

# RED STAR



A MARXIST-LENINIST JOURNAL

50p

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# EDITORIAL

At this moment a large part of the British navy is making slow progress towards the Falkland Islands. The British / Argentinian dispute over the ownership of the Falkland Islands has caused some conflict of opinion in the Marxist-Leninist forces throughout the world. In the main the division is polarised around the question of whether the Argentinian claim has any validity or whether it is the duty of Marxist-Leninists to oppose both British and Argentinian claims and expose the real nature of this conflict. The Nottingham Communist Group are firmly of the opinion that the latter strategy is the correct one. This is an important issue because it raises the whole question of national sovereignty, the role of the national question in the present historical circumstances and the attitude communists should take towards such struggles.

The Nottingham Communist Group do not consider that the Argentinian ruling class are showing any progressive aspects in their claim to and occupation of the Falkland islands. The reason for their military invasion of the islands would appear to be varied but two major reasons stand out. Firstly, Galtieri and his fascist thugs have a close and friendly relationship with the USSR and are complying with the wishes of the USSR to reclaim territory which has great economic and strategic importance to the USSR. Hence the Argentinian comprador bourgeoisie is acting as a junior partner in what is essentially an inter-imperialist rivalry. At the same time the Argentinian fascist Junta is having great difficulty in controlling the masses of the Argentinian people, who, despite torture, murder and the most brutal repression, are bravely struggling against the Junta. It is interesting to observe that those chauvinistic Argentinian elements who now regularly turn up on our television screens, are almost 100% middle strata and higher in their social composition. Whenever we are shown elements of the Argentinian masses they are using the opportunity of the availability of

the world media to show up the nature of the fascist regime. This is particularly evident in the many demonstrations of the masses protesting against the "disappeared" or, to be more precise, those thousands upon thousands, who have been tortured and murdered by the Junta. The Argentinian claim does not, as yet, have the support of the masses and the stance the people have taken is to be applauded by all progressive people.

The British Government and politicians of all the main political parties have also seized upon this opportunity to divert our attention from unemployment and the present slump. Labour party leaders have made pious statements about not letting the Falkland Islanders fall into the hands of the fascist Junta. Yet these same hypocrites have been happy to sell arms to the Junta and have no qualms about the murder and oppression of the people of Northern Ireland.

The media here has suddenly 'discovered' that the regime in Argentina is a fascist one, something that never bothered them at all in the past. The same tactics are being used as in World War 2 to whip up the support of the masses for inter-imperialist rivalry and war. Of course British imperialism and their running dogs did not care when the German fascists were murdering the Communists and the Jews in their millions but as soon as Hitler began to eye the sacred property of British imperialism, horror of horrors, the evil nature of fascism was suddenly exposed.

So far the attitude of the masses in this country has not been greatly chauvinistic and hence attempts by the monopoly class to get them to rally round the imperialist cause has not been very successful. We should bear in mind that this situation could change quickly if there is military counter attack and the killing begins. For this reason it is important that communists draw attention and propagandise as to the true nature of this conflict. It is the duty of progressive elements in Britain and in Argentina to oppose and undermine the war preparations of the ruling class of both these countries. It is the duty of others throughout the world to assist and support in this and not be hoodwinked into thinking that there

is anything whatsoever progressive and supportable about the Argentinian takeover of the Falkland Islands.

This issue of "Red Star" is a double one because there was delay in getting the January issue out. Most of this delay was caused by our involvement in attempts to establish the Programmatic Commission, which most of our regular readers will be familiar with. Nottingham Communist Group and Stockport Communist Group have initiated a series of meetings and discussions with other groups and individuals on this matter. Some people have been won over. So far the Commission has not been brought into being but we of the Nottingham Communist Group are convinced that this is the correct way to develop the revolutionary struggle in this country and will continue to struggle for this line.

So far no other group or individual has produced a coherent political argument against our line. Some groups appear to take the view that our line is in fact correct but seem unwilling to involve themselves and make rather flimsy excuses for this. Others say briefly that they do not consider it correct but give us no clear reasons and no clear alternatives. We say to both these views and the people they represent that we make the pages of "Red Star" available to you to make full and clear accounts of your position. We must begin the process of theoretical struggle here. For too long there has been little exchange of views; groups are isolated and often apathetic. Wake up, comrades, there is still a world out here!

The Nottingham Communist Group is fortunate in receiving Marxist-Leninist publications from all over the world. In future issues of "Red Star" we intend to make available articles from other Marxist-Leninist parties and groups that we consider to be of particular interest here. In this issue we reprint an article first published in the "Revolutionary Worker", the paper of the Revolutionary Communist Party (US). This article South Africa - the ANC exposed deals with many new developments in the southern part of Africa, particularly the growing Soviet social imperialist interest there. This is especially

true of South Africa itself, which, because of its high level of economic development and strategic importance, would be regarded as a prize worth having by the USSR. The article analyses the history of the ANC in some detail and shows the essentially reformist nature of the ANC. In particular, the close relationship between the ANC and Soviet social imperialism is clearly brought out. The ANC does have a certain amount of credibility here and the article clearly shows that it will never lead the Azanian people to freedom from the rule of imperialism.

We also publish two items from the Stockport Communist Group. You can't be against revisionism and for the Theory of the Three Worlds. Is a self criticism of the SCG regarding their former, erroneous support for this theory. Actually, the article goes much more deeply than that and shows how the acceptance of the Three Worlds Theory by the International Communist Movement (which certainly was the case at one time) shows how deeply revisionism is embedded in the movement and how vigilant Marxist-Leninists must be to constantly weed revisionism from its ranks. The SCG appeal to those people who are now becoming increasingly critical of the phony Three World Theory but are reluctant to throw it off to make this break immediately and to make self criticism and rejoin the genuine revolutionary ranks.

The SCG also publish an Open letter to members of the RCLB. Some time ago comrades of the SCG were in the RCLB where they continuously struggled against the revisionist line propagated in that organisation. The SCG urge present members of the RCLB to struggle against the revisionism, especially the social chauvinism of the organisation. In the opinion of the Nottingham Communist Group we consider it very unlikely that the RCLB, an organisation thoroughly permeated with revisionism, can ever be brought back to the ranks of the revolution. What we hope for more concretely is that those sincere and genuine people in the RCLB see the nature of the rotten outfit they are in and take the opportunity to split.

The question of the recent counter-revolution in China is still one which has not been fully resolved by those calling themselves Marxist-Leninist here. We publish an article by such a one who vainly twists and turns with all his might and main to try and convince himself and others that China is still socialist. He is attempting an impossible task, as can be seen in China a Revisionist Writes. In our reply to this correspondent we point out he has no clear idea of what socialism is and hence is not in a good position to investigate whether it is still in existence in China.

Finally, we review the book Indian Comprador Bourgeoisie and Indian National Congress, by K. Jhansie. We have copies of this work available for sale, price £2.00. Jhansie affirms that the Indian National Congress is the creation of the Indian comprador bourgeoisie and land-owning class, closely supervised and supported by British imperialism. He disagrees with the "Classic" line that Indian and British Marxist have held which states that India does not have a significant comprador bourgeoisie and also ascribe a progressive role to the INC. Jhansie provides an impressive array of evidence to support his argument and the book is lively and very readable. Particularly interesting is his expose of that consummate tool of British imperialism, Gandhi.

We have just received the second issue of the International journal A World to Win.

# SOUTH AFRICA — the A.N.C.

## exposed

On the weekend of October 9th a "Conference in Solidarity with the Liberation Struggles of the Peoples of Southern Africa" will be convened in New York City. Initiated by the International Committee Against Apartheid, Racism and Colonialism in Southern Africa, an arm of the Soviet sponsored Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organisation, this conference is the first of a worldwide series aimed at rallying joint support for the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) and the Southwest African People's Organisation (SWAPO). Joining a host of Communist Party, USA (CPUSA) revisionist types in co-sponsoring the event are a large number of other organisations and individuals. Playing on people's just hatred for apartheid and imperialism, the conference will probably attract a number of people who genuinely want to support the struggle for the liberation of Southern Africa. Unfortunately, this conference is not designed to do anything of the sort.

To begin with, the entire question of the liberation of Southern Africa as it's dealt with in the call for the conference reduces the struggle to one of ending "apartheid, colonialism and racism." Nowhere is imperialism mentioned; instead we are painted a picture of the struggle for democracy and majority rule. While these may be aspects of the struggle for national liberation, particularly in Southern Africa, by no means can the struggle itself be reduced to simply these terms. To do so only serves to blunt the revolutionary essence of any national liberation struggle - the battle against imperialism - and paint the democratic content of this battle as if it were one of voting and reform.

In addition, the conference issues a call for support for "the official liberation program" of the ANC, for "increasing political support and material assistance" to the ANC and declares that the ANC is "leading the fight to rid their country of racial oppression and injustice, for freedom and independence". The fact that the ANC, particularly as it has been brought under CP domination, has usually stood nakedly opposed to any genuinely revolutionary developments in Azania (including even its Bizarre refusal to use the name Azania, preferring the imperialist name of "South Africa") and the fact that raising the ANC, the Soviet-sponsored "liberation group", as the group "deserving strong support" in a country where a number of well-known revolutionary nationalist forces are actively engaged in the struggle provides a powerful hint as to what the real intentions of this conference are. Often the revisionists appeal to pragmatism to win blank cheque endorsements internationally ("Who else is fighting the regime with a chance of winning?"), but in the case of the ANC/SACP (South Africa Communist Party) even this pragmatic argument runs into hot water. While the conference organisers intentionally avoided any mention of the international situation in relation to the liberation of southern Africa, in fact the conference itself is intimately bound up with the world situation today, particularly the intensifying contention between the U.S. and Soviet imperialists and their blocs as they prepare for world war. And in addition to the questions it raises concerning the liberation of southern Africa, particularly Azania, it also serves to highlight the very important questions concerning the strategy of the Soviet social-imperialists today, and how the contention between the U.S. and Soviet imperialists is a crucial question intertwined with revolutionary developments and facing all revolutionary forces.

The situation in southern Africa today is highly complex and contradictory. For years the people



of southern Africa have waged, and continue to wage, sharp struggles against U.S. imperialism and the white settler regimes propped up by Western, especially U.S. imperialism. At the same time and in fact overall mainly influencing the course of events in the area, including the possible avenues for revolutionary breakthroughs, is the seething contention between the U.S. and Soviet imperialists, and their respective blocs, as they twist and jockey for position in preparation for the outbreak of world war to redivide the world in favour of the victor. It's a situation where both imperialist superpowers must attempt to squash, blunt and distort the development of genuine revolutionary movements among the masses of people and simultaneously are driven to not only deny any "opportunities" to their imperialist rival but must also attempt to hold on to and expand their "spheres of influence" at the expense of their rival. This is equally true for both the U.S. and Soviet imperialist blocs.

Although the U.S. imperialists remain the dominant imperialist power in southern Africa, the Soviet imperialists have by no means been sitting idly by waiting for the chips to fall their way. While the U.S. has scored some points with the capitulation of Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe, the Soviets have not at all given up hope of increasing their role in Zimbabwe either through their main representative in the country, Joshua Nkomo and ZAPU or by taking advantage of the disillusionment and anger growing among the Zimbabwean people as Mugabe ties Zimbabwe closer and closer to Western imperialism. At the same time, the U.S. imperialists must pay close attention to being able to stomp out any genuine struggle that erupts among the Zimbabwean people as a result of continuing imperialist oppression.

In Namibia the U.S. is desperately attempting to work out an agreement in their favour while the Soviets are counting on being able to force them

into a compromise that would at least give SWAPO a share of running the country, after which the Soviets are banking on being able to call in the markers on the "aid" they have given to SWAPO over the years and thereby increase their influence. And, while Angola has lined up in the Soviet camp, the U.S. is energetically attempting to lure it away, both by promising a better deal and by using South African military might as a club to beat them into submission. But, in southern Africa, for both imperialist powers, Azania is the crowning jewel being contested. And while the U.S. is driven to more openly embrace the hated apartheid regime, the new upsurges erupt among the masses of Azanian people. In this situation the Soviets are enthusiastically attempting to fish in U.S. imperialism's troubled waters.

For the U.S. imperialists and their war bloc South Africa is of critical strategic importance. In addition to the vast superprofits that the U.S., Britain and other Western imperialists squeeze from the masses of the Azanian people, South Africa is also the source of many of the strategic minerals necessary for the functioning of the U.S. war bloc. While the U.S. relies heavily on South African supplies for many of the minerals crucial to the production of steel, this is even more true for the U.S. NATO allies. In addition, South Africa's military communications and tracking systems and their modern military port facilities ( which were expensively modernised and offered by the South African government for use by NATO in 1975) as well as its geographic location on the Cape of Good Hope make it indispensable to U.S. war plans. The Cape route sea lanes are used by 2300 ships a month delivering 57% of Western Europe's imported oil, 20% of the U.S. imported oil and 70% of the strategic raw materials used by NATO members. As Air Vice-Marshal Stewart Manual of Britain stated, "Southern Africa is the key to the

security of NATO's lines of communications... and South Africa in particular has the facilities... to provide the surveillance necessary for the security of European interests."

