

ENTERING AN EPOCH OF SOCIAL REVOLUTION

Nelson Peery

Contains additional essays "Dialectics of the Leap and the Destruction of Capitalism" and... "Polarization in U.S. Basis for a Workers Party"

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EDITOR'S NOTE

For the second printing of "Entering an Epoch of Social Revolution," it seemed only natural to share with the reader subsequent, related essays. "Dialectics of the Leap and the Destruction of Capitalism" and "Polarization in U.S. Basis for a Workers Party" were the logical political contributions to further clarifying and exploring questions raised in "Entering an Epoch of Social Revolution."

In the Appendix, we have also included study guides for the two essays that can be used for classes or adapted for various levels of discussion.

Readers will note references in these materials to "the Party" or "our Party," which refer to the Communist Labor Party (CLP), the organization which first produced these materials. Founded in 1974, the Communist Labor Party was officially dissolved in January of 1993. An overview of the history of the CLP and its reasons for dissolution are contained in the three articles of this pamphlet.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

This pamphlet, like most inquiry into something new, was a long time birthing.

It began with scattered statements during the late 1960s and early 1970s noting the shift from labor saving to labor replacing means of production.

By the middle 1980s, we realized that we were seeing the science of society Marxism, being vindicated before our eyes. These labor replacing means of production, hostile to the existing productive relations, were creating an epoch of social revolution.

This understanding had to be transferred to the comrades and friends of the Communist Labor Party (CLP). It was correct to write the pamphlet despite our scattered and scanty knowledge.

Were it to be rewritten many of its foundations could be strengthened. Many of its projections could be clarified.

The pamphlet however, represents the moment when the CLP realized an era was ending and the form of our movement was moribund. Hence the pamphlet is more than simple propaganda. It is historical for us. Therefore it should not be changed in a substantial way. It is a summary of the CLP's estimate of history.

Qualitatively new means of production are in deepening antagonism with private, capitalist ownership of socially necessary means of subsistence.

Permanent, structural unemployment is pervasive and growing. Increasing numbers of proletarians cannot sell their only commodity labor power. Production with high technology is forcing industrial production (i.e. human labor coupled with electromechanics) off the market. The economy based on the buying and selling of labor power is being irreversibly destroyed. The destruction of the economy will force society to reorganize. This reorganization will change the forms of ownership of socially necessary property from private to public. Only then will the economy conform to the productive capacity of robots and computers.

The new means of production, by creating a new epoch of social revolution, have destroyed the communist movement that arose with industrialization.

The first 75 years of the 20th century were a time of social revolution in the areas of the world still dominated by agriculture. This era, bloodied by imperialist wars, civil wars, wars of national liberation and proletarian revolutions, has come to an end. The transition is completed.

Characterized by Lenin, this era produced a communist movement that reflected the time. Industrial development could be carried out by the bourgeoisie for its benefit, or by the workers for their benefit. Which class would win depended, to a great extent, on moral and ideological factors.

The Bolsheviks and the parties of the 3rd (Communist) International theComintern were a peerless, heroic movement. The struggle to industrialize under proletarian dictatorship attracted the most moral, socialized, self conscious elements politicized by the class struggle.

The new era is producing a new movement. For the first time, an actual, practical communist movement of the workers is emerging. Production without work demands distribution without money. The cause of communism is practical.

The objective character of the movement demands, more than ever, its subjective, i.e., political, theoretical, ideological expression.

The creation of a communist movement is the overwhelming demand of our time. This pamphlet was written to call attention to, and to clarify this demand.

Nelson Peery January, 1993

ENTERING AN EPOCH OF SOCIAL REVOLUTION

Nelson Peery

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INTRODUCTION

In January of 1859, Karl Marx wrote, "At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come in conflict with the existing relations of production, or what is but a legal expression for the same thing with the property relations within which they have been at work hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an epoch of social revolution." [1]

This summation of historical materialism was possible not simply because Marx had applied the laws of science to history, but also because he was living in such a period. The epoch of social revolution was unfolding before his eyes.

We are entering such an epoch today. The development of the productive forces is crossing a nodal line with the widespread use of electronics, i.e. computer controlled robotics and other forms of high technology, being applied to industry. These productive forces are qualitatively new, not simply improvements on workercontrolled mechanics. Scientists and engineers are developing instruments that eventually could expand our mental capabilities as much as the industrial revolution expanded our physical capabilities. More than that, we stand at the threshold of eliminating mental as well as physical labor.

The think tanks have coined new phrases such as "revolutionary societal transformation" to avoid "social revolution" but they are more aware of the depth of change than many of the so-called revolutionaries. Since the late 1950s scores of books have been written

analyzing each step as this economic revolution took shape. Twenty years ago, the outlines of the economic revolution emerged. Today the outlines of the resultant social revolution are clear.

After noting the historic importance of the agricultural and industrial revolutions, the futurist Alvin Toffler wrote in 1980,

"The Third Wave affects everyone... challenges all the old power relationships, the privileges and prerogatives of the endangered elites of today, and provides the backdrop against which the key power struggles of tomorrow p will be fought." [2]

THE REAL WORLD

Our country and our proletariat are entering a new stage of history. The introduction of qualitatively new productive forces is putting formerly productive workers in the soup lines and homeless shelters. There is an unheard of accumulation and polarization of wealth and poverty. Many heavy industrial jobs that paid \$15.00 per hour are now performed by robots, eliminated or shipped to low wage areas. They are replaced by minimum wage service and light industry jobs. Some 60 million people exist by government help. Millions are living in the streets utterly destitute and many more millions crowd in with relatives and friends as a last stop before the street. Working class youth are practically abandoned without education, health care or a future.

The government, openly and covertly, through scores of its agencies, especially the CIA, is heading the pack of judges, police officers, lawyers, doctors and criminal syndicates in the mad scramble for the billions of dollars in profit from the narcotics trade.

Our cities are becoming policeoccupied, brutally controlled fiefdoms. Tens of millions of workers searching for ideological and moral stability are caught up in fundamentalist religious cults. There is a frightening rise of fascism. The fascists are not simply the Nazi thugs or the KKK murderers. The workers know and reject them. The workers do not know or they belittle the serious fascist danger that is arising within the chambers of government, from secret groups of officers in the military, from the growing unity

between a certain section of the trade unions and the most reactionary, jingoist, chauvinistic sections of finance capital its industrial wing.

The labor unions are moving toward a split. There is a growing militancy within the economically unstable section of the unions.

There is a spirit of rejection of the "business unionism" that developed during the past 30 years. Though five out of six workers remain unorganized, the government is working through the center and left wing unions to coopt the growing spontaneous struggles of the class.

A section of the working class is being driven out of social production into permanent unemployment. The worst aspects of oppression are the result of unemployment. Seventy percent of the unemployed do not receive unemployment compensation. Welfare, workfare, homelessness are all elements of unemployment.

Unemployment today is different from the 1930s. Then it was simply a cyclical crisis. Today, the cyclical crisis is taking shape within and expresses the historic crisis, the social revolution. It is not curable within capitalism.

During the late 1940s Ford's River Rouge auto plant had 60,000 workers. Today it has greater production with 16,000. This peaking out and decline in the number of workers concentrated in a single plant reflects the decline of mechanicallybased industry and the growth of a new type of instruments of production: computers, robots and high technology. The use of electricity as a source of power was a stage of the development of the mechanical forces and created laborsaving devices. Electronics, made possible by the semiconductor and microchip, totally separate from mechanics, is the basis of laborreplacing instruments. Superconductivity will open a whole new world. As a result of these economic changes, property relations built around mechanics are becoming untenable.

Our country is entering a political, moral, social, cultural and economic crisis. It is the final stage of the general crisis of capitalism. The crisis is splitting society into its right and left polarities. The right polarity is splitting between its reactionary and fascist wings

and the left polarity is splitting between its reformist and revolutionary wings. Such political motion will create millions of serious revolutionaries.

In this respect, the first stage of the revolution is the creation of a party guided by scientific socialism which is an organization of the practical leaders of the revolutionary proletariat. This historical process is in motion. The creation of a Party for these revolutionaries to enter is our overriding organizational task.

As a contribution to this effort, this paper will: 1) restate the foundations of Marxism as the science of society and revolution; 2) describe the current 2 revolutionary stage; 3) identify the revolutionary forces; 4) outline the tasks of the Party in the process of its becoming the subjective expression of the objective process; and 5) begin an inquiry into the theory of the revolution in the United States of North America.

THE COMMUNIST LABOR PARTY

We are at the beginning of the beginning. At this stage the working class is taught to be conscious of itself and its historic mission. Revolutionary work today is agitation and propaganda. It is not enough to simply say "agitate." Part of agitation is to build the apparatus for agitation, to raise the funds for agitation, to develop the plans for agitation, to learn the skills of agitation. We need a revolutionary party with a revolutionary theory. This moment requires an organization that can influence the working class where it is, and as it functions.

No revolution can develop without new ideas. The productive forces, by creating the objective side of an epoch of revolution have created the basis within the working class for the introduction of new ideas. The new idea for this moment is class consciousness. Lenin fought for the position that class consciousness had to come from the outside into the social struggle in order to raise it to the level of class struggle.

Activity alone is the struggle for reform. Lenin detailed how each stage of the struggle prepared the way for the next. From this conclusion he formulated the slogan "an

organization of revolutionaries inseparably connected to the spontaneous movement" to bring that class consciousness into the struggle.

