

DETROIT REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT RECORDS

BOX 13 OF 16

FOLDER 15

CL REPORT PUERTO RICO

ON THE QUESTION OF A TWO-STAGE REVOLUTION IN PUERTO RICO

"At a certain stage of their development, the material forces of production in society come into conflict with the existing relations of production.... From forms of development of the forces of production these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an epoch of social revolution."(1)

Revolutions are the inevitable and irresistible vehicle of the advancement of human society; they serve the purpose of () the means of production and the relations of production. The socialist revolution frees the means of production from the chains of the profit system and allows for the full realization of the vast technological capabilities of modern society. The bourgeois revolution similarly serves the purpose of freeing the rising bourgeoisie and its developing economic system from the shackles of feudalism, with its isolation and anti-scientific mysticism. Thus Lenin defines revolution as, "The violent break-up of the obsolete political superstructure, the contradiction between which and the new relations of production caused its collapse at a certain moment." (2)

One of the great points of demarcation between Marxism and revisionism, especially since the October Revolution of 1917, has been the attitude of revolutionaries to the nature of revolutionary movements in the colonies and dependent countries, that vast majority of mankind which bears the brunt of imperialist exploitation and oppression. Today, as we move closer to the formation of a truly multi-national Communist Party in the United States of North America, debate on this problem has intensified, especially as regards the question of the nature of the revolution in Puerto Rico.

Among the great historic merits of the October Revolution was that it clearly demonstrated that the national bourgeoisie was no longer capable of leading the national revolutionary movement in the colonies and dependent countries to victory. "The revolution," wrote Joseph Stalin in 1925, "cannot be advanced and the complete independence of capitalistically developed colonies and dependent countries achieved unless the compromising national bourgeoisie is isolated, unless the petty-bourgeois revolutionary masses are freed from the influence of the bourgeoisie, unless the hegemony of the proletariat is established and unless the advanced elements of the working class are organized in an independent Communist Party."(3) If there is one thing which revolutionaries the world over have learned in the ~~past~~ past 60 years, it is that the hegemony of the proletariat in every

stage of the national ~~rev~~ revolutionary movement is a prerequisite to the victory of the national revolution and ultimately of the socialist revolution. Anything less than the immediate establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat after the victory of the national liberation movement is bound to lead, as it did in Algeria and elsewhere, to the ultimate defeat of the revolution.

But different societies, at different levels of economic and political development, pose different problems for the proletariat in power. The target of the revolution is the outdated relations of production which are holding back the development of the productive forces of society. Thus, in a semi-feudal, semi-colonial or colonial country, where the advancement of society is impeded by foreign imperialist domination and domestic feudal oppression, the target of the revolution cannot be other than imperialism and feudalism. As Mao Tse-tung says in reference to conditions in China in 1939:

"Since the nature of present-day Chinese society is colonial, semi-colonial and semi-feudal, what are the chief targets or enemies at this stage of the Chinese revolution?"

"They are imperialism and feudalism, the bourgeoisie of the imperialist countries and the landlord class of our country." (4)

And further:

"Imperialism and the feudal landlord class being the chief enemies of the Chinese revolution at this stage, what are the present tasks of the revolution?"

"Unquestionably, its main tasks are to strike at these two enemies, to carry out a national revolution to overthrow foreign imperialist oppression and a democratic revolution to overthrow feudal landlord oppression, the primary and foremost task being the national revolution to overthrow imperialism (Mao is writing at the time of the War of Resistance Against Japan--ed.)" (5)

Marxism-Leninism thus makes absolutely clear the objective mission of the national liberation struggle in those colonies with strong feudal hangovers: to clear the path for the development of capitalism and ~~at~~ at the same time lay the foundation for the building of socialism, all under the dictatorship of the proletariat. Lenin, in the period of the democratic revolution in Russia, explains why this must be so:

"In countries like Russia, the working class suffers not so much from capitalism as from the insufficient development of capitalism. The working class is therefore decidedly interested in the broadest, freest and ~~the~~ most rapid development of capitalism. The removal of all the remnants of the old order which are hampering the broad, free and rapid development of capitalism is of decided ~~economic~~ advantage to the working class." (italics ours) (6)

Although the situation in Tsarist Russia was by no means identical to the situation in the semi-feudal colonies and semi-colonies today, the need for the elimination of

feudal hangovers in both circumstances dictates similar political projection as regards the revolutionaries' attitude toward the development of capitalism. Mao Tse-tung elaborated on this point many times:

"Since Chinese society is colonial, semi-colonial and semi-feudal, since the principal enemies of the Chinese revolution are imperialism and feudalism, since the tasks of the revolution are to overthrow these two enemies by means of a national and democratic revolution in which the bourgeoisie sometimes takes part, and since the edge of the revolution is directed against imperialism and feudalism and not against capitalism and private property in general even if the big bourgeoisie betrays the revolution and becomes its enemy--since all ~~this~~ this is true, the character of the Chinese revolution at the present stage is not proletarian-socialist but bourgeois-democratic.

