

"WORKERS AND OPPRESSED PEOPLES OF THE WORLD, UNITE!!"

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## SOCIALISM IN CHINA

The capitalist class has always glorified its own form of rule -- the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie -- and has distorted and slandered the socialist state -- the dictatorship of the proletariat. Why has the bourgeoisie been forced to lie and be deceptive about the true nature of capitalism and socialism? It is because capitalism is the rule of a handful of millionaires over the majority of the working masses, the dictatorship of the rich over the exploited and oppressed people who own nothing but their ability to work. And socialism is the dictatorship of the working class over the overthrown millionaires, the state which is run by and in the interest of the working masses, where there is no exploitation, poverty, hunger, unemployment, crime, war, and all the evils of the capitalist system. It is no surprise that the bourgeoisie tries to hide the truth; and it is no wonder that the bourgeoisie is fearful of the day when the working class will learn the truth about socialism.\*

In socialist China, all industrial enterprises and all wealth created by them belongs to the proletariat and laboring people. The state, led by the working class, exercises direction of them and sees to it that production and management serve the people. In a socialist country, the aim of production is to satisfy the needs of the state and the people, and is not for profit! All production follows a state plan, in accordance with proportionate development of the national economy, and therefore there is no anarchy of production. Wasteful and impractical commodities, such as we see in a capitalist society, have no place in a socialist one. Government departments pass on plans according to the needs of the state and the people, after the participating enterprises are consulted. Before the plans are finalized they are discussed with the workers for suggestions and criticisms, and once decided upon, it is up to the enterprise to guarantee fulfillment of the plan. All profit (socialist accumulation) made beyond fulfillment of the plan is handed over to the state treasury for use in socialist construction and improvement of the living standards of the people, which is constantly rising.

In China, the workers are not wage-slaves; labor-power is not a commodity sold to an exploiting class, as it is under capitalism. Unemployment does not exist, as there are jobs available for all who can work. Enterprises cannot hire or cut down the work force individually; all adjustments in the labor force must be made by government labor departments according to an overall plan. Uniform wage scales are set by the state for all enterprises, and therefore cooperation, not competition, characterizes the relations between workers and industrial enterprises and among the workers themselves. The trend is to decrease the gap between the highest and lowest paid workers.

Funding of socialist enterprises, like everything else, is qualitatively different than in a capitalist enterprise. The state allots fixed and working capital to the enterprises according to a plan. Government departments supply funds for trial-production of new products, for scientific experiment, and for expanding production. If there is a shortage, the enterprise can borrow from a state bank. In other cases, the state will subsidize the enterprise lacking funds. In addition, the state allocates a sum equal to

*turn to page two*

\* The USSR is not a socialist country; it was until the early 1950s when capitalism was restored. Today it is an imperialist superpower, competing with the US.

### What's Inside

*Shipyards in Imperialist War  
Propaganda & Agitation  
Socialism and the Elderly*

11% of the enterprises total wages for welfare -- a special fund for providing health protection, free medical care, housing, relief of the ill, and other services.

It should be stressed that China has a unified and stable price policy. The purchasing power has been stable for twenty years; the prices of daily necessities have not fluctuated, and the prices of manufactured goods have gradually fallen. No economic crises exist and China has no external or internal debts. Compare this to the rise in prices, currency depreciation, monetary inflation, financial crises, debts and drop in purchasing power, all of which characterize a capitalist economy.

The political party of the proletariat, the Chinese Communist Party, is the highest form of organization of the proletariat and exercises leadership in everything. A party committee exists in every factory, providing overall leadership to the enterprise. A revolutionary committee, elected by the working people of the enterprise, is the leading administrative body, and is composed of workers, technicians, and administrators within the factory. This committee is responsible for the day-to-day running of the factory, including propaganda, organization, production, finance, wages, welfare, etc. Both the party and the revolutionary committees are concerned with the interests of the masses, and rely on the working people and their initiative.

The workers play a decisive role in running state affairs, and participate in managing the units where they are directly engaged in production. Workers take an active part in the political movements of the Party, carrying out proletarian ideology, combatting revisionism, and consolidating the socialist state. Mass organizations, under the leadership of the party and revolutionary committees, are in charge of running the affairs and carrying out various tasks in the factories, such as implementing safety devices, improving the quality of the products, and engaging in technical cooperation.

