# INDOCHINA PEACE CAMPAIGN

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#### THE FUTURE OF IPC

The Detroit chapter of IPC apologizes for the lateness of our proposals on the future of IPC. We are encouraged however by the extent and seriousness of the discussion in the papers we have seen. Although there is clearly considerable diversity within IPC, the program proposals in particular suggest that we enter the critical forthcoming national meeting with high prospects for unity of action and program at its conclusion.

By way of introduction to our program and structure proposals, we wish to address four questions regarding the general situation which we consider to be the most important facing IPC as the theoretical and analytic basis for our program. They are the questions most often adressed, although not always in the same terms, by other papers and proposals.

We believe that the future of IPC is crucial. We oppose, however, what seems to be the prevailing view that "the movement is everything, the ultimate aim is nothing." (Bernstein) That is, we have no interest in perpetuating IPC for its own sake, nor out of a vague sense that the end of the war didn't exactly pesolve all the problems facing the U.S., the Indochinese, or for that matter, the people of the entire world. We believe that the ultimate aim is socialist revolution and that it is that objective against which strategies and programs must ultimately be evaluated. We are not saying that IPC is the vehicle to achieve socialist revolution. Quite the contrary. But its program in our view must not be incompatable with motion toward that general objective. Our reason is simple. Capitalist-Imperialism as we will attempt to explain further, is vastly more capable of creating problems for humankind than of solving them. It is an inherently destructive, exploitative, backward and rotten means of organizing society. It is not, in the final analysis, "reformable," although we must struggle resolutely to do so within the limits that are possible.

The four questions which we believe are most crucial are:

- 1) Everyone uses the term "imperialism" quite freely. What exactly is it?
- 2) Is there a general crisis of capitalism, and if so, what is the



relationship between it and the Indochinese victory and our strategy here is the U.S.

- 3) What is the role of the peace movement in the forthcoming period? Where must we focus our attention and be puepared to act?
- 4) What is the role of the state, that is the government, and what is our relationship to it. In particular, what is the role of the struggle for reforms in general and electoral activity, inside or outside the Democratic Party, in particular.

As much as possible, we have struggled within our chapter to apply the scientific method of Marxism-Leninism to these questions to guide us in analysis and proposals for action.

### WHAT IS IMPERIALISM?

The Indochinese, led by the Viet Nam Workers Party, were able to administer stunning defeats to Imperialism as represented by the Evench, Japanese and U.S., not merely because they have exceptional human spirit and are clever at cutwitting complex modern war technology. Equipped with the science of Marxism-Leninism, the Vietnamese understood capitalism and the colonial oppression which accompanies its present and final stage, that of Imperialism. As a result, they also understood the strategy necessary to defeat it. Their "solidarity of purpose" was provided essentially by their solidarity with Marxism-Leninism as manifested by the Viet Nam Workers Party. No other strategy has provided more than temporary relief from colonial oppression.

It is, of course, true to say that Viet Nam was no accident. Neither was the war in Korea, the liberation of China in 1949, the Second World War, the U.S. invasion of Santa Domingo, Teddy Roosefelt or John Kennedy's invasions of Cuba, or Hitler. Nor were any of the foregoing merely the result of a "policy" either.

We must probe deeper. Where did the "policy" come from? Since its been defeated so many times, why doesn't it go away? Can it be changed without changing the system which produced it? It it merely a set of bad ideas, an "imperial ideology" in the minds of some people who have somehow stumbled into power in our country? Our response to all of these questions is NO.

Imperialism, as Lenin pointed out more than 60 years ago in Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism, is a stage -- the final one -- in the development of capitalism, not a "policy" of some capitalists at some time and some place. In other words, beyond a certain point in its development, capitalism cannot but act in an imperial fashion. Its foreign"policy will always be imperial. Lenin defines Imperialism by the following five chapacteristics: (from Vol. 1, Selected Works, page 737)