"However, ~~this~~ in present-day China the bourgeois-democratic revolution is no longer of the old general type, which is now obsolete, but one of a new special type. We call this type the new-democratic revolution and it is developing in all other colonial and semi-colonial countries as well as in China. The new-democratic revolution is part of the world proletarian-socialist revolution, for it resolutely opposed imperialism....the new type of democratic revolution clears the way for capitalism on the one hand and creates the prerequisite for socialism on the other."(?)

Summing up then, we see that the revolution in a colonial or semi-colonial country with feudal hangovers must take the form of the new democratic revolution under the hegemony of the proletariat; and that the necessity for new democracy stems essentially from the backward economic structure of these countries.

The question naturally arises as to why, in general, in the colonial and dependent countries, we tend to find extensive feudal hangovers; and as to why in certain colonial nations we find an almost entire lack of feudal vestiges and a highly developed capitalist economy.

As the question is two-fold, so is the answer. Imperialism, in its quest of maximum profits, develops not only commodity exchange but capitalist production; not only does it sack the colonies of their raw materials and dump excess commodities in the colonial world; but imperialism develops industry, in order to make use of the extremely cheap labor pool which the impoverished masses of the colonies provide. Thus imperialism develops ~~max~~indeed revolutionizes, the productive forces of the colonial countries. But at the same time, the colonial rule of the imperialist bourgeoisie generally depends upon its alliance with the most reactionary strata of the colonial country; and as Mao says, quoting the Communist International, "Imperialism first allies itself with the ruling strata of the previous social structure, with the feudal lords and the trading and money-lending bourgeoisie, against the majority of the people. Everywhere imperialism attempts

to preserve and to perpetuate all those pre-capitalist forms of exploitation (especially in the villages) which serve as the basis for the existence of its reactionary allies."(8)

It is clear that these two tendencies of imperialism cannot exist side by side forever. The ever-increasing industrialisation of the colony sooner or later must force the destruction of most, if not all, remaining pre-capitalist hangovers. The determining factor in deciding the degree of the capitalist development of a colony is the fundamental law of capitalism, the search for maximum profits. If the imperialists gain more from the extensive maintenance of feudal types of oppression in the countryside (as in much of Latin America, for example), then these colonies will be of a semi-feudal nature.

But it is becoming increasingly common for the imperialists to push for rapid and thorough industrialisation of certain of their colonies. A prime example of this is Puerto Rico (other examples might include such colonies as the Negro Nation, Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, South Africa and Ireland).

For many reasons (its size, its closeness to the USNA, its status as a direct colony, particularities of the international sugar market, etc.) Puerto Rico has become one of the most highly industrialized areas in the world. This trend started after World War II and became extremely pronounced in the 1950s. In 1955, agriculture represented 18% of Puerto Rico's net income; by 1970 this had plummeted to 4% (agriculture accounts for 3.1% of the USNA's net income). At the same ~~time~~ time, manufacturing, from 18% increased to provide 24% of the island's income in 1970--as compared to 27.6% in the USNA. And in the combined industries of manufacturing, construction, mining, transportation, communications and utilities, generally signs of an advanced capitalist economy, percentage of net income rose from 30% in 1955 to 43% in 1970--a bit higher than the comparable statistic for the USNA.

Thus Puerto Rico is at least as heavily proletarian as the USNA, agriculture has just about as much importance to the economy as in the USNA--which means one thing and one thing alone: Puerto Rico is fully and entirely capitalist. What vestiges of feudalism as remain are weak and growing weaker.

bu will, for Puerto Rican society is socialism. The only possible next step, or stage if you will, is a new democratic stage, whose "objective mission is to clear the path for the development of capitalism"(9), would be absurd in Puerto Rico.

What is the theoretical "justification" given for this absurd assertion? Generally, it centers around the undialectical quoting out of context of short passages of "On New Democracy" or other works. An example is:

So long as they are revolutions in colonial or semi-colonial countries, their state and governmental structure will of necessity be basically the same, i.e., a new-democratic state under the joint dictatorship of several anti-imperialist classes. (10)

Is this thesis of Mao Tse-tung's correct? Yes; it was correct in 1939 and it is correct today. Why is it that in the colonial and semi-colonial countries, new democracy is generally a necessary stage in the revolution? As we have said; for the elimination of feudal vestiges; and nearly all colonies and semi-colonies are also semi-feudal. Mao makes this very clear throughout all of his writing and, in fact, just seven pages earlier, says:

"...such a revolution in a colonial and semi-colonial country is still fundamentally bourgeois-democratic in its social character during its first stage of first step, and ~~with the objective mission of clearing the path for the development of capitalism~~...its objective mission is to clear the path for the development of capitalism." (11)