In a capitalist factory, the employer puts in the money, the engineers design the machines, equipment and technological processes, and the workers do the manual work, and nothing more. In socialist enterprises, things are entirely different. Mass movements are carried out to combine the efforts of workers, technicians, and administrators, and to encourage the masses to take the initiative, make suggestions and criticisms, and play an active part in the efforts to improve production. In this way, the ideas of the workers themselves are summarized and implemented.

The superiority of the system of socialist ownership by the whole people is a fact which the bourgeoisie tries to obscure. But working people in this country know very well that capitalism doesn't work for them, and are realizing that the fundamental needs of the masses cannot be obtained under capitalism. This means that working people must organize themselves and abolish the capitalist system of wage-slavery, just as the Chinese masses did, and replace the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie with the dictatorship of the proletariat. History has clearly shown the advantages of socialism; now the working class must realize them.

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## THE ROLE OF THE SHIPYARDS IN IMPERIALIST WAR

The danger of imperialist war between the United States and the Soviet Union grows each day. While today puppet troops do their fighting -- the US uses Israeli and South African troops; the Soviet Union manipulates Cuban forces -- tomorrow, local conflicts threaten to erupt into open confrontation between the two superpowers. In Europe, the potential for war increases daily; both the Soviet Union and the United States (along

with its NATO allies) have nearly a million troops poised to do battle for industrial Europe. Both sides lurk like vultures over the oil-rich Middle East. In Africa, the Soviets desperately scheme to coopt genuine liberation struggles, while the US sends arms and aid to oppose them. Even in Latin America, US imperialism's near-exclusive domain until recently, the growing Soviet presence intensifies the contradictions between the two competitors.

At a time when unemployment and underemployment in the US stand at over ten million; when entire cities, such as New York, are going bankrupt; when schools and hospitals are closing down for lack of funds -- at a time like this, the US has a 'defense' budget of more than \$120 billion. As an imperialist power, the US has been on the offense the entire 20th Century, particularly after World War II, when it emerged as the most powerful imperialist country. But to call it a 'defense' budget is not entirely inappropriate: the US military, with over *three thousand bases* throughout the world, defends billions of dollars of overseas investments made by huge corporations such as IBM, General Motors, and Bank of America.

Now, the once socialist Soviet Union has joined the United States in the system of international piracy known as imperialism: *together, they are the main enemy of the peoples of the world.* Under the smokescreen of 'detente' which holds that the contradictions between the two superpowers are lessening, the two countries continue their frantic buildup for war. The bourgeoisie of both countries profit from the buildup itself. The 'defense' effort provides an artificial stimulus to sagging economies. It keeps millions of workers employed in the production of socially useless commodities. While industry in general is stagnating in the two superpowers, the war industry is booming.

#### WAR PREPARATIONS AND THE SHIPYARDS

Work in the shipyards is directly connected with the buildup for imperialist war. Much of the work involves contracts with the US Navy for either repair or construction of warships. Even the commercial vessels we work on, such as the tankers which carry the foreign oil imports the US is dependent on, figure to play a strategic role in the event of war. The availability of work in the shipyards has always been related to preparations for war.

Older shipyard workers in the Bay Area remember how the Hunters Point Navy Shipyard and the Bethlehem yard in San Francisco employed 45,000 workers between them during World War II. After the war employment was cut drastically; 20,000 were laid off from Hunters Point. Employment in Bay Area shipyards began to rise during the Vietnam War, but has been only a few thousand in recent years. Now in the Bay Area and all across the country, work in the shipyards is picking up. The Navy budget request for ship-building doubled from fiscal 1975 to fiscal 1977 -- from \$3.56 billion to \$7.3 billion. The Navy ship repair budget also doubled in the same span.

Consider the following: As of April 1, 1976, these and other ship-building contracts were in effect: Ingalls Shipyard, Pascagoula, Mississippi, 28 destroyers, 5 assault ships; General Dynamics, Groton, Massachusetts, 22 nuclear submarines; Newport News Shipyard, Newport News, Virginia, 16 nuclear submarines, aircraft carriers, and guided missile cruises. *This is a response to the dramatic increase in the strength of the Soviet Navy.* The Soviet military machine is also well equipped for war. By 1975, the Soviet Union had 221 major combatant surface ships and 245 attack and cruise missile submarines. And the figure 221 did not include 130 fast patrol boats armed with surface to surface missiles; it did not include 150 small submarine chasers, or 300 patrol and torpedo boats. The authoritative British publication *Jane's Fighting Ships* states that Soviet naval strength is now on a par with the US.

