

DETROIT REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT RECORDS

BOX 13 OF 16

FOLDER 14

CL REPORT POPULISM

FASCISM IN DISGUISE

EXPOSE PHONY POPULISM AS FASCISM IN DISGUISE!

In March 1971 there appeared in the People's Tribune (volume 3, number 3) an article entitled "American Populism: Fascism in Disguise." We pointed out that the USNA imperialists and their flunkys were coming forth with a new political line with which they hoped to appeal to the increasingly dissatisfied and rebellious working class and other oppressed strata within the USNA state. The new line boiled down to, "Soak the rich." Of course, demagogues like George Wallace were even then old hands at championing the rights of "the little guy" (if he's Anglo) against "the rich." But the corporation lawyer Nixon calling for "a new American revolution," as he did in the 1971 State of the Union message? This was something rather new.

Since then the thing has developed. Even the long-obscuré term we used in the article, "populism," has been resurrected by the bourgeoisie. One example. Senator Fred Harris (Oklahoma), in an article called "The Real Populism Fights Unequal Wealth," ends by asking the question, "Will we permit the 'encroachment of the powerful few upon the rights of the many?' The new populism's answer is no." (1)

As Marxist-Leninists we are not too inspired by Harris's or George McGovern's new populism, which echoes a political movement which was hopelessly compromised and discredited 70 years ago. Nor does the big USNA imperialist bourgeoisie seem to fear the "soak the rich" "power to the people" line. For example, from an article in the New York Times called "No Radical Economics via McGovern":

"The economist for a major American business group and the head of a big mutual fund organization said at an international gathering today that they did not see radical economic changes in store for the US if Senator George McGovern was elected president.

"But the economist, Albert T. Sommers of the Conference Board, asserted that the business community would be 'more comfortable' and the stock market would perform better if President Nixon were re-elected.

"Both Howard Stein, chairman of the Dreyfus Corporation, and Mr. Sommers, responding to questions on the financial outlook at a meeting sponsored by the Conference Board, explained that views of presidential candidates tended to moderate after they won elections." (2)

Even before this, McGovern, on May 22, had attempted to make the imperialists feel more "comfortable" with him by running a "full page ad in the Wall Street Journal to explain to businessmen what his tax proposals" (supposedly higher taxes on corporations and wealthy individuals) "would not mean." (3)

That there still may be doubt among businessmen as to McGovern's politics and economics we can only attribute to the hide-bound stupidity of certain particularly philistine sections of the bourgeoisie. We are far more interested in the more intelligent (and dangerous) imperialists who are using the "new populism" for their own purposes, to attack the working class. In order to understand why they are using the "anti-richman" line in such a heavy way at the present time we must understand where we are now at historically. In addition, in order to expose the populist line and understand how to fight it in a really mass way (an increasingly important task for communists), we must have an understanding of the social motion of populism, including its historical development. To do this properly we have to go back to Lenin. As far as we know USNA populism has never been examined from a Marxist-Leninist angle, except by the Communist League, and our work till now has necessarily been only skeletal. In the history of the working-

class movement in this country only the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA) was ever in a position even to attempt to analyze populism, but it was so bogged down in the subjective, petty-bourgeois swamp of populism itself that its feeble efforts came to nothing. The stock CPUSA document on the subject, Anna Rochester's The Populist Movement in the USA (1943), is a piece of hack journalism that reads like a bourgeois highschool textbook. Anna Rochester does not make the slightest attempt to analyze what the Populist movement was and what it became except that it was mainly farmers against monopolies. This failure is not accidental. Had the Party honestly shown the class-base and social motion of populism it would have had to expose itself (with its American exceptionalism, its anti-monopoly coalition, etc) as populist. But we will get into that later. For now we will merely say that this paper is an attempt to develop and deepen our comrades' and friends' understanding of the extremely important question of populism, and of how the bourgeoisie and their "working-class" flunkeys, the CPUSA revisionists, are using it to try and disrupt and destroy the arising and developing revolutionary working class movement in the USNA.

THE CURRENT RISE OF POPULISM

There is a growing crisis inside the USNA. This crisis is being brought on by the economic contradictions of capitalism in general, and the growing revolutionary movement in the colonies and semi-colonies and the growing contradictions among the imperialist countries in particular. The crisis is just beginning to mean for the vast majority of the people in the USNA a great impoverishment and lowering of living standards. The fascist wage-price (really just wage) freeze, high unemployment, rising prices, the devaluation of the dollar, the gold crisis - these are just some of the ways in which the growing crisis is manifesting itself. In order for the USNA imperialists to continue making maximum profits they must shift the burden of the growing difficulties more and more onto the backs of the working class. The reaction to the impoverishment and fascist attacks has been spontaneous fightbacks by many strata of the working class, which are resisting the best they can but which at the same time lack genuine revolutionary leadership, that is, a real Marxist-Leninist communist party. The present "leaders" of the working class are selling it out.

The class is more and more rejecting the present structure and demanding changes which will guarantee concrete, palpable results. Seeing the growing social consciousness of the masses, that is, their growing awareness that the rich are getting richer because the poor are getting poorer, the USNA imperialists are putting forth their so-called "third alternative" - one that is neither for the present rich, monopoly capitalists, the imperialists, nor for (supposedly even worse) the communists. This third alternative promises "the people" a new way of life, one where "the people," the majority, rule and obtain the things they need through a fairer distribution of the wealth and a return to them of the "power" which they once had but which has been "usurped" (as McGovern said in a speech on July 7, 1972). This third alternative is phony populism. Its purpose is to oppose the class struggle and replace it by a phony "popular" movement whose real aim is not to reform the system but to pave the way for fascism.

Populism has many forms and appearances. Wallace is a populist par excellence. He champions the "little guy" versus the rich, snobbish, Wall Street bankers, etc. McGovern uses populism with his tax reform programs, guaranteed annual income for every individual, etc. Nader's "consumerism" is populist, as are all the slogans that set "the poor against the rich," that call for "a People's Party," "all power to the people," and so on and so forth. Populism does away with classes and instead matches the "poor" ("the people" - workers, lumpens, petty-bourgeois and even some bigger bourgeois) against the "rich" "usurpers." Why does the imperialist bourgeoisie dig populism?