Our Party must develop the theory of the American revolution if it is to carry out a revolutionary practice. We can accomplish this only if we understand quantitative stages of development and concentrate our energies on pushing through each stage. The entire world is moving toward a revolutionary transformation. The unemployed are emerging as a political vanguard of the class. The Communist Labor Party is firmly inside this revolutionary sector of the class. Our press is our link to it. We begin the struggle for class consciousness within this sector.

BEGIN THE INQUIRY

Our economic, political and social systems are entering the process of death, transformation and rebirth. The profound economic revolution going on before our eyes is calling forth an inevitable social revolution. Our Party and any serious revolutionary Party must recognize and describe not simply the economic revolution, but the general line of march of the social revolution and reconstruction of society.

The revolution of the capitalists against feudalism had objective guidelines because capitalism was formed and functioned inside feudalism. The bourgeois revolutionaries needed only to "do what comes naturally" to win. The communist has no such luxury. There is no communism operating inside capitalism. Therefore all our guidelines are subjective philosophical and theoretical. Errors in philosophy inevitably mean errors in theory and practice.

Understanding and mastering the theory of the proletarian revolution requires a basic understanding of the revolutionary, scientific philosophy of dialectical and historical materialism.

Let us first define our terms.

Philosophy covers the study of the processes governing thought and the principles and laws that regulate the universe and underlie all knowledge.

Science is systemized knowledge derived from observation, study and experimentation carried on to determine the nature of what is being studied.

Theory is a coherent group of general propositions used as principles of explanation for a class of phenomena.[3]

PHILOSOPHICAL DISCUSSION AND INQUIRY

Dialectical materialism is our philosophical approach to the study of a real world in constant change.

A materialist approach means we begin with the real, material world. The world is knowable. Its constant change prevents us from knowing everything at any particular moment. But that is no excuse for not accepting and learning about what is real. On the contrary, it inspires a serious Marxist to constantly study.

Our philosophy is not simply materialist; its approach to phenomena is dialectical. The basic laws of dialectical materialism are: 1) Nature is a connected and integrated whole. 2) Nature is in a state of constant change: development, disintegration, dying away and arising. 3) Internal contradiction, the basis of development, is inherent in all things. 4) Changes are from lower to higher order and occur as negations.[4] 5) Qualitative changes begin with the quantitative introduction of the new quality into the quantitative development of the old.

Qualitative changes occur as leaps. 6) Quantitative changes are definite and indispensable. Historical materialism, the application of dialectical materialism to history, shows that the method of securing the means of subsistence determines the character of a social system. People organize (create productive relations) around their tools and the knowledge of using them (the productive forces) for the production of their food, clothing and housing. The dialectical development of the struggle between the constantly

developing productive forces and the static productive relations is the motive force for the quantitative development of social systems. Qualitative change (negation) in the motive force used in production is the basis of qualitative changes between economic formations.

The sum total of the productive relations constitutes the economic structure of society. The basis of the productive relations of capitalism is that the working class has to sell its labor power to the capitalist class in order to live. This fundamental relationship is static. Society, however, is much more complex.

The relationships among the workers, among the capitalists, and between the workers and capitalists are all part of these definite indispensable relations that shape not simply the society but the individual. For example, the special oppression of black people is part of the productive relations, as is the position of the proletarian woman. The struggle for reform is precisely a struggle to reform the productive relations. In this country, there have been the legal reforms of Social Security, civil rights and women's rights, to name a few. Capitalism's basic law of private appropriation of socially produced commodities needs to be reformed. Since it cannot be reformed, the use of robotics, production and distribution control by computers disrupts that law. The sale of labor power and the labor process become incompatible with the mode of distribution. With no reforms left, society turns toward revolution.

THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT

Since people organize society around the instruments of production, the forms of social organization depend upon the type of tools which exist. The productive forces ultimately lead and determine the productive relations. The application of science to industry, and the resulting advance in the productive forces, compels the restructuring of the social relations. Every qualitative economic development has brought forth a qualitative social development.

Dialectics teaches us that the process of development is through definite, indispensable, knowable and predictable quantitative stages with a leap into a new quality.

A process is the totality of stages of development of dialectical motion. Internal contradictions set matter in motion and compel it forward. A process is dialectical because it compels and forces the creation and unity of the antithetical elements; forces them to polarize and struggle, creating a synthesis by their mutual destruction. Social production is such a process. An individual might stand aside from this compulsion, but society can not.

There are two elements that determine social production. One is the property relations which are static. They create and connect (in this instance) the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The other is the productive forces which are increasingly mobile and revolutionary. They determine the changing features and relationship of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

The revolutionary process is the motion of the basic contradiction of capitalist production through each quantitative historical stage. This motion is expressed in the specific political, social and ideological forms within which this contradiction is fought out. The political struggle moves to higher levels with each quantitative stage of the revolutionary process.

In the early days of capitalism, the tools were simple and there was a close relationship between the tools, the workers, the capitalist and the market. This was the stage of manufacture (from the Latin *_manus_*, hand, and *t _facere_*, to make).[5]

The relationship between the thesis and antithesis (the bourgeoisie and the proletariat) becomes more contradictory within each stage and forces the emergence of a new stage. Therefore, as each succeeding quantitative stage becomes more polarized it more sharply expresses its quality. The development of science and thus of the productive forces is spontaneous. Each quantitative development forces the proletariat, the bourgeoisie, and the market further and further apart. The bourgeoisie becomes more clearly bourgeois, the proletariat more clearly proletarian. The market becomes more clearly worldwide.

Each quantitative stage is further preparation for the introduction of a new quality which replaces contradiction with antagonism. The quantitative introduction of the new quality into the process is the catalyst for the leap into the new quality. For instance, the

invention of qualitatively new machinery called forth the perfection and application of the steam engine. Together they revolutionized not simply the economy, but the social order.

The early development of computers and robotics called forth the semiconductor and microchip. Together with the superconductor, they are creating the electronic technological revolution. Social production with electronics is in antagonism, active hostility, with the existing economic relations. It is expressed as antagonism between the method of production and the method of distribution.

DIALECTICS: QUANTITY, QUALITY, THE ANTAGONISTIC ELEMENT

Quality (in the sense we are using it) is a process. The sum total of the stages of development (quantity) of the process is the process. Thus, there cannot be a separation between quantity and quality. Every quantity is qualitative. Since life is specific, every quality is expressed quantitatively.

Growth, or motion, takes place in definite and indispensable stages. A change of environment exacerbates internal contradictions. Each stage grows out of the preceding one and connects to it. Each stage has its set of internal contradictions that describe its motion inside the general qualitative contradiction that covers the process. Therefore, each stage of growth is both innerconnected and interconnected.

In *‘Dialectics of Nature’*, Engels gives examples of the transformation from one quality to another. "All qualitative differences in nature rest on differences of chemical composition or on different quantities or forms of motion (energy) or, as is almost always the case, on both. *‘Hence it is impossible to alter the quality of a body without addition or subtraction of matter or motion’*, i.e. without quantitative alternation of the body concerned c [emphasis added]."[6]

An increase of intensity and change in the form of contradiction marks each stage of quantitative development. The final stages of contradiction create the conditions for the introduction of antagonism.

Contradiction is "the action of speaking against or in opposition to an action, proposal; gainsaying; opposition." Antagonism, on the other hand, is "the mutual resistance or active opposition of two opposing forces, physical or mental; active opposition to a force." [7]

Contradiction does not grow into antagonism. Antagonism replaces contradiction. Internal contradiction is the basis of development and growth. Antagonism is the basis of destruction and transformation to a new quality.

Marx states, "At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come in conflict with the existing relations of production."

The contradictory relationship between the material forces of production and the productive relations forms and develops capitalism. That "certain stage" in the contradictory relationship begins with the "quantitative alteration of the body concerned" through the introduction of a qualitatively new and antagonistic quantity.

Qualitatively new productive forces inevitably call forth, and are used by, qualitatively new motive forces. Let's glance at this process and the overthrow of feudalism.

Manufacturing was the highest and final stage of the manual labor system. The last stages of manufacturing prepared the ground for mechanical labor and made its introduction inevitable. A qualitative change in motive force was necessary. "Not till the invention of Watt's second and so-called doubleacting steam engine was [such] a prime mover found." [8] In a leap, manufacturing changed to industry.

Feudal relations, which were contradictory to the manual labor of the serf, faced an antagonism in the process of largescale mechanization possible with the steam engine. Every schoolbook states that the industrial revolution brought down feudalism. The world created by manual labor was overthrown by the new world created by mechanical labor. The newly liberated productive forces consolidated and a new social order was built to accommodate them.

Complex industrial machinery, including the steam engine, developed during the manufacturing period but did not create an industrial revolution. As machines became bigger and more complex, demanding a powerful and reliable motive energy, the engineers introduced the doubleacting steam engine. Contradiction became antagonism and the social revolution was under way.[9]

In much the same manner, electricity was adapted to machinery, creating laborsaving devices around the time of the Civil War. The use of electricity became more and more sophisticated. Finally, development of electrical devices could go no further with computers the size of a house. The microchip and the semiconductor were developed outside the industrial process and then brought into it. They have created an antagonism by transforming electricity from a help to mechanics into an independent life as electronics and in opposition to mechanics.

They have sparked the ongoing economic revolution.