All of this, plus South Africa's highly developed economy and consequent economic clout in the rest of the region makes it a valuable potential prize for the Soviets as well. But in times like today a period of intense preparation for world war, it's the strategic importance of South Africa that looms largest in Soviet plans, as with the U.S. However, having summed up that the U.S. would "go to the mat" over South Africa, the Soviets are not pushing for an immediate seizure of power. The Soviet strategy in South Africa today is aimed at developing a situation in which at most the Soviets will be able to devise some sort of power sharing scheme or at least, and more likely, being able to be in a position to cause as much difficulty as possible for the U.S. imperialist now and, in the event of an outbreak of war, being in a position to disrupt and wreak as much havoc as possible behind the lines of a strategically important U.S. outpost and if possible completely seize it. Lenin points out in Imperialism that it is not only important for an imperialist power to control, but also to deny his rival control over strategic markets, sources of raw materials, etc. In implementing their version of this strategy and crucial to disguising their moves as "justly aiding the fight against imperialism, colonialism and racism" the Soviet social-imperialists have relied heavily on their main mouthpieces in southern Africa, the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the African National Congress (which follows the political leadership of the SACP).

## ANC's and SACP's origins

Over the last 20 years or so the Soviets have expanded a great deal of effort to keep the ANC afloat and have waged a massive international public relations campaign designed to cast the ANC and the SACP in an air of legitimacy. In fact, over the last 20 years the ANC itself has expended much more energy in international conferences and speaking tours orchestrated by the Soviet Union and aimed at declaring the ANC "the sole authentic representative of the South Africa people," than they have inside Azania. Despite the Soviet efforts, however, a look at the history and the current policies of the ANC and the SACP shows beyond a shadow of a doubt that far from organizing the masses of Azanian people for a revolutionary onslaught against imperialism and its apartheid regime, both the ANC and the SACP have consciously held back the development of a genuine revolutionary movement in Azania.

From its founding in 1912, while some democratic and progressive individuals have been a part of it, the ANC has been an organization dedicated to compromise and capitulation. Extremely similar to the NAACP in the U.S., the ANC sought only to better the conditions of black Azanians within the structure of the existing society. Essentially reformist and never really a mass organization, the ANC over its first 35 years of history stood on the side of organisational death with its high points being participation in the sham Natives Representation Council (NRC) an advisory body established by the South African regime to undercut the struggle of the masses of the Azanian people (interestingly enough the ANC was the only black group that stayed in the NRC until the bitter end, upholding it even after the South Africa regime had discarded it as a useless scheme) and sending periodic delegations to plead with the British imperialists to intervene on behalf of the Azanian people.

In 1949 the ANC, influenced by a growing militancy among the Azanian people and among the members of their own youth league, adopted a "program of action" aimed at turning the ANC into a mass organization and non-violently persuading the South African ruling class to mend its ways and establish a "truly democratic society." The high point of this campaign was the ANC-launched defiance campaign of 1952 in which thousands of ANC volunteers defied the apartheid regime's laws and were sent to jail. At that point the ANC membership soared to almost 100,000 and the South African ruling class viciously stepped up its repression. In response the ANC called off its defiance campaign after 6 months and actively sought other ways to influence the government.

For its part, the SACP has an ever "grander" history; in fact the best that can be said of them is that they have always been consistent in their capitulation and opportunism. Founded in 1921 and mainly based among the white workers of South Africa, one of the first acts of the SACP (then known as the CPSA) was its involvement in a strike of white miners against the admittance of "unqualified," that is black, miners into semi-skilled jobs. Summing up that the strike was essentially a battle against the capitalist mine owners, the CPSA announced its support of the strike with "reservations about some of the demands of the workers." Actively striving to assume leadership of the strike the South African CP actually sank to the point of organizing a demonstration in which the white miners marched through the streets behind banners that read "Workers of the World Unite to Keep South Africa White." Following the government's crushing of the strike the SACP buried itself in thoroughly economist trade-unionist work for years.

In 1928 the Communist International drew up a declaration concerning South Africa in which it declared that one of the demands of the working class was for the establishment of "an independent native South African republic." Fearing that this would wreck their chances of working out a compromise with the South African ruling class and would alienate the white workers, the SACP actively opposed the adoption of this demand. Rather than being an unfortunate mistake, this position flowed from, and is a clear example of, the SACP's line that in South Africa - one of the most vicious examples of imperialism's domination of an oppressed people - the issue is not imperialist rule and oppression which must be overthrown, but the lack of bourgeois democracy and majority rule.

A delegation from the South African CP was quickly dispatched to Moscow to present their case against the resolution. S.P. Bunting, a leading member of the SACP, argued that the resolution was wrong since in essence there is no real national question in South Africa. Bunting also offered in opposition to the resolution the fact that it would "... in practice arouse white workers' opposition as being unfair to the minority..." and that this demand would harm the revolutionary movement since statements about returning South Africa, the country and the land to the native population seemed to "indicate a black race dictatorship." In conclusion, Bunting argued that "South Africa is, owing to its climate, what is called a white man's country, where whites can and do live not merely as planters and officials but as a whole nation of all classes, established there for three centuries of Dutch and English composition."

Bunting's brilliant argument was only topped by that of his wife, also a leading member of the SACP, who argued that the land of South Africa

had never really belonged to the blacks in the first place, since according to her understanding of history both the Boers and the blacks arrived in the area at the same time and were both equally responsible for driving the original inhabitants out of the area. In a later argument Mrs Bunting revealed her real concern about the slogan and demand for a black republic. "Who will guarantee equality for the whites in an independent native republic? Their slogan, as you know, is 'drive the whites into the sea.' In response the Comintern stated, "...What is to become of the whites?... If the white party members do not raise and energetically fight for an independent native republic, then who knows? They may very well be driven into the sea!"

Following the enforced adoption of this Comintern resolution the SACP returned to South Africa and halfheartedly did some work around it, fairly reformist work which brought them into contact with the ANC. During World War 2 the CPSA once again put on a dazzling display of its penchant for capitulation. Following the German attack on the Soviet Union, the CPSA, wholeheartedly embracing the errors of the international communist movement, declared the war itself had been transformed into a "people's war" and totally abandoned the struggle in South Africa and urged people to fall in line behind the South African ruling class who was then promising massive reforms for blacks if they supported the war effort.

But the most impressive display of their capacity for capitulation was yet to come. In 1950, two years after the Afrikaner government was elected and had unleashed massive repression including instituting apartheid laws aimed at quelling the rumblings of the struggle among the Azanian people the CPSA reached its low point. Included among these laws was the

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"Suppression of Communism Act" designed to smash any resistance to the regime by labelling it communist and taking appropriate security measures. Three months before the Act even took effect, the leadership of the CPSA decided to disband the party since "its members were unprepared for the harsh conditions" necessitated by the new law. It was only 3 years later, in 1953, that the party leaders who had organized themselves into a motley group called the "Congress of Democrats," decided to reform the party, changing its name from the CP of South Africa to the South African CP (While capitulation and opportunism have been a particular hallmark in the history of the SACP, it was also undoubtedly influenced and reinforced by the revisionism in the international communist movement at the time. For an analysis of the lines and policies of the international communist movement during this period refer to the article "For Decades to Come, On a World Scale" in Revolution magazine, June, 1981.)

### The (Derail) Freedom Charter

By 1955 the SACP, working through the Congress of Democrats, had established a tight working relationship with the ANC. In 1955 the ANC and the SACP, joined by other reformist forces, drew up what they have touted widely and loudly ever since as the document representing the "true interests of the people of South Africa" - the Freedom Charter. This is the "official liberation program" the call to the New York Conference endorses. This jewel of a document resembles something out of the wildest dreams of Thomas Jefferson and was immediately declared to be the programme of the revolution by both the SACP and the ANC. The fact that both groups adopted the Freedom Charter as their common programme for liberating Azania is yet another example of the fact that, according to their outlook, the struggle is not against imperiali-



ism but for democratic reform and the willingness, in fact eagerness, of both groups not to defeat imperialist rule but merely to share power with it. There is also the closely related fact that nowhere in the Freedom Charter is there any mention of armed struggle, which is a sure sign of the penchant for compromise and the "peacefull road to socialism" (a road littered with the bodies of the oppressed) that guided both its formulation and implementation then and today.

In a highly appropriate imitation of the Preamble of the bourgeois U.S. Constitution, the Freedom Charter begins "We the people of South Africa, declare for all our country and the world to know..." As it continues the appropriateness of its imitation of the U.S. bourgeois constitution becomes very apparent. It declares that "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white..." - fine words again obscuring the essence of the struggle is national liberation against imperialism and its settler regime.

The document goes on to describe the ANC/SACP vision of a future South Africa, a bourgeois democracy with key sectors of the economy nationalised and placed in the hands of 'the people', that is, the 'representatives' of the people's interests, the ANC/SACP. As to whether these 'representatives' intend to oppose imperialism, we will let them speak for themselves. Oliver Tambo, the president of the ANC said in an interview in the September/October 1981 issue of Africa Reports magazine: "The broad basic position of the ANC concerning the South African economy in all its major parts after liberation are contained in the Freedom Charter. What we say to foreign investors today is that they must pull out of South Africa because their investments inevitably help to strengthen the apartheid regime. We would

therefore expect that if U.S. corporations have any regard for our voice, there will be no U.S. investments in South Africa on the day of liberation. If there are, that will mean that such investors will have elected to side with the minority racist regime against the democratic majority... Consequently, when their friend goes, as he surely will, so will they be obliged to go. As for other investors who would want to participate in the reconstruction of South Africa, they of course would be welcome to join us as equal partners in arrangements that are mutually beneficial to both themselves and to us." Once again apartheid is opposed but imperialism, which is the force behind it and all modern forms of national oppression is ignored - even welcome. Interestingly, the "Freedom Charter" has never even come close to being upheld by any other group that has ever professed itself determined to liberate Azania.

### Period of Soviet Collusion

In 1956, following the overthrow of socialism in the Soviet Union and the beginning of the process of restoring capitalism, a new element was added to the scene in Azania. Quickly aligning themselves with the new capitalist ruling class in the Soviet Union, the SACP and the ANC harbored visions of their new allies giving them the strength to seize power in Azania. And with their bourgeois aspirations tied so closely to the Soviet imperialist designs in South Africa they immediately became the leading spokesmen for and implementors of Soviet policy in the region. At that point the Soviet rulers were primarily concerned with consolidating the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union and preparing mainly in this way for later imperialist adventures; so while they did not sever their international links with various forces in liberation struggles, they did promote and implement a

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policy which served their interests at the time - a policy of condemning wars of national liberation as dangerous to international stability and for their own reasons, colluding with U.S. imperialism to stifle liberation struggles. A disgusting example of this is the fact that in 1960 the Soviets joined with the U.S. in a UN vote which resulted in UN troops being sent into the Congo to crush the struggle there. The Soviets even went so far as to provide means of transportation for the UN troops going to the Congo. Khrushchev himself sent a telegram to Patrice Lumumba, a leader of the Congolese people's struggle, calling the UN vote a "useful thing". A short time later Lumumba was captured and murdered and the struggle of the Congolese people was crushed.

#### Condemning Violent Uprisings

Enthusiastically taking up the Soviet line, the SACP and the ANC energetically avoided and backhandedly attacked all the upsurges among the Azanian people between 1956 and 1961. Instead of waging people's war, the SACP and ANC actively promoted reliance on the United Nations for the solution to imperialist oppression in Azania. When violent upsurges did occur among the Azanian people, the SACP condemned them as spontaneous and declared that "riots and pogroms can only lead to massive state retaliation, a serious political setback for our cause and its prestige at home and abroad and a crushing defeat of the people."

Stating that, "even though the conditions are desperate, responsible leaders cannot merely follow the policies of desperate and impatient men who grow reckless and clamor for any sort of action regardless of the consequences," the Central Committee of the SACP declared in a statement in 1963 that reviewed the previous period of time that violent attacks on the state were not to be upheld,

but instead the "real revolutionaries" should bury themselves in fighting the everyday demands of the people for a better life which would supposedly serve to teach the Azanian people that "every attempt to redress or rectify a local or partial grievance is necessarily connected with, and can only be won by, the defeat of the Nationalist Government itself and the ending of white minority rule. Where every protest and demand is met merely by bloody suppression by the state, it becomes clear to one section of the people after another that the state itself is an obstacle to any sort of advance, and that no sort of happy or tolerable future is possible without the removal of this tyrannical state and its replacement by one which embodies the will of the majority of the people." Once again with words like "removal" and "replacement" of the apartheid regime their reformist strategy stands out clearly. The word "overthrow", let alone a people's war to do it, was avoided like the plague. In 1958 when peasants revolted in many rural areas of Azania and even went so far in one area as to set up people's courts and try, convict and execute local officials and traitors, the SACP, in reporting on the events in the African Communist, the organ of the SACP, saw fit only to emphasise the massive state retaliation that had come down from the ruling class. Needless to mention, the peasants had revolted without, and in fact in spite of, the ANC and SACP.

