

But this does not mean that a new world war is absolutely inevitable, although it is a serious danger. Both superpowers rest on shaky foundations. There are constant revolutionary movements in their own backyards that they must try to suppress. The flames of revolutionary peoples war in the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, as well as the revolutionary struggles of the working people in the advanced capitalist countries, including the superpowers themselves, are great obstacles to the ability of the superpowers to launch a major war. It is thus of especial importance in this period that the genuine Marxist-Leninist forces strive to lead the peoples' revolutionary struggles, and to steer clear of the traps laid by the imperialists and revisionists. The possibility that a world-wide movement genuinely opposed to the war plans of the superpowers could at least lead to a postponement of such a war has to be more carefully investigated. But the firmest revolutionary struggles for liberation and socialism, without allying with one superpower or another, are the surest means by which a new world war might be prevented. And the total elimination of national oppression and class exploitation is a precondition for the final elimination of wars.

Section IIA - Strategy and Tactics

Through our struggle to rid ourselves of the influence of the "theory of the three worlds," we have begun to reexamine our conception of strategy and tactics, and the relation between a given strategy and the theory of Marxism-Leninism.

Most Marxist-Leninists in this country, if asked to explain strategy and tactics, would simply say that strategy is the overall plan for the disposition of forces in a given stage of the revolution and tactics deal with particular tasks at a particular moment of history. Further, they would generally elaborate that there are three strategic tasks: party building, the united front and armed struggle. These were adopted directly from the "Quotations from Chairman Mao Tsetung" (p.3) where Mao speaks of "...the three main weapons with which we have defeated the enemy..." (quoted from "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship", Selected Works, PLP Peking, Vol. IV, p.422). Since we are in a period in this country in which party building constitutes the central task, and since party building is generally viewed as one of the three strategic tasks, the various plans for building the party - all the various "key links" formulated by the various and sundry groups and organizations - are viewed as strategies towards building the party. Tactics in general, if discussed at all, are usually relegated to our relation to the "mass movement" - e.g. a set of tactics for the trade union movement, another for the women's movement, another for youth, etc.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THEORY

The "theory of three worlds" puts forth a strategy of unity with the comprador regimes in the "third world" and with the capitalist states of the "second world," and now of a united front against Soviet social-imperialism. It was credible to many of us because of our own facile approach both to the theory of Marxism (our belittlement of theory) and to its practical application, i.e. the strategy and tactics of proletarian revolution. The "theory of three worlds" gives a fundamentally incorrect analysis of the world situation today. With such an incorrect appraisal of the objective situation, the strategy advanced could not be a strategy for proletarian revolution, but a strategy of reformism that leaves the proletariat tailing behind the bourgeoisie.

The strategy and tactics of proletarian revolution must be based on a correct assessment of the objective situation. In this lies the importance of the theory of Marxism-Leninism, for it is the theory of Marxism-Leninism that enables us to grasp the inner laws of society's development, and, based on this understanding,

to develop a plan that will accelerate that development. As Lenin explains:

"Nothing but an objective account of the totality of all the mutual relationships of all the classes in a given society without exception, and consequently an account of the objective stage of development of this society as well as an account of the mutual relationship between it and other societies, can serve as the basis for the correct tactics of the advanced class. All classes and all countries are at the same time looked upon not statically, but dynamically, i.e. not as motionless, but as in motion (the laws of their motion being determined by the economic conditions of each class). This motion, in its turn, is looked upon not only from the point of view of the past, but also from the point of view of the future; and moreover not only in accordance with vulgar conception of the 'evolutionists,' who see only slow changes, but dialectically: 'In developments of such magnitude twenty years are no more than a day,' Marx wrote to Engels, 'although later there may come days in which twenty years are concentrated.' (Briefwechsel, Vol. III, p. 127)." (Requote from Karl Marx, FLP Peking, p. 40 - 41; also in the Collection Marx-Engels-Marxism, FLP Peking, p. 38).

Objective Conditions

By the objective situation we mean that aspect of society that exists outside ourselves, over which we have no control, those phenomena that exist independently of our will. We cannot choose, for example, the period of history in which we live, any more than we can choose the class of society from which we come. Certainly most of us would prefer to live in socialist America. But the fact is that we live in the United States of America in 1979, that this is one of the two most highly developed imperialist powers in the world, and obviously all our work most proceed from that.