We can see why if we remember that fascism can't and doesn't come to power by openly calling for "the open terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinist and most imperialist elements of finance capital. (4) On the contrary, fascism must appear to be what it isn't, it must appear as its very opposite, as a mass movement of and in behalf of the vast majority. "What is the source of the influence of fascism on certain sections of the masses? Fascism is able to attract the masses because it demagogically appeals to their most urgent needs and demands." (5) It is precisely upon these most urgent needs and demands of the working class that the appeal of the present populist movement in all its aspects rests. Populists such as Wallace and McGovern come from the right politically, but use left-sounding slogans to get support. It is these left-sounding slogans, the increasingly revolutionary (or really pseudo-revolutionary) rhetoric, the militant popular demagogy that set the populist apart from the ordinary bourgeois liberal. There is no difference in class stand. The extreme case with which an ordinary liberal like Teddy Kennedy can ask (as he did a year or so ago) the populist question, "Why should a poor man fight a rich man's war?" and appeal to the masses in a populist way illustrates this. In fact, the increasing use of populist rhetoric by liberals and straightforward reactionaries alike (Loren's "new American revolution", etc) shows that populism is really on the rise. The imperialists understand perfectly well the growing social consciousness of the masses due to the decay of imperialism, and are consciously trying to cover up the class struggle with vagueness and confusion and hence to keep the working class under the leadership of bourgeois politicians and other demagogues. The imperialists do not mind being hated by the masses, but they do mind being overthrown and replaced by the dictatorship of the proletariat. Hence the third alternative, which tells us we can turn back the wheel of history to a time of "free enterprise" and petty production when "anybody could strike it rich" - or at least to a more recent time when USNA imperialism held greater sway in the world and the working class was more heavily bribed.

"This dream of a third alternative is in fact illusory. On the one side, it is the echo of the conceptions of the past period, of the period of liberal capitalism, which was already perishing with the advent of imperialism and which cannot be revived when the conditions that gave rise to it have passed away, in the stage of the extreme decay of capitalism and of the extreme intensification of the class struggle." (6)

The imperialists peddle the third alternative on the grounds that under capitalism (even in this period of extreme decay) "the people" really have strength and power if we decide to use it. Or else if we take the power we used to have back from the "usurpers" (McGovern, et al), "the powerful few" who are "encroaching on the rights of the many." What tool do the people have for doing this? The democratically constructed system of government - the state. The rotten CPUSA says exactly the same things as the outspoken anti-communist populists, mainly on the theme of our regaining freedom, rights, etc, from the usurpers. Charlene Mitchell, talking about the freeing of Angela Davis, informs us that "Angela's freedom is directly linked to our ability to restore basic fundamental democratic rights." (7) What rights she is talking about "restoring," and when did we have them in the first place, remain the CPUSA's secret. Similarly, thirty years ago, Aara Rochester was telling us that "Populism sought to overthrow the 'invisible government' by monopoly and finance and to recapture (?) for the masses of people - workers, farmers, small producers, small businessmen and professionals - the control of the government." (8) Rochester and the CPUSA "forget" of course that the USNA was founded on capitalism (and on a very brutal form of capitalism, capitalist slavery, to boot) and that to talk about the masses ever having had "control of the government" (which they must have if they are going to recapture

it) is to prove oneself either a fool or a knave. The revisionists are both. Their line of recapturing and restoring completely jibes with their third-grade textbook historical outlook on their supraclass heroes like Jefferson, Franklin, Lincoln, Douglass, etc etc - not bourgeois, according to the Party, but "democrats" - in the abstract - leaders of "the masses of people" when they had "control of the government."

We can easily see that Spiro Agnew was wrong when he said that the liberals were tailing behind the Communist Party USA. On the contrary, it is the CP which is tailing behind the liberals - and populists.

Lenin, speaking of the Russian populists, the Narodniks, makes short work of their line on the power of the masses in capitalist society: He says they talk

"...as though strength were already on the side of the working people and their ideologists, and all that remained was to indicate the 'immediate,' the 'expedient,' etc, methods of using this strength.

"This is a sickening lie from beginning to end." (9)

At the present time, what lies behind this lie and its tellers is fascism.

"The characteristic feature of fascism is that, as a consequence of the shock suffered by the capitalist economic system and of special objective and subjective conditions, the bourgeoisie - in order to hinder the development of the revolution - utilizes the discontent of the petty and middle, urban and rural bourgeoisie and even certain sections of the declassed proletariat, for the purpose of creating a reactionary mass movement."

"In periods of acute crisis for the bourgeoisie, fascism resorts to anti-capitalist phraseology, but after it has established itself at the helm of the state, it casts aside its anti-capitalist rattle, and discloses itself as a terrorist dictatorship of big capital." (10)

But this is not the end. The fascists must then attempt to stabilize their rule by fulfilling their promises to at least certain strata of the working class and other groupings from which they must get support to survive the revolutionary onslaught of the vast majority. Comprador fascist regimes such as in South Vietnam, Spain, South Africa, Brazil etc can survive only as long as the USNA imperialists pay the bills. But who will pay the USNA fascists' bills except the peoples of the colonies and semi-colonies and the most exploited and oppressed workers within the Anglo-American nation itself? In other words, the USNA imperialists have to and will continue to have to expand their base of bribery by trying to further enslave and re-enslave the colonies and semi-colonies. They are preparing for new wars of fascist aggression now principally through use of their weapon, white chauvinism, the principal ideology of aggressive USNA fascism. But further. One of the most fundamental aspects of USNA populism, fascism's disguise, is both historically and at the present time white chauvinism, (or what is incorrectly referred to as "racism"), although often (in the case of Negro, Puerto Rican, Mexican national minority populists, etc) white chauvinism must necessarily manifest itself in terms of its opposite, bourgeois nationalism. We will explain this point more when we get to the CPUSA's populism and its use of "racism." But the intimate connection between populism and white chauvinism should be clear to everyone. Wallace is the most obvious example, but there are thousands of others, for example the International Ladies Garment Workers Union "buy American" campaign, where they set the "American worker" against the "cheap foreign labor" from Korea, Taiwan, Japan, etc and tell us to "buy American" because its the only way us poor folks can keep our jobs, etc etc ad nauseum.

We must oppose and expose phony populism. We must see it as social motion toward fascism. We must ceaselessly uncover the real class contradictions hidden under populist demagogy and point out the real, revolutionary alternative to this motion. Proletarian internationalism and the dictatorship of the proletariat alone will provide this alternative. To fight for them on a scale that can really influence the masses and enable us to lead the class struggle we must build a communist party worthy of the name.

POPULISM IN RUSSIA

At this point we would like to show the Leninist views on populism or Narodism (an exact equivalent in Russian of the word populism, Narod, like the Latin word populus, means "people"). This will give us a good base for understanding the class basis and historical motion of USNA populism.