THE CONTENT OF THE TIME

The short span of 35 years from 1830 to 1865 saw revolution sweep the earth. From the upheavals in France to the United States Civil War, the long way around, those years were an epoch of revolution. The Soviet and Chinese revolutions occurred after this period, but belong in it.

Specifically, what was the content of that time? It was the qualitative transformation from manual agricultural labor to industrial mechanical labor. What was its form? It was the economic, social and political transformation from feudalism to capitalism. Russia arrived at that stage about 40 years later and the transformation took the form of a transition from feudalism to socialism.

This formulation is contradictory to the statement that "the content of the time is the transition from feudalism to capitalism."

Marx referred to the conflict of the productive forces with the relations of production. He makes it clear that the spontaneous advance of the forces of production which increasingly conflict with the static productive relations is the basis of the revolutionary process. The revolution is the restructuring of productive relations to accommodate and unfetter the qualitatively new productive forces. From this point of view, the forms, not the stages of social development, are from primitive communism to slavery to feudalism to capitalism to socialism to communism. The content, or stages, have been from the club, spear, sling, bow and arrow, to the plow to machinery to electronics. The various forms of manual and animal motive power (i.e. the bow and arrow, animal husbandry, agriculture, manufacturing), mechanical motive power, or electronic motive power determine the stage of social development. Feudalism or capitalism may have been the forms that these stages took, but under certain conditions the form was socialism.

What happened in the period of transformation from feudalism to capitalism? Localized manual labor provided the economic base for feudalism. Its political and social structure was a reflection of the subsistence economy that manual labor produced. The slow introduction of manufacturing meant the introduction of new tools and a new division of labor. These new productive forces led to surplus which created trade. Trade created the towns. The struggle between town and country (the bourgeoisie and the feudalists) for political power expressed the contradiction between the developing productive forces and the property relations that contained them.

It has been proven possible to skip political forms but not economic stages. Politics are in the category of the subjective. Marx and Engels raise the question in the Preface to the Russian edition of the *Communist Manifesto* (1882) whether Russia could move from primitive communism to communism and thus skip several political stages.

Industrialization occurred under a bourgeois dictatorship in France and under a proletarian dictatorship in the Soviet Union. Mongolia's social structure went from prefeudal to socialism. But every society has gone through manufacture and industry.

Could there have been a proletarian seizure of power during the struggle for reconstruction after the Civil War in the United States? A great economic and social revolution was underway. The impulse toward proletarian revolution was there and

conditions were somewhat similar to and more favorable than in Russia in 1917. There was talk of "putting the bottom rail on the top."

There was no organization to do it. We didn't have a Lenin or a Bolshevik party.

With this understanding, using the Marxist method, let us reassess some of Marx's and Engels' conclusions. We should do this not to show how smart or daring we are, but to train and prepare the comrades for the difficult times that lie ahead.

Marx and Engels believed that the concentration of the proletariat brought on by giant industry would set the stage for the socialist revolution. Yet not one single industrial nation has gone through a socialist revolution. The standard explanation has been that the emergence of imperialism shifts the worst aspects of the contradiction between productive forces and relations into the colonial world. This gives capitalism a reprieve.

Imperialism is not what saved capitalism. Shifting of contradictions did not mean there was a lesser or a different capitalism. To change, something has to be added or taken away. A horrible oppression developed in the colonies to facilitate a horrible exploitation. Oppression of itself never brought about a revolution. Only a qualitative change in the productive forces can destroy a system. Qualitative change comes with the introduction of a qualitatively new and antagonistic quantity. Imperialism is not qualitatively new or antagonistic. Imperialism is monopoly capitalism. Monopoly capitalism is a stage of capitalism itself. The answer lies elsewhere.

The answer is that no system goes out of existence until there is no more room for the quantitative expansion of the productive forces. Fettering of the productive forces by the existing economic relations begins with qualitatively new means of production coupled with new forms of motive force.

STAGES OF REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT

Revolutionaries cannot struggle against the quality "capitalism." They must deal on the quantitative level with specific stages of development. The revolutionary Left of our

country fails when it simply counterposes capitalism to socialism, rather than defining the stage of development and fighting it out stage by stage.

Let's take the analogy of the birth of a baby. What if a recently pregnant woman goes to the doctor for her first examination and the doctor tells her to lie on the operating table and push? That is exactly what we do when we abstractly say the answer is socialism. Or when the Left calls on the workers to revolt. The role of the doctor is to guide the woman through the various stages of her pregnancy. This can be done only if the doctor deals with each specific stage of development within the quality "pregnancy."

The quality "revolution" demands the same treatment, and we are the doctor. Marxists understand that "the communist party is midwife to a society pregnant with change." Qualitative statements such as "Smash Imperialism" or "For the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" are easily stated. Any sectarian leftist can do this.

The rub comes with trying to understand and work within the concrete and specific stages of development. It means we have to understand when the growth of the baby in the womb is complete and it is time for birth. It means we have to understand at what point the struggle is no longer reformist and economic, but leaping to political and revolutionary.

The whole point of philosophically understanding that qualities in the physical world can change only with quantitative addition or subtraction is to translate this physical law to the subjective, political struggle.

We formed our Party to bring class consciousness to the proletariat. We understood that the class through experience would achieve social consciousness and on its own would create its organs for the reform struggle. Only a class conscious proletariat, though, is capable of assuming political power. But class consciousness does not arise from experience. Class consciousness is brought into the struggle from the outside as a qualitative antagonism to the unity of social consciousness and reformism. Only then can the class move to class consciousness and class struggle.

Why is this question of such decisive importance today? It is important because the developing social revolution is historical and inevitable given the changes in the productive forces and energy. A social revolution does not guarantee a move toward communism. The social revolution only guarantees change. The fascists are moving to use the dynamics of the social revolution to bring about fascism. The move toward communism can only come through a proletarian revolution that operates consciously within the objective social revolution.

The spontaneous development of the productive forces creates the conditions for the qualitative leap. In much the same manner, the structural unemployment, the constant threat of war and fascism, the increasing national oppression, the growing misery of the people condition the class to accept consciousness. But it must be brought to them.

THE REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS

The revolutionary process is the motion of the basic contradiction of capitalist production through each quantitative historical stage.

The contradiction between the static productive relations and the everadvancing productive forces expresses itself as a contradiction between the mode of expropriation and the mode of exchange.

As the contradictions in the economic struggle become more acute, the stage is set for the introduction of a new quality and the economic struggle leaps into the realm of politics.

The revolution is a political not an economic struggle. There is no way to transform the economic struggle to a political one. One leaps to the other. Marx points out: "The political movement of the working class has as its ultimate object, of course, the conquest of political power for this class, and this naturally requires a previous organization of the working class developed up to _a certain point_ and arising precisely from its economic struggles.

"For instance, the attempt in a particular factory or even in a particular trade to force a shorter working day out of individual capitalists by strikes, etc., is a purely economic movement. On the other hand the movement to force through an eighthour law, is a political movement. And in this way, out of separate economic movements of the workers there grows up everywhere a political movement, that is to say a movement of the class, ...[emphasis added]"¹⁰

The political movement does not simply quantitatively grow from the other. They are two different processes. One is against the capitalists and the other is against the state. At a "certain point" of development when conditions and experience are ripe the qualitatively new idea, class consciousness, is introduced. Without this, class activity is not possible.

The revolutionary process intensifies within social production. The mode of expropriation is the purchase of labor power. The mode of exchange is labor power for money, money for necessaries, necessaries to recreate labor power. The means of production have developed past, and come into conflict with, the productive relations. Larger and larger sections of the population become unemployed. The unemployed, in turn, cannot purchase their subsistence. The section of the class that has been driven out of social production and into the fight for survival is the first example of political polarity. It cannot fight the capitalists because there is no connection in production. Its struggle is against the political means of control. The political struggle develops when the state power interferes with the circulation of the necessities of life.

From this time onward, everything depends upon the subjective. The understanding of this process must come from outside the activity. The science of society must be introduced to the fighters. The political struggle intensifies to the degree that the polarities separate, connections liquidate and all forces flow to one or the other pole. That depends upon activity. The greater the activity coupled with the intellectual development of the combatants, the greater the polarity. That depends on us.

The unemployed, in their various stages of disintegration, are part of the working class. They are not a lumpenproletariat.

Let's settle this question once and for all. The rise of capitalism meant the crisis of feudalism. The serf ran away into the towns seeking food. One section of the serfs became the bourgeoisie. Another section became the proletariat. For objective reasons some could not enter either the bourgeoisie or the proletariat. They existed along the edges of society as a flotsam, a lumpenproletariat.

We today have an employed section of the working class, an unemployed section, a homeless section, a section on welfare. All are part of the proletariat.

Homelessness is the worst aspect of unemployment. It is the cutting edge of a movement of the unemployed that is just beginning to stir. We must concentrate our agitation and propaganda on homelessness in order to influence the whole movement of the unemployed and marginally employed. Homelessness is the clearest example of the degeneration of the system. If we make our plans according to the objective motion, the struggle against homelessness will be the door to enter the revolutionary section of the class. We can influence the process only if we are part of it.

The productive forces in their unending development are the basis of the complex, extended and constantly changing economic relationships in society. These relationships are between classes, between groupings within classes, between the sexes and age groups. They are the relationships between people in the process of social production. History is the study of this constant motion and change.