The theory of Marxism-Leninism teaches us to examine the objective situation scientifically; to know the inner laws of society's development; to see not only what is happening but why, how and in what direction different classes are moving; to see more than events but to grasp the relationships between events. Phenomena, such as the large number of strikes in the U.S., take on new meaning when viewed through the lens of Marxism. We know, for example, that these strikes must be examined in light of both the intensification of the

of the general crisis of capitalism and the particular economic crises of capitalism. As the capitalists strive to obtain the maximum profit possible, they shift the burden of the crisis onto the backs of the working class, lowering the living standard by inflation, cut-backs in services, attacks on the trade unions. Thus the outburst of strikes, as the U.S. working class, in accord with the laws of history, resists oppression. The fact that these strikes are generally peaceful and limited in their content reflects (besides the weakness of the communist movement which would one day be strong enough to divert the trade union movement to a revolutionary movement) the fact that the superprofits wrested by U.S. imperialism from the colonial and neo-colonial countries have enabled the capitalists to buy off a section of the U.S. working class; that this bribed section, which has been able to maintain its leadership over the proletariat in this country, must restrict the struggle of the working class to a struggle for reforms in order to maintain its own privileged position in society.

The theory of Marxism-Leninism gives us the ability to recognize the inter-relationships between phenomena; to know their material class content; the theory of Marxism enables us to recognize the motion of society, to see not only the ebbs and flows, the twists and turns within a particular epoch but to know where the struggle between old and new, between reaction and progress is leading; to know what is coming into being as well as what is going out of being. The contradiction between socialized production and individual ownership is the material basis within capitalist society for the inevitable development of the worldwide system of socialism. As Lenin so aptly put it: "Imperialism is the eve of social revolution of the proletariat." Without a correct class analysis of society, without the scientific knowledge of where we come from and where we are going, it is impossible for the conscious element - i.e. that aspect of the movement and those people in it who strive to act on society rather than react to it - to do anything but run frantically behind the spontaneous movement, wildly trying to catch up instead of diverting it along the path of revolution.

Subjective Conditions

The subjective side of the movement is the perceptions a given group of people have of themselves and the society around them.

Without the interjection of scientific socialism into the working class movement, the level of consciousness of the working class remains trade union, bourgeois consciousness. As we bring scientific socialism to the working class, concentrating at this time on the advanced section of the class, on organizing the vanguard, the working class will become conscious of itself as a class, a class-for-itself rather than a class-in-itself. It

is thus that the subjective factor, although it cannot change the direction of the development of a given society, can accelerate the transformation of society in the direction in which it is already going. Stalin explains in Concerning the Question of the Strategy and Tactics of the Russian Communists:

"But the movement has also a subjective conscious side. The subjective side of the movement is the reflection in the minds of the workers of the spontaneous processes of the movement; it is the conscious and systematic movement of the proletariat towards a definite goal. It is this side of the movement that interests us because, unlike the objective side, it is entirely subject to the directing influence of strategy and tactics. Whereas the objective processes of the movement, here, on the contrary, on the subjective, conscious side of the movement, the field of application of strategy is broad and varied, because strategy can accelerate or retard the movement, direct it along the shortest path or divert it to a more difficult and painful path, depending on the perfections or shortcomings of the strategy itself..." (Collected Works of Stalin, Vol. 5, p. 164; also see

WHAT IS STRATEGY

Strategy then must be based on a correct Marxist assessment of the period of struggle one is in. This assessment is represented by the program of the party of the proletariat which includes not only an analysis of the historic period and the class forces at play but a determination of the aims of the proletarian movement. This is one of the reasons our movement's general view of strategy and tactics has been erroneous. The belittlement of theory has hindered the development of a correct program for proletarian revolution; without a Marxist program a correct determination of what strategy to pursue is impossible. Rather what our movement has done is to substitute vehicles for the accomplishment of our strategic aims for the strategy for proletarian revolution itself.

Party building, the united front, and armed struggle are all component parts of our strategy and tactics. The party of the proletariat is an essential tool before, during and after the seizure of state power. It is the organization of revolutionary leadership of the proletariat and oppressed masses. In this particular period, where there is no party, building the party is the central task of all genuine Marxist-Leninists in the U.S. But the construction of the party is not a substitute

for developing a strategy for proletarian revolution in the U.S., and this strategy is a necessity for the party. The determination of ones allies is a component part of strategy and tactics, and again not the strategy itself. Imperialism cannot be overthrown peacefully; thus we recognize the necessity of armed struggle and preparation for civil war. How we organize our red army, the time of an insurrection, the use of guerrilla warfare involve a most precise utilization of the principles of strategy and tactics. But merely to equate proletarian strategy to armed struggle belittles the importance and complexity of the art and science of Marxist-Leninist strategy and tactics.