- "1) The concentration of production and capital developed to such a stage that it creates monopolies which play a decisive role in economic life." (On the surface, this seems to be something with which nearly everyone agrees. Even the U.S. Senate thinks that there is too much economic power concentrated in the hands of the few. The cry 75 years ago was to bust the trusts and break up the monopolies. Some, such as Standard 011, were broken up. Lock what happened. Today, it is fashionable to focus on the "multi-national corporation" which is merely the contemporary form in which monopolies operate. They represent no qualitative change from the phenomenon Lenin observed 60 years ago. They are like a particular imperialist "policy" such as that toward Indochina, an "imperial ideology," the effect of economic reality, not the cause of it. Actually, the term is further misleading in that with some notable exceptions, so-called "multi-national corporations" are must plain old U.S. corporations operating wherever socialist revolution does not prevent them from operating. They do not transcend nation states any more than the bourgeoisie has ever transcended nation states, which is totally, as we shall discuss later in this paper. In other words, the view expressed in Ira's original paper that "the crisis of American policy has generalized from the published en unwinnable war in S.E. Asia to the difficulty of managing an increasingly unstable global economic system" is exactly the opposite of the truth. The truth, as we see it, is that the war in Indochina was a consequence of the contradictions built into Imperialism. It exacerbated the economic difficulties to be sure, but it did not create them.)
- "2) The merging of bank capital with industrial capital and the creation on the basis of 'finance capital' of a financial oligarchy." (Scratch a "multi-national corporation" and you'll find a bank or two or three. And it is in the banks that the fundamental decisions about the life, death and growth of corporations and cities (e.g. N.Y.C.) and other governmental units are made.)
- "3) The export of capital which has become extremely important as distinguished from the export of commodities." (It is true, of course that the U.S. and other capitalist countries export goods. This is not, however, the essence of imperialism. Imperialism results when the home or domestic market has been consolidated, a process which had been achieved by the later 1800's in this country. That means that so much surplus value -- that over and obove the amount necessary to barely sustain and recreate the working class -- has been extracted from the workforce that it can no longer be profitably invested at home as abroad -- if it can be invested at all. What begins to be exported when this happens is not just goods but capital itself, in search of a higher rate of return. Although capital takes the form of money, it is actually a relationship. Specifically, it is the relationship of ownership of the means of producing -- land, factories, machinery, tools, and raw materials -- by a small class, the bourgeoisie, so as to exploit the labor of and thus the people who actually create the products, the proleterist. The working class, deprived of any independent means of existence and by virtue of receiving in wages far less than the value of what they produce, thereby recreates the very relationship -- capital --

bear the brunt of imperialist wars, to cast off this yoke and to overthrow the bourgeoisie. It is in the struggle between these two tendencies that the history of the labour movement will now inevitably develop.

Despite the fact that "revolution is the main trend" of the 20th century, we remain in the ere of Imperialism. The victories of the Soviet people, the Chinese, the Albanians, the Indochinese, the Koreans, the Cubans, end the Mozambiquans have not yet altered the fact that Imperialism, although dying, waning and decaying is still dominant. Socialism, while ascendant, remains the secondary aspect, the wave of the future but not yet the dominant aspect of the present.

It is this reality which creates the basis for understanding the general crisis of capitalism.

# THE GENERAL CRISTS OF CAPITALISM

In a letter written in 1952, Joseph Stalin defined the general crisis of capitalism as follows:

The general crisis of the world capitalist system began in the period of the First World War, particularly due to the falling away of the Soviet Union from the capitalist system. That was the first stage of the general crisis. A second stage in the general crisis developed in the period of the second World War, especially after the European and Asian people's democracies fell away from the capitalist system. The first crisis, in the period of the First World War, and the second crisis, in the period of the Second World War, must not be regarded as separate unconnected and independent crises, but as stages in the development of the general crisis of the world capitalist system (neither should the victory of the Indochinese be regarded as an independent crisis)

Is the general crisis of capitalism only a political or only an economic crisis? Neither the one nor the other. It is a general, i.e., all around crisis of the world capitalist system, embracing both the economic and the political spheres. And it is clear that at the bottom of it lies the everlasting decay of the world capitalist economic system on the one hand, and the growing economic might of the countries which have fallen away from capitalism -- USSR, China and the other people's democracies -- on the other.