These relations last a long time after the productive forces that created them have gone. Therefore, they affect the development of the productive forces and the various social and class groupings. This is because one labor system is negated, not destroyed. Negation means the incorporation of certain aspects of the old in the new. Therefore, the new is always connected to the old.

In our country's history, slavery was the crudest and most backward expression of the manual labor system. There were many forms of manual labor including the highly skilled craftsman. After the Civil War, mechanical labor negated but did not eliminate manual labor. The inevitable result was that the favored sections of manual labor (which

were white) took over mechanical labor and the worst of the remaining manual labor went to the exslaves.

On this basis the labor movement was split and the split institutionalized as white supremacy.

Electronics is negating mechanical labor. This negation of the negation has the immediate effect of eliminating manual labor. This elimination began with the unskilled and semiskilled sector where most of the black workers toiled. The black worker, as the most oppressed and exploited section of the unskilled, has formed the core of the fighting proletariat. Electronics, by practically eliminating the unskilled sector, has thrown a huge section of black proletarians out of production and into the political battle for their survival.

As the economic relations between a section of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie are broken, their economic contradiction is broken. The struggle of the unemployed and underemployed begins to take a political form. They are thrown into a struggle against the state and the system it protects. The revolutionary process escalates into demonstrations and street fighting. This has an impact on greater sections of the employed. One section moves closer to the employers, the other closer to revolution.

The struggle steps away from the point of production and out of the factory. Uprising and revolution resolve what began as an economic struggle. If we look closely at the recent so-called riots we see that economic demands were remote. The immediate struggle was for power. Would the state control the streets? Or would the people wrest the streets from the state? Would the police control the people? Or would the people control the police? There is no possibility of conducting such a struggle on the economic level.

At the end of the final stage, these polarities suddenly step away from the force that had held them together. They pass through one another, taking on some features of each other. The proletarians gain property but are not bourgeois. The bourgeoisie loses its property but does not become proletarian. The antithesis (the former proletariat) becomes the thesis of the new quality and the old thesis begins the process of dying away.

TWO CONDITIONS FOR PROLETARIAN REVOLUTIONS AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES

We should make a clear distinction between the epoch of revolution we are entering and the seizure of power by revolutionary communists during the transition from agriculture to industry.

The Soviet revolution occurred at such a moment of historic transition from manual to mechanical labor. It proved that Soviet socialism, like capitalism, was a form for the development of industrial mechanical labor. In 1917 Russia was "pregnant with revolution" but by the steam engine and not by the proletariat.

First, the bourgeoisie seized power and lost it. The Bolsheviks seized power and held it. Given the quantitative stage of the productive forces Russia could have gone capitalist. Lenin and the Bolsheviks seized power under adverse circumstances. They rejected the mechanical approach that the socialist revolution could not take place in a country that had not gone through the stage of capitalism.

The revolution in China was very complex because monopoly capitalism was deeply entrenched where it had gained a foothold. The widespread feudal economy, colonialism and semicolonialism coexisted along with elements of neocolonialism. All these political and productive relations held back the development of the productive forces and China's revolution was a deepgoing social revolution. Until the productive forces develop past the capability of capitalist productive relations to contain them, the class struggle against the bourgeoisie for power will continue in both the USSR and China.

Before the Russian socialist revolution most Marxists held the theoretical position that the development of productive forces incompatible with the bourgeois system would create the conditions for the communist revolution. The Russian revolution occurred with the development of the productive forces incompatible with the _feudal_ system. So far, the only communistled revolutions have occurred during a transition from agriculture to industry. The revolution has been won through insurrection and/or civil war. These

revolutions have all had the task of industrializing their country. In doing so they create their counterrevolutionary force.

The feudalists of France had no future after the revolution. The qualitative change of the productive forces and motive power guaranteed that. In the countries where communists have seized power, the state, not the productive forces, blocks the militarily defeated bourgeoisie. The mechanical productive and motive forces are completely compatible with bourgeois relations of production hence the constant regeneration of bourgeois counterrevolutionary forces and the refusal of the state to "wither away." Only in this context can the "Stalin Era" be understood.

We have often stated that Stalin is a bone in the throat of the revolutionary movement. He cannot be swallowed or coughed up. There is no possibility of uniting the international movement without settling Stalin's position in and contribution to history.

We are perhaps the first to describe an objective basis for achieving this. The understanding that capitalist reorganization of Soviet socialist industry was possible answers questions that have haunted communists for years. This point of view clarifies the Stalin period in the USSR. The subjective "Stalin period" and the objective industrialization of the USSR overlay. Stalin's assumption of power and his passing away took place at the beginning and ending of a whole quantitative stage of Soviet economic and political development. The Stalin period began and ended coincidental with the beginning and ending of Soviet industrialization. Industrialization is a qualitative stage in the development of the productive forces. Very often the two processes become intertwined and confused in people's minds. Stalin assumed leadership of the USSR with the completion of the first stages of the consolidation of Soviet political power. The First Imperialist World War had ended. The Red Army crushed the counterrevolution. The economy stabilized. The New Economic Policy (NEP) had run its course. Stalin turned his strength and singleness of purpose to the obvious task at hand. That task was the gathering up of the scattered economic energy of the Soviet Union and concentrating it in the form of giant industry. The capitalist countries accomplished this over a long period of time by starving the small producer out of the market. The USSR accomplished this in a very short period with persuasion where possible and with legally sanctioned force when necessary. The productive relations of industrialization were not at odds with the

proletarian dictatorship. While there is capitalist industrialization, industrialization is not capitalism. Socialist industrialization is faster and better. Stalin's death occurred at the end of industrialization and with the introduction of a new qualitative stage of the productive forces, electronics.

Let us look at "Stalin's crimes" in this light. There was no physical "liquidation" of the kulaks or other reactionary classes. They were eliminated as classes by the liquidation of their economic bases. Soviet power crushed the resistance to industrialization. Millions died in the 25 defensive wars fought between 1917 and 1940. A large number went to labor camps and many died there.

This all happened because the counterrevolution had an objective base during this entire period.

Marx points out: "Men never relinquish what they have won, but this does not mean that they never relinquish the social form in which they have acquired certain productive forces. On the contrary, in order that they may not be deprived of the result attained and forfeit the fruits of civilization they are obliged, from the moment when their mode of carrying on commerce no longer corresponds to the productive forces acquired, to change all their traditional social forms." [11]

Stalin understood that counterrevolution was possible. His monumental place in history is precisely because he relentlessly, almost daily, worked to crush every spontaneous impulse or plan for counterrevolution.

Would Stalin's critics dare compare Soviet industrialization to what happened in the USNA during its period of industrialization?

These crimes include the genocidal slaughter of the Indians, the looting of Africa of perhaps 20 million human beings to transport barely a million alive into the most brutal, exploitative and complete slavery the world has ever known. They include the rape of Mexico, the destruction of the Philippine Islands and Puerto Rico, the plunder of Canada

and the continuing bloodsoaked exploitation of Latin America. The crimes include the "white slavery" period of Northern industrial development. The list is endless. The Stalin period was the gentlest, most benevolent industrialization the world has ever known. His "crime" was to consolidate the political dictatorship of the proletariat, build socialism in one country and crush the fascist invaders. The world bourgeoisie has never forgiven him.

The resurging counterrevolutionary forces in Eastern Europe sum up their economic and political understanding by stating, "Socialism is the longest route from capitalism to capitalism." They understandably believe that socialism's role has been to take their countries from semifeudal, semicapitalist relations to material conditions compatible to modern advanced capitalism. Unless suppressed, they may succeed.

The second condition for revolution, the one we are entering, is much more a historical than a subjective act. The change in the quality of the productive forces is all in favor of communism. Capitalism already exists. There is only one revolutionary class. The reactionary force is attempting to stabilize a system that is objectively changing. Distinct from Russia or China, the United States has fully developed the economic basis for communism. We will not go through any extended period of state socialism. We do not need the proletarian dictatorship to take us through the stage of industrialization and into electronics. We need the proletarian dictatorship to restructure society around the advanced means of electronic production. The ruling class cannot continue its rule because it cannot circulate the necessaries of life. New means of production make the capitalist labor process useless and it must be cast aside.

In no way can we assume that because this historic revolution is inevitable, the bourgeoisie will be willing to simply surrender. Quite the contrary its think tanks are already trying to figure out how to have abundance through electronics and maintain privilege. It will fight every step of the way. We need a revolutionary party to overcome it.

THE CRISIS OF SOCIALISM

Soviet society is in crisis. There have not been quantitative changes in the productive relations that correspond to the quantitative and qualitative changes that have objectively taken place in the development of its productive forces.

The productive relations of both capitalist industry and socialist industry are made possible by the level of the productive forces. The level of the productive forces describes what is possible. Only the social struggle for reform can make possibilities into realities. The transfer of machinery from capitalist America to the socialist Soviet Union proves this. These productive relations are, until socialism, historically evolved. The capitalist era inherits and utilizes relations from the previous society because it was also based on exploitation. Not so with socialism.

Under socialism the proletariat, through its state, owns the means of production. Under socialism, though the relations of production are consciously planned, history constantly gets in the way. The bureaucracy in the USSR has fiercely resisted any changes in the productive relations. The bureaus that were necessary to keep the books, gather together the scattered economic energy, and create the productive forces for industrialization slowly became a bureaucracy that held a privileged position and finally dominated the life of the ruling class, the Soviet working class.