The party's strategy is the orientation and direction of the proletariat for an entire historical period. It strives to lead the proletariat along the most direct path in pursuit of a particular goal and should remain relatively unchanged for that period. It outlines the disposition of forces involved in the struggle: which class is the vanguard; who are the direct reserves (reliable allies) of the vanguard class; what are the indirect reserves (contradictions within the enemy camp); which class stands in the way of the revolution and has to be neutralized (direction of the main blow); and of course which class constitutes the main enemy.

INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY

There are, of course, differences between an international strategy for proletarian revolution and particular strategies for particular countries. Imperialism, as a world-wide system of exploitation, has forcibly plundered and held back the development of many nations around the world. An underdeveloped nation oppressed by imperialism, with a large peasantry and a large sector of its economy still centered around semi-feudal relations and agriculture, has different strategic tasks than an advanced imperialist country. But the ultimate aim of the proletariat for this period in both countries is proletarian revolution and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The final aim of the dictatorship of the proletariat is, of course, the establishment of a classless, communist society worldwide. Even before the revisionist clique took power in China, the Communist Party of China took contradictory stands on this question. To them it often seemed to be enough to overthrow imperialism. That became an end in and of itself. But the overthrow of imperialism, which is a correct strategic aim in the

* The final aim of the dictatorship of the proletariat is, of course, the establishment of a classless, communist society worldwide.

colonies and neocolonies of the world can be (for a Marxist) a strategic aim only for the first stage of the revolution in these countries.

To preach the overthrow of imperialism as an ultimate strategic aim is tantamount to advocating anti-imperialism as a third ideology. And, as has been proven over and over again in any number of countries throughout the world, an anti-imperialist struggle either blossoms into socialism or rots into some new form of dependence on imperialism. One cannot simply oppose imperialism; imperialism must be smashed as well as overthrown. One must be for something -- one must be for socialism.

The struggle for socialism cannot take place without the leadership of the vanguard class, the proletariat. The proletariat, based on its material conditions in capitalist society -- owning nothing but its ability to sell its labor power -- is the only thoroughly revolutionary class in society. It is the only class capable of carrying the revolution through to completion. Yet the proletariat, represented by those nations in which the dictatorship of the proletariat has been established and the vanguard proletarian parties throughout the world, is not seen by the "three worlds" theorists as the vanguard of all revolutionary movements, the leading force of revolution, the class on which Marxist-Leninists concentrate their attention. Rather "the third world, the storm center of revolution" has replaced the proletariat as the "motive force" of history, and it is here, to the Chinese revisionists, that communists should focus their attention. The Chinese revisionists have distorted the contradiction between oppressed nations and imperialism to mean the contradiction between the ruling classes of these countries and imperialism. They have elevated this contradiction to the place of principal contradiction of our time and they have liquidated the fundamental contradiction of society, between proletariat and bourgeoisie, between socialism and capitalism, as the motive force of history.

The Fundamental Contradiction and the Principal Contradiction

We would like to pause briefly to explain the distinction between the fundamental and the principal contradiction. The fundamental contradiction of society -- the contradiction between the exploiters and exploited, the basic class contradiction in any given society -- is not necessarily the same as the principal contradiction at a given time in that society, i.e. that contradiction that determines the development of all the others.¹⁸ On the contrary, throughout history the fundamental contradiction has not been the same as the principal contradiction, and it is for this reason that classes still exist. For example, in the epoch of declining feudalism and rising capitalism, the fundamental contradiction was between the landed aristocracy

and the merchant/bourgeois class. The resolution of this contradiction, rather than eliminating exploitation of the peasantry, created different social relations, but social relations nevertheless based on the exploitation of man by man. What makes the epoch of imperialism different than all previous historic epochs is that a qualitative change in social relations (the beginning of a new historic epoch) can take place only when the fundamental contradiction (between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie) is itself resolved, leading for the first time in history to a new, socialist, society without class exploitation. This change takes place when the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat is the principal, as well as the fundamental, contradiction in society.

The contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie does not play the principal or leading role at all times throughout the epoch of imperialism. On the contrary, imperialism has created a number of classes as well as a handful of exploiting nations, and therefore, as we have seen in Section I, a number of contradictions, primarily: between two opposing systems, socialist and capitalist; between labor and capital in the capitalist countries; between the oppressed peoples and nations and imperialism; and between the imperialist powers. The uneven development of capitalism, the wide disparity between nations, the insidious quest of the imperialists for ever-greater profits on a worldwide scale, as well as the temporary ebb of the proletarian movement in the advanced capitalist countries, and the coming to power of the revisionists in the Soviet Union have pushed the national liberation movements into the forefront of the world's revolutionary movement. The contradiction between the oppressed peoples and nations and imperialism has been the principal, leading contradiction during most of the period since World War II.*

THE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS vs. THE "THIRD WORLD"

But to say this is different than to say that the "third world" is the motive force of history, first because that formulation liquidates the proletariat as the motive force of our epoch, as well as liquidating the necessity for its leadership in the liberation movements. Second, that formulation ignores the fact that classes do indeed exist within

* Whether this contradiction is today still playing the leading role or whether the contradictions between the two superpowers is principal is open to question. Further examination of the world situation is needed to determine this.

the "third world," as well as within the national liberation struggles, and that some of these classes have no antagonistic contradictions with imperialism. The Philippines is an underdeveloped country and therefore part of the "third world." But Marcos, who represents the comprador bourgeoisie of that country, though he may at times strive for an appearance of political independence from U.S. imperialism, is a fascist dictator who is an agent of U.S. neocolonialism and who in no way, shape or form can be part of the revolutionary current. The masses of the oppressed Filipino people, yes; certainly they are a force directly opposed to the interests of U.S. imperialism. But to call the Marcos regime progressive is to practice the grossest kind of deception and opportunism.

The direct reserves of the proletariat internationally include (and in the main consist of) the national liberation struggles. These are the most dependable and revolutionary allies of the proletariat, just as the proletariat is the most reliable ally of the national liberation movements. But it is important to remember that these movements include several different classes. The proletariat, no matter how small, can and must strive for hegemony over the national liberation movements. The united front, although it may include members of the national bourgeoisie, must be forged from below as an alliance of the proletariat with the peasantry. Under the leadership of the proletariat the peasantry can be won over to revolution. The lowest stratum of the peasantry becomes the main ally of the proletariat in the struggle for socialism.

Unfortunately, the proletariat is not always able to lead the movements of the oppressed nations and nationalities. When these movements are led by sectors of the bourgeoisie or petty-bourgeoisie, we must examine them in light of the criteria Lenin put forward in his "Report of the Commission on the National and Colonial Questions" delivered to the Second Congress of the Communist International, July 26, 1920. First, are they in essence revolutionary or essentially reformist struggles? Second, we must determine if they

"do not hinder our work of educating the peasantry and broad mass of the exploited in a revolutionary spirit. If these conditions do not exist, the Communists in these countries must combat the reformist bourgeoisie, to which belong also the heroes of the Second International." (in Lenin On the National and Colonial Question, FLP Peking, p. 33)

When a national struggle is essentially a reformist struggle led by the bourgeoisie, while we support the legitimate aspirations of the masses for independence and liberation, it is our duty as revolutionaries to expose and condemn all parties of compromise with imperialism. Such forces as Ecevit in Turkey,

Kaunda in Zambia, or Manley in Jamaica, actually maintain or even strengthen imperialist domination of their countries, though with cosmetic reforms or in a new disguise. Communists in the oppressed nations must direct their main blow against these bourgeois reformists, just as communists in the oppressor nations direct their main blow against revisionists and trade union bureaucrats. Although at certain stages of the struggle the national bourgeoisie may strive for independence from international capital, it tends to vacillate and compromise with imperialism. It aims to preserve capitalist relations of society and to enhance its own oppressive position as a bourgeoisie. For example, Khomeini in Iran struggled against the Shah as an agent of U.S. imperialism even then trying to restrain the masses from using armed force in this struggle. But once he himself came to power, he opposed the continuation of the people's democratic revolution, trying to suppress the genuine revolutionaries and disarm the masses, attacking the Kurds and other oppressed nationalities and opposing the women's demands for equality. Although the communists may unite with the national bourgeoisie when it is struggling against imperialism, they must find the correct tactical demands to bring the masses under the leadership of the proletariat; they must not leave themselves subordinate to the national bourgeoisie. This is the only way the national democratic revolution can be brought to completion and the way opened for socialist revolution.