#### *Control of the Seas Strategic*

Both the US and the Soviet warlords place strategic importance on their navies. The role of the navy is to achieve control over the sea lanes and trade routes of the oceans, project military power around the world, particularly nuclear capabilities, and the ability to land on and attack the coastal areas of foreign countries. In the Indian Ocean, US nuclear submarines like the Trident carry IRBMs -- Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles -- capable of hitting any target in Europe, Africa, Asia, or the Soviet Union. Both superpowers strive for control of the Mediterranean, which borders Europe, Africa and the Middle East. The sea lane around the Cape of Good Hope in Anzania (South Africa) is also key -- and southern Africa today is one of the most turbulent spots in the world.

### *War Danger Points Out Need for a Party*

The growing danger of imperialist war emphasizes our lack of and need for a communist party. *Either revolution will prevent imperialist war, wrote Mao Tsetung, or imperialist war will give rise to revolution.* This was true of both World Wars: the first gave rise to the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks in Russia, and the second led to the breaking away of Eastern Europe, and soon after that, China, Korea and Vietnam, from the world capitalist system. We can expect similar events if another world war breaks out. Two things are not so clear, however: one, can the US proletariat and its allies succeed in preventing the outbreak of another imperialist war; and two, should the imperialist war break out, could we turn it into a civil war against our 'own' bourgeoisie. In both cases -- preventing imperialist war by overthrowing the bourgeoisie or turning imperialist war into a successful civil war -- the proletariat must be led by a communist party. Therefore, in this immediate period, our tasks are to oppose all preparations for imperialist war and forge a vanguard party which can lead the struggle against imperialist war.

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## PROPAGANDA & AGITATION

Propaganda and agitation are two forms of socialist activity directed toward the proletariat. Propaganda presents many ideas, showing the interconnections between the contradictions in society; it spreads the teachings of scientific socialism, develops the understanding of the present capitalist system, uncovers the relations between the various social classes. Because propaganda deals with teaching a complex science, it will be understood by comparatively few, and generally takes the form of books, pamphlets, and study circles. It is primarily directed toward the advanced workers, toward turning them into 'worker intellectuals'. Agitation takes a single, particular idea, and links it to the general contradictions in society. Agitation requires that communists participate in the day-to-day struggles of the working class, and raise the level of class-consciousness. By its very nature, agitation is a form of activity most suited to leading the masses and generally takes the form of speeches, leaflets, and participation in daily struggles.

As Lenin pointed out in *Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats*, propaganda and agitation are inseparably connected. Making an absolute out of one or the other leads to grave mistakes. All propaganda and no agitation leads to separation from the daily struggles of the proletariat; all agitation and no propaganda results in bowing to the spontaneous movement, neglecting the scientific study of Marxism-Leninism, and liquidating party-building.

A common mistake is to equate agitation with trade union consciousness and propaganda with socialist consciousness. Another is to equate economic agitation with economism and reformism, and political agitation with socialism. Both economic (struggle between the workers and their employers) and political (struggle between the workers and the state)

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agitation and propaganda can be approached from either bourgeois or proletarian ideology. There is socialist and bourgeois agitation and propaganda; the difference lies in the analysis, in whose interests are represented. Economic agitation that pushes reforms as a solution is bourgeois economism. Economic agitation that links reforms with proletarian revolution serves the interests of the working class. It is similar with political agitation, and with economic and political propaganda.

Does agitation have to precede propaganda? This depends on the concrete situation. Often short, agitational exposures serve to prepare the conditions for deeper, more thorough propaganda work. Does economic agitation have to precede political agitation? Again, it depends on concrete conditions. The important thing is to avoid the 'theory of stages' which Lenin fought against and which argues that economic agitation must precede political agitation.

What should be the chief form of socialist activity in the working class now? In a pre-party period, when the main task is to build the party, when uniting Marxist-Leninists and winning over the advanced workers necessarily takes precedence over leading broad masses of workers, propaganda must be in the forefront. How else to train the vanguard, if not through a thorough study of the communist movement, and detailed analysis of concrete conditions. Further, the development of political line, the struggle against opportunism and revisionism, is primarily a matter of propaganda work.