How was that possible? Only because mechanical industry cannot be the foundation for communism. Where there is scarcity there will be privilege. A qualitative change is now taking place in the productive forces in the USSR. The problem will be solved by passing through the stage of mechanics and into the stage of the application of electronics to industry, which will eliminate shortages. The social process in the USSR is going to be very difficult and may become violent. The struggle of the workers as a ruling class against a privileged stratum, however, is going to be very different from the struggle of our proletariat against the bourgeois dictatorship.

The diversity and struggle within the socialist camp over the past thirty years was the result of different levels of productive development. China was beginning industrialization when the Soviets were leaving it and beginning to grapple with electronics. The internal social struggles within China and the USSR today arise from the

transition from industry to electronics. Both are going through the same process. Thus, they are moving to relax the tension between them.

The USSR and China are wrong not because they recognize the necessity of change. They are wrong because they want to rely on market exchange instead of planning the next quantitative stage to communism.

THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE NEW LEFT

History is stepping into the arena of revolution and the revolutionaries have never known such confusion. Led by the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA) much of the so-called "left" is entering its final stage of degeneration. The objective side of history is passing a certain line in the process of change and the next step is the sudden leap of social response to this change. The first step in this process is the disintegration of the political organizations that arose out of the passing period and are unable to adjust to the new conditions.

Let us take a quick look at the basis of the growth and decline of the CPUSA and the New Left.

The prestige of Lenin, the urgent calls of the new international communist movement for unity of the revolutionary forces in the USNA were the basis for the formation of the CPUSA. The ideology of the founding organizations was anarchosyndicalism and a rightwing revision of Marxism. Organizations or people cannot simply adopt an ideology. They either keep the one they have or they change it quantitatively in relation to experience and intellectual development. The CPUSA adopted MarxistLeninist terms. They kept the anarchosyndicalism and revisionism.

Syndicalism is a form of trade unionism with the aim of workers owning the means of production and distribution. Its final goal is the control of society by federated bodies of industrial workers. The major weapon of syndicalists is the general strike.[12]

Anarchism is the doctrine urging the abolition of governmental restraints or of the government itself as the condition for full social and political liberty.[13] In the USNA, anarchism arose from the petty bourgeoisie in its struggle against the robber barons. It early on united with syndicalism from the immigrant European workers to become anarchosyndicalism.

The revolutionary process in 1919 was entering the stage of unionization of the industrial proletariat. The working class members of the new Communist Party came directly from the syndical movement and brought their ideology with them.[14] The revolutionary upsurge engulfing the world did not allow time for a principled unity. The great need was to unite the revolutionary movement based on practical activity. They would pay the price later.

The CPUSA grew with the growth of the industrial unions and after its isolation during the late 1940s it simply transferred its syndicalism to the mass struggle. There were new slogans but they had the same syndicalist content. Instead of calling for one big union the call was for national unity under a Roosevelt coalition, allclass black unity, unity of the unions everything in the name of unity. It never recognized the existence of the dialectic. Lacking Marxist theory, the CPUSA transformed the objective demand for revolutionary unity into a slavish tailing behind whoever was temporarily in control of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). This final crisis of the CPUSA evolved as the industrial stage of the USSR began to transform and Soviet society, economics and politics were thrown into antagonism.

The CPUSA cannot explain to its membership why the Soviet government is doing things that are against the interests of the world's workers. Their Party arose from an ideological tendency that limited them to a certain stage of history. They are adrift. Like the old soldiers of "The Barracks Ballad," they will now begin to fade away.

As for the New Left, all that was new was its slogan "participatory democracy" in place of anarchism for the doing away with government restraints. Enraged by the decision to draft students, they became enamored with anything that challenged the power of government. A section of this radical student movement emerged as a quasiMarxist, anarchistic group that lived by attaching itself to various external revolutionary

movements or states. The conditions for the development of the New Left were the rapidly expanding economy, the war, the bribery of the working class and the radicalization of the world's petty bourgeoisie. As these conditions deteriorated, so did the New Left.

During this process, some comrades and groups have made and are making a serious struggle to master Marxism. As they do so, they cease to be part of the New Left and become part of the current in communism that is 145 years old.

THE COMMUNIST LABOR PARTY AND OUR TASKS

Within this context of constant birth, decline and death of movements and organizations, where do we stand?

We can honestly state that from the very beginning, we intended to build a political party based on the class struggle and guided by scientific socialism. There was no class struggle and we knew very little Marxism. We could not create a class struggle so we set about creating an organization of Marxists. We have spent about a million dollars in this effort. We educated mainly exLefties, many of whom drifted away from the Party as new conditions took over and the class struggle began to emerge. As a result, we have some theoretically well developed comrades, but as an organization, the Party is dangerously backward. And worse, it is intellectually passive.

The composition of the Party is changing. A large number of comrades who are from a qualitative era which is passing have come to the end of their ability to contribute and have left. Our new recruits are mainly from the unemployed sector of the proletariat.

We are changing. It is painful, but we are changing. The entire world is moving toward a revolutionary transformation. The bourgeoisie is preparing for a sudden downturn in the economy. The trade unions are splitting. The unemployed are emerging as a political vanguard of the class. The so-called revolutionary movement is disintegrating. A spontaneous movement of the workers is demanding a leadership that comes up with precise proposals for the resolution of their daily problems. They are searching for a

theory that accurately reflects their social motion. They have an instinctive distrust of the leadership of an activist. The activists simply respond to the quantitative level of struggle without any conception of the quality of the fight. Their fight is eternal, without resolution. The armchair Marxists are the opposite. They understand quality, but do not understand the role of quantity. There is a historic need for an organization of revolutionaries to boldly step forward and provide leadership. The

Communist Labor Party can be that organization. The Communist Labor Party is firmly inside this revolutionary sector of the class. The *People's Tribune* is now qualitatively different from the Left political newspapers. The practical leaders accept it as their paper.

The most urgent and serious task we face is to define what Marx called the "line of march" of the coming revolution. The form of the revolution grows out of history. We must strengthen the Party around historical forms of struggle. The content of the revolution is social reconstruction that guarantees the distribution of the necessities of life. In a word, we need a theory of our revolution. We must begin a whole series of polemics and papers on this subject. We can no longer attempt to educate in an abstract Marxism. We must focus our education on this task and then see to it that the entire Party becomes engaged in this effort.

Our organizational form, too, must change to fit the tasks that this historical period presents. Reorganizing the Party demands that every comrade participate intellectually and politically. We can no longer afford to simply wait until the central office speaks. We have to figure out what it means to organize around our press and then do it. We have to remove all obstacles standing in the way.

Comrades, the moment we have trained for is at hand. We must actively and aggressively seize that moment.

CONCLUSION

What does this mean for us, an organization of serious revolutionaries? We are completing the move from the unavoidable sectarian position we occupied. The

revolutionary process is getting underway. It is posing the question, will electronics continue to add to the burden of misery borne by the working class, or will it be the instrument of liberation? The answer will be forged in the crucible of struggle. We are getting into position to carry out our historical task. We, the comrades of the Communist Labor Party, have the responsibility of introducing the catalyst into the social struggle. That catalyst is class consciousness. It is the first quantitative stage of a new quality that will replace contradiction with antagonism between classes.

Though this is a historically inevitable stage of development, it will not be easy. Unity is the key to any victory. Unity of the revolutionary section of the class stands on class consciousness. Unity rests upon objective equality and subjective consciousness. Our tactic is to bring consciousness to the white workers in the areas where they are economically equal to the black. Our aim is to replace bonds of color with bonds of class. Nothing can be done without this unity and consciousness. This fight cannot be won by the black worker alone. The fight has to be carried on by the revolutionaries within the white majority of the working class. It will not be an easy task to convince the white workers that white supremacy is their enemy when for 200 years it has been the guarantee of their privileges. The material conditions are evolving where we can and must convince the white workers that the defense of the black worker is the front line of their own defense. This struggle cannot be won by a few dedicated ideologues.

The Civil War could not be won until the North, and a good section of the South, understood that slavery, not simply the slave power, was the enemy. They had to be taught that the destruction of slavery was the defense of their own liberty. More importantly, the destruction of slavery was the moral imperative the necessary democratic thing to do. That was the task history thrust upon the Abolitionists. Once the American people understood the nature of the war, their action conformed to the realities and the war was won.

Today we have a similar task, but on a higher level. We must master the method and emulate the courage and dedication of the Abolitionists.

We submit this report for one simple reason: to prove that our political task of bringing class consciousness from outside to inside the social struggle conforms to the dialectical

process in all spheres of motion. Electronics could not grow spontaneously from the application of electricity to industry. In the same manner, class consciousness cannot grow spontaneously from the social struggle or social consciousness. Our task, our historical purpose, is clear.

With the acceptance of this report, we will, for the first time, complete in a minimal way the rounding out of our own theoretical, political and ideological foundations. We will be an independent party and strike out on our own. This Congress is the turning point. We face a real task in the real world. We are ready. Let's get out there. Let's get on with the revolution!