To deny the vacillating stance of the national bourgeoisie deludes the people; it is a denial of Marxism and a compromise with idealism. The national liberation struggles, as a component part of proletarian revolution, require strict adherence to the Leninist principles of strategy and tactics if they are to advance the interests of the oppressed peoples.

We must note that there are also national struggles (even ones that take advantage of just demands of peoples against oppression), that have become tools of one of the other superpower in its struggle against its rival. As examples, we mention the struggle of the Kurds in Iraq that was supported by the CIA and the fight to set up Bangladesh as a politically independent state, spearheaded by Indian troops backed by the Soviet Union. Communists can not be drawn into supporting such struggles.

THE ROLE OF THE "SECOND WORLD"

The main bastions of imperialism today are U.S. imperialism and Soviet social imperialism. These two superpowers together constitute the main enemy of the world's people. But what of the role of the secondary imperialist powers such as France, Japan, Great Britain, and West Germany? The "three world's theory" regards these nations as allies of the "third world." Contrary

to this position, an indirect reserve is defined by Stalin as:

"(a). the contradictions and conflicts among the non-proletarian classes within the country, which can be utilized by the proletariat to weaken the enemy and strengthen its reserves; (b). the contradictions, conflicts and war (the imperialist war, for instance) among the bourgeois states hostile to the proletarian state, which can be utilized by the proletariat in its offensive or in manoeuvring in the event of a forced retreat." (J. Stalin, Foundations of Leninism, p. 88).

The interimperialist rivalry between the French bourgeoisie and the U.S. bourgeoisie, for example, can and must be utilized by the proletariat as an indirect reserve. But it is the rivalry between these states, a rivalry motivated by their lust for profits, and not the states themselves, that constitutes the reserve, a reserve that can be utilized by the proletariat when the contention between them intensifies to the extent that their energies are directed against each other, and not against the proletariat, thus allowing the proletariat an opportunity to widen and expand its field of operations.

Today to call for unity with the French bourgeois objectively liquidates the contradiction between the French bourgeoisie and the French proletariat, as well as the contradiction between French imperialism and the French colonial and neo-colonial countries. Even when calling for a united front against fascism before World War II, the Comintern did not call for unity with the bourgeoisie of the capitalist countries. Rather the united front against fascism was to be built from below and,

"...if in France the anti-fascist movement leads to the formation of a government which will carry on a real struggle against French fascism...the Communists, while remaining the irreconcilable foe of every bourgeois government and supporters of a Soviet government, will nevertheless be prepared to support such a government..." (Georgi Dimitrov, United Front Against Fascism, "Report to the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International," 1935, Gamma Publ., p. 19, his emphasis).

We are not now in a period where the main enemy of the people of the world is fascism and an offensive by the most reactionary sector of international finance capital. The "open terroristic dictatorship" of the bourgeoisie (ibid, p. 7) has certainly not replaced the bourgeois democracy in the U.S., even though inroads have been made into certain basic bourgeois rights such as freedom of the press. And the state monopoly

capitalists of the Soviet Union do not play the same role in the world today as the Nazis of Germany did in 1939. We raise this to point out that if we were confronted with fascism as the main enemy of the world's people, the "three world theorists" would leave us helpless in the face of them.

The united front against fascism advocated by the Seventh Congress of the Comintern in 1935 was seen, first of all, as a tactic and not a strategy. The strategic aim for the capitalist countries remained proletarian revolution and the establishment of Soviet power. The forging of a united proletarian army - the proletarian united front - united against first the barbaric rule of capital and second for the dictatorship of the proletariat - was seen as "...the decisive link in the preparation of the toilers for the forthcoming great battles of the second round of proletarian revolution..." (Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, "Resolution on Report of Ercoli", p. 40 - 45). The Comintern Resolution called for unity of action from below, unity of action of the masses of toilers against fascism, without for a moment forgetting the aim of proletarian revolution and the necessity to expose the reactionary Social Democratic leaders who stood in the way of the united front and who had formed a bloc with the imperialists.