On March 21, 1960 the Pan African Congress (the PAC was formed from a split in the ANC by a group of revolutionary nationalists opposed to the reformist thrust of the Freedom Charter, the ANC and the SACP) organised anti-pass law demonstrations throughout Azania. In Sharpeville thousands of unarmed Azanians demonstrated in front of a police station. In what has become known as the Sharpeville Massacre, 69 Azanians were killed and 180 wounded when the South African police fired on this demonstration. The ANC's

immediate response was to denounce the precipitate action of the PAC as the cause of the massacre. Interestingly enough, although the ANC considered the PAC's demonstration on March 21 to be precipitate action, they apparently felt that the same type of action ten days later--- the scheduled date of an ANC sponsored demonstration -- would not have been.

Following the Sharpeville Massacre the South African ruling class intensified their repression throughout Azania, including banning both the ANC and the PAC. Yet even after all of this, the only response of the ANC was to call for a national convention of all South Africans to create a democratic republic. It was only in June of 1961, after it became obvious that the masses of Azanian people were not responding to the ANC's convention call or their strike aimed at pressuring the government to comply with the demands of the convention, that the ANC announced that the South African government, by their continuing repression and unresponsiveness, had forced them to take up the armed struggle. In June of 1961 the ANC's armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe was formed.

### Phony "Armed Struggle"

Despite the bravado surrounding the announcement that the ANC and SACP had taken up the armed struggle, nothing much happened outside of a few acts of sabotage principally directed at electric pylons out in the countryside. But this was no accident nor the result of massive state repression; instead it was the inevitable outcome of the fact that neither the ANC nor the SACP ever had any intention of launching an armed struggle against imperialism. In taking up "armed struggle" the ANC and the SACP adopted the popular revisionist "foco theory" of handf--ls engaging in "spectacular" acts as opposed to

waging protracted people's war based on mobilising and arming the masses of Azanian people. This was advantageous for the revisionists on a number of counts. Not only did it allow them to cover up their treachery before the masses who were increasingly coming to understand the need for and call for armed struggle; it also ensured that things would not get out of hand, thereby jeopardising their chances of reaching some sort of compromise that would put them in some position of power. To the ANC and the SACP the "armed struggle" allowed them both to appear to be serious about the liberation of Azania without really doing anything, while doing just enough to put some minimal pressure, particularly in the international arena, on the South African ruling class. The ANC's and SACP's version of "armed struggle" dovetailed perfectly with the Soviet imperialists interests and world strategy at that time.

Even in carrying out their limited campaign of "armed struggle" the ANC and SACP had been extremely halfhearted. Needless to say this halfheartedness raised some questions among the Azanian people. In order to cover themselves the ANC and SACP declared that the sabotage campaign wasn't really the beginning of the armed struggle after all, but merely preparation for peopleswar. At other times they declared that there really couldn't be any efforts at seizing power by armed force or attacks on the South African army or police or assassinations of Europeans since that would only provoke a bloodbath. Occasionally they were even more frank, particularly when speaking to the South African ruling class as evidenced by Abram Fisher's (a leading member of the SACP) statement in the South African Supreme Court on March 28, 1966 that "Civil war is no solution at all".

Following a few acts of sabotage, in 1963 the South African government pulled a raid and succeeded in totally smashing the ANC and SACP inside Azania. Most of the leadership of the groups

ended up in jail or in exile and in both situations they were to be joined by large numbers of their rank and file membership. By 1965 both the ANC and the SACP had effectively ceased to exist inside Azania. For the next 10 years major portions of the ANC's and SACP's activities were confined to the international arena. Immediately upon establishing an external mission in exile, the ANC and SACP turned to the Soviet imperialists for help. In fact it was only through the influx of millions of Soviet dollars that the ANC was even able to remain intact for the next 10 years. In addition to providing the funding for the ANC external mission, the Soviets also provided military training and arms for ANC cadre and scholarships for those who wished to continue their education - providing they were ANC cadre. (For the Soviets such training perfectly serves their plans for elite 'power sharing' schemes.)

### International Advertising

At the same time the Soviets launched numerous worldwide conferences aimed at icing all other Azanian opposition groupings and establishing the ANC as "the sole authentic representative of the South African people" as was first formulated at a Soviet-organised conference in Khartoum in 1967. In addition to all this the Soviets, in conjunction with British liberals and revisionists, helped launch what they called an "anti-apartheid movement" worldwide that would play off people's righteous hatred for apartheid and rally support for the ANC.

Of course, in order to surround the ANC and SACP with some semblance of being "genuine liberation" groups, the Soviets also found it necessary to link them up with Soviet backed groups that actually were fighting against U.S. imperialism (such as in the case with the ANC's SWAPO links today). Probably the most spectacular instance of this

was the ludicrous ANC-ZAPU military alliance in 1967. ZAPU was the Soviet - backed guerilla outfit in Zimbabwe headed by Joshua Nkomo and which spent most of the Zimbabwean war sitting in camps in Zambia receiving Soviet arms, while ZANU did most of the fighting. In 1967 Oliver Tambo announced that ANC cadre would be joining with ZAPU cadre in the Zimbabwean war in order to cut a path into South Africa and begin the infiltration of ANC guerillas into South Africa. While Tambo announced that "today the fighting is in Zimbabwe but tomorrow it will be in South Africa", in actuality the entire affair was a colossal disaster. Given only heavy weapons and trained in bourgeois methods of work, the ANC cadre were quickly smashed on their first encounter with the troops of Rhodesian ruler Ian Smith.

While this stunt was obviously orchestrated to give credence to the ANC's "desire to liberate South Africa", there is considerable evidence that it was designed to quash any sentiments for armed struggle among the ANC cadre in their military camps and to reinforce the sentiment that the state is too strong among the Azanian people in general. According to well publicised reports at the time, the ANC guerillas were guided into Zimbabwe by ZAPU guerillas, carefully avoiding all contact with the Zimbabwean people, and then ditched by the ZAPU forces just before Ian Smith's soldiers arrived. In fact, when some of the ANC soldiers managed to escape across the border into Botswana they were arrested and four of the chief witnesses against them at their trial were ZAPU members who had accompanied them into Zimbabwe.

The massive Soviet aid poured into the ANC to keep it alive was by no means a sign of their good intentions. In fact if anything it was ultimately in the Soviet imperialists own interests since it held back the development of the revolutionary movement in Azania and promoted



the Soviet image of being a "natural ally" of liberation movements in preparation for their eventual shift from mainly colluding with U.S. imperialism to principally contending with them.

By 1969 the SACP had managed to gain control of a large number of the leading positions in the ANC including having one of their leading members, Joe Slavo, placed in charge of military operations. And as the SACP made clear in a 1979 central committee statement, cynically entitled "Long Live Proletarian Internationalism", the "aid" extended by the Soviet imperialists to the ANC and the SACP was most definitely a two-way street, a matter of you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours. As opposed to genuine proletarian internationalism, these pro-Soviet revisionists advanced the proposition that "We who are part of the liberation movement of South Africa must never fail to appreciate and insist that solidarity is a two-way process, that the aid and support which the socialist countries give so generously, and at the expense of their own material gains, to freedom fighters everywhere, can only be reciprocated by unswerving identification with the socialist community in the common struggle against capitalism and imperialism". (U.S. imperialism that is .) Stripped of its rhetoric - this is a business deal. While the Soviets demanded "reciprocation" for their "aid and support" the ANC and SACP were more than willing to comply; in fact the ANC and SACP had developed into among the most ideologically committed of the various Soviet stooges around the world. In their numerous international affairs the ANC and SACP were constantly praising the aid of the Soviets, helping to build up their "anti-imperialist image". In a struggle between the Chinese revolutionaries and the Soviet revisionists in the early 1960's the ANC and SACP faithfully sided with the Soviets. From that point they went on to continually attack China in various international forums for advancing "rather

purile ideological propositions" and for "the sidetracking and disrupting of various international solidarity organisations by Chinese delegations who persist in dragging into gatherings of non-communists their alleged ideological campaign against the CPSU and the world communist movement." (Although the Chinese even during the early '70s before the revisionists seized power in China, made a number of errors in relation to national liberation struggles, particularly in Africa, based on identifying the Soviets as the main danger in the world, especially in the period of the 1960's they were fiercely defending and upholding national liberation movements against imperialism and the Soviet revisionists' attacks on them.)

### Stepped Up Contention

As stated previously, in the period between 1965 and 1975 the ANC and SACP were effectively non-existent inside Azania and existed internationally as straight up mouthpieces for Soviet imperialism. But in 1976 the situation began to change. The shift in Soviet strategy from principally collusion to principally contention with U.S. imperialism was sharply reflected in southern Africa when the Soviets won a contest with the U.S. in grabbing at Angola. With this event the Soviet strategy for South Africa also shifted. Suddenly the ANC and SACP began to issue more frequent and louder calls for the "armed liberation of South Africa". Citing the "changed geopolitical situation in South Africa" they resumed their infrequent sabotage campaign and their calls to the Azanian people to rally round them. Soviet orchestrated "emergency conferences against apartheid" and "solidarity conferences" were convened worldwide to reemphasise the legitimacy of the ANC and the SACP. Speaking at an Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Conference in late 1976 ANC President Oliver Tambo issued a call for "intensification for mass action". And in a

completely disgusting move to shore up their international reputation the ANC and SACP claimed that it was their work which led to the heroic Soweto uprisings. According to the Afro-Asian peoples Solidarity Organisation Conference in October of 1976; "The uprising itself is a result of decades of political organisation among workers, peasants, women, youth, students and professionals by the ANC and its allies, making it possible for the people to become a concerted, organised force able to withstand the ruthless machinery of the South African police state". In attempting to get over with this claim, the ANC and the SACP were reduced to covering their conspicuous non-involvement in Soweto by talking about how their underground cells must have been involved but obviously given the current situation they couldn't reveal any of the specific details. By 1977 Sechaba, the organ of the ANC, was reporting that the ANC national executive committee had summed up that "the revolutionary situation in our country has matured", and that the "revolutionary council has advanced its plans and subordinated every bit of its activities to the urgent question of launching an armed struggle in our country." Calls were issued for "strengthening our organisation"; a purge had been conducted in 1976.

Internationally the Soviets stepped up their PR campaign around the ANC and called for "intensifying the anti-apartheid work". A campaign was launched to have the OAU add its voice to the chorus singing the praises of the ANC as "the sole representative of the people of South Africa". For some time the OAU has recognised both the ANC and the PAC. At the same time, and no doubt in the interests of "reciprocation", the ANC and the SACP stepped up their campaign of praise for Soviet "aid". In early 1976 the African Communist was stating that "It has been the reality of Soviet power which has made it possible for one African country after another to break the

shackles of imperialism and obtain independence". By the end of 1976 they were stating that the lessons of Angola were that "the power of the communist world was placed at the disposal of oppressed people fighting for liberation and independence". By the end of 1977 Sechaba was emphasising "the armed struggle for the seizure of power" and Oliver Tambo delivered a speech in Angola in which he stated that a victorious revolution in Africa could only be defended with arms from "our most true and tested allies, the Soviet Union and Cuba".

Of course this period hasn't been all roses for the ANC and the SACP. Their long years of inactivity and their obvious subservience to Soviet imperialism was beginning to cause them some trouble. In response to criticism of their ties to the Soviets the ANC and the SACP launched a "no room for anti-Sovietism in South Africa" campaign and declared that the Soviets were only helping because of their good, revolutionary - and heaven forbid competing imperialist - intentions. In the African Communist they made the almost ludicrous statement, "An even more striking example of Soviet disinterestedness (than the case in South Africa - RW) has been Cuba, today very largely dependent militarily and economically on Soviet aid, but yet completely independent in the development of its own policies.... Who would dare assert that Fidel Castro, the liberator, is a Soviet stooge? Who would claim that Cuba is not building socialism according to its own decisions?"

And in response to criticisms of their perennial calls for armed struggle without producing any moves in that direction, Oliver Tambo stated in Sechaba at the end of 1977, "Over the last 10 years the ANC has publicly advocated non-violence because of repression. Either we restrained our people or there would have been bloodshed and we would not have been prepared for it. We

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can say that at that stage we did more than most organisations in resisting the things that drove us to violence". Keeping in mind that these words were spoken more than one year after Soweto one can only say that no better example of the slime that passes for "the vanguard of the liberation struggle" in the view of the Soviet imperialists could be found.