FOOTNOTES

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4. The first four points are from Joseph Stalin. *_Dialectical & Historical Materialism_* (New York: International Publishers, 1940), p. 7. 5. *_Compact Edition of the Oxford Dictionary_*, (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press 1971). 6. Frederick Engels. *_Dialectics of Nature_*. (Moscow: Progress Publishers, Third Revised Edition, 1964), p. 64. 7. *_Random House Unabridged Dictionary_* 8. Karl Marx. *_Capital_* (Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1961), Vol. 1, p. 337. 9. *_Capital_*, Vol. 1, p. 3767. 10. Frederick Engels and Karl Marx. *_Selected Correspondence_* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1954), p. 328. 11. Marx and Engels. *_Selected Correspondence_*, p. 41. 12. *_Random House Unabridged Dictionary_*. 13. *_Random House Unabridged Dictionary_*. 14. William Z. Foster. *_History of the Communist Party of the United States_* (New York: International Publishers, 1952), Ch. 12.

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Nelson Peery was born in 1923 in Missouri and raised in Minnesota. His works convey the force and commitment of someone who, like millions of his generation, survived the Great Depression and fought in World War II to save the world from fascism. These essays convey the clarity and conviction that come from 50 years in the revolutionary movement. In addition to participation in the Watts Rebellion of 1965, Nelson Peery was a supporter/participant in the revolution in the Philippines in 1945 and in Ethiopia in 1978. A bricklayer by trade (retired), former member of the Communist Party USA, and founding member of the Communist Labor Party, Nelson lives in Chicago, studying, speaking and agitating for the social revolution of today.

DIALECTICS OF THE LEAP AND THE DESTRUCTION OF CAPITALISM

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Engels points out, "At certain definite nodal points, the purely quantitative increase or decrease gives rise to a qualitative leap." What is that leap? It is motion or change from one quality to another. The leap that is just beginning is from the capitalist form of slavery to communism. Philosophy indicates that we must build a Party that will lead in the destruction of capitalism so as to complete the leap. It is important that we understand this process in order to develop revolutionary politics. However, no change is simply a sudden change from one quality to another. A qualitative change begins with the introduction of an elementary stage or quantity of a different quality. Therefore, the leap is a series of changes wherein one quality is replaced quantitatively, or stage by stage, by another quality. These quantitative substitutions take place more or less rapidly until the new process is completely qualitatively different from the previous process. This is the leap. We are seeing this happen in the leap from electromechanics to electronics. Stage by stage electronics is replacing mechanics. Once the transformation started, all industry had to adopt the new methods and quantitatively extend them or be driven from the market. We don't know how long the transition will take, but we know it cannot stop until it is completed. As with all motion, the rapidity of the change in quality depends upon the changes in the environment within which the change occurs. Consequently, in nature and in society, the leap takes a long time to complete. For example Soviet society is still in a leap that has taken 75 years and for all we know might take a hundred more. The fact that the environment the world capitalist system has not quantitatively been destroyed in the past forty years has prevented the continuance of the leap. The on going Soviet experience also shows that the leap is not a straight line. It is dialectical: leap forward, stagnation, back sliding, crisis, polarization and leap forward. We emphasize that each stage is a reflection of a stage of development of the environment. We must not confuse the political seizure of power with the social transformation. The seizure of power was as instantaneous as an explosion. It is always very important to carefully describe what process we are referring to. Every internal process is the environment for some other internal process. The earth is internal to the solar system. But the earth is the environment

for all earthly processes. The means of production is the environment for society. Society is the environment of the class struggle. The list is unending. This is the way that nature is united into a whole. Let us begin with the objective development of the means of production as the environment for the subjective development of a social system. What is the process? The Capitalist system (and the system of state socialism) developed upon and in compatibility with the industrial means of production. A leap begins as qualitatively new means of production are introduced into the industrial system. The intricate network between industry and banking, between all the various forms of buying and selling becomes disrupted as wage labor, the source of increase of all wealth, falls in value and price. The highest form of industry, electromechanics, cannot compete with the more efficient new means of production. Each invading quantity of the new quality further disrupts the system. Since profit is surplus or unpaid labor time, and machines, including robots, simply transfer their value to production, the very high profitability in robotic production comes from placing products, without labor power on the market at the same price as commodities, that contain labor power. The accelerating shift to electronics creates untold wealth along side untold misery. The new electronics creates a hitherto unknown want in the midst of a heretofore unknown plenty. More and more workers are permanently unemployed and a polarization between absolute wealth and absolute poverty begins. Unseen and often unknown productive and social relations that correspond to electromechanics are abandoned or begin a subtle transformation. Economic life is the environment for the political thinking of the workers. Without a change in the economic life it would be impossible to have changes in the thinking of a large number of workers. With such changes in the economy, changes in the political thinking of the workers are inevitable. Such changes take place according to the laws of dialectics. They occur as a leap. The leap is the destruction of the old mode of thought and the creation of the new. It starts with the introduction of an elementary stage of the new quality of thought and the quantitative struggle to destroy the old quality. For a long time, bribery has stifled even reformist thinking within the class. The struggles of the 1960s and 1970s were social struggles for reform, not class struggles. These fights cut across class lines and were fundamentally different than, for example, a class struggle for the eight hour day. Over the years, the ruling class has carefully developed an "ethnic" form of struggle. It could take root in this country because of the existing division between black and white. The divisions within the working class are very deep and can

only be overcome through intellectual struggle linked to daily practical experience. But as Engels points out, that process cannot begin without the quantitative introduction of a new quality. w This task is more difficult and demands more creativity than most comrades think. The Left in our country has always followed two incorrect paths. One is tailism, urging the workers to do what they are already doing, and the second is sectarianism, creating a "Marxist" "correct" program and then struggling to win the workers over to it. Their intellectual work amongst the masses has been a reflection of these positions. However wrong they might have been, reformism or left wing communism during the period of stagnation could not harm much. During the leap, these errors are deadly. To have a revolution, qualitatively different thinking on the part of the workers must reflect each quantitative change in the quality of the means of production. During the development of a process it is leftishness and sectarianism to stress the qualitative aspects of a struggle. Once a process is underway, the struggle is concrete and therefore quantitative. We are good at this. We know how to "agitate" and struggle around individual examples of injustice. Our campaigns around Aldape Guerra in Texas or Johnel Warren in Florida are examples of this. During a leap it is tailism and reformism to stress the quantitative. Here we have to stress the meaning of these struggles. The quality of the process must be stressed. The Freedom movement of the 1960s was a brilliant example of this. The fighters who rode the busses, manned the picket lines and formed the ranks for the marches were fighting for "Freedom" rather than any quantitative aspect. This gave the movement moral superiority over their foe, who conversely was forced to stress the quantitative aspects. We must prove that capitalism is through, it is changing and we have to fight to control that change. During the leap, the quantitative aspects of the old are stronger than in the new. It is the strength of the new quality that gives it victory. This means that every revolutionary spontaneous activity, every struggle of the class must be used to explain the quality of their activity. The only way we are going to win them over to communism is to show that they are the communists and what they are doing is communism. We must convince the mass that history is moving toward communism. Our first task is to make the fighting elements of the workers class conscious. At this point social consciousness is barely beginning to be a political force. It is being aroused through the TV and the daily press. The bourgeoisie understands that some sort of consciousness is going to emerge. They are already striving to restrict it to social consciousness and reformism. We must block them

with the rational and dialectical position of class consciousness and solidarity. We need to throw every available cadre into this struggle. Marx points out in the *Manifesto*, "Communists,... have over the great mass of the proletariat the advantage of clearly understanding the line of march, the conditions, and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement." We need a conference to spell out in a general way the "line of march" of the revolution. This is the quantitative, concrete, political aspect. What we must do first and immediately is to address the problem of changing the minds of the people in the fight for their daily bread. Our task is first to win the workers to communism on the basis of the development of the productive forces not as some good idea. Second, we have to convince them that their welfare lies in seizing the political power that will enable them to use these new forces in their interest. We have to explain that their spontaneous efforts to house, feed and clothe themselves are in flat contradiction to the capitalist system and especially it is against the interests of the ruling class. In other words, our task is to guarantee that an intellectual leap takes place as a reflection of the leap in the objective sphere. Only the Marxists can do this. We are the only ones who understand what is going on. It doesn't help any if we understand something and won't do it. Finally, during the period of a leap everything is unstable. It is a time for audacity. Thus Marx writes, "Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims." There is no way for us to one on one and in secret get over this message. The press and the comrades with the press are the major weapons for this struggle. At this point things are on course but we need a series of well thought out papers to prove that we are moving correctly in a qualitative sense.

POLARIZATION IN U.S. BASIS FOR A WORKERS PARTY

Nelson Peery

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Party has always correctly referred to the process of polarization as the beginning of the struggle of opposites in the process of transformation. The development of the method of production is the fundamental force moving history forward. On that foundation, the struggle over the redistribution of property moves the organization of society forward to adjust to new methods of production. There are literally millions of polarities men and women, skilled and unskilled labor you name it. However, under definite circumstances, one set of economic and social polarities begins to dominate all others and determines their direction. Today the polarity between wealth and poverty within each country is beginning to dominate all other social polarities. As the dominant polarity shifts, the form of the class struggle changes. We must learn to work with each form not simply as categories but in the process of change. Revolutionaries must be most sensitive to each stage of change. It is not sufficient to simply say it in general terms. It is absolutely necessary to understand and anticipate each stage in order to participate in and accelerate those stages. We are now getting a little experience as to how this process is played out. Our summing up this limited experience would be helpful to the comrades in the mass struggle, as well as orienting the Party for the difficult times that lie ahead. Polarization is caused by the same relation that forces unity. This is easily seen in a general sense. For example, the working class and the bourgeoisie are tied together through the process of production and distribution. Actually, the world process of production and exchange is what holds the world together. The struggle over the control of that production and distribution is what tears it apart. The unity is objective. There cannot be production in the capitalist system without the unity of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The subjective aspect is that each side tries to take what it considers its share of that production. Each side wants more, or refuses to give up what it has. After all the maneuvering and politicking is done, the two sides clash to enforce their will in this

regard. All social struggle is ultimately reduced to this expression of the historical process.