Firstly, why was the struggle against Narodism, the first major struggle that Lenin waged, necessary for the formation of an independent proletarian revolutionary party of a new type? The struggle was waged "at a time when no social-democratic movement in Russia yet existed. (In the mid-1890s) It was first necessary to prepare the theoretical, ideological groundwork for such a movement. The chief ideological obstacle to the spread of Marxism and of the social-democratic movement was the Narodnik views which at that time prevailed among the advanced workers and the revolutionary-minded intelligentsia." (1) In The Development of Capitalism in Russia, The Economic Content of Narodism, What The Friends of the People Are and How They Fight against the Social-Democrats, The Heritage We Renounce, etc, Lenin dealt the Narodniks blows from which they never could recover. Again and again he exposes the economic and social motion of society and how the Narodniks were trying to hold history back.

"Narodism, which stands for levelling out the peasantry...is 'regressive' because it desires to keep capital within those medieval forms that combine exploitation with scattered, technically backward production and with personal pressure on the producer."

Narodism seeks to stop the differentiation of the peasantry into different classes, a differentiation in which the minority become rich peasants, capitalist peasants (employers of others' labor power), and the majority become increasingly more impoverished and hence rural proletarians or semi-proletarians, migrant workers or sharecroppers, etc. Whereas under feudalism the countryside was (in terms of the peasant masses) rigidly stratified and socially static, under capitalism rapid transitions take place which leave a few rich and the majority worse off than before. Narodism is clearly the ideology of the petty-bourgeois peasantry trying to stem the tide of its disintegration (that is, its differentiation into bourgeoisie and proletariat, under the irresistible influence of the towns, the market). It is a petty-bourgeois negation of the inevitable and historically progressive development and consolidation of capitalist rule, based on the rapid development and improvement of the productive forces resulting in a potentially inexhaustible source of well-being for the whole of society once the whole of society is actually in control and in a position to utilize these productive forces. It is a negation of (most importantly) the class struggle, the very thing which, with the victory of the proletariat, will ensure the most rapid development of the productive forces in behalf of the whole society, the masses of toilers. Narodism, in short, is the negation of the role of the proletariat and the proletarian dictatorship, the only force on Earth capable of suppressing the overthrown exploiters and building socialism. Narodism was a reaction to the spread of capitalism on the part of the small farmers and handicraftsmen, who were losing their land and tools and becoming proletarianized.

How the original populist movement in the USNA was similar to its Russian counterpart we shall see in a moment. But first let us sample the inexhaustible treasury of Lenin on Narodism and try to sum up his analysis.

The essence of Narodism lies "in representing the interests of the small producer." (13) Lenin describes the socialist theories of the petty-bourgeois populists as "absolutely reactionary inasmuch as they claim to be socialist theories." (14) The reason for this lies not only in that they try to roll back the wheels of history, but also in that they obscure the class struggle. "They are reactionary, lastly, because they simply cannot understand the necessity for a struggle, a desperate struggle of the working people themselves for their emancipation." (15) "They are reactionary in depicting our state as something standing above classes and therefore fit and capable of rendering serious and honest aid to the exploited population." (16) The Narodniks believed they could attain utopia by fighting to reform the system, by fighting against the abuses of capitalism, but not against the capitalist system itself (which they often denied even existed in Russia). Their influence among the revolutionaries and working class in general (the majority of whom had just recently left the farm) had to be broken in order for a party to be built that could lead the class out of the stage of social consciousness to the higher stage of class consciousness and class conscious revolt.

Lastly, we should mention a particularly obnoxious but important aspect of Narodism, that is, its sentimental, idealist, romantic, philistine view of the past - that presumably idyllic, folksy, patriarchal past that never existed in the way that Narodniks saw it but which they nonetheless wanted to go back to. Lenin compares the reactionary Narodniks of the 1890s with the great bourgeois democrats (Chernachevsky, Herzen, etc) of the 1860s, whose "heritage" the Narodniks claimed to represent:

"Even more at variance with this tradition (of the 60s) is Narodism's idealization and over-embellishment of the countryside. This false idealization, which desired at all costs to see something specific in our rural system, something quite unlike the rural system in every other country in the period of pre-capitalist relations, is in naked contradiction to the traditions of the sober and realistic heritage. The wider and more deeply capitalism developed, the more distinctly did the countryside display the contradictions common to every commodity-capitalist society, the more and more glaring did the antithesis stand out between the Narodniks' honey talk about the peasant's 'community spirit,' 'artel spirit,' etc., on the one hand, and the actual division of the peasantry into a rural bourgeoisie and a rural proletariat on the other, and the more rapidly did the Narodniks, who continued to look upon things with the eyes of the peasant, change from sentimental romanticists into ideologists of the petty bourgeoisie, because in modern society the small producer changes into a commodity producer.... Better stagnation than capitalist progress - this, essentially, is every Narodnik's attitude to the countryside...." (17)

This philistine sentimentality about a past that never existed is the hallmark of the petty bourgeoisie. Keep in mind Anna Rochester's sympathetic account of the Populists trying to "recapture" "the control of the government" for "the masses of people." Needless to say the opposite side of this sentimental coin is fear of progress, of revolution, of the working class and its dictatorship. Let us quote what Engels has to say about these petty-bourgeois (he is speaking of the Proudhonists, but it could just as well apply to the populists, Russian and USNA):

"27 years ago I described in The Conditions of the Working Class in England the main features of just this process of driving workers from hearth and home as it took place in the 18th Century in England. The infamies of which the landowners and factory-owners were guilty in so doing, and the deleterious

effects, material and moral, which this expulsion inevitably had on the workers concerned in the first place, are there also described as they deserve. But could it ever enter my head to regard this, which was in the circumstances an absolutely necessary historical process of development, as a retrogression 'below the savages?' Impossible! The English proletarian of 1872 is on an infinitely higher level than the rural weaver of 1772 with his 'hearth and home.' Will the troglodyte with his cave, the Australian aborigine with his clay hut, and the Indian with his hearth ever accomplish a June insurrection and a Paris Commune?" (18)

Or an October Revolution? Will the petty-bourgeois troglodytes of the CPUSA ever succeed in leading the working class anywhere but into fascism? They couldn't - even if they wanted to.