UNITED FRONT AGAINST IMPERIALISM

We emphasize this to show that the proponents of the theory of three worlds have distorted the essence of the united front against imperialism. The united front against imperialism is not a series of unholy alliances or a geopolitical entente - a political-military bloc of nations based on geography, color or opposition to one superpower or the other. It cannot include U.S. imperialism, one of the two greatest oppressors of the world's people, nor can it include the bourgeois governments of other advanced capitalist countries - Great Britain, France, West Germany, Japan. Substituting a bloc of "third world" countries, many of which are run by reactionary, oppressive neo-colonialist regimes, for the united front against imperialism liquidates the class content of the united front: It disarms the proletariat and oppressed masses in the face of a most bloodthirsty and belligerent enemy - the system of imperialism.

The united front against imperialism is the strategic alliance of the international proletariat with its direct reserves, the national liberation movements. It is forged from the revolutionary struggles of the masses of the people and fortified by the genuine leaders of these struggles, both Communist and non-Communist. The foundation of the united front against imperialism is not the minimum principle that we support any act that objectively weakens imperialism but the Marxist-Leninist

principle of proletarian internationalism. As Stalin says:

"e. The interests of the proletarian movement in the developed countries and of the national liberation movements in the colonies call for the union of these two forms of the revolutionary movement into a common front against the common enemy, imperialism:

f. The victory of the working class in the developed countries and the liberation of the oppressed peoples from the yoke of imperialism are impossible without the formation and consolidation of a common revolutionary front;

g. The formation of a common revolutionary front is impossible unless the proletariat of the oppressor nations renders direct and determined support to the liberation movements of the oppressed peoples against the imperialism of its 'own country,' for 'no nation can be free if it oppresses other nations.' (Engels);" (Stalin, Foundations of Leninism, p. 77).

TACTICS

We recognize that in the U.S. communist movement there is a great deal of confusion over tactics, not only regarding what tactics are but the fundamental importance of correct tactics to proletarian revolution. That the united front against fascism was a tactic and not a strategy is but one example of the fact that tactics cannot be belittled.

In our movement we frequently hear the view that differences, either among groups or circles or individuals, are "only differences in tactics, tactical differences" and therefore not of any great importance. Tactics are viewed as particular activities at particular times in particular mass movements. They are viewed mainly within the context of the spontaneous movement, and thus reflect the erroneous position of "tactics-as-a-process" that Lenin so vehemently opposed in What Is To Be Done?

In What Is To Be Done? (FLP Peking, pp. 57-58) Lenin likened a tactical plan to the adoption of a treatment plan for a particular disease. For every disease there are a number of possible treatments. Leukemia, for example, can be treated with chemotherapy (drugs), radiation, or surgery. A doctor adopts one or the other of these treatments depending on the age of the patient, the advancement of the disease, the intensity of the disease, whether it is in a period of remission or exacerbation. Whether he chooses one course or another, he must stick to it as a plan; otherwise he deals only with symptoms, with the overt

manifestations of the disease as they appear, and not with the essence of the disease itself.

So too with tactics; belittling the importance of tactics, allowing them to flow solely from the spontaneous movement of the masses as this or that struggle emerges on the scene is tantamount to liquidating the role of the conscious factor and debases the movement to the curse of spontaneity.

Lenin explains tactics as:

"...the Party's political conduct, or the character, the direction and methods of its political activity. Tactical resolutions are adopted by Party congresses in order to precisely define the political conduct of the Party as a whole with regard to new tasks, or in view of a new situation." (V.I. Lenin, Two Tactics of Social Democracy in the Democratic Revolution, FLP Peking, p. 9).

Tactics, like strategy, are founded on a scientific Marxist examination of the objective conditions of struggle. As was explained earlier in this article, without a clear analysis of the objective factor, without a program of struggle, there can be neither a correct strategy nor correct tactics. Once this is developed and a clear overall strategy laid out, we can begin to seriously talk about tactics. Tactics are not a separate subject from strategy; rather they are part of the strategy, the method of implementing an overall strategy at a particular time. While it is true that tactics change with the ebb and flow of the movement, this is not to say that they change without a plan or direction, without having as their aim the acceleration of the objective factor towards socialism. Rather they take into account the ebbs and flows of the movement and represent the plan for the forms of struggle best adopted for a particular time.