(J.V. Stalin, Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR, Peking Edition, p.58)

Capitalism, as Mark and Engels analyzed more than 100 years ago, is an inherently unstable, crisis-bound economic system. It is given to war and the periodic economic upheaval of over-production, known in bourgeois terms as "the business cycle." We must understand the general nature of capitalism as well as the particular. Most of the papers we have seen focus for too much on the particular effect of the Indochina War and for too little on the general nature of capitalism. They look at the microscope but not at the telescope. That ill-prepares us to function in a period in which there seems agreement that although Indochina will continue to be important, it will not be the "focal point" of anti-imperialist struggle.

Let us consider, for example, the question of jobs and defense spending. We fully and vigorously support the demand for jobs at the empanse of the military budget. We do not, however, have illusions that, whatever happens to the military budget, full employment is possible under capitalism. It is not, has not and never will be possible. From its outset, papitalism required a reserve army of the unemployed. Modern capitalism-imperialism, as a result of electronics, moveover, creates a permanent army of the unemployed -- most conspicuously reflected by the permanent "welfare" roles. There are people now and those yet unborn in the U.S. There who, under capitalism, can never and will never be gainfully employed, no matter what happens to the defense budget. Thus we support jobs with peace because it is correct to do so, not because we think that cutting the defense budget, in and of itself, creates jobs. Maybe it does and maybe it doesn't. The studies by FIRGIM and other groups "proving" the question one way of the other are not only self-contradictory but more importantly simply barking up the wrong tree.

The reason, of course, for a high defense budget in the first place is primarily a result of the growth of national liberation and socialist revolution -- not as a phoney means of propping up the domestic aconomy. The fact of the matter is, that communism does actually represent the only real threat to capitalism. It must be militarily, as well as politically and economically, opposed by the imperialists. It is as simple as that. As socialist revolutions and national liberation struggles succeed in more and more places, it becomes that much more expensive. Viet Nam and Horea are the most recent and obvious lessons of how, the expense can go.

Naturally, the capitalists, rather than absorb the expense themselves -- which would mean them not acting like capitalists and abandoning the drive for maximum profits -- attempt through various means to impose it upon the working class. Here they are very multi-national. Dollar devaluations, for example, represent the imposition of a part of the expense of Viet Mam on the Japanese and European working class.

At home the imposition of the burden of the crisis is represented by the drop in real wages, high prices, massive unemployment, speed-up and poor working conditions for those still employed, the further capitulations of trade union leaders to capital, the loss of social services combined with rising taxes, artificial "emergy shortages", ruinstion of the environment, wasteful destruction of needed commodities (spilling of milk and slaughter of calves), a more widespread atmosphere of social decadence (drug dependence

of all kinds, suicide, mental illness, crime and violence, sexual perversion, corruption and mysticism -- Guru Maharaji, Clockwork Orange, the Excorcist). Most of all, the burden represents an intensified attack on national dinorities, women and youth. Reforms gained in the past are wiped out overnight. "Experiments" which will later be tried on the entire working class, are first tried on the national minorities.

It is exactly these conditions which breed the cynicism, mistrust of politicians, confusion and despair and desperation in which the appeal of the "populism" of Hitler, this solini, Wallace and Tom Watson come to abound. IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO SAY THAT THE MERE KNOWLEDGE THAT THEY WENT WRONG IS USFFICIENT TO AVOID THE SUCCESS OF AN INEVITABLE PASCIST OFFENSIVE IN THIS COUNTRY. The bourgeoisie moves to institute fascism when the defense of its hagemony and control requires it. Fascism comes not all at once through a coup d'tat, but in bits and pieces and stages. Fascists prey upon the legitimate concerns of the masses. They are exceedingly edept at turning the "populist" rhotoric which inevitably emerges during periods such as the present, when Imperialism is forced to turn inward, to the advantage of furthering the fascist offensive. Fascism is not merely some set of popular "neutral" ideas floating around to be molded as we might like. but wather it is the political strategy of the ruling class under particular conditions in the general crisis of capitalism. The fascist offensive currently under way can be defeated. But certainly not by aligning ourselves with it. It is our view that although there were serious errors committed by communists in Germany, the decision of the reformists in Germany in the 1930's to ally themselves with the capitalists -- a la the democratic party here -- egainst the communists, was precisely the green light that the fascist forces in the bourgeoisie, personified by Hitler, meeded. Conversely, it was the decision by the reformist "third force" in Viet Nam to ally with the communists that ultimately helped bring an end to the fascist rule of Thieu end the liberation of south Viet Nam.