POPULISM IN THE USNA

Now let us go back in history to show what populism was originally in the USNA. On the basis of this we will understand why the present populist movement is a phony populist movement. But before doing so we should state, so there will be no misunderstanding, that we are not, when we compare Russian and USNA populism, saying that the two social systems were identical. In a letter to the Russian Danielson in 1893, Engels, talking about an article by Mr. B. V. Struve on the question of developing capitalism in Russia, states:

"I must agree with him in this one point, that for me, too, the present capitalistic phase of development in Russia appears an unavoidable consequence of the historical conditions as created by the Crimean War, the way in which the change of 1861 in agrarian conditions was accomplished, and the political stagnation in Europe generally. Where he is decidedly wrong is in comparing the present state of Russia with that of the United States in order to refute what he calls your pessimistic views of the future. He says the evil consequences of modern capitalism in Russia will be as easily overcome as they are in the United States. There he quite forgets, that the US are modern, bourgeois, from the very origin; that they were founded by petits bourgeois and peasants who ran away from European feudalism to establish a purely bourgeois society. Whereas in Russia we have a ground-work of a primitive communistic character, a pre-civilization Gentilesellschaft (a form of tribal society based on the gens, joint family), crumbling to ruins, it is true, but still serving as the groundwork, the material upon which the capitalistic revolution (for it is a real social revolution) acts and operates. In America, Geldwirtschaft (money economy) has been fully established for more than a century, in Russia Naturalwirtschaft (natural economy) was all but exclusively the rule. Therefore it stands to reason that the change, in Russia, must be far more violent, far more incisive, and accompanied by immensely greater sufferings than it can be in America." (19)

Keeping this important difference in mind, however, we are completely justified in comparing Russian and USNA populism, which were both ideological expressions of the petty, mainly agricultural producers during the rise, extension and consolidation by the petit bourgeoisie of their home market. "Populism in the US was rooted primarily in the farmers and other small producers and traders - classes which had dominated economic life (?) until they were oppressed and displaced by the growth of industry." (20) The Granger movement of the farmers against the railroads and other monopolies from the 1870s on; the Greenback movement which demanded more (cheaper) money in circulation to facilitate debt payments and commodity sales; the Freesilver movement of the 1880s and 1890s; the People's Party (the Populists) and the election of many Populists to state and federal offices - all had their

base in the petty bourgeoisie, all protested the ruin of the small producers by the monopolies and banks which were rapidly being consolidated into modern USNA imperialism. These movements were all retrogressive in the sense of trying to hold back the development of history. Like the Narodniks, who were Russian exceptionalists - they believed that Russia could remain non-capitalist or that it could "skip" capitalism - the USNA populists were "American exceptionalists". What happened to them? Representing a disintegrating class, the populists disintegrated with it. The majority were co-opted into the Democratic Party which demagogically appealed to the "farm vote" while all the time being the tool of big capital. A minority, the more discontented, went over to the Socialist Party and finally to the CPUSA, where their descendants to this day carry out their populist policies (disguised as Marxism). It is no accident that the core of the Party's program is "anti-monopoly coalition" instead of the dictatorship of the proletariat (a bogey nowhere to be found in their New Program of 1970). Nor is it an accident that a current CPUSA pamphlet (by Victor Perlo) is entitled, populistically, "Robbing the Poor to Fatten the Rich," or that the principal Party tactic at this time is building a "Politics of People's Action," of building, in fact, a new "people's party." This is nothing but the same old greasy populism with some watery "Marxism" poured on to make it more palatable. "The CP is tied by a thousand financial, social and political threads to the liberal Anglo-American bourgeoisie." (21) This is why they changed the name of their east coast paper from the Daily Worker to the Daily World. "Worker" is sectarian, and because the CPUSA talks about the working class only as one more element in the syndicalist cabal they propose as their anti-monopoly coalition. They are just like their ancestors, the original populists, who welcomed the support of the industrial proletariat in the 80s and even put some "workers'" demands in their platform, but who nonetheless represented a different class altogether.

The populism of the late 1800s and early 1900s within the USNA can and should be compared with Russian Narodism of the same period. Both were characterized by exceptionalism, Russian and "American." Here is Stalin on the Narodniks:

"First, the Narodniks asserted that capitalism was something 'accidental' in Russia, that it would not develop, and that therefore the proletariat would not grow and develop either.

"Secondly, the Narodniks did not regard the working class as the foremost class in the revolution. They dreamed of attaining socialism without the proletariat. They considered that the principal revolutionary force was the peasantry - led by the intelligentsia - and the peasant commune, which they regarded as the embryo and foundation of socialism.

"Thirdly, the Narodniks' view of the whole course of human history was erroneous and harmful. They neither knew nor understood the laws of the economic and political development of society. In this respect they were quite backward. According to them, history was made not by classes, and not by struggle of classes, but by outstanding individuals - 'heroes' - who were blindly followed by the masses, the 'mob,' the people, the classes." (22)

When we compare these main errors of the Russian Narodniks with those of the USNA populists we find many similarities.

Firstly, the original populists of the 1870s and 80s viewed monopoly of the home market and the squeezing out of the small producer not as an inevitable development of the economic structure of capitalist society, as a progressive development, but as a deviation, something which could and should be stopped.

Second, nowhere did the populists of the USNA see the proletariat - the class that grows and develops precisely as a result of the growth and development of capitalist production - as the leading class, the class under whose leadership society will break the fetters of capitalist relations of production and move forward. On the contrary, the populists thought that the ruined, pushed out, declassed, disintegrating petty-bourgeois strata were in themselves (and not as future proletarians) the real revolutionary force.

Third, the USNA populists, like their Russian counterparts, believed that individuals alone make history, that "good" individuals, once in office, could be capable of helping "the little guy" or at least of forcing the government to do so. Hence the bourgeois belief on the part of the populists that Ben Tillman and Tom Watson in their day and McGovern and Chisolm etc in ours, simply by their personal integrity (??) - Chisolm is "unbought and unbossed" etc - could take on the rich in behalf of the people.

But our analysis of the original USNA populist movement will be inadequate if we simply compare it to Russian Narodism without discussing the particular social and historical environment in which the former grew and developed and turned into its opposite. As the Communist League Negro National Colonial Question points out, the populist movement came about during the period of reconstruction after the Civil War.

"...The Northern finance capitalists were faced with the delicate task of defeating the enemy (the southern planters) politically without disturbing the existing capitalist property relations. They found the answer in the Populist movement. Here, 'poor' people were thrown into the struggle against the 'rich' without any consideration as to class and history. Thus a political front was skillfully built that threw the energies of the ex-slaves, poor Anglo-Americans and the free Negroes against the existing power of the landlords."

During the early period of the Populist movement it was necessary for the Northern bourgeoisie to some extent to push for Anglo-Negro unity.

"The democratic, anti-monopoly Populist movement that reached its high point just before the counter-revolution was led, in the South, by such men as Ben Tillman and Tom Watson. These so-called leaders were opportunist vacillating men who constantly compromised with the landlords while trying to fight them. The most crucial and decisive question was the question of the unity of the Negro and Anglo-American masses. Despite all the speeches to the contrary, Watson, Tillman et al, never moved to do away with Negro segregation in the Farmers' Alliance. The only outcome of a revolutionary mass movement led by vacillating, petty-bourgeois leaders was the fascist drive.