For example, during the first stage of the Russian Revolution (from 1903 - February, 1917) the strategy - to overthrow tsarism remained unchanged. However, in the years 1903 - 1905, during an upsurge of revolutionary activity, the Bolsheviks boycotted the Duma (the tsarist parliament). They were able to do this because the revolutionary upsurge allowed them to take the offensive. From 1907 to 1912, as the revolutionary movement declined, the Bolsheviks participated in the Duma and utilized parliamentary forms of struggle as the best forum for espousing their revolutionary aims. Throughout this period the Bolsheviks strove to isolate the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie that was sitting at the head of the Duma. Their methods or tactics for doing this changed according to a plan based on the political changes of the time.

Tactics can never be seen as ends in themselves. They are subordinated to strategy; and if a tactical victory means a strategic defeat the tactical victory should be given up. On the other hand the correct

determination of tactics, whom to unite with in a particular period for example, can be crucial to the successful obtainment of a strategic aim, and in this lies their importance.

As Marxists we recognize all forms of struggle - legal, illegal, parliamentary, strikes, demonstrations, civil disobedience, military actions, participation in the trade unions, etc. This does not mean that we jump into any and every form of struggle that comes our way; rather we choose the forms of struggle that enable us to best pursue our strategic goals. This choice of tactics is based on an analysis of both the objective conditions as well as the consciousness of the masses. This point has not been grasped in our movement. We have been frequently unable to separate questions of tactics from questions of principle. For example, there was at one time a great deal of discussion over the role of communists in the trade union movement. Should communists participate in the trade union movement? Should our main task be to unite with the trade union bureaucrats in order to expose them? Or to unite with the masses, from below, to expose the labor aristocracy? Do we try to turn the unions into revolutionary organizations? Do we strive to build factory nuclei organizations or do we fight to build anti-imperialist rank-and-file caucuses? These questions were posed by our movement and fought for. Building factory nuclei and working within the trade unions with the rank and file, for example, are questions of principle which communists carry out at all times. The methods of carrying these out, however, are questions of tactics. Where the movement failed and what prevented the movement from resolving these questions is that the questions were posed outside of the context of our central task at a particular time, and outside of the context of the mass movement. We saw our positions as dogma, as unchanging, always and forever, and if you said make trade unions revolutionary organizations and I said build factory nuclei, you were an opportunist and should be thrown into the marsh.

Tactics change. Forms of struggle change. It is the art of revolutionary leadership to have the foresight to plan these changes; to find and "...grip as strong as we can the link that is least likely to be torn out of our hands, the one that is most important at the given moment, the one that guarantees the possessor of the link the possession of the whole chain..." (Lenin, What Is To Be Done?, pp. 201 - 202). The struggle to find the key link is a struggle to determine the correct tactical plan in any given process. We choose in this period as our key link those forms of struggle that will best serve to bind and weld a core of committed revolutionaries from among the advanced workers as well as the revolutionary intellectuals (e.g. propaganda). We choose in the upcoming period those forms of struggle that will enable the masses to know through their own experiences what the vanguard already knows; that will

enable the masses to desire and set as its own aims what the vanguard already knows and has set as its own aims. Therein lies the importance of tactics - for it is the masses (and not the vanguard in and of itself) who are the true makers of history.

Without correct tactical leadership - without the ability to change a propaganda slogan into a slogan of action or into a directive - we will be unable to mobilize and lead the masses to accomplish our strategic aims. The Bolsheviks became masters of this art. The slogan "Down with the Autocracy," for example, was a propaganda slogan when it was first advanced by the Emancipation of Labor Group and when it was aimed at winning over the vanguard. It became an agitational slogan during the Russo-Japanese war when it was aimed at winning over and educating the masses. Prior to the February Revolution it became a call to the masses to prepare for the actual overthrow of the tsar (i.e. an action slogan). During the February Revolution it was a directive - an actual call for the seizure of power and indeed the tsar was then overthrown.²¹

THE SITUATION IN THE U.S.

Certainly in this short space we have raised only a few of the most salient points regarding strategy and tactics. The subject is among the most vital in the literature of Marxism-Leninism, and we are fortunate to live in a period of history when the rich summations of the history of the proletariat are available to us. We realize that we have in a sense raised more questions than we have answered, and we can only touch upon the most burning questions for the U.S. proletariat, the strategy for proletarian revolution in the U.S. We have tried to emphasize the importance of theory in this period, as a prerequisite to clearly formulating a composite strategy for this country.