The sudden shift and posturing by the ANC and the SACP over the last six years has had absolutely nothing to do with a turnaround on their part concerning the question of revolution. In fact it had everything to do with throwing more obstacles in the way of the revolution and helping to advance the Soviet strategy for South Africa. Although the ANC attempted to claim the Soweto uprising as a product of their own work, it was only to cut out any of the real significance of it. It was also around this time that the ANC publicly began to attack the name "Azania", in a big way which was growing in popularity among the revolutionary masses. According to the ANC "Azania" was an historically inaccurate name for the area comprising South Africa and was in fact a legacy of slavery. Instead the ANC insisted that South Africa was the only correct name for the area. Once again what this revealed was the ANC's fundamental opposition to and denial of the national liberation struggle of the Azanian people and their dedication to working out a compromise power-sharing agreement

### Attacking Soweto Uprising

In summing up Soweto the SACP in the African Communist (first quarter of 1977) declared that this heroic mass uprising was plagued with the weakness of "extreme subjectivism" and a "go it alone tendency". While forced to try and claim it as their own internationally, they also had to totally gut its meaning for the people of Azania. In addition to emphasising the power of the South African state in their sum up of the "lessons of Soweto"

the SACP also declared that in order for Soweto to have had any real significance and in order to advance the struggle, "it is absolutely for the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM - which was heavily involved in leading the Soweto uprising), if it is to continue to develop its mass character, to bring its adherents into the mainstream of revolutionary ideas and action in the revolutionary movement led by the ANC". While this was a clear effort to throw a wet blanket over the upsurge and revolutionary enthusiasm, thinking and action by Azanian youth, the ANC by no means themselves to feeble attempts at trying to lure in the BCM. While hoping to snare a new generation into their cesspool of revisionist treachery, the ANC also unleashed a furious attack on the BCM and its leaders. Throughout 1977 Sechaba ran articles attacking the BCM as being "backed by the West" or as Alfred Nzo, the secretary General of the ANC, called them "new allies of imperialism" and "substitutes for the Bantustan leaders". According to Nzo, "some of those who only yesterday were hailed as the new revolutionary upsurge inside our country are now important allies of imperialism against the ANC". In addition to their general attacks on the BCM, the ANC tried to hit particularly hard at one of the leaders of the BCM, Steve Biko. (This attack came before he was murdered by the South African rulers.

Of course, after his death the ANC did their damndest to try and claim his mantle as their own) According to Sechaba (first quarter of 1977) Steve Biko was tied in with British liberals and by implication, to U.S. imperialism. With regard to campaigns to have him released from jail the ANC issued their objection stating that there were more well-known people in jail much longer than Biko had been. When Biko was released they stated in their slimmest tones, "Watch with interest what happens to him now".

As another indication of the fact that the "new thrust" of the ANC and the SACP had nothing to

do with mobilising the Azanian people for a genuinely revolutionary struggle there is the infamous ANC-Buthelezi agreement. After having criticised Buthelezi, the Bantustan leader of Kwazulu, for being a wretched sellout and enemy of the people in 1977, the ANC then turned round in 1979 and joined forces with him in a "progressive front". Much after this agreement Buthelezi continued to advocate all of the things that the ANC had criticised him for in the past, including supporting Bantustan education, calling for an increase in foreign investment in South Africa, and advocating the use of South African police and armed vigilantes against striking school students. By September of 1980 the ANC was forced to once again turn around and denounce Buthelezi, using exactly the same charges that they had used years before.

What's significant about both these examples, the attack on the BCM and Biko in particular, and the ANC's Buthelezi agreement, is what they reveal about the aims of the ANC. There's a common thread running through both instances, a thread tracing the ANC's desires to fulfill their own bourgeois aspirations. On the one hand they don't hesitate for a minute to unite with a well-exposed and infamous enemy of the Azanian people, Buthelezi, in an attempt to advance the very same bourgeois aspirations that led them to attack the BCM. More evidence of this is given by the ANC's and the SACP's attempts to nestle up to numerous Western European social democrats including Mitterrand in France, Willy Brandt in West Germany and the ruling classes of the Scandinavian countries. Add to this the ANC's and SACP's recent joining in with the Progressive Federal Party (a liberal white bourgeois political party in South Africa) and other liberal organisations to call for a national convention in South Africa in order to write up a new constitution for South Africa and there can be no doubt about what the ANC is up to - and it is not opposing imperialism.

By 1981 the ANC once again announced with a tremendous amount of international fanfare that it was "taking up the armed struggle". And once again they launched a campaign of infrequent sabotage. For many familiar with the history and current policies and practices of the ANC and SACP and who are extremely wary of their ties to the Soviet Union the question around the ANC often boils down to "well there is no one else to support, no one else who is really taking up the gun in South Africa. And as for the Soviet connection, it is necessary if the Azanian people are ever going to achieve liberation, after all who else is going to give them guns?" In response to the necessity of Soviet aid in order to achieve liberation, one would be better off seriously examining the question of what country in the world has ever been independent of imperialist extortion and domination after being "aided by the Soviets? And as far as the usual protest of "there's no one else to support" what is particularly marked about the Soviet attempts in South Africa is the attempt to attack, exclude and generally push out of the way any revolutionary nationalist forces who may oppose their schemes. This, combined with the whole history of revisionism in Azania, ought to shake the dust out of the minds of those who feel that this is the way to oppose imperialism.



# S. C. G. ON THE THREE WORLDS THEORY

## YOU CAN'T BE AGAINST REVISIONISM AND FOR THE THEORY OF THE THREE WORLDS.

The theory of the three worlds, first propagated by Deng Xiao-ping at the United Nations in 1974 and systematically presented by the 'Communist' Party of China in the pamphlet 'Chairman Mao's Theory of the Three Worlds in a Major Contribution to Marxism-Leninism' has long since been exposed as the Peking clique's revisionist programme for capitulation to imperialism. The clique's spurious attribution of the theory to Mao ZeDong has also been exposed as a bare-faced lie.(1) Over the last couple of years the capitulation of the Chinese revisionists has become obvious and shameless. One need only to instance in this respect their lavish praise of the late and unlamented President Sadat as a "valiant fighter against imperialism". Indeed, so shameless and obvious are they that many honest people who have been fooled by the Chinese revisionists are beginning to question their policies

But as the Nottingham Communist Group (NCG) have pointed out "some of the waverers are trying to opportunistically slide out of the untenable position they find themselves in. They are beginning to admit China is now on the capitalist road while at the same time trying to cling onto the reactionary Three Worlds Theory line..." (2) Since the NCG wrote this further evidence of this centrist, Kautskyist tendency has come to light. In their report on their 2nd Congress the RCLB state that "opportunism... is a sovial-chauvinist ideology which seeks to create common cause between the working class and monopoly capitalism on the basis of the maintenance of the imperialist order". (3) Quite so! But nowhere in their report do the RCL refer to the three worlds

theory - which they have previously described as the line of demarcation between genuine and sham communists - nor to social-chauvinism's apotheosis in 'defence of the fatherland' which they have hitherto been keen exponents of. As the NCG also said "To these honest people we say: make a clean and honest break with the revisionist camp now and completely throw off all this reactionary rubbish." (4)

The purpose of this article is not to go over old ground and to criticise the three worlds theory per se, but rather to demonstrate to those vacillating and unsure elements in the RCl and elsewhere that the rejection of the three worlds theory is an essential part of upholding Marxism and repudiating revisionism. This will be done by subjecting to self-criticism the past line of the Stockport Communist Group (SCG) on the class struggle internationally.

The most important task of the international communist movement has been for some time the exposure and defeat of the new wave of revisionism coming from Peking and Tirana. This wave of revisionism has been centred on attacking Mao ZeDong Thought as the summing up of the experience of the international proletariat since the time of Lenin. It has particularly attacked Mao's summing up of the experience of the socialist revolution and construction of his theory of 'continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat'. Further, this new wave of revisionism has attempted to negate Mao's brilliant leadership of the international communist movement's defence of Marxism against the Soviet revisionists in the 1950s and 1960s. For their part, The Chinese revisionists, with their three worlds theory, are singing new, more sophisticated tunes as 'defence of the fatherland', peaceful co-existence, disarmament and many other old revisionist favourites. The international communist movement has once again been split by revisionism and the British communist movement has been no exception.

## THE TWO-LINE STRUGGLE IN THE RCLB.

The Stockport Communist Group has its origins in a two-line struggle in the RCL in 1977-79, a struggle which centred on the theory of the three worlds. During this time, those of our comrades who were then in the RCL attacked most of the specific political lines of the theory, such as 'defence of the fatherland', the RCL's support for the EEC and NATO, its failure to give wholehearted support to the Irish people in their struggle against British imperialism, its line of a 'second and third world' unity and so on. From the very beginning though, our struggle in the RCL was crippled. Crippled by the fact that we were attempting to do then what others are attempting to do now - eclectically combine Marxism and revisionism by trying to reconcile the revolutionary line with the basic outlook and theoretical and ideological premises of the theory of the three worlds. We didn't grasp that the social-chauvinist political line that we were fighting against had as their immediate source the theory of the three worlds itself. In the RCL we were closet revolutionaries, who, instead of giving a militant call to the members of the RCL to struggle against the three worlds theory, called for a 'revolutionary application' of it. It is scarcely surprising that the members of the RCL were unmoved by this stirring call and that our half-baked opposition to the RCL's social-chauvinism was almost completely ineffectual. Confronted with a choice between the coherent revisionism of the RCL and our own illogical and opportunist combination of opposition to specific aspects of the three worlds theory with basic adherence to the theory, the RCL membership chose the coherent revisionism.

A particularly crass example of our eclecticism, our attempt to fight revisionism by making concessions to it, is the extract below from a document entitled 'Uphold Leninism in Applying the Theory of the Three Worlds' written by one of our members in criticism of the RCL's Manifesto:

"The theory of the three worlds is a strategy in the sense that it clearly differentiates between reactionary and progressive forces in the present day international class struggle. It does this in exactly the same way as Lenin's differentiation of the world into oppressor and oppressed nations. It therefore indicates to the international proletariat, and to the oppressed people and nations, our friends and enemies on a world scale.

The theory of the three worlds does not replace any of the fundamental principles of Leninism; it merely applies them to the world situation. Similarly, it does not replace the analysis of the international communist movement on the fundamental contradictions in the world today; again, it merely applies it to the world today.

For these reasons, it is essential that the Manifesto, which is a step towards the programme, states the fundamental principles of Leninism. If it does not... then it is inevitable that we will succumb to imperialist pressure and make right opportunist, even revisionist errors..."

The theory of the three worlds is precisely an attempt to "replace the fundamental principles of Leninism" with revisionism. The RCL's Manifesto, rather than analyse the international situation by using the tool of the fundamental contradictions in the world, took as its starting point the theory of the three worlds and was therefore imbued with revisionism and social-chauvinism. Our method of combatting the approach of the Manifesto was to propose that paragraphs referring to the fundamental contradictions in the world be added to those referring to the three worlds theory!

This then is the eclectic brew of Marxism and revisionism which we fought for in the RCL. Lenin rather aptly characterised this type of opportunism when he said:

"When we speak of fighting opportunism, we must never forget a characteristic feature of present-day opportunism in every sphere, namely, its vagueness, amorphousness, elusiveness. An opportunist, by his very nature, will always evade taking a clear and decisive stand, he will always seek a middle course, he will always wriggle like a snake between two mutually exclusive points of view and try to 'agree' with both and reduce his differences of opinion to petty amendments, doubts, innocent and pious suggestions, and so on and so forth." (5)

Those comrades today who have doubts about the three worlds theory, or who are in their turn trying to marry the three worlds theory with Marxism, to "seek a middle course" between the camp of revolution and the camp of revisionism, can learn from our negative example and take a "clear and decisive stand" against the theory of the three worlds. Failure to do so will have grave consequences. The three worlds theory and the revolutionary line are mutually exclusive and the slightest concession to the theory of the three worlds leads inevitably and inexorably to a class-collaborationist, social-chauvinist line. This is clearly demonstrated by the development of the SCG's line - which, until July 1981 was still considerably influenced by the three worlds theory - after our members who were in the RCL were expelled from that organisation and who then founded an independent organisation (6)

#### THE SCG'S OPPORTUNIST CONCESSIONS TO REVISIONISM.

In June '79 under the name 'Communist Unity', we published a systematic presentation of our views on international class struggle in a document entitled 'The Present International Situation and the Tasks of the Proletariat'. In describing some of the concessions made to the reactionary three worlds theory in this document and other ones, the dividing line we draw between the revolutionary and revisionist lines may appear to be drawn exceedingly fine. Such an attitude would be most myopic. We are in a situation where the Marxist-Leninist movement in Britain

is fighting a rearguard action to keep the flame of revolutionary Marxism alight. In these circumstances, as Lenin put it:

"...what at first sight appears to be an 'unimportant' mistake may lead to the most deplorable consequences, and only shortsighted people can consider factional disputes and a strict differentiation between shades inopportune or superfluous. The fate of Russian (Marxism) for many, many years to come may depend on the strengthening of one or other 'shade'". (7)

Some of the 'deplorable consequences' of our concessions to revisionism are described below.