"Just as the Populist movement was led by Tillman and Co. when the monopolies needed to crush the landlords, so the 'revolt of the poor whites' was also led by Tillman and Co. when there was the need to crush Populism and especially the Negro masses." (24)

Originally a democratic upsurge of the masses, the Populist movement became fascist. Since the League understands the ideological and social threads connecting populism with the bourgeoisie we can see why. When the Northern bourgeoisie needed a certain amount of unity among the masses, the populists to a certain extent pushed for unity. When the Northern bourgeoisie needed to crush the Negro people and with them all the oppressed, the populist leaders openly pushed rabid white chauvinism and fascism.

The CPUSA, "analyzing" the exact same historical events, 'is totally unable and unwilling to understand the change that took place in the Populist movement. The CP sees the fascization of the movement as a quirk. Besides referring the reader to the inconsistencies and vacillations of Foster in his characterizations of Watson and Tillman in The Negro National Colonial Question, let us quote a couple of examples of Anna Rochester's "analysis" of the populists:

"Even in these earlier years (the 90s), his fellow members of the little Populist caucus were realizing that Tom (Watson) was 'difficult,' but they never dreamed that fourteen years later he would - still under the populist banner - demand that Negroes be excluded from political life; that in 1910 he would not only return to the Democratic fold but work with the Georgia party machine of bankers and industrialists, while he threw his energies into poisonous hatred of Negroes, Catholics and Jews." (25)

"While the People's Party recognized from several angles the importance of protecting the Negro vote, as a decisive factor in the struggle against the Bourbon Democrats, there is no clear indication that the Populists were prepared to make political equality for the Negro people a major issue. White populists in the South seem to have had little understanding of racial discrimination as essentially a crime against the democratic principles which they professed." (26)

The "difficulty" of certain individuals, "little understanding of racial discrimination as essentially a crime" on the part of others - this is CPUSA analysis. One more:

"But the 'paramount issue' raised by the Democrats in 1900 was opposition to the imperialist expansion which in 1898 had reached a new stage of development with the war against Spain. They overlooked, of course, the Venezuelan episode of 1895 when a Democrat, President Cleveland, had stretched the Monroe Doctrine almost to the point of war against Great Britain, with his assertion that 'Today the US is practically sovereign on this continent, and its fiat is law upon the subjects to which it confines its interposition.' And neither Democrats, Republicans, nor Populists seemed to grasp the connection between our imperialist advance over subject peoples and the increasing power of monopoly at home. The inner relationship of domestic and foreign policy was not yet clear." (27) (Emphasis ours)

Not imperialism, but the lack of "clarity" on the part of the good imperialists is the enemy. This is indeed the philistine's-eye-view of history. No wonder the Party, even before it became totally corrupt, was completely unable to explain anything.

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Comparing early USNA populism with Russian Narodism we can see its reactionary character, its obscuring of the class struggle, the nature of the state and the need for "a struggle, a desperate struggle of the working people for their own emancipation," as Lenin says. Although at the beginning the populist movement had a democratic content, in the course of the enslavement of the Negro Nation it lost even this progressive aspect and became reactionary not only economically but politically.

Today, is there any possibility of populism having a progressive content? No. First, there is no large class of small producers who are in a life and death struggle with monopoly capitalism. Most of the small-scale production that exists is allowed to exist by the imperialists for the sole purpose of providing them with a reactionary base. The small shopkeepers, small farmers and other petty bourgeois in general stand in opposition to the working class and are

under their thumb ideologically as well as economically. Therefore the slogans, calls, programs, parties, movements etc which play on the populist traditions of the past do not have as their origin a definite class other than the bourgeoisie itself, and are in this respect phony. Second, and more important, the new-style populism does in fact originate with the bourgeoisie and their flunkeys - the Wallaces, Harrises, McGoverns, etc, and the Communist Party USA. In no way does it represent the spontaneous, democratic upsurge of the masses. On the contrary, it represents the conscious opposition by the imperialists to the spontaneous movement of the working class, instinctively revolutionary but not yet fully conscious itself. The imperialists allow the McGoverns and Wallaces to speak out demagogically against both "the rich" and the communists. Under the pretext of fighting both the Wallaces and McGoverns develop a movement to kill off or buy off the real revolutionary leaders of the working class while leaving the imperialists and their state intact, weakening the class further and preparing the groundwork for the coming to power of open fascism.

At this point we must ask the question, What is the material base for this newtype phony populism in the USNA? Generally speaking, the objective reason for the imperialists' past ability to dull and cover up the class contradictions within the USNA has been the enslavement of the colonial and semi-colonial world and the bribery of the working class (not to mention other strata) on the basis of the superprofits from the colonies. Everyone, no matter who he is and how little he has, is bribed both materially and socially over the colonial peoples outside the USNA in general and the Anglo-American nation in particular. For the workers (mainly Anglo) and people in general with easy, highly bribed jobs, the present economic crisis has made them uptight and wanting to get back the full bribe which they have begun to lose. Objectively the bribe is largely responsible for the low general level of class consciousness of the USNA working class. Subjectively, of course, the CPUSA's treachery has helped the imperialists keep the working class movement on a low level.

A phony populist movement can flourish in a period in which class distinctions are not immediately clear and when the leading role of the proletariat has not yet been established in practice. At such a time it is easy for the imperialists to invent theories about "the people" who comprise quite different strata of the population but who are treated as a homogeneous grouping led by the petty-bourgeois flunkeys of the imperialists, the politicians, and so on.

The make-up or class base of the populist movement is sections of the petty bourgeoisie and a section of the most bribed workers. It is made to look like a "middle-class" movement. "But fascism is also often presented as a middle-class movement in the sense of an independent movement of the middle-class, as a 'third party' independent of capital and labor, in opposition to both the organized working class and large-scale capital." (For example, the constant complaining heard about "big business and big labor," etc.) "The fascist dictatorship is accordingly presented as a 'conquest of power' by the middle class in opposition to both the organized working class and to the previous domination of finance capital." (28)

The history of phony populism in Europe and now here in the USNA makes it clear that the middle class or petty bourgeoisie cannot be independent but must serve either finance capital or the proletariat.

"The impoverished and desperate middle class is driven from its former philistine slumbers into political activity. But this political activity takes on a new character. Whereas the Bernsteinian dreams has seen in the middle class a stabilizing and harmonizing factor in the social structure, wedded to liberalism and social reform, and smoothing over the antagonism

of classes, the new dispossessed and ruined middle-class elements break out as an extremely unstable, violent force potentially revolutionary or, alternately, ultra-reactionary, without clear social basis or consciousness, but recklessly seeking any line of immediate action, which may offer hope of immediate relief (relief from debts, state aid to small businesses, smashing the large stores, etc), or the prospect of jobs (the new bureaucracy, mercenary fighting forces, displacement of Jews (Note: or Negroes and other national minorities in the USNA), war.