II. FROM ONE STAGE OF POLARIZATION I TO THE NEXT

The polarization between imperialism and the national liberation movement dominated all the social struggles of the 1960s. New movements that reflected that polarization, for example, communist, women's, youth sprang up. The old movements that could not or would not change began the process of dying away. We have entered a new stage of economic history. Electronics lays the basis for the beginnings of polarization of absolute wealth and absolute poverty. This polarization has never been known before. This is a new kind of poverty. Previously, poverty developed because there was a restricted market or no market for what the workers had to sell, their ability to work. This time, what they have to sell is superfluous, obsolete and therefore worthless. The ramifications of this are mindboggling. Labor is the foundation of all value. The surge of profit for the past 40 years rested on the expanding rate of surplus labor time. Surplus or unpaid labor time expanded as electromechanics reached its highest degree of perfection. Now, laborreplacing electronic technology is interspersed throughout the economy. The result is that the unemployment rate is running at 13% and the average weekly wage has fallen to 21% below the levels of 1973. Productive capacity has not fallen. The use of computerized production and robotics more than makes up the difference. On the one hand, the mounting layoffs, shutdowns and runaway shops have created a mass of permanently unemployed workers. They no longer contribute surplus labor. On the other hand, the qualitative changes in production have made the remaining workers so productive that necessary labor time has shrunk near the zero point. The result is that those without jobs become superfluous and utterly without value. They will never go back to work. Those with jobs find their wages falling as the necessary labor time of the most productive sector contracts. Thus we see employed workers homeless and living on the street. This deeply affects the process of circulation and finally realization. This period of polarization indicates a coming period of destruction of value and eventually of wealth. Eventually, profitability and consequently the price of real estate and stocks must fall to the level of its value. That value will be reckoned in terms of socially necessary

labor time under these conditions of electronic technology in production. In this manner, the greatly expanded wealth of the country will be liquidated. Let us look at this. A great deal of the wealth of the country is tied up in real estate and the stock market. Their expansion, that is appreciation, fueled the expansion of wealth. Real estate became valuable because of the expansion of jobs. The stock market expanded through gambling on future profitability which also depended upon jobs. The growing production with less and less labor challenges the entire value system and is already threatening the viability of the real estate and stock markets. No revolution can take place without the liquidation of wealth. This liquidation of wealth will take place by deeply decreasing or wiping out the value of these capital w prime movers. This polarization of wealth and poverty is taking place within every country and not simply between imperialist and colonial countries. Hence, the struggle over property within every country is beginning to dominate and determine the direction of all other polarities and struggles. The polarity between the national liberation movement and imperialism was the basis for groups nations, oppressed peoples, the oppressed gender becoming aware of their condition and fighting it out. So today, classes are becoming ideologically aware of their conditions and beginning the fight on the basis of the polarization of wealth and poverty. Since the economic polarization is well underway, we have to base our tactics on the inevitable social response of the people.

III. CLEARING OUT THE OLD

The victories of United States imperialism in the recent period were part of the process of preparing for the new polarization. They were part of the historical process of clearing out the lumber of the old and preparing the ground for the emergence of the new. The destruction of the bureaucratic strata of the Soviet Union was absolutely necessary to prepare the way for the next stage of the revolution. The victory of neocolonialism performs the historic task of completely drawing the economically backward colonial world into the orbit of world exchange. These processes are absolutely necessary to a world exchange. These processes are absolutely necessary to a world revolution the only kind that can take place now. Polarization has placed the United States in a difficult position. Every political victory of imperialism against the revolutionary movement

places it in a more precarious position. Each country that is won over to a "market economy" becomes destitute and ceases to be a market for the U.S. imperialism. The imperialists thought that Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union would be almost insatiable markets if they could overthrow socialism, but today these debt burdened countries no longer constitute an effective market. In a like manner, "winning" the cold war means a defeat for monopoly capitalism. The cold war fueled the military budget which in turn fueled the economy. The "victory" takes the form of a downturn in the economy.

IV. POLARIZATION IN THE U.S.

The expressions of this polarization within this country have profound consequences for revolutionaries. Only the propertyless mass can maintain the perspective of overthrowing capitalism and establishing communism as a method of exchange. All other sector will settle for partial resolution. America is very large and the working class is large, some 65% of the population. The bits and pieces of classes are also very large. These bits and pieces (larger than the working class of most nations) have already indicated their individual paths of political activity. The guarantee of revolutionary stability is to continue to base ourselves in the propertyless mass while taking advantage of the movement of other sectors of the class. We have already found out that independent revolutionaries are moving toward our Party only because we have concentrated on this basic element of the class. The most important result of this polarization and its causes is the stability and growth of an objective communist movement. We should try to get agreement on these words and concepts. The great social struggles of the 1930s had the objective task of reforming and restructuring the capitalist system to make it compatible with the decline of the family farm, the consolidation and monopolization of giant industry and the growth of industrial cities. Were you to ask the participants in those struggles if they were fighting to reform and restructure the system, they would tell you they were fighting for a union, or against lynching or for food. The movement for reform was objective. The reasons individuals carried out that fight were subjective. Today, we see the beginnings of an even greater social struggle. This time, the struggle is revolutionary. There is no way to restructure the capitalist system to be compatible with the electronic means of production. Under these conditions, there is no way to have a

revolution that doesn't change the mode of ownership, production and distribution. That change inevitably is communist. The mass of participants will say they are fighting for food or housing, but objectively they are fighting for communism.

V. REFORM TO REVOLUTION

We cannot simply state this and go on as before. The shift from reform to revolution doesn't just happen. It is a process and like all processes involves destruction of the old to make way for the new. It includes destruction of the old organizational forms, and the destruction of the methods of dealing with the old. The first thing is that we simply cannot apply the same tactic to an objectively reform movement and to an objectively communist movement. If we are correct regarding the development of an objective communist movement, wouldn't it be deadly to carry the same tactic over from the fight for reform? Theory tells us that this objective movement is going toward communism. Do we have to direct it, keep it under our wing or try to pull it in a certain direction as we did with the reform movement? Or should we develop the tactic of pushing it forward from the inside? That means recognizing that it does have an objective goal, accepting the actual struggle of the revolutionary section of the class as the basis for our program, and pushing for its accomplishment. The second thing is that we cannot have the same organizational relationship to the movement under these various circumstances. When a reform movement is fighting for reform within the system, a communist party must create a relationship with this objective movement that reflects that reality. Clearly we have to adapt our organizational forms to set up a proper relationship to an objectively communist movement. The real skill of the professional revolutionaries is shown by their ability to grasp the quantitative aspects of a qualitative leap, their ability to change with the changing process. We are at a very early stage of polarization, but we can see where this thing is going. Economic polarization developed on the basis of electronic technology applied to production by multinational corporations serving the world market. In every country, the qualitative increase in productivity by the workers so cheapens their value that absolute poverty becomes the condition for absolute wealth. Economic polarization creates social polarization. The unity of national and other social groups is destroyed as economic polarization regroups society according to wealth and poverty.

The Los Angeles rebellion is testimony to this stage. Social polarization, in turn, is the basis for the next inevitable stage political i polarization.

VI. AN ORGANIZATION OF REVOLUTIONARIES

Marx states in the *Manifesto*, "The Communists fight for the attainment of the immediate aims, for the enforcement of the momentary interests of the working class; but in the movement of the present, they also represent and take care of the future of that movement." What is the future of this current motion? Marx continues, "every class struggle is a political struggle." Further, he points out, "this organization of the proletarians into a class, and, consequently into a political party..." This means that as the workers are objectively formed into a class, they necessarily are, on the subjective side, formed into a political party. One is the expression of the other. The next big and very difficult step will be the formation of a workers party. It will not be a populist, hybrid, "third party," but a party of the class. It would be more than an electoral party. It would be the organizational center for the struggles of the class strikes, demonstrations, protests, and elections. Such a party would create political programs to achieve the immediate demands of the class. A task that, under the existing conditions, is the unnatural responsibility of our Communist Labor Party (CLP). When such a workers party exists, the task of the communists will be to plan out the strategies and tactics of the proletarian revolution and win the mass leaders to that line. Our proper role as communists is to become the most advanced and resolute section of the working class party, that section that pushes forward all others. Only by doing this can we establish the proper relationship between ourselves and the actual movement for communism. We must do what we can to prepare the workers for and help them form this party. The starting point is grasping the concepts of and differences between economic, social and proletarian revolution. Secondly, we must see and prepare to work within the various stages of struggle and organization that lies between now and then. We must put an end to the talk about liquidating the Communist Labor Party in order to form a workers party. We cannot form a workers party. Such a party is the result of consciousness on the part of the workers. On the other hand, an organization of revolutionaries is absolutely indispensable to the formation of a workers party. We intend to disband the CLP in order to build such an

organization of revolutionaries. This is an exciting historical moment. Skirmishing in the epoch of the final conflict has begun. All the objective factors are in place or almost so. From now on the subjective factor, our skill, clarity, astuteness and determination become the decisive factors. This is the moment we have waited for. We need wait no more.