As many have pointed out, with their three world theory the Chinese revisionists propose that the international proletariat should:

- replace the method of class analysis of the four fundamental contradictions with the eclectic, non-class method of the 'three worlds'.
- under the guise of an international united front against 'suppower hegemonism' no longer fight for revolution but fight only the superpowers.
- support US imperialism against Soviet social-imperialism on the grounds that the Soviet Union is the aggressive superpower.
- defend the fatherland in the minor imperialist countries allied with US imperialism.
- practice peaceful co-existence between the minor imperialist powers and the dependent countries (the so-called second and third world unity).
- support neo-colonialism and give up the revolutionary struggle in the dependent countries.

In the course of struggle in the RCL we had come to understand the pernicious nature of these ideas, but to combat them we invented our own version of the three worlds theory, a version free, we thought, from the "opportunist distortions" of the theory we denounced the RCL for. But the theory itself is rotten through and through and inevitably some of the rottenness found its way into our line.

WHAT CAN AN 'INTERNATIONAL UNITED FRONT' AGAINST IMPERIALISM, COLONIALISM AND HEGEMONISM, HEADED BY THE TWO SUPERPOWERS CONCRETELY MEAN?

This formulation (3) is a very good example of eclecticism. Although we recognise in practice the proletariat of each country must fight the enemies of the international proletariat in that country - e.g. the workers of Britain have to fight British, European and US imperialism, those of Poland Soviet and Polish imperialism and those of El Salvador the US imperialists and the domestic reactionaries - our formulation failed to draw a clear line of demarcation with the line that everything should be subordinated to a struggle against 'superpower hegemonism' (read Soviet social-imperialism).

If an 'international united front' means anything at all it means that the proletariat of different countries should direct their struggle mainly at those enemies of the international proletariat defined as the targets of the united front. Whilst we used the formulation above rather than the three worlds formulation of 'against superpower hegemonism' our formulation, if it was meant to be a guide to action, rather than a pious statement, could not have any essentially different content than the CPC / RCL formulation. Our formulation could only mean that the proletariat of, say, Britain, should fight mainly against the two superpowers, not mainly against British imperialism, that they should 'subordinate' their struggle against British imperialism to an alleged 'general interest' of a world-wide struggle against superpower hegemonism. It is true that we didn't actually advocate this, but what is being discussed at present is the question of what our formulation logically leads to, the fact that it was an opportunist concession to the revisionist line. The formulation treated Britain, France, Germany, Japan, Canada etc. as 'middle elements' in the class struggle on a world scale. We correctly rejected the RCL's spurious arguments for such a characteriza-

tion of these countries because we recognised that the world revolution isn't one revolution, but a series of inter-connected national revolutions, and that therefore the concept of 'middle elements' on an international level is rather dubious. But if we say that the United States and the Soviet Union are the first world, the dependent countries the first world and the minor imperialist countries the second world, as we did, and moreover that this differentiation is a "strategic concept" then doesn't it logically follow that the so-called second world countries are middle elements? For what is a strategy except as a means to distinguish friends and enemies?

The international communist movement must seriously study the question of whether or not the concept of an 'International united front' is at all valid. The people of all countries must fight their enemies, i.e. the enemies of the international proletariat in their countries. This is their contribution to world proletarian revolution. To do otherwise leads inevitably to the error of attempting to subordinate national revolutions to an alleged 'general interest', a line which sounds very revolutionary, but in practice, certainly in countries where the bourgeoisie hold state power, can mean only a subordination of the proletariat to the bourgeoisie. (9) Isn't this what happened in the so-called 'international united front against fascism' of 1941-1945 when the proletariat of the allied imperialist powers were enjoined to support, allegedly in the 'general interest' their 'own' imperialists against the axis powers?

It is a fact that there is a general interest of the international proletariat. At present it is crucial that the proletariat and people of all countries oppose the war preparations of imperialism. But this can only be done effectively if the proletariat of each country fight the war preparations of 'their' imperialists and reactionaries. If the British workers fight for a withdrawal from NAT, the Polish workers



for Polish withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact and expulsion of Soviet troops, if the Soviet troops in Afghanistan emulate the American troops in Vietnam and mutiny and if the Omani and Egyptian people fight to kick out the US imperialists, then isn't the general interest being served? Likewise it is true that there are 'chief enemies' of the international proletariat, and of the oppressed people and nations, at present the Soviet Union and the United States are such chief enemies. But simply because of this, these imperialist superpowers have their forces all over the world; if the proletariat of each country makes a correct analysis of the tasks of the revolution in 'its' country, then it will, in the majority of cases, strike blows at these chief enemies, just as the proletariat of Britain, a country where British imperialism is the chief enemy, must of necessity strike blows at US imperialism by fighting the alliance of British with US imperialism. Conversely, if the chief enemies do not have forces in a particular country, then the proletariat of that country cannot strike material blows at them. There is, as Lenin said:

"... only one kind of internationalism in deed: working wholeheartedly for the development of the revolutionary movement and the revolutionary struggle in one's own country, and supporting ... such a line in every country without exception." (10)

But the kind of 'internationalism' which takes place in an 'international united front' can, judging by history so far and on theoretical grounds, only have the effect of strengthening imperialism in general (however temporarily) at the expense of the target of the united front, as was the case in 1941-1945, when the allied imperialists emerged from the war temporarily stabilised, and would be the case if the international proletariat were to heed the CPC's call for such a front against 'superpower hegemonism' (read Soviet social-imperialism).

The SCG is not very self-critical that it didn't re-

get the concept of an 'international united front' as the international communist movement as a whole is only just beginning to sum up its history on this question, but we are extremely self-critical about our eclecticism in our formulation on the content of an international united front. We stuck into our document on the international situation such statements as "it is particularly important to fight against the military alliance of the two superpowers (11) and that the "people of all countries (should) fight against the two superpowers." These statements stick out like sore thumbs as they go against the whole thrust of the documents arguments, which is that the proletariat must fight the enemies of the revolution in each country. The statements were stuck in to placate the three worlders, so as not to upset them too much. As calls to action the statements were either pious, as we have shown, or opportunist arguments for 'subordination'.

Our concession to the three worlds theory, whilst not leading us to calling on the international proletariat to give up revolution, as did the RCL and CPC, did lead to us drawing up a call for an international united front, which was wrong in principle, and which, in the precise formulation it was used, went half-way to meeting the CPC / RCL formulation. If put into practice over a period of time, the line represented by the formulation must have led to a degree of confusion, hesitancy and a lack of militancy in fighting real enemies of the British proletariat and thus in making our contribution to the world proletarian revolution.

#### IS THE SOVIET UNION THE 'MOST DANGEROUS SOURCE OF WAR'?

Once more attempting to repeat the tragic errors of the '30s, the so-called 'international united front against fascism', the three worlders call for 'taking the Soviet Union as the primary target in the struggle against hegemonism' (lately the more honest three worlders have come out into the open and called for the Soviet Union to be the only target of the united front, which of course was what they always intended in practice).

This call is based on the thesis that the Soviet Union is the 'more dangerous superpower' and the 'most dangerous source of war'. For sophisticated reasons which now escape us, we once rejected the former thesis but accepted the latter one. However, let's treat the latter formulation on its merits.

The CPC say, basing themselves on some statements of Stalin and Lenin, that the source of war is the struggle of new imperialist powers to re-divide the world, already divided in favour of the older imperialist powers, in their favour, and go on to say that the older powers should be supported against the newer ones because the newer ones are 'more aggressive' etc.... Now it was certainly the case in world wars 1 & 2 that the 'have not' powers, mainly Germany and Japan, initiated the war and were 'aggressive'. But in examining a war, we must grasp that war 'is the continuation of politics by other means' and ask ourselves what 'peacetime' politics is the war a continuation of. If we don't pose this question we shall lose sight of the fact that no matter how 'aggressive' the newer, have not powers are, they are aggressive precisely because the older, 'have', imperialists already have the lion's share of the imperialist booty. To support the older powers on the grounds that the newer ones are 'aggressive' is to support the status quo, the existing imperialist division of the world. Further, this line portrays the older powers as 'peace-loving', when history shows conclusively that these powers also will sooner or later resort to war to defend their possessions from encroachment by other imperialists.

The idea that the Soviet Union is the "most dangerous source of war" is one which sees only (or chooses only to see) the superficial phenomena of Soviet expansionism and ignores ( or covers up ) the real relationships involved inter-imperialist struggle by rival powers for world domination. Even the most

this clearly. The United States and its allies are rapidly building up their arms and are making it quite clear that they will not permit the Soviet Union to take much more. Indeed, the United States is openly talking of starting the war. The situation of a few years ago when the Us was to some extent falling back was a transitory thing and now both superpowers are actively preparing for war to decide which superpower has world domination. It may well be that the Soviet Union is more 'aggressive' in this respect, but this is a quantitative thing and not something upon which strategy can be based. Our documents covered up and apologised for US imperialism and its allies in the war preparations and attempted to divert the attention of the international proletariat away from our 'own' imperialists and towards Soviet imperialism. Our acceptance of the formulation 'most dangerous super-power' was a serious social-chauvinist error.

#### THE CONCEPT 'SECOND WORLD' OPENS THE DOOR TO SOCIAL-CHAUVINISM.

It is correct to point to the contradictions between the 'superpowers' and the minor imperialist powers, but such contradictions are nothing new. In the days when Britain was the most pre-eminent imperialist power it had used to push around such imperialist powers as Holland, Belgium, and the US, but nobody claimed that these contradictions were anything but inter-imperialist contradictions. Lenin, for instance, ruthlessly exposed the clap-trap about 'gallant little Belgium' when the British, French and Belgian imperialists attempted to use Germany's invasion of Belgium in 1914 as a pretext to advance their own imperialist interests.

In the Sgc's practice, we have not, by and large, treated the 'second world' imperialist powers as any different in essence from the 'superpowers'. But we did support the concepts 'second world' and 'third world', moreover as a strategic concept. This implies that there is a qualitative difference, a difference

in nature, between the 'second' and 'first' worlds. If these powers are in two different 'worlds', with the dependent countries in another world, doesn't this imply, and isn't it meant to imply (at least by the true thirdworlders), that the 'second World' i.e. the minor imperialist powers, here in a half-way house between imperialism and the oppressed nations, that they have a "dual nature", that they are no longer, properly speaking, imperialist?

The minor imperialist powers of the west are "tied by a thousand-and-one threads", in Lenin's words to the US imperialists, as are the minor imperialist powers of the eastern bloc to the Soviet Union. When the US fights for its interests, it is willy-nilly, fighting for the other western imperialists. This is why countries like Britain and France are bound, to line up with the US imperialists in a new imperialist war, and why they are already militarily and politically allied with them. The same relationship exists between say, Poland and East Germany on the one hand and the Soviet Union on the other. Philosophically, we may say that in the contradiction between the contention and collusion of the major and the minor imperialist powers of the west, and of the major and minor imperialist powers of the eastern bloc, collusion is at present the principal aspect.

The terms 'second world' and 'first world' cover up, obscure, these relationships. That our use of these terms was no mere formal matter, but rather reflected our infection with the three worlds theory is shown by our past tendency to play down the alliance between the US and other western imperialists. For example, our 'political report' adopted in February 1981 correctly pointed to the contradictions between the US and the other powers in the US bloc, but completely ignored the opposite and dominant tendency for them to firm up and strengthen the alliance. The consequence of such an error can only be to teach the working class and people to seriously underestimate the strength of the alliance between US and British imperialism and to disarm them in the face of inter-imperialist war.

THE CONCEPT 'THIRD WORLD' COVERS UP FOR NEO-COLONIALISM.

"The national liberation movement has entered upon a 'new stage' having economic tasks as its core... formerly the struggle was carried on mainly in politics, today the economic question has become the central task". 'Pravda' 1963. (12)

"The vast majority of the oppressed nations have ... achieved independence ... and are now confronted with the tasks of freeing the productive forces from the shackles of imperialism". - SCG 1979. (13)

The fundamental identity of views expressed here between the Soviet revisionists and our document is salutary and revealing. Due to infection with the three worlds theory we succumbed to the view that once political 'independence' in the dependent countries has been won, all classes can peacefully unite and set about harmoniously developing their economies. The concept 'third world' covers up, and is intended to cover up, the fact that in the 'third world' countries, i.e. the dependent and colonial countries there is on the one hand a huge mass of people, workers, peasants, intellectuals, some national bourgeois with an objective interest in anti-feudal and anti-imperialist revolution, and on the other hand a small number of reactionaries, feudalists and comprador bourgeois elements, who are the agents of imperialism. The three worlds theory does not distinguish and is not intended to distinguish between friends and enemies in the dependent countries. The reason for this is clear from a conscientious study of the 'Peoples Daily' article, that the Chinese revisionist originators of this theory wish to serve imperialism by trying to convince the people of these countries that revolution is no longer necessary now that formal independence has been won. The theory deliberately glosses over the fact that every country of the so-called third world is dependent to one

degree or another on imperialism and is led by ruling classes connected on one way or another with imperialism.