"In what direction, however, can these middle-class elements turn their political activity? They can in practice only line up in the service of either finance capital or of the proletariat. The myth of their 'independent' role, of the 'third party,' is still endeavored to be hung before them." (29)

And what is the role of the "left" (viz the CPUSA and other so-called working class leaders) in maintaining populist delusions, and how do these populist delusions aid the imperialists in creating social-chauvinism? Not only does the CPUSA create confusion theoretically on the role of the proletariat in the social revolution, but its theoretical deviations and revisionism in general leads directly to ideological confusion in the working class. For example, because of their political opportunism, the CPUSA pushes the line that the national minority workers are not part of the working class. ("The workers, with such allies as the small farmers, urban middle strata, intellectuals and the specially oppressed minorities..." (30) (Emphasis added) Or, "The fight against racism is thus basic to the class struggle in the US. Chauvinism, or what is more popularly called racism (!), serves the very opposite of the interests of the working class and the Black people." (31) (Emphasis added)) Notice also that the middle-class is treated not as having a dual nature, but as an ally of the working class without qualification. The CPUSA line says that the national minority workers are different, that they play an external role in the class struggle. Hence the CPUSA calls for a "people's movement" - or populist movement - which will include this oppressed sector the population against monopoly. The result is division of the working class along national lines. Thus the populist line diverts the working class as a whole away from struggle against the bourgeoisie as a whole, and leaves the class ideologically and organizationally confused.

We should here mention perhaps the most important way that the CPUSA actually aids the imperialist bourgeoisie in creating the conditions for fascism, that is, how it helps undermine the unity of the working class during this period of growing populism. It is their pushing of the line of "racism." In the USNA today this line means that it is not the imperialist bourgeoisie that oppresses the colonies and particularly the national minorities, but the "racism" of the Anglo workers. This line keeps the working class divided because it isn't the "racism" of the Anglo workers that keeps the class divided (although white chauvinism re-enforces the division), but the material and social bribe that the Anglo-American workers receive over the oppressed nations (Negro Nation in particular) and the national minorities from the oppressed nations. And the basis for this bribe, as we stated earlier, is the oppression of the colonies by imperialism itself.

The reason for the incorrect line of "racism" held by the CPUSA (among other reasons - ie, the wishes of the State Department) is rooted in the CPUSA's failure "to distinguish between the Negro people which was developed as a people prior to the Civil War, and the Negro national movement which developed only after the defeat of reconstruction." (32) It is this failure to see the national oppression of the Negro and other peoples that allows for the CPUSA to push the line that it is the color or "race" of a people that determines their being

oppressed by another "race." By virtue of the anarcho-syndicalist nature of the movement which develops from this imperialist line the Negro, Puerto Rican, Mexican and other national minorities are brought into the populist movement, but without ever gaining unity with the rest of the working class. No matter how many demands, programs etc are raised and no matter how many are fulfilled no link is ever made between the national minority workers and the most down-trodden Anglo workers. (The CPUSA makes sure of this by putting forth such outright fascist slogans as "Black power to Black people, Brown power to Brown people, White power to White people," etc etc ad nauseum). On the other hand the middle class or petty bourgeoisie and the most bribed workers (particularly Anglo), discontented with the partial losing of their bribe, are utilized by the imperialists in the populist movement under the guise of fighting the rich, of anti-monopoly. Again the CPUSA is instrumental in this. When bribed workers not only get back what they lost but get more (for example, in the recent West Coast longshore strike - see People's Tribune, volume 4, number 2), the CPUSA hails the increased bribe as a victory for the working class. The "victorious" worker then says to himself, or is told by the imperialists, "See, you got it. Why can't they (the most exploited and oppressed, the unemployed, etc) get it? It's because they're lazy, stupid, they can't fight, etc." Through increasing divisions in the working class the imperialists are trying to give themselves the necessary social base for the open taking of power by the fascists and the driving down of the national minorities in particular but also the whole, or almost the whole of the working class.

The imperialists push the line of "racism" among the more bribed Anglo workers to prove the "superiority" of the Anglo workers and reinforce the whole imperialist system. They push the line of "racism" on the national minorities to keep them divided from their Anglo counterparts. The CPUSA pushes "racism" to corrupt the revolutionary leadership of the proletariat and the revolutionary-minded petty bourgeois. The result is the undermining of the unity of the class and the laying of conditions (under "progressive" populist slogans) for the fascist dictatorship. The CPUSA's revisionism has caused great confusion among the revolutionary-minded radicals on the Left and even among the advanced workers who have risen up spontaneously. Wishy-washy ideas about getting the "rich," fighting the "ultra-Rights," kicking "monopoly," all have come from the CPUSA distortion of the class struggle. In the absence of a revolutionary party the class will continue to flounder because they are bombarded every waking minute by bourgeois propaganda that re-enforces the confusion and pushes fascism.

The CPUSA says that the present problem in society is that of monopolies and that once we get rid of them everything will be OK. How does this differ from the line of the original populists? It doesn't except that the CPUSA pushes the populist line under the cover of Marxism and of representing the working class. They refuse to expose imperialism as a system and to show that the progress of mankind and the building of a new society depends on the overthrow of the entire capitalist class and the smashing of their state. They refuse to show that the destruction of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie can only be accomplished by its opposite, the dictatorship of the proletariat. The populism of the CPUSA is clearly characterized by Lenin as follows:

"The difference between Narodism and Marxism lies wholly in the character of their criticism of Russian capitalism. The Narodnik thinks that to criticize capitalism it is sufficient to indicate the existence of exploitation, the interaction between exploitation and politics, etc. The Marxist thinks it necessary to explain and also to link together the phenomena of exploitation as a system of certain relations of production, as a special social-economic formation, the laws of the functioning and development of

which have to be studied objectively. The Narodnik thinks it sufficient, in criticizing capitalism, to condemn it from the angle of his ideas, from the angle of 'modern science and modern social ideas.' The Marxist thinks it necessary to trace in detail the classes that are formed in capitalist society, he considers valid only criticism that is based on the precise viewpoint of a definite class, criticism that is based on the precise formulation of the social process actually taking place and not on the ethical judgement of the 'individual.'" (33)