APPENDIX

EDUCATIONAL ON "DIALECTICS OF THE LEAP AND THE DESTRUCTION OF CAPITALISM"

PARAGRAPHS 1 AND 2 of "Dialectics of the Leap and the Destruction of Capitalism"

Readings: Stalin, *“Dialectical and Historical Materialism”*, first 14 pages Engels, *“Anti Duhring”*, chapter on Negation of the Negation. Questions: 1. Discuss the motion from primitive communism to advanced communism as a leap and the various stages of the leap. 2. What was the new antagonistic element that forced change in each stage discussed above. 3. Discuss the development of each new form or stage (feudalism, capitalism) as a negation to preserve the content of slavery in the sense of exploitation. 4. Is the communist revolution a negation of capitalism?

PARAGRAPH 3 of "Dialectics of the Leap and the Destruction of Capitalism"

Readings: Stalin, *“The three basic slogans of the party on the peasant question”*, April, 1927 Questions: 1. Discuss how the slogans of the Soviet revolution changed with each change in the political environment. 2. Discuss these changes as stages of the leap.

PARAGRAPHS 4 AND 5 of "Dialectics of the Leap and the Destruction of Capitalism"

Readings: *“Entering An Epoch of Social Revolution”* Questions: 1. Discuss the necessity of carefully studying the economic and political environment in order to decide what is possible as political tactics. 2. How does our tactic of striving to unite the working class where they are economically equal reflect this? 3. In the context of the quantitative introduction of a new quality as a reflection of the quantitative change in the

environment, counterpose this tactic to the CPUSA slogan of "black and white unite and fight."

PARAGRAPHS 6 AND 7 of "Dialectics of the Leap and the Destruction of Capitalism"

Readings: Marx, *Value, Price and Profit* Questions: 1. Do robots produce commodities? Is the labor theory of value applicable to production by robots? 2. If robotic production is not a value creating system, how can there be exchange? 3. How will this affect the sale of labor power?

PARAGRAPHS 8, 9 AND 10 of "Dialectics of the Leap and the Destruction of Capitalism"

Readings: Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*, three paragraphs near the end of the essay. The first of these three paragraphs begins with "In one point, however, the history of development of society proves to be essentially different from that of nature." The following articles published in *Rally, Comrades*: Vol. 4, No. 7, (September, 1984) "Ethnic Politics set worker against worker"; Vol. 3, No. 3, (April, 1983) "Emerging role of black workers: New forms of class struggle, new tasks"; Vol. 3, No. 2, (February 1983) "USNA trade union movement 1860-1983: Rise and Fall of Working Class Bribery"; Vol. 3, No. 8 (October 1983) "New Times, new tasks: new forces at front of Social Motion"; Vol. 4, No. 6 (August 1984) "10th Anniversary of CLP: Radical social change demands radical break with past" Questions: 1. How did the depression years and the years of economic expansion affect mass thinking? 2. How does an intellectual struggle amongst the masses develop? Give some examples. 3. What is the central question preventing the intellectual development of the class today and how is it overcome?

PARAGRAPHS 11 AND 12 of "Dialectics of the Leap and the Destruction of Capitalism"

Readings: *Rally, Comrades*, Vol. 3, No. 3, (April, 1983) "Emerging role of black workers: New forms of class struggle, new tasks" *To Study, to Propagandize, to Organize: the Report from the 4th Central Committee*, December 1988 Marx, *Communist Manifesto*, Section II, "Proletarians and Communists," first page and a half. Questions: 1. Why is it leftishness (sectarianism) to stress the qualitative aspect before the leap begins? Give some examples. 2. How and within what process did class consciousness develop?

PARAGRAPHS 13 AND 14 of "Dialectics of the Leap and the Destruction of Capitalism" Readings: Marx, *Poverty of Philosophy*, section called "Metaphysics of Political Economy, Second Observation." Questions: 1. Is an intellectual leap possible without a leap in the objective process? Why?

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Educational on "Polarization in U.S. Basis for a Workers Party"

Section I of "Polarization in U.S. Basis for a Workers Party" Readings: Entering an Epoch of Social Revolution: sections entitled "Philosophical Discussion and Inquiry;" and "Process of Development" Questions: 1. Give a basic description of the foundations of polarization in the U.S. today. 2. How is this polarization the beginning of real transformation, and to what? 3. Real planning requires intimate knowledge of the objective situation. Describe how the current tasks of the party relate to the polarization and unity of the objective situation.

Section II of "Polarization in U.S. Basis for a Workers Party" Readings: "Dialectics of the Leap and the Destruction of Capitalism," two paragraphs beginning with "The capitalist system..." and "Each invading quantity..." Engels, *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific* section 3, paragraph beginning "Since the historical appearance of the capitalist mode of production, the appropriation by society of all the means production...." Marx, *Communist Manifesto* section on Bourgeois and Proletarians, paragraph beginning "Hitherto, every form of society has been based...." *Wall Street Journal*, October 13, 1992, page one, "Housing Cave In Southern California is rattled as prices of homes keep falling." Supplemental Reading: Marx, *Capital, Volume 1*, Chapter XXV, Section 4, "Different Forms of the Relative Surplus Population, The General Law of Capitalist Accumulation" Questions: 1. Describe the role of value in the current polarization. 2. How has the electronics revolution in production affected the polarization of wealth and poverty? 3. How will the U.S. become "poor" enough that the motion toward revolution is reinforced?

Section III of "Polarization in U.S. Basis for a Workers Party" Readings: "Dialectics of the Leap and the Destruction of Capitalism," paragraphs 18 (especially 3 and 8) Marx, *_Capital_*, Chapter XXXII, "Historical tendency of capitalist Accumulation" Entering an Epoch of Social Revolution, sections entitled "Content of the Time" and "Two Conditions for Proletarian Revolution" *_Rally Comrades_*, Volume 2, #6, (December, 1992) "Capitalist Crisis, Bankruptcy of Bourgeois Options" Questions: 1. Every advance in society is based on the destruction of economic underpinnings. What was destroyed in the economic transition from agriculture to advanced industry? Today, what is being destroyed and what is the new foundation upon which the social order begins? 2. Discuss "every political victory of imperialism against the revolutionary movement places it in a more precarious position."

Section IV of "Polarization in U.S. Basis S for a Workers Party" Readings: Entering an Epoch of Social Revolution, section titled "The Revolutionary Process" *_Rally Comrades_*, Volume 2, #3 (July, 1982), "Against Sectarianism for a Leninist Style of Work" ; *_New Perspective Quarterly_*, Spring 1990, page 5 of article "Lines on the Horizon", *Wall Street Journal_*, October 13, 1992 "Housing Cave In", page 1 . Questions: 1. Describe how the American people are being stratified. How is this changing the social fabric of society? 2. Why did the social struggles of the 1930s have the objective task of reforming the restructuring the capitalist system? What effect did this have on the "reform" movement? What is the objective impulse of the social struggle today? What effect does it have on the "reform" movement?

Section V of "Polarization in the U.S. Basis for a Workers Party" Readings: *_Rally, Comrades_*, "Call for the Sixth Congress," Vol. 11, No. 5, November, 1992. *_Rally, Comrades_*, "Ensure Party Growth," Vol. 10, No. 4 (July 1991) (especially the section on the party, theory, and philosophy). Karl Marx, *_Preface to the Critique of Political Economy_* ; Entering an Epoch of Social Revolution, section entitled "The Real World," Supplemental Readings: *_Rally Comrades_*, Vol. 2, #2 (July 1982) "Path to Power and the Role of the Party;" and *_Rally Comrades_*, Vol. 2 #3 (July 1982) "Against Sectarianism: For a Leninist style of work." Questions: 1. Briefly describe the following and their relation to each other: a) "economic" revolution, i.e. productive forces and property relations, b) social revolution and c) proletarian revolution. 2. "Theory tells us this objective communist movement is going toward communism." (Section 5, paragraph

2). Describe the process involved in the shift from reform to revolution. What does this mean for the work of the Communist Labor Party in the developing social struggles? What are the correct tactics? Give examples.

Section VI of "Polarization in the U.S. Basis for a Workers Party" Readings:

Entering an Epoch of Social Revolution, sections titled "Communist Labor Party"; "Communist Labor Party and Our Tasks"; "The Real World". Dialectics of the Leap and the Destruction of Capitalism, paragraph 11 which begins "This task is..." Engels, assorted letters and essays: 1. Engels to Sorge, London, November 29, 1886. 2. Engels to Mrs. [Florence Kelly] Wischenewetzky, London, December 28, 1886 3. Engels essay titled, "The Labor Movement in the United States" which is a preface to the American edition of "_The Conditions of the Working Class in England in 1844_", written in London, January 26, 1887. Supplemental Readings: _History of the CPSUB_, Chapter 1 Questions: 1. What is the relationship of the communists to a workers party? Is it our role to form a workers party? Explain. 2. What is the proper organizational form for the revolutionaries in this quantitative stage of the revolution (i.e., the beginnings of the social revolution o against capitalism)? 3. What is the role of agitation and propaganda in this quantitative stage of revolution? Give examples.

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