To talk about 'countries' without discussing the alignment of class forces in these countries, as do our third worlders, is to abandon Marxism. All countries are ruled by classes. The vast majority of 'third world' countries are nominally independent, but because of the class nature of the ruling forces in them are unable to achieve any real degree of independence in the way that China did when under the rule of the proletariat. Probably a majority of the dependent countries are ruled by agents of imperialism. Even when they are ruled by national bourgeois elements, the class nature of these elements means that they must resist the radical transformation of their societies which alone can strike major blows at imperialism, and to carry out such resistance they are bound to attack the masses, as they are currently doing, for example, in Zimbabwe. The 'third world' countries can only achieve genuine national liberation through proletarian revolution of the new democratic kind, which, in the majority of these countries will take the form of civil war against domestic reactionaries. But what the three worlds theory does, and what we did in pushing this theory, is to lump together in one homogenous struggle the people of the dependent countries and the agents of imperialism in them. A specific example of our error in this respect is that we supported, under the influence of the three worlds theory, the so-called 'struggle for a new international economic order'. It is quite right to support the struggle of dependent countries for higher commodity prices etc., but to speak of a 'new order' in this way is to imply that a qualitative change can come about without revolution; it is the sheerest reformism and deception.

In general, we overestimated what can be done by the dependent countries under bourgeois leadership. We claimed that "... irrespective of the class which holds state power in a particular country, and despite some backsliders, the essence and main aspect of

the struggle of the oppressed countries is a revolutionary struggle against imperialism." (14) But in the overwhelming majority of these countries the "essence" and "main aspect" of the countries struggle ( we are not talking about the struggle of the people of these countries) has either been outright support for and capitulation to imperialism (South Korea, Indonesia, India etc.) or a bourgeois reformist and therefore unsuccessful, not revolutionary struggle against imperialism (Tanzania, Mozambique etc. ) We also said that the non-aligned movement, UNCTAD, etc have dealt "major blows" at imperialism, but in fact, whilst some blows have been struck, these bodies have not been able, because of the class nature of the forces dominant within them, to even mount effective defensive measures against imperialism in any lasting way. We need only instance as evidence for this contention these countries' massive and rapidly increasing debts to imperialism and the fact that, despite the lauded non-aligned movement, most of these countries in it are in fact, and increasingly so, aligned with one or other of the imperialist blocs. Even the utilising of inter-imperialist contradictions by these countries has often only had the content of switching imperialist backers in order to get a better deal for the ruling forces, as when Iraq, Egypt and Somalia have switched sides.

To fail to point out the objective limitations set by bourgeois leadership on the struggle of the people of the dependent countries is to lend credence to the 'socialist' demagoguery used by the bourgeoisie of the dependent countries to cover up their capitulation to imperialism and to teach the working class of all countries that a capitalist road to development is possible in the dependent countries. To lump together all class forces in the dependent countries under the generic term 'third world' and to imply, as have some of our statements, that all these forces have an objective interest in fighting imperialism is a plain lie and paints people like Marcos and Gandhi, whose interests lie with imperialism, as being part of the revolutionary forces. It elevates occasional,



temporary and superficial phenomena, such as the Shah of Iran's support for OPEC, and indeed the OPEC struggle itself, to questions of strategic importance. Any contradictions these forces have within the imperialists is a contradiction in the enemy camp. A contradiction that can be used in the interest of the revolution, but a contradiction within the enemy nevertheless.

#### THE IDEOLOGICAL ROOTS OF THESE ERRORS.

It isn't enough to understand what errors occurred: to prevent the occurrence of similar errors in the future it is necessary to understand why they occurred. The principal reason was infection with revisionism, the most dangerous form of bourgeois ideology in the communist movement. The new communist movement, which the SCG is part of, was founded in the wake of the CPC's and PLA'S struggle against Soviet modern revisionism and was founded on and took as their starting point opposition to the Soviet revisionists and their acolytes around the world. But as revisionism is exposed in one form, it takes on new ones. The new communist movement, forged in struggle against the Soviet-led wave of modern revisionism, was in the main unable to withstand essentially similar line of the CPC and PLA when they went revisionist after 1996. This shows that the new communist movement had never grasped the essence of revisionism and had seen only its surface appearance. Most of the new communist movement swallowed uncritically, for instance, Khrushchev's 'third world' concept when it was dressed up in newer, more 'Marxist' clothes by Deng Xiao-Ping.

Mao said 'covering up for revisionism is aimed at concealing one's own revisionism'. Those parties and organisations in the new communist movement, who, to whatever degree, supported the CPC's three worlds theory did so because they themselves were infected with revisionism. Bourgeois ideology completely surrounds and inevitably penetrates the communist movement. Only constant vigilance, through study of Marxist theory and the objective world and militant st-

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ruggle against revisionism can prevent the communist movement from succumbing to revisionism. The SCG, like most of the new communist movement, was simply not up to the task of fighting the new wave of revisionism. In our case, whilst we rejected many (but not all) of the specific political aspects, such as 'defence of the fatherland', of the three worlds theory, we embraced it in its general, theoretical and ideological aspects. We embraced its general approach and non-class method of analysis, with the results described earlier. We did this because of quite specific ideological errors.

#### IDEOLOGY DETERMINES POLITICAL LINE.

In the first place we simply didn't grasp the importance of ideology and were dismissive of those who stressed its importance. We one-sidedly stressed the importance of political line, the line on the objective class struggle and virtually ignored questions of ideological line. But as Mao said "the correctness or incorrectness of the ideological and political line decides everything." Moreover, in putting ideology before politics in this statement Mao recognised that one's world outlook governs how one reacts to concrete phenomena in the world, in particular the stance one takes towards the class struggle. Without a good grasp of Marxist ideology it is not possible to have a correct political line; in fact those who fail to pay a lot of attention to ideology will inevitably be captured by revisionism, no matter how much they try to combat it on the political level. A good illustration of this fact is the events shortly after 'Communist Unity' was founded. A struggle erupted as to the prerequisites for principled unity ('CU' was objectively a coalition <sup>of people</sup> who opposed the RCLB's social-chauvinism, but from different standpoints). The comrades who later left insisted that we needed to have unity on the questions of China and the three worlds theory. We, those who later founded the SCG, wished to sweep these issues under the carpet. We said that the unity we needed was on "how to lead the masses to revolution," a formula deliberately designed to confine

two-line struggle to political matters and to debar from discussion ideological questions. We argued that the unity we had - against 'defence of the fatherland' and social-chauvinism in general - was sufficient and denounced the other comrades as "academic" and "sectarian" for wanting to discuss China and the theory of the three worlds. We thought that the fact that we were united in opposition to NATO, paying primary attention to fighting British imperialism etc. made it quite unnecessary to bother about whether or not the general approach, the ideological aspects of the three worlds theory were correct. Although we genuinely thought this, this stance of ours, because ideologically we did support the three worlds theory, was objectively a cover-up job aimed at protecting the reactionary three worlds theory from attack. Covering up for revisionism is indeed aimed at protecting one's own revisionism! The later development of our political line is sufficient indictment of our attitude.

THE WORKING CLASS STRUGGLE IS INTERNATIONAL: ITS AIM IS COMMUNISM.

At a time when the most important task of the international communist movement was, as it still is, the defence of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tse Tung Thought against the new wave of revisionism we attempted to confine discussion to <sup>the</sup> relatively safe plane of the immediate questions of the objective class struggle. Just as our formula that we need discuss only "how to lead the masses to revolution" was aimed at preventing discussion of ideology, so it also had the objective of debarring from discussion any question, such as China or the theory of the three worlds, which did not have an immediate bearing on the class struggle. Discuss the three worlds theory? Why that doesn't affect the line we put to the masses (or so we thought) so we needn't discuss it. As for China, why that doesn't concern the British working class, its up to the Chinese working class to sort that one out! This narrow and empiricist, parish pump attitude was a reflection of the fact that we didn't grasp that from

the point of the long-term interests of the British working class, from the point of view of what they would do when in state power, it is of vital importance that the reversal in China is studied and its lessons grasped. Our standpoint was grossly opportunist and was a manifestation of that outlook which Lenin characterised as "sacrificing of the long-term and vital interests of the proletariat to its momentary, passing, secondary interests." We wished to keep the attention of the communists and the working class firmly fixed on the questions of the day and to prevent them from raising their eyes, even for a moment, to the far horizon. In this, we objectively concurred with Bernstein who exclaimed "the movement is everything, the final aim is nothing."

It is vital that the working class of all countries attain a wideness of vision, a sense that they are a part of the international proletariat, marching together towards the goal of communism. From this point of view, the events in China were of global significance, of immense objective importance to the international proletariat, and therefore to the British proletariat as a detachment of the international proletariat, whether they are recognised as such or not. At root, our attitude in refusing to discuss China and the reactionary three worlds theory of the Chinese revisionists was nationalist; not in the openly bourgeois form which says "Britain first", or the labourist "British workers first," but the subtler, but nationalist nevertheless, form of "it doesn't directly affect the struggle for socialist revolution in Britain, so why discuss it?" But it is essential that the international proletariat, and therefore the British proletariat, not only support genuine socialist countries, but <sup>also</sup> ruthlessly expose the pretensions to socialism of the revisionists. Only then can the working class distinguish its friends from its enemies and have a clear understanding of what constitutes socialism and what does not, and therefore of its historic goal of world communism.

A further manifestation of our narrow, parochial attitude was our consistent refusal, when in the RCL and for some two years afterwards, to attack the revisionist line of the CPC on the class struggle internationally. This was in part a further example of "protecting our own revisionism", since we shared some of the CPC's revisionist theses. But from a relatively early date we had recognised that much of what the CPC said in its three worlds theory was revisionist and nevertheless refused to criticise them. The RCL's stance was that criticism of the CPC was impermissible in principle: in response to one of our comrade's attacks on the RCL's social-chauvinist line, <sup>one</sup> of their then leading lights remarked that we were implicitly "attacking the great CPC itself." We criticised this slavishness and said that we should use own heads and not rely on the CPC. We should though have taken the bull by the horns and said "quite right" and criticised the CPC thoroughly. Rather though than the crass obsequiousness of the RCLB, we simply peddled our tired old refrain of "it isn't an issue." Of course it was an issue. The CPC had been the leading communist party in the world, and China the bastion of world revolution. Inevitably and rightly the CPC had a major influence on the ideological and political line of the international communist movement. It had always been wrong to rely on the CPC for one's line, to use it as a crutch, instead of using one's own head; but now the crutch was propping up reaction, not revolution. A good kick at the crutch would have helped the members of the RCL to see how rotten their own line was. To do so was also one's internationalist duty, a vital part of fighting for the ideological and political health of the international communist movement; it was a task of comparable importance to those of fighting Titoite and Soviet revisionism in the 1940s, 50s and 60s. To us though the question of the rotten line of the CPC was an irritating niggle, something which we hoped would go away, a diversion from "how to lead the masses to revolution." We didn't grasp that, as Mao put it, "everything reactionary is the same, if you don't knock it, it won't fall down." In the international balance of class forces the scale had swung greatly in the favour of the imp-

erialists with the revisionist coup in China, to fight to swing the balance back it was imperative to expose the Peking clique in order to prevent them getting away with their attempts to pass off counter-revolution as revolution, revisionism as Marxism.

## CONCLUSION

The SCG is severely self-critical for the errors described in this self-critical article. For over two years it took a centrist stand in the current great battle between revolutionary Marxism and the new wave of revisionism. It sought unity between Marxism and revisionism and refused to firmly denounce the renegades in Peking and their counter-revolutionary line and practice. The eclectic brew of Marxism and revisionism it pushed confused comrades who were genuinely looking to break with revisionism and delayed further the principled unification of the communists in Britain.

This self-criticism has not been written to make the members of the SCG feel better, or to expiate their sins, but to enable others to learn from our mistakes and to help us in rooting out the causes of our errors. We urge those comrades who want revolution but who are still clinging to the rotten theory of the three worlds to learn from our negative example and realise that they can't have both. We urge these comrades to break with the three worlds theory, make their self-criticisms and to join those fighting to build the party in implacable opposition to British and all imperialism.

## FOOTNOTES.

(1) See particularly 'Revolution', propaganda organ of the RCP, USA, Nov. 1978 'Three Worlds Strategy: Apology for Capitulation.'

(2) 'Red Star' July 1981.