The phony populism the CPUSA pushes is connected with their anarcho-syndicalism. Present-day anarcho-syndicalism says that the oppressed should throw off their immediate oppressors without regard to or in consideration of the nature of the whole capitalist system and its state. For example men should be overthrown by women, bosses by workers, whites by blacks, etc. This theory, like the theory of "racism," objectively helps keep the working class divided and under the leadership of the bourgeoisie, both big and petty. "Although the theoretical and political projections of the movement are syndicalist, the concrete applications transform it into its opposite - with which it is completely united. In practice, syndicalism (which comes from the left) is expressed as modern populism (which comes from the right). The reason for this is that both of these bourgeois outlooks disregard the basic social motion, which is the class struggle." (34) "It would seem that the most casual examination would show that the emancipation of any exploited class or group is impossible without the overthrow, of the system that exploits. More yet, it is clearly seen that the proletariat cannot emancipate itself without emancipating every oppressed class and group within the country. Therefore, it would seem that every oppressed grouping, every exploited class, fights first of all for the unity of the proletariat. That is the overriding condition for its own emancipation." (35)

To combat the syndicalist notion of the present movement, a genuine communist party will show economically why capitalism came about, where it's going and why the proletariat, and it alone, will free all of society. Does the CPUSA do this? Hell no. They mumble their counter-revolutionary slimy populist position about monopoly being the reason - not the capitalist mode of production - for the oppression of students, farmers, workers, Negroes, etc, and that all we need to do is join together and fight to reform the system with "people's power." Not the dictatorship of the proletariat crushing the dictatorship of the imperialist bourgeoisie, but "people's power" modifying "monopoly's power." How vile a betrayal of Leninism, and what a faithful rendition of the populist line of the 1880s! And what a sneaky way of uniting syndicalism and populism.

Is it any wonder that, given the long-time hegemony of the CPUSA in the working class movement, the working class is confused and backward? Every time it rises up spontaneously the revisionist hyenas of the CPUSA and groups influenced by it descend to kill the fightback. "From the beginning the Communist League recognized that the root of every anti-working class deviation in the left was the counter-revolutionary revisionism of the CPUSA." (36) And we should not expect that these attacks will lessen - they will increase - as the working class movement, under correct communist leadership, becomes more conscious of its needs and aims. The CPUSA will use the various syndicalist, populist groupings it has fathered against the working class and its communist leadership, and will try to destroy us. Let them try. Theoretically strong and ideologically ready, we are becoming and will continue to become more than a match for the CPUSA and its lackeys. A real communist party will be built and consolidated on the basis of destroying the CPUSA, and the working class will at last have the leadership it deserves.

SUMMATION

In the USNA at the present time in history any talk about "a people's movement" is foolishness, and reference to "the people" is an illusion. Talk like this comes from the petty bourgeoisie and is the expression of their fightback against disintegration. Marx says,

"The democrat, because he represents the petty bourgeoisie, that is a transition class, in which the interests of two classes are simultaneously mutually blunted, imagines himself to be elevated above class antagonism generally. The democrats concede that a privileged class confronts them, but they, along with all the rest of the nation, form the people. What they represent is the people's rights. What interests them is the people's interests. Accordingly... they do not need to examine the interests and positions of the different classes. They do not need to weigh their own resources too critically..." (37)

Today the movement of "the people" is mainly a movement of the petty bourgeoisie and the bribed workers who have been living off the bribe of the imperialist oppression and exploitation of the colonies. The people's movement aims at regaining the full bribe which is being lost. And the only way that the bribe can be regained is by the further subjugation of the colonies and their more brutal oppression. "If fascism is allowed to develop in the US it will be ten times more ruthless than German nazism. The German fascists needed fascism in order to launch their wars of aggression - the US capitalists need fascism in order to continue their wars of aggression." (38) Within the Anglo-American nation this concretely means a deepening of the fascist, white chauvinist attacks against the national minorities. Externally, this means organizing strata of the working class (including the consolidation of the most exploited and oppressed, the most helpless, into mercenary armies, etc) around a program of wars of aggression and counter-revolution against the peoples of the world. "Fascism, in short, is a movement of mixed elements, predominantly petty-bourgeois, but also slum proletariat and the demoralized working class, financed and directed by finance capital, by the big industries, landlords and financiers, to defeat the working class and smash the working class organizations." (39) Is modern-day phony populism an aspect of this push toward fascism? We think we've shown that it is. Just as the rising imperialists turned the originally democratic populist movement around in order to enslave the Negro Nation in the 1880s and 90s, so the present-day imperialists are resurrecting populist demagoguery in order to drive the Negro people back into slavery, attack the Puerto Rican people, the Mexican national minority, the poor Anglo-American workers, and drive toward fascism and new imperialist wars. There should be no talk on our part about a new, spontaneous, honest populist movement - the phony populism of the present day was originated, bought and paid for by the big imperialists whose handmaiden is the CPUSA. Populism is reactionary. At best it is naive utopianism. At worst it is blatant demagoguery and a cloak for fascism.

How do we fight it? First, we must struggle for theoretical clarity - we must mercilessly expose the petty-bourgeois delusions and uncover the underlying class contradictions which are pushing history forward. We must expose the populist philosophy and oppose it with historical materialism.

"The objectivist speaks of the necessity of a given historical process; the materialist gives an exact picture of the given social-economic formation and of the antagonistic relations to which it gives rise. When demonstrating the necessity for a given series of facts, the objectivist always runs the risk of becoming an apologist for those facts; the materialist

discloses the class contradictions and in so doing defines his standpoint. The objectivist speaks of 'insurmountable historical tendencies;' the materialist speaks of the class which 'directs' the given economic system, giving rise to such and such forms of counteraction by other classes. Thus, on the one hand, the materialist is more consistent than the objectivist, and gives profounder and fuller effect to his objectivism. He does not limit himself to speaking of the necessity of a process, but ascertains exactly what social-economic formation gives the process its content, exactly what class determines this necessity." (40)

Phony populism is here, as in Russia, a real social force "inasmuch as it defends general bourgeois interests." (41) For "...the distinctive and basic feature of the petty bourgeoisie is to battle against bourgeoisdom with the instruments of bourgeois society itself." (42)

Specifically, we must expose the CPUSA's role of allying with the bourgeois liberals to spawn populist delusions and disarm the working class and leave it open for fascist onslaught. Lenin especially puts down the CPUSA's line on leaving capitalism intact and only fighting monopoly - little business against the big - poor against rich. "...To leave the capitalist 'school' with its bloodsuckers in complete immunity and to want to eliminate its capitalist products by means of liberal half-measures is to be a true 'friend of the people!'" (43)

Let us sum up the connection between fascism and the CPUSA's now populist, now social-democratic policies.