Is there any possibility or necessity for a bourgeois-democratic revolution in a fully developed capitalist nation, which Puerto Rico certainly is? Of course not; but our friends of the two stages, since they have no grasp of dialectics, simply latch onto a catch phrase, taken out of historical, political and theoretical context, and apply it everywhere and anytime. Mao also says many times that the main enemy of the Chinese people is Japanese imperialism--in 1939. Would anyone think of applying this to, say, Mexico in 1974? Of course not, although the basis of this concept--the need for unity of all revolutionary classes against a foreign aggressor--is absolutely correct. Just so is the concept of a new-democratic stage in the revolution in semi-colonial and colonial countries absolutely correct. It is only in those colonies which do not conform to the general rule of imperialist preservation of feudal oppression in the countryside that Marxists-Leninists, analysing dialectically the general and the particular, call for socialism and not for new democracy.

Let us be clear on one point. It is the bounden internationalist duty of all Anglo-American communists to raise the cry: "Free Puerto Rico!" Our task is to build a party which can unite the multi-national proletariat of the USNA state; and a major prerequisite of this unity is the repudiation by the Anglo-American proletariat of the

plunder and ~~enslavement~~ enslavement of the colonial nations on the part of "our" bourgeoisie. Yet the Communist League is part of the international communist movement, and we have the responsibility ~~as~~ to aid our understanding, ~~to~~ to aid in the clarification of the many problems which face Communists the world over. It is in this spirit that we feel obligated to ~~point~~ point out the theoretical fallacy of the call for a two-stage revolution in Puerto Rico.

This absurdity, of a new democratic revolution in Puerto Rico, has disoriented certain honest comrades in the USNA, mostly out of confusion or ignorance. But we fully understand the true origin of this "theory" of a two-stage revolution in Puerto Rico. The modern revisionists all over the world have long attempted to sabotage the national liberation struggles in the colonies and dependent countries by preaching their counter-revolutionary, social-imperialist "theory" that political independence, under the hegemony of the national bourgeoisie, is a necessary prerequisite for the development of the revolutionary movement. The revisionists' social-imperialist designs on the colonies and semi-colonies demand that the proletariat of the colonial nations be sacrificed for the preservation of the national bourgeoisie; and their many "theoretical" justifications of this corrupt line consists of falsifying the Marxist-Leninist position on the national liberation movement and on New Democracy.

This makes it all the more ~~more~~ important for all Marxist-Leninists and honest revolutionaries to develop our understanding of this question, through a thorough and exhaustive study of the classics of Marxism-Leninism and of the concrete situation confronting us.

FREE PUERTO RICO!

**DOWN WITH THE MODERN REVISIONISTS' ~~EXXIX~~ FALSIFICATIONS OF
MARXISM*LENINISM!!**

BUILD AN ULTI*NATIONAL COMMUNIST PARTY!!!

Additions to Puerto Rico article draft.

page 2, line 2, after ~~the~~ "socialist revolution", insert:

Indeed, in the present-day period of history, state power must either be in the hands of the proletariat or in the hands of the bourgeoisie. The proletarian dictatorship takes many forms; as Lenin says:

"All nations will reach socialism; this is inevitable. But not all nations will reach socialism in the ~~same~~ same way; each will introduce a special feature in the form of democracy it adopts, in the form of the proletarian dictatorship, and in the rate at which it carries out the reconstruction of the ~~various~~ various phases of social life." (Lenin, "A Critique of Marxism and 'Imperialist Economism'", Collected Works, Volume XIX, pages 256-257)

One of these forms is the "people's democratic dictatorship" or the "new democratic republic" in the semi-feudal colonies and semi-colonies. New democracy, in its essence, is a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat; ~~indeed~~ indeed, it could not be otherwise, for...

(then back to "anything less than....")

page 5, paragraph 5; after "not for new democracy", insert:

One more point. Understanding that a period of new democracy in Puerto Rico would be tantamount to handing the revolution over to the petty-bourgeois does not mean that we repudiate alliances with other forces. Although New Democracy entails a governmental alliance between all the revolutionary, i.e. anti-imperialist and anti-feudal classes in society, all coalitions in colonial ~~countries~~ countries are not New Democracy; Communists seek to ally with all forces which can aid in the achievement of our goal. We Communists in the USNA will ~~not~~ make alliances with non-proletarian elements, particularly from the urban petty-bourgeoisie; no revolution will be possible without alliances. But does this mean that we will have a new-democratic stage in the USNA? No; it ~~merely means~~ merely means that we will make alliances.

Similarly, in Puerto Rico it will undoubtedly be possible and necessary for the proletariat to unite with many other sectors of the population which are opposed to the USNA imperialists' plunder of Puerto Rico. But this is not new democracy; this is an alliance.

then to: "Let us be clear on one point.."