Communist propaganda and agitation must focus on the advanced workers because they determine the character of the movement. If agitation is more suited to leading the broad masses, however, then how can we say that agitation must be directed primarily to the advanced. Our central task determines the nature of our work. In a period without a party, agitation is secondary, but nonetheless very important. It means participating in the day-to-day struggles of the working class, but it doesn't mean attempting to lead the mass movement as our main work. Even our agitational work must be directed toward training the advanced and preparing them to win over the broad masses, under the leadership of a party.

What about intermediate workers. Propaganda and agitation, though directed at the advanced in terms of political content, will reach intermediate and backward workers through distributions. Though not our primary task, we should find forms of taking socialist ideas to intermediate workers, especially in times of spontaneous upsurge, when 'average workers' are generally more open to socialism.

Successful propaganda and agitation is not simply a question of style, but primarily of content. Popularizing the ideas of scientific socialism leads readers or listeners to profound thoughts, raises deeper questions in their minds, in language that is easily understood. Vulgarizing assumes a reader or listener who cannot or does not want to think, and takes the form of condescending, deliberately 'folksy' language.

The most common errors around the question of propaganda and agitation are: Right opportunism -- bowing to spontaneity, narrowing the scope of agitation and propaganda, falling into economism and the theory of stages. Linked with this is putting agitation in the forefront in this period. In addition, propaganda and agitation has been confused with the number of ideas presented, regardless of content. These errors stem from belittling theory and worshipping the upsurge in the militancy of the working class. Left opportunism -- dogmatically putting forward sterile formulas, not making concrete analysis, omitting agitation. These errors are reflected in the tendency to go ahead of the needs of the masses and are based on a subjective idealist understanding of events.

Much of the confusion over propaganda and agitation stems from opposing lines on

how the party will be built. Those calling for 'agitation in the forefront' cannot help but lower the content of their agitation and appeal to the level of the 'broad masses'. Placing propaganda in the forefront and guarding against liquidating agitation helps to assure that both will be carried out in line with the central task and will be directed at winning advanced workers to a more thorough study of scientific socialism and a deeper knowledge of their role in the revolution.

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## SOCIALISM AND THE ELDERLY

There are many ways in which the contradiction between the productive forces (the instruments of labor and people who use them) and the relations of production (the relation of people to each other) manifests itself in capitalist society. One of them is the under-utilization and objective destruction of elderly people as part of the productive forces. In socialist China this is not the case. The character of the productive forces corresponds with the relations of production. Therefore society comes closer to fully realizing the creative capacity of the productive forces. There is no need to disregard old people on the grounds of having outlived their usefulness or in order to make room for new workers. As the crisis of capitalism intensifies and US imperialism becomes weaker, the bourgeoisie is forced to cut back on many programs which directly affect the standard of living of old people. Decreasing social security, inadequate pension and health funds, impersonal, underequipped commercialized rest homes, and forced retirement are just a few of the problems faced by old people in a capitalist society. Despair and poverty are a reality for many of the elderly in the US today.

In a socialist society, the productive forces become the most revolutionary element in production. Unfettered by the economic crisis inherent in capitalism, they are able to develop at a much more rapid pace. Consequently, old people in China, with their wealth of experience and knowledge, are called upon to contribute as much as they can to the society. Leading neighborhood committees is one example. Forced retirement does not exist in China, but women may retire at 55 and men at 60 years. Those who do are encouraged to remain active in community projects such as nurseries and schools, health and safety programs, teaching Marxism, or even setting up small factories. Mediating family arguments and re-educating people who commit minor crimes are additional tasks. Most old people live with their families, but if none exists, the community takes on the responsibility.

Retiring on 70% of their income, old people in China are entitled to minimal cost or free health care. A most important duty of the elderly is to convey experiences to the youth of what life was like before liberation so that socialism is not taken for granted.

What can communists in the US learn from the correct handling of the problem of the elderly in socialist society. First, that the creative energies of the elderly as part of the productive forces are constantly being fettered in a capitalist society and because of their oppressive living conditions they are objectively being destroyed. Only under the dictatorship of the proletariat will the aged be freed to live productively. Second, younger Marxist-Leninists must not think they are the only ones with experience in working with the masses. We must listen to and learn from older communists and non-communists. Although lacking a theoretical understanding of socialism, the latter still have a vast accumulation of social practice and much knowledge which can be useful to us in our efforts to build a communist party.

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