- (3) 'Class Struggle' Nov. 1981.
- (4) 'Red Star' July 1981.
- (5) Lenin, V.I. One Step Forward, Two Steps Back, Moscow, 1973, pp. 199-200.
- (6) The three people who were expelled from the RCL in Jan. 1979, and who were later joined by another, founded an organization called 'Communist Unity.' Immediately a new struggle erupted. Some comrades correctly argued that the three worlds theory was revisionist and considered that the CPC was going the same way. This is why the document published at that time 'Exposure and Defeat of the RCLB is a Major Task in Party-Building' made no clear statement about the three worlds theory. Unfortunately those comrades who opposed the three worlds theory chose to resign and to lapse into inactivity and thus the struggle never
- (7) p.6.
- (8) Ibid. p. 7.
- (9) In his 'Preliminary Draft of Theses on the National and Colonial Questions' (Contained in the collection 'Lenin on the National and Colonial Questions' Peking, 1975 ) Lenin stated that:

"...proletarian internationalism demands, firstly, that the interests of the proletarian struggle in one country be subordinated to the interests of that struggle on a world scale..." (p. 26) (our emphasis -SCG)

In this text Lenin is arguing against a narrow nationalist, petty bourgeois viewpoint on the proletariat's struggle, and there can be no doubt but that the interests of the international proletariat must take precedence <sup>over</sup> those of the proletariat of a particular country. This quote

has though been seized upon by the three-worlders to argue that the proletariat of all those countries whose ruling forces are opposed to Soviet social-imperialism should not make revolution, but should rather 'subordinate' their struggle to an alleged 'general interest' of a struggle against 'hegemonism', i.e., the Soviet Union, by supporting NATO, the EEC etc.. As to how it can be in the international proletariat's interest to support these reactionary institutions, to strengthen any imperialism, no word of explanation has yet been forthcoming.

- (10) 'The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution', 'Selected Works'. vol. 3. Moscow, 1971, p. 71.
- (11) p.4; p.6.
- (12) Cited in 'Apologists for Neo-Colonialism', 'Red Flag', October 22, 1963. The article is contained in the collection 'Polemic on the General Line of the International Communist Movement'. Peking, 1965, p. 191.
- (13) 'The Present International Situation' p. 12.
- (14) Ibid. p. 8.



## Letter to the members of the R.C.L.B. from S. C. G.

Dear Comrades,

Three years ago the so-called 'anti-league faction' i.e., ourselves, was expelled from the RCLB. Because of the bureaucrat-centralism which then prevailed in RCL, and also because of our own ideological errors and bad style of work, we were not able to bring the two-line struggle in the RCL to fruition. The objective and subjective conditions did not exist which would have allowed us to convince you that the RCL's line was a rotten, social-chauvinist line nor for you to show us what was wrong in our thinking and style of work. We would like therefore to try to clear the air so that the theoretical struggle on the tasks of the international proletariat may concentrate on the main issues and not be obscured by subordinate matters.

Firstly, we want there to be no thought in your minds when reading our subsequent self-critical remarks that we are in any way retracting the severe criticisms which we have made regarding the RCL's ideological and political line on the objective class struggle. The criticisms which we made on the RCL's social-chauvinism, its wish to defend the fatherland, its refusal to support the struggles of the peoples of such nations oppressed by British imperialism as Ireland and Zimbabwe, and on its economist and spontaneist line on the class struggle in Britain, were in general entirely correct and in most cases unfortunately retain their validity. (Though as the self-criticism elsewhere in this issue of 'Red Star' explains, our effectiveness in fighting the RCL's revisionism was <sup>crippled</sup> by our support for the Chinese revisionists and aspects of their 'three worlds' theory.)

Those of you who were in the RCL at the time will recall that the specific event which sparked off the train of events which led to our expulsion was the accusation by our member who was then the Secretary of the RCL that the then Chairman of the RCL was a "traitor to the working class." Our member's subsequent refusal to make a self-criticism for this remark was incorrect and we are now prepared to make a self-criticism. The specific matter which provoked the accusation - whether or not to continue the RCL's Zimbabwe solidarity work - was but one aspect of the deeper struggle between Marxism and revisionism in the RCL and therefore this contradiction was antagonistic. But in the interest of winning the maximum possible unity around the correct line it was essential to differentiate between lines and the comrades who held those lines and, at least initially, to have treated the contradictions with the latter non-antagonistically. We didn't grasp this point and incorrectly treated the contradictions with the then Chairman of the RCL and with other leading members of the RCL as antagonistic ones.

An underlying reason for this failure to handle contradictions correctly was circle mentality. We weren't all that interested in winning the maximum possible unity, mentally wrote off the members of the RCL, and were quite content to split away with a handful of people and found another circle. The interests of the working class would though have been best served if we had made our self-criticisms and stayed in the RCL to fight for our line. What the working class needs after all is a national organization, not a plethora of small circles.

In our view this course of action would more than likely have still led to a split because the contradiction between the two lines was antagonistic. But whilst splits are sometimes necessary and inevitable, they should nevertheless only take place when they are objectively necessary. In 1979 the contradictions in the RCL had not matured to a state where a split was necessary. We were not however prepared to spend

further time and effort to win over those comrades who held the revisionist line and worked instead for a premature split. This was a liquidationist and defeatist attitude.

We hope that these brief self-critical remarks will move you to study again our criticisms of the RCL's social-chauvinist line and help you to see that these criticisms were in essence correct and remain correct. Since our expulsion from the RCL, some progress has been made by you in defeating revisionism in your ranks, especially on the question of Ireland, but on the cardinal political question of the day - the attitude one takes to the coming imperialist war - the line of the RCL is as social-chauvinist as ever. Despite loudly proclaiming in 'Class Struggle' its opposition to social-chauvinism, it is evident that it still advocates the most concentrated form of social-chauvinism, namely, 'defence of the fatherland' in an imperialist country. Its seemingly wholehearted support for the struggle of the people of Ireland against British imperialism is therefore objectively nothing more than camouflage for your support for British imperialism, which, when it goes to war as part of the US-led imperialist alliance, will do so for no other reason than to protect its exploitation and oppression of the British, Irish and millions of other workers and peoples around the world. We urge the RCL to respond to the criticisms which we and others have made of its social-chauvinist line and we particularly urge the members of the RCL to discuss the questions raised in this debate, to fight revisionism and to reject social-chauvinism in the discussion of your line on the international class struggle which we understand you are about to undertake.

Comradely Greetings,

The Stockport Communist Group.

# CHINA : A REVISIONIST WRITES & A REPLY FROM N.C.G.

I would like first of all to make it clear that this essay is only a reply to the Nottingham Communist Group pamphlet "Is China Still Socialist?". I have not studied all the material they employed in the production of their pamphlet, for reasons which will be apparent, and so I do not regard this as a total statement of my position, as indeed the Nottingham Communist Group make clear that their pamphlet is in no way exhaustive.

Clearly the whole question of whether China is or is not socialist is extremely complicated. It is debatable what would constitute firm evidence either way, as definitions of socialism are nothing if not many and varied. Things Chinese are never easy to understand from 10,000 miles away and a different culture away, and precise information on many of the subjects is probably not even available to the Chinese themselves, given the paucity of official statistics, and the unsophisticated nature of much Chinese government. For these reasons the complete certainty presented by the writers of the pamphlet is unjustified. And in fact the pamphlet contains so many errors and distortions that it cannot hope to have proved its case.

For example, the total cultural shambles produced by the Cultural Revolution is passed over as though a great nation can do without a culture. The sillier side of the Cultural Revolution is uncritically presented as though the whole matter were totally closed. Shakespeare is referred to in a hostile way. Perhaps the writers of the pamphlet are not aware that Marx was exceptionally fond of Shakespeare, quoting him extensively in his works. Perhaps they don't know that Shakespeare

was the playwright of the democratic classes in 18th Century England, and was a great favourite of the French Revolutionaries. It is nonsense to write such things, and childishly accept this philistinism in Marxist clothing.

The writers of the pamphlet repeat Marxist phrases without showing any understanding that always in Marxism more than one kind of policy is compatible with the general phrases. To arrogantly assume that only one interpretation is correct, and to aggressively label any other line as fascism is of course - fascism. One doesn't need to read Beijing Review for 1962 to see what the Gang were like. I challenge any of the Nottingham Communist Group to read the attacks on Hai Jui dismissed from Office and other works in 1966 by Yao Wen-Yuan and not detect these for literary hatchet jobs - picking out one word or phrase and jumping from this to accusations of treason. Yao at his trial at least had the sense of dignity to apologise for his crimes. The Nottingham Communist Group seem to imagine that the murder of Liu Shao-chi was some kind of morally uplifting event. To murder a man with over forty years successful experience of making revolution because of some ungrounded doubts only visible to the eyes of the faithful is pretty shabby. Deng at least has not had Chiang Ching murdered - a consummation no doubt much desired by Blue Apple. In fact the Gang were dealt with better than they ever dealt with their foes, none of whom ever had a trial.

The basic fault of the pamphlet is to take the Chinese at their own word. Clearly to read current Chinese material one would imagine something terribly profound had happened, and if one assumes China was socialist before it all blew up, then clearly one must assume that it is no longer socialist now. But we must be quite clear that if there have been changes, they are by no means complete and are not as great as one might think. The pamphlet believes the advertising of the current leadership, and shows every sign of having believed the advertising of the Gang.

For example, the Cultural Revolution liked to present itself as very much a break with Russian methods - for example, favouring agriculture rather than heavy industry. But it is clear that old habits carried on - chasing impossible targets in heavy industry and letting agriculture stagnate. And the departure of the Gang didn't change this. Hua carried on with this policy, until in late 1978 the current policies began which are shifting the emphasis from the towns to the countryside.

The pamphlet seems to assume that Chinese factories no longer use spiritual incentives, but only dangle consumer goods before the workers and put profits in command. In fact there is the usual Chinese dislike of financial incentives and emphasis on duty, with the usual promotion of model workers and the spirit of self sacrifice. They have not changed their approach overnight, and won't change things very much. The reason being something the writers of the pamphlet don't even begin to understand - that capitalism and all that it means (contrary to what Trotsky might say) has never existed in China. What didn't exist can't be restored. The Chinese people know nothing about capitalism and are finding the greatest difficulty in introducing the form of capitalism the Central Committee is ordering them to. For example, when they were told to market some of their produce there was an immediate outburst of the feudal practice of bribing potential purchasers - the idea of being go-getting salemen is something Chinese industrialists know nothing of. In consequence, or perhaps inevitably, the market is only being allowed restricted scope. The need to actually produce goods that people want is acute, and the way to achieve it is very difficult for the Chinese.

The pamphlet has a totally static, lifeless and non-dialectical approach to the development of Socialism in modern China. The Chinese make no secret of the low level of socialist development in their country. Xue Muqiao talks of China being at the lowest level of socialism, something that contrasts starkly with the extravagant claims of Khrushchev to be building communism itself. They have realised that one can't leap into socialism by simply declaring it. It is all very well to say that people are the greatest productive force, but China is

so frightfully backward that the actual physical objects we take for granted are simply missing. For example, there is no railway leading to Tibet - and that after thirty years of the revolution. There are even counties to which there are no roads! The standard of living of the Chinese people is still dangerously close to starvation level. There are literally millions and tens of millions of peasants who are just dying to be allowed to buy a bicycle. To talk as though China was about to bribe the workers and peasants with the goulash communism of Khrushchev is just nonsense. Doing something to get production and living standards up is absolutely vital. For many Chinese, it is only recently that their standard of living has risen above that of 1957! And to be perfectly frank, the political stability of the regime itself would suffer if this situation was continued.

You assume in your pamphlet that the Chinese people are just a bunch of noughts being led by Deng & co. The fact is that the failure of the Cultural Revolution seriously undermined the whole ideological hold of Marxism in China. Very many people just became cynical. But clearly the Chinese people have been through so much that they are now amongst the most politically sophisticated people in the world. The slogan shouters of the Gang had their day - a very long one indeed - and now they're gone. The attempt to whip up disturbances via the Big Character Posters on the so-called Democracy Wall showed how that kind of behaviour was regarded. The Chinese have had enough mass movements to last them a lifetime. Perhaps the writers of the pamphlet don't realise how so many Chinese feel - that running society on the verge of riots for year after year was just not on. They realise that the fighting has exhausted itself. Now it's results or else for the CCP!.

A basic failing in the pamphlet is that it shows no understanding of what left and right mean in Communist terms. What is at issue is not so much the direction and the aims, but the pace of development towards those aims. Deng would probably agree with every demand put forward by the Gana as something devoutly to be wished, but not

yet!. To listen to the pamphlet one would not imagine that Liu Shao-chi was a firm supporter of the Great Leap forward, nor would one think that Deng Xioping had been in Moscow in the early sixties resolutely battling with the Russians. One would imagine that Mao had not approved of the return to power of Deng before the Tian an Men incident. The whole pamphlet is in such black and white terms that truth is a casualty. Perhaps the biggest laugh is on page 22, where you assert that the two lines were clearly on a collision course in 1966, when of course the major feature of the Cultural Revolution was precisely that it took virtually everybody by suprise.