It is in this context that we must see the struggle for peace.

## THE ROLE OF THE PEACE MOVEMENT

Stalin has most succinctly set forth the context in which the peace movement functions as follows:

The object of the present-day peace movement is to rouse the masses of the people to fight for the preservation of peace and for the prevention of another world war. Consequently, the aim of this movement is not to overthrow capitalism and establish socialism -- it confines itself to the democratic aim of preserving peace. In this respect the present-day peace movement differs from the movement of the time of the First World War for the conversion of the imperialist war into civil war, since the latter conversion went further and pursued socialist aims.

"It is possible that is a definate conjuncture of circumstances the fight for peace will develop here of there into a fight for socialism. But then it will no longer be the present-day peace movement; it will be a movement for the overthrow of capitalism.

What is most likely is that the present day peace movement, as a movement for the preservation of peace, will, if it succeeds, result in preventing a particular war, in its temporary post-ponement, in the temporary preservation of a particular peace, in the resignation of a bellicose government and its suppression by another that is prepared temporarily to keep the peace. That, of course will be good. Very good....It will not be enough, because, for all the success of the peace movement, imperialism will remain, continue in force -- and consequently, the inevitability of wars will also continue in force.

(Stalin, Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR, Peking Edition, 1952, p. 36.)

We must consolidate the knowledge, experience and skill of the anti-war movement precisely because we know it will be needed again. It seems most likely that it will be needed first vis-a-vis Korea. But all of Latin America, the Middle East, Africa and Asia are places where the imperialists will be required sooner or later to militarily intervene, in a direct fashion. We know that in Iran, Rhodesia and elsewhere mercenaries are already fighting for the imperialists.

Any formal, direct intervention has the potential of becoming a nuclear and/or world war. Since the Indochina defeat for the imperialists there has been a marked escalation in the open discussion of the use of nuclear weapons as essential to U.S. strategy in this period. Make no mistake about it, one of the greatest achievements of the anti-war movement was preventing the use of nuclear weapons in Indochina.

It would be a tragic error for us to assume that because the Vietnamese have won that the Imperialist leapard has therefore changed his spots. Wounded -- at home and abroad -- he is more dangerous than ever before. We need only look to the Mayaguez incident, or a recent Harris poll, to understand the limited and temporary nature of IPC's and other groups gains around Indochina. The Congress, for example, will remain "anti-war" only so much as we continue and expand anti-war pressure directly and indirectly.

The Ford administration for the moment is a "temporary peace-keeping government." Nixon was ousted in large part so that such a government could be installed to accommodate the reality of defeat in Indochina. But we must guard against the view that as a result a "generation of peace" is possible. It is not.

The intrinsic conflict between Imperialism and socialist revolution and national liberation remains. War is merely the continuation of politics by other means. And politics is war without bloodshed. Peace is not merely the absence of war. The absence of formal state of violence at any given moment should not be taken as evidence of anything other than that we are in a phase of war without bloodshed. As Lemin said:

...the victory of Socialism in one country does not at one stroke elliminate all war in general. On the contrary, it presupposes such wars....Socialism cannot achieve victory simultaneously in all countries. It will achieve victory first in one or several countries, while the others will remain bourgeois or pre-bourgeais for some time. This must not only create friction, but a direct striving on the part of the bourgeoisie of other countries to crush the victorious proletariat of the socialist state.

(Lenin, On War and Peace - Three Articles, Peking Edition, p. 60)

It is for these reasons that we must vigourously defend those who have most courageously and probably most effectively fought for peace. We must demand universal, unconditional amnesty including the dropping of all war resistence charges, civil or military, conviction records, the upgrading of all bad discharges and the replacement of the present discharge system with a Single-Type-Discharge. We must defend the contribution of the resistance movement to ending the war. In fact it is resisters, particularly those in the military, who did more to end the war than the "diplomacy" of Henry Kissinger. We must also defend the right of the working class to refuse to participate in future anti-socialist, imperialist wars.