This is not to say that we (as a movement) are starting from scratch and know nothing regarding our strategy for the U.S. proletariat. We can say that the U.S. is an advanced imperialist country and that, based on this, our strategic aim is proletarian revolution and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. We know that the working class movement in this country is dominated by the labor aristocracy and that the communist movement is dominated by right opportunism and revisionism, and it is against these forces that we must direct our main blow. We know that the multi-national U.S. proletariat is the vanguard of the revolution. We know that the Afro-American and Chicano national liberation movements and the revolutionary movements of the other oppressed nations and nationalities have played a leading role in providing impetus to the proletarian movement since the late 1950's, and that these movements, constitute part of the main reserve of the proletariat in this country. We continue to uphold the teachings of Lenin and Stalin that those classes

Section IIB - Strategy and Tactics In World Wars I and II

closest to the proletariat, namely the semi-proletariat and the lowest stratum of the peasantry, also constitute part of the main reserve of the proletariat in the struggle for socialism.

We raise this but our grasp of it in actual living terms is limited. We need to do further study of both the objective situation and Marxist-Leninist theory around these questions. We do not sufficiently grasp either the class compositions of the national movements in this country or the relations of other classes to the proletariat, in particular our attitude to the various strata of the petit-bourgeoisie (based on fact and not speculation), which class constitutes a broad and complicated section of the population of the U.S. Who is part of the labor aristocracy and who is actually part of the petit bourgeoisie? We have little knowledge of the relation between town and country, of the changes in agriculture, the relation between agricultural workers and the industrial proletariat, etc. To develop anything more than the kind of superficial strategies of the Revolutionary Communist Party or the Communist Party (M-L) we must address ourselves to answering these and many other questions. And a national organization with a leading center are of great importance to our ability to carry this out.

We can see that the "theory of three worlds" gave us a theoretical basis for deviating from our theoretical tasks. It provided us with a view of strategy and tactics that distorts and revises the Leninist teachings on this subject. It is our responsibility now not only to gain a correct understanding of the international strategy for proletarian revolution but to concretely take up the tasks necessary for the development of a correct strategy for proletarian revolution in the United States of America. The day this bastion of imperialism falls will be a day of revolutionary rejoicing throughout the world.

In the first two sections of this article we have tried to explain some of the fundamental features of imperialism and the general basis of a Marxist-Leninist approach to the strategy and tactics of proletarian revolution. To concretize this analysis we would like now to briefly summarize two of the most catastrophic events of the 20th century, namely World War I and World War II. These two events represent the most acute periods of world-wide crisis in the first half of this century; and the attitude and actions of the communist movement towards these events provide us with profound and vital lessons in the art and science of revolution.

Every war must be regarded as a separate entity, from the standpoint of its fundamental historical character, i.e. as a just or unjust war, a war waged by the oppressed against the oppressor that benefits mankind, or a war waged by or among the oppressors for the continued plunder of the masses. A particular war cannot be examined merely from the standpoint of the atrocities committed - atrocities occur in all wars - or who invaded whom first. All wars represent a form of class struggle and are, as Lenin states in "Socialism and War," (quoting Clausewitz), "...the continuation of politics by other (i.e. violent) means'..." (In Lenin On War and Peace, FLP, Peking, pg. 11). The events leading up to a war as well as the particular war itself must be studied in the context of the inherent contradictions of the time; otherwise they become meaningless, isolated phenomena that offer little guidance to the formation and implementation of tactics for the revolutionary forces.

FACTORS LEADING TO WORLD WAR I

In Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism Lenin points out that capitalist countries develop unevenly, particularly during the era of imperialism. In the first third of this century Great Britain was the most highly developed and powerful imperialist country. As the saying went, "the sun never set on the British Empire." By 1914 Great Britain, with a land mass of 0.3 million square kilometers, controlled a colonial empire of 33.5 million kilometers populated by 393.5 million inhabitants. Great Britain and France together controlled 1/4 of the world's population.²² Germany, on the other hand, entered the arena of capitalist contention rather late. It consolidated itself as a state only in the late 19th century. As its industrial capacity grew - by 1914 its output of steel surpassed both England's and France's together²³ - it sought markets outside its borders to export its surplus goods and capital. Yet its colonies by 1914 encompassed only 2.9 million square kilometers of territory with a population of 12.3 million inhabitants, i.e. less than 1% of the world's population.²⁴ As a nation governed by the economic laws of