It would seem from the pamphlet that never under any socialist system at any time can the actual development of production be the major contradiction, but that class struggle must always be there, right at the centre. This of course is anti-Marxist Trotskism. Also it would seem that never can class struggle be anything other than acute and threatening. Though defeated a thousand times, the bourgeoisie has the satanic quality of never getting any weaker!.

To me the answer is so clear, and the arguements so feeble, that I feel no desire to study the RCP(US) materials on which it is based. They are presumably more of the same. The fact is that China is more socialist than it was five years ago. There is a growing socialist democracy (of which you make no mention) trying to give real life to the People's Congresses. There is the beginnings of a legal system. There is an attempt to generate literary and intellectual debate that is free from the fear of the mob, in which case a hundred flowers really will bloom. There is an attempt to revive the party stlye of work of the Yanan period ( which I am sure alone makes complete nonsense of your pamphlet). And lastly there is still a good deal of respect shown for Chairman Mao, with his picture still appearing in Beijing Review, and an approximately 70-30 judgement being made on him.



The fact is that China is still socialist, and as for the various pet ideas in your pamphlet - there is no doubt that at some stage of the future these ideas will again become prominent. I can only hope that the Nottingham Communist Group will take my advice to heart and not cut itself off from real living socialism in an ever more barren version of 1900s Trotskyism.

In early 1960 the Nottingham Communist Group produced a pamphlet Is China Still Socialist?. This was the outcome of some months of analysis on our part and was occasioned by our growing disquiet at the many events and changes of policy taking place in China since the death of Comrade Mao Tse-tung. Although we posed the matter as a question, we had in fact come to the conclusion that China was no longer a socialist country, that there had been a revisionist coup and she was now on the capitalist road. As part of our investigation we studied the struggle that had taken place within the CCP, the Cultural Revolution and Mao's own writings and analysis of that period.

In this country, when our pamphlet appeared, the idea that counter-revolution had taken place in China was greeted with hostility by those groups calling themselves Marxist-Leninist. They, as has been the experience for many decades, preferred their political analysis second-hand rather than doing any concrete investigation for themselves. Our pamphlet, to a certain degree, helped to open up debate on this important question and this played some part in creating the rupture between the genuine revolutionary elements and the supporters of the new revisionist regime. In "Red Star" we ran several articles on China and also entered into some, rather limited debate with a member of the Communist Workers Movement.

We don't intend to make a detailed reply to our correspondent, indeed this would be difficult to do as no coherent argument is presented. However, we would like to make a few points.

First of all, our correspondent appears unclear as to whether China is still socialist or not. Indeed, he also appears unclear in his understanding of what socialism is and the ways it differs from capitalism. He admits that the Chinese people are "Finding the greatest difficulty in introducing the form of capitalism the Central Committee are ordering them to". It would seem he's quite happy with the notion of a Central Committee ordering the masses about but we'll let that one pass and not raise any implications. On the other hand though, "to read current Chinese material one would imagine that something terribly profound had happened, and if one assumes that China was socialist before it all blew up, then clearly one must assume that it is no longer socialist now". Nonetheless, he concludes "China is more socialist than it was five years ago". Wow!

What are we to make of all this confused and contradictory nonsense?. Alas, we know the syndrome only too well. It is a crude variation on the China-is-socialist-because-I-want-it-to-be argument and bears no relation to reality.

If we turn to the question of the Cultural Revolution and the "Gang of Four" we find the same old whines of the revisionists repeated slavishly: there were riots, the country was in ruins, the mob was in control etc etc. No grasp of the dynamics of putting politics in command and exercising democracy at mass level. Of course those high party elements who were taking the capitalist road didn't like the Cultural Revolution, they were amongst it's chief targets. Yes, they lose no opportunity to calumnise Mao and his supporters. "Peking Review" can be read till the cows come home and no-one will find a political analysis of the Four. No such thing exists in China and we are doubtful that it ever will. There are plenty of articles full of lies and vile innuendo for those who are taken in by such things.

Our correspondent may find the contention that there was fierce and protracted struggle within the CCP highly amusing but then perhaps he is always amused by public displays of his own ignorance. There is enough documentation for any who is really interested to find out exactly what was going on. Of course, when the battle was at it's fiercest, we were all too busy telling each other how wonderfull China was to bother to investaigate exactly what was hapeening. In that sense there may have beem some element of suprize here. As our correspondent is still 70% in favour of Comrade Mao Tse-tung we can do no better than to quote him on the matter at hand:

"In 1949 it was pointed out that the principal contradiction was one between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Thirteen years later the question of class struggle was reiterated, and mention was made of the fact that the situation began to turn for the better. What is the Great Cultural Revolution for?. To wage class struggle. Liu Shaoqi advocated the theory of the dying out of the class struggle but he himself never ceased to wage class struggle. He wanted to protect his bunch of renegades and followers. Lin Biao wanted to overthrow the proletariat and attempted a coup. Did the class struggle die out?"

( 1976 cited in "People's Daily  
6.4.1976)

We suggest that if our correspondent is serious in his committment ot the revolutionary struggle that he reconsiders his present absurd position and, in the first instance, orientates himslef around the questions: what is the nature of socialist society? what are the economic and class contradictions? what is the relationship bewteen the Party and the masses? what is the economic and political basis for a revisionist seizure of pwer?. At the moment he has no real idea of the major problems faced by socialist societies and hence is not in any position to grasp the significance of the struggle within the CCP, the meaning of the Cultural Revolution and the activities of the present revisionist clique.

# BOOK REVIEW

INDIAN COMPRADOR BOURGEOISIE AND INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS. Kuldeep Jhansie. Ludhiana, India

This short and highly readable book deals with the political history of India from the late nineteenth century to the present. It is a sustained exposure both of the Indian National Congress, in particular its leaders Gandhi and Nehru, and the leadership of the Communist Party of India. Jhansie shows that the INC was in fact set up by the British colonial administration in the late nineteenth century in order to divert the peasants from agrarian revolt and that it was basically a comprador organisation in which the representatives of the comprador bourgeoisie and big landlords were dominant. This assessment is based on his view that the big Indian bourgeoisie was/is predominantly comprador with no progressive role to play in the new democratic revolution. This is in marked contrast to the views of commentators on Indian affairs such as R.P. Dutt, Paul Baran and Indian marxists such as Chattopadhyay, all of whom have argued that the Indian bourgeoisie did not (by and large) constitute a comprador class, and that "...it represented ... to a large extent the genuine political aspirations of the broad masses of people."

(Chattopadhyay) According to this latter view, 1947 was a progressive step, the culmination of the "national liberation struggle" led by the INC. Jhansie argues convincingly that this is a false interpretation of history.

Jhansie also lays bare the role of Gandhi in do-

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ing all he could to prevent the emergence of a militant national movement. He is revealed as a faithful servant of British imperialism from the very moment in 1914 when he appeared on the political scene to give his unconditional support for Britain at the outbreak of war. What Gandhi feared most were the independent actions of workers and peasants in striking back at their oppressors. When their struggles reached new heights following the establishment of the Workers and Peasants party in 1926, Gandhi spared no effort in trying to divert their struggles into the peaceful Satyagraha movement. That he was ultimately successful in this aim was largely due to the opportunist and petit bourgeois role played by the CPI who interpreted the politics of the united front against fascism as the politics of unity without struggle, the politics of complete surrender to the bourgeoisie and to imperialism. The CPI failed to analyse correctly the class composition of Indian society, the stage of the Indian revolution and it therefore could not build a genuine anti-imperialist, anti-feudal united front under the leadership of the working class. Without a clear and precise programme of action it swung like a pendulum from 'right' to 'left'. Jhansie argues that these failings cannot be attributed to the 'dictates of Moscow'; he places the blame squarely on the shoulders of the CPI leadership. Thus while the international communist movement was advising the Indian communists to pay attention to the peasant question, the leadership of the CPI were preoccupied with trying to turn the INC into a united national front. This was occurring at the very time when the INC was reflecting the contradictions among the imperialist powers, with Nehru taking a pro-US position, Gandhi pro-British and Bose pro-fascist. However it was not the CPI which used these inter-imperialist contradictions, but Gandhi, and his famous "quit India" demand should be seen in this context. In addition to the Japanese threat, for Gandhi and the INC, Bose and his fascists proved an equal if not greater

threat. Gandhi had a dual strategy; his declaration effectively shifted the ground from Bose, since his main line of propaganda was that India should take advantage of Britain's difficulties to win independence. At the same time, Gandhi did not want to appear to be anti-Japanese just in case they were to become the new masters of Asia. Despite all this, India after 1945 was close to revolution, which was only forestalled by the granting of 'independence' and the treacherous leadership of the CPI in bringing about an end to the armed revolt of the peasantry in Tebanganana.

In the concluding chapter on the Indian economy, Jhansie shows that the status of India as a semi colonial, semi-feudal country has changed little since 1947, even if this fact is not recognised by the CPI (M), who regard the first stage of the national democratic revolution as having been completed. The main change has been the penetration of Soviet social imperialism into India, but while Jhansie acknowledges this, he does not treat it in any great detail. The final section of the book contains the programme of the CPI(ML), drawn up in 1970, a programme which the author acknowledges needs to be changed, especially over its position on China, but which correctly characterises Indian society to be semi-colonial, semi-feudal, in which the big Indian bourgeoisie are predominantly comprador in nature.

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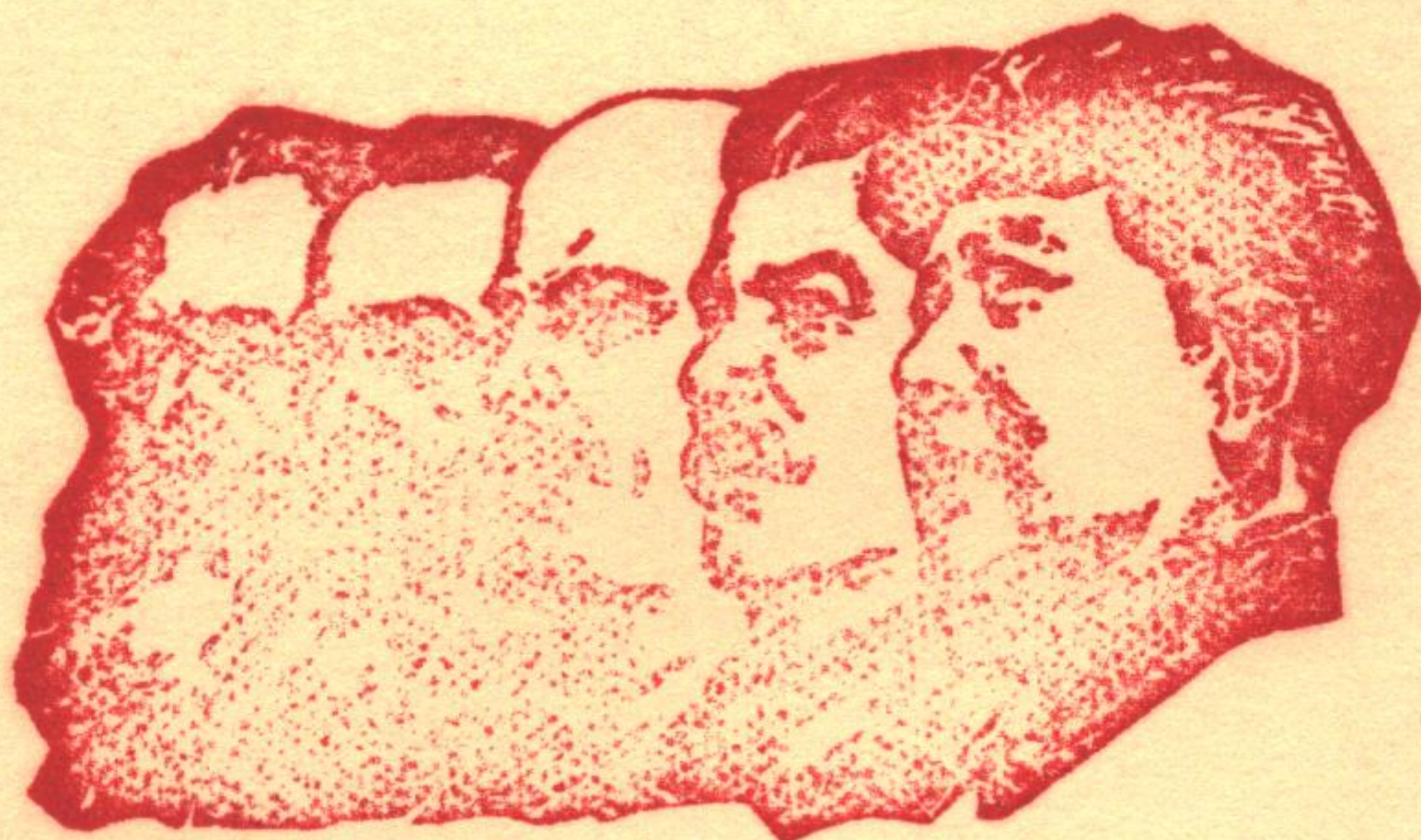
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