The peace movement must also combat the national, great-power chauvinism which is inevitable in an Imperialist country. As we saw in Germany, such chauvinism is intensified by the bourgeoisie, particularly fascists, following a military defeat. Although it might appear otherwise, the fact of having opposed the war against the Indochines people does not free us from national chauvinism. Most often this takes the form of white chauvinism. Although there is in many of the papers and proposals submitted regarding the future of IPC a new emphasis on domestic concerns, they are virtually devoid of any mention of the oppression of national minorities. There is nothing, for example, about the fascist, KKK attacks on busing, or the deportation of "illegal"aliens. Yet these "policies" follow directly from the direct oppression of colonies of the US such as Puerto Rico. Must oppressed people be some safe thousands of miles away before we can support their struggles? Is this because we derive so much more of our material well-being from those who are oppressed and exploited closer to home?

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE STATE, THAT IS THE GOVERNMENT, AND WHAT IS OUR RELATIONSHIP TO IT? IN PARTICULAR, WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE STRUGGLE FOR REFORMS IN GENERAL, AND ELECTORAL ACTIVITY INSIDE OR OUTSIDE THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY, IN PARTICULAR?

There is hardly space here for an extensive discussion of the questions posed above. They are questions which are among the most thoroughly discussed in the writings of Marxism-Leninism, and we are including a suggested reading list at the sonclusion of this section.

First we must consider the question of a basic understanding of the state. The bourgeois view is that the state is a neutral entity moderating the conflicts within society, which therefore can be held now by one, now by another group contending for its interests. The opposing view was put forward by Engels in 1884 in The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State. (Progress Publishers edition, p. 166) as follows:

The state is therefore, by no means a power forced on society from without...Rather, it is a product of society at a certain stage of development; it is the admission that this society has become entangled in an insoluable contradiction with itself, that it has split into erreconcilable antagonisms which it is powerless to dispel. But in order that these antagonisms, classes with conflicting economic interests, might not consume themselves and society in fruitless struggle, it becomes necessary to have a power seemingly standing above society that would alleviate the conflict, and keep it within the bounds of "order"; and this power arisen out of society, but placing itself above it, and alienating itself more and more from it is the state.

As distinct from the ... old order, the state frast divides its subjects according to territory...

The second distinguishing feature is the establishment of a public power which no longer directly coincides with the population organizing itself as an armed force. This special, public power is necessary, because a self-acting armed organization has become impossible since the split into classes....This public power exists in every state; it consists not merely of armed men, but also of material adjuncts, prisons and institutions of coercion of all kinds.... It may be very indignificant, almost infinitesmal, in societies where class antagonisms are still undeveloped and in out of the way places. It (the public power) grows stronger, however, in proportion as class antagonisms within the state become more acute, and as adjacent states become larger and more pupulous.

... The highest form of the state, the democratic republic (Engels is here discussing bourgeois partiamentary democracy such as in Britan, France, the U.S., etc. -- our addition) which under our modern conditions of society is more and more becoming an inevitable necessity and is the form of the state in which alone the last decisive struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie can be fought out...

In other words, "According to Marx, the state is an organ of class rule, an organ for the oppression of one class by another..." (Lenin, State and Revolution, in Selected Works, Vol. 2, p.291) As we can see from the present situation in Iddia or Chile, it maintains its parliamentary democratic form only as long as it suits the bourgeoisie to do so. It is clear that even if one does not accept this perspective on the role of the state, the decision to seek to join it by election or other means is an exceedingly serious one. There are circumstances when participation in the bourgeois government is quite appropriate.

We are also quite aware that the question of Tom Hayden's candidacy for the U.S. Senate in the California Democratic Party Primary is not now and never really was before IPC as a body. It is a <u>fait accompli</u> as the cover of <u>PEOPLE</u> magazine and the new IPC telephone number attest. Neverthe-less, the underlying political assumptions represented throughout a number of proposals, particularly those reflecting the same "public interest campaign" approach, merit some discussion.

In the first place, we believe that regarding electoral and congressional activity in general, we should not romanticize or idealize the congressional strategy of the anti-war struggle. It was correct for its condition, time and place. Congress will surely remain an appropriate areas for political struggle on a vast number of questions. But we need to remember that IPC was, as has been pointed out, in large part built on the "ruins" of the anti-war movement. That means that we were particularly restricted through no real choice of our own to a narrow range of tactical alternatives. We were, by misleadership and the successful intervention of the political police in the national anti-war movement, "contained" as it were.