"Fascism bases itself primarily, for its social basis, on the miscellaneous petty-bourgeois strata, the peasantry, the declassed elements and backward workers. Social-democracy bases itself on the upper strata of the industrial workers. The bourgeoisie builds its rule on the support of both, bringing now one, now the other, to the forefront, and utilizing both for its support. Fascism can never become the main basis of the bourgeoisie in the same sense as social democracy (although it may become its main and sole governmental instrument when the crisis requires the coercion of all the workers, and the hold of social democracy is in danger of weakening), because fascism never wins the main body of the industrial workers with traditions of organization - the sole power that can overthrow capitalism. Here the role of social democracy remains of decisive importance, even after the establishment of the fascist dictatorship." (44)

The role of the CPUSA as a populist and social-democratic organization is to ideologically prepare the way for fascism and to carry its ideology into the sphere of organizational principles (syndicalism, anti-monopoly coalition, etc).

"Social democracy thus prepared the way ideologically for fascism; first, by the abandonment or corruption of Marxism; second, by the denial of internationalism and attaching of the workers to the service of 'their own' imperialist state; third by the war on communism and the proletarian revolution; fourth, by the distortion of 'socialism' or the use of vaguely 'socialist' phrases ('the new social order,' 'the commonwealth,' 'industry as a public service,' etc) to cover monopoly capitalism; fifth, by the advocacy of class-collaboration and the unification of the working class organizations with the capitalist state. All this provides the ideological basis and groundwork for fascism, which represents the final stage of the policy of the complete absorption of the working class, bound hand and foot, into capitalism and the capitalist state. The whole propaganda and line of

social democracy confused, weakened and battered down the class conscious socialist outlook of those workers who were under its influence, prevented the spread of revolutionary Marxist understanding, fostered semi-fascist conceptions of nationalism, imperialism and class collaboration, and thus left the masses an easy prey to fascism." (45)

Historically in Germany and Italy fascism came to power when the capitalist institutions broke down and the working class was ready for a revolutionary change, but was without leadership and hemmed in by populist-talking reformist leadership. Dutt talks about this stage of the movement and consolidation of a fascist dictatorship: "That stage arises when the breakdown of the old capitalist institutions and the advance of the working class movement has reached a point at which the working class should advance to the seizure of power, but when the working class is held in by reformist leadership." (46)

The CPUSA distorts what a state is. They believe (or rather, pretend to believe) that we live in a democracy, which has been partially usurped by monopoly but which can be "recaptured" (Anna Rochester) if "the people" try. Lenin says:

"Being hostile to capitalism, the small producers constitute a transitory class that is closely connected with the bourgeoisie and for that reason is incapable of understanding that the large-scale capitalism it dislikes is not fortuitous, but is a direct product of the entire contemporary economic (and social, and political, and judicial) system arising out of the struggle of mutually opposite social forces. Only inability to understand this can lead to such absolute stupidity as that of appealing to the 'state' as though the political system is not rooted in the economic, does not express it, does not serve it." (47)

"...The Narodniks reveal their petty-bourgeois nature once and for all; their insistence on paltry, middle-class reforms, arising out of their absolute inability to understand the class struggle, places them on the side of the liberals against those who take the side of the 'antipode' (Note: the proletariat in this case), seeing it as the only creator, so to speak, of the good things in question." (48)

The only difference between the CPUSA and the Narodniks on this question is that the CPUSA consciously covers up the class struggle with struggle for paltry reforms - "Free our beautiful sister Angela," black sheriffs, community control of the police, review boards so "illegals" can be deported democratically, etc. Again, Lenin nails them to the wall:

"...The basic characteristic feature of Narodism - the capacity for compromise." (49)

We believe that the growth of the CPUSA in this country will come simultaneously with the growth of the populist movement. And vice versa, the overcoming, the smashing and death of the revisionist CPUSA (politically and ideologically as well as organizationally) will come about with the transformation of the working class's consciousness from social or populist consciousness to class consciousness. The more educated and experienced the working class becomes the more exposed the CPUSA's treachery will become. The more the populist movement is exposed as reactionary, the more exposed will be the CPUSA.

It is our duty, the duty of the class conscious communists, to take the struggle against populism to the masses by fighting with them to raise their consciousness. It is our duty to give the class an understanding of its long-range, international interests. "As the capitalists intensify the exploitation here at home, the

workers are going to fight back. That fightback today, has to take the form of social consciousness - of a populist sort of struggle. The reason for this is that the workers cannot develop class consciousness by themselves. They have to be taught this form of consciousness. This is the task and role of the communist parties." (50) Therefore, we need to build a communist party to bring class consciousness to the masses; and with it we need to build a class conscious mass struggle.

The opposition to a phony populist movement is a revolutionary mass struggle led by the conscious vanguard, a Leninist communist party. The revolutionary mass struggle need not be socialist or communist, but it must be anti-fascist and pro-communist. Such a movement, involving all of the discontented population and led by the proletariat and its party cannot have fighting monopoly as its goal. It must clearly fight to overthrow the whole capitalist system. It must fight for any reforms and changes which will benefit the revolutionary population, but it must never sacrifice the long-range interests of the masses, proletarian internationalism. It must recognize the leading role of the proletariat and be in favor of the proletariat seizing power.

This mass struggle will not try to retard the development of society and drive it back to "the good old days" when there was more bribery. On the contrary, it will speed up the process of the development of the class struggle.

"...Our Narodniks are incapable of understanding how one can fight capitalism by speeding up its development, and not by 'holding it up,' not by pulling it back, but by pushing it forward, not in reactionary, but in progressive fashion." (51)

By struggling among the masses we will develop a class struggle that goes far beyond populism. "One must not hide but expose - one must not dream that 'it would be better without struggle,' but must develop the stability, continuity, consistency, and chiefly, ideological nature of the struggle." (52) This is how communists fight in the mass movement!

The working class as a whole cannot be diverted from phony populism and a fascist onslaught unless there is a militant Marxist-Leninist communist party to lead the way. Since there isn't yet such a communist party we must build one. We must see the building of it as the practical solution to the problem of the ideological and political and practical disorganization of the working class. The struggle against fascism and its populist demagogy can be resolved in practice only by the organization that a class party can provide - one that fights for the dictatorship of the proletariat all the way.

We will build a party that fights for the independence of the Negro Nation, Puerto Rico and regional autonomy for the Southwest - that is, for true equality in the working class. We will oppose the widespread populist-syndicalist line that says that everyone should do their own thing against "monopoly" with a clear Marxist-Leninist line on what the class needs now and what it will need in the future.

FIGHT FOR CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE WORKING CLASS
MOVEMENT!

BUILD A CLASS PARTY!

G. D.

J. A.

New York

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