It hardly follows, therefore, especially if the overall opportunities for political work are as abundant in this period as most people seem to think they are, that we should confine ourselves to the same arena's in the forthcoming period. The question must be re-examined. Congressional work as an end in itself merely repeats the dynamic of "the movement is everything, the ultimate aim is nothing." It follows even less that having already been pushed into a focus on Congress, we should go one step further and rush into the Democratic Party.

We could not disagree more with the view put forward in Tom Hayden's April letter that, "The Democratic Party (in California) is a working class or people's party in its base of five million voters." The fact is that the Democratic Party is a bourgeois political party ranging from George Wallace to Tom Hayden, which is significantly to the right of even the British Labor Party. The fact that it has a mass membership of people who have nowhere else to go says nothing about its real class character, political purpose or potential. To see it as a vehicle for "contending for power" is problematic, to say the least, on numerous counts. For one thing, presumably none of us is interested in contending for power per se. That goes on of course all the time and is easily done in all sorts of arenas. What we are

about, we thought, was contending for change, however we might define it -- socialism, the dictatorship of the proletariat, people's democracy or whatever.

Especially from the perspective on the state we argued earlier, we think the Democratic Party is not a particularly effective vehicle for contending for change. In the first place, Tom Hayden is not going to win the Senate primary. In the second, primary tactics of significantly improving the life of the majority of people, even under capitalism, do not consist of electing two, three many Tom Haydens, Gary Harts, Sam Browns, Julien Bonds, etc. to legislative bodies. The Hubert Humphreys of today are the Tome Haydens of yesteryear. Nor does the primary tactic consist of disillusioning the masses with the manufacture meager results from such victories or the failure to even attain them.

The recent AFL-CIO rally in Washington, D.C. is only one example of the already existing state of disillusionment with the most "left", most majority, "veto-proof do-nothing Congress in U.S. history. The mere creation of disillusionment with parliamentary democracy through the experience alone of the masses, as we can already see, is as likely to give impetus and fuel to the fascist offensive as to real reform.

The facts are that we must look at both sides of the illusion of "contending for power." On the surface, it appears to be contending for power against reactionary democrats and republicans and other bad and masty people. But as the struggle within IPC around R.U. shows, that is not the only adversary being contended with. This is to be expected. As Lenin said:

Socialism has grown into a force and throughout the civilized world has already upheld its right to existence. It is noty fighting for power...

("Reformism and the Russian Social Democratic Movement," in Against Revisionism, Progress Publishers, 1970, p. 48)

Not only is this true internationally, it is true within the U.S. movement as well. For all of the errors, weaknesses, incorrect political lines -- as well as that which is and has been correct -- the most significant trend within the "left" and increasingly the proletariat in recent years has been the trend toward Marxism-Leninism. Reformism and alliances from within the "left" with the bourgeoisie is always a response not only to a worsening in the objective conditions of the masses, but to the growth of the revolutionary movement as well.

We fully support many struggles for reforms. When won, for as long as they can be held, they improve the life of the working class. They are essential to the growth of any movement. In principle, we exclude no arena or tactic of struggle, certainly not Congress. We think, however, that perpetuating illusions about reforms, both as to whether they can be achieved and what is accomplished thereby, as well as perpetuating alliances with the most reactionary forces against socialists, is exceedingly dangerous and incorrect in this period or any other.

It is our view that the peace movement should consolidate its recent victories in such a way as to move the entire peace movement forward, politically, and in terms of the actual expansion of the peace movement. And it is particularly important at this time that the peace movement, including IPC, clearly understand to the same degree as the "third force" in Viet Nam understood, who are our friends and who are our enemies, and what kinds of alliances are in the best interests of the working people in the U.S. and internationally.

It is with the above analysis and positions in mind that we offer the following program and structure proposals to the national meeting for the future of IPC.

#### READING LIST FOR LAST SECTION:

Engels: Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State

Lenin: State and Revolution

Lenin: "Markism and Reformism" in Against Revisionism

Lenin: What is to be Done

Lenin: Left-wing Communism, An Infantile Disorder