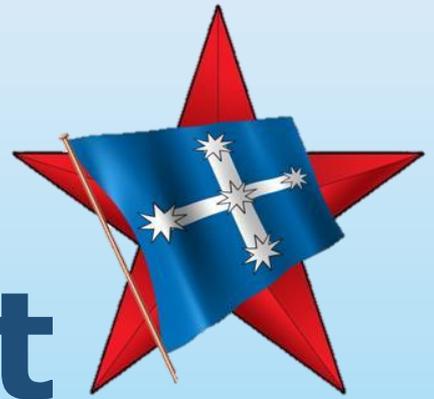


# Australian Communist



JOURNAL OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA (MARXIST-LENINIST)  
Autumn 2022 | [cpaml.org](http://cpaml.org) | [info@cpaml.org](mailto:info@cpaml.org)

**History of the CPA (M-L):  
Some Ideological Development  
and Lessons**

***Jefatura*: On the (anti-)Maoist  
Principle of Great Leadership**

**Understanding the Need to  
Restrict Bourgeois Right  
and more...**





***“Theory is the experience of the working-class movement in all countries taken in its general aspect. Of course, theory becomes purposeless if it is not connected with revolutionary practice, just as practice gropes in the dark if its path is not illumined by revolutionary theory.”***

*– J.V Stalin, Foundations of Leninism (1924)*

**T**heory and practice. The two inseparable components of knowledge. Through practice we reach some general conclusions from which we form a theory. With that theory in hand, we again throw ourselves back into practice, testing our theory, refining it against the actualities of concrete reality. Sometimes our practice gets results, and sometimes it fails. Examine it, refine it, and try again. Only through the long arduous process of the trial and error of our theory through revolutionary practice, and reflecting on our practice through the lens of revolutionary theory, can we move towards a more accurate understanding of reality and towards the success of the revolution.

*Australian Communist* is the theoretical journal of our Party. It has an important role as a place for the discussion of revolutionary theory in the light of the historical practice of the international proletarian revolutionary movement, and particularly in our local context of Australia. This edition of *Australian Communist*, includes three articles that exemplify this understanding of the relationship between theory and practice and the striving to achieve an ever more accurate understanding and knowledge of social reality to aid the advance of the revolutionary movement.

In the first article, comrade John S. examines the history of the CPA (M-L) and the communist movement in Australia, drawing lessons both positive and negative from historical practice and assesses them in the light of reality today.

The second article, the collective effort of a local Party Study Group, takes a critical look at the theory of *Jefatura*, or “Great Leadership”, originating in the experience of the Peruvian revolutionary peoples’ war that has gained traction amongst a section of communists.

A lengthy and in-depth contribution by Nick G., current CPA (M-L) Chairperson, is our third article. It examines the notion of bourgeois right, and how it has been understood and dealt with in the historical experiences of the Russian and Chinese revolutions, and what role it played in the counter-revolutionary reversions to capitalism in those societies.

As usual, we also feature a piece ‘From the Archives’ – this time a report by E.F ‘Ted’ Hill to the Central Committee in May 1975. Interesting as both a historical document of the Party and the communist movement, it also gives good insight to the leadership of comrade Hill and how he endeavoured to apply Marxism-Leninism to the Australian situation at the time.

We hope readers will enjoy this edition, and find it both insightful and useful. We encourage feedback and discussion of our published work, and welcome all comments and genuine contributions.

**Editors, March 2022**



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and membership enquires  
welcome!



# History of the CPA (M-L): Some Ideological Development and Lessons

by John S.

**T**he CPA (M-L) has strongly and successfully challenged and repudiated the sell-out of revolutionary theory and practice by the revisionists around the world, that openly manifested in the 1950s, led by the corrupt revisionist clique in the Soviet Union. The Party has upheld the sharp revolutionary edge of Marxism against the blunting and softening by various revisionist groups, the confusion and opportunism of those who meandered into so-called “New Left” theories and who substituted the jump onto every new progressive issue as a replacement for adherence to a coherent theory guiding revolutionary strategy and action.

The Party clarified the Marxist attitude to social democracy, in the form of the ALP [Australian Labor Party] in Australia. Contrary to the old CPA [Communist Party of Australia] confusion that the ALP was a two-class party, the CPA (M-L) asserted that the ALP was a party of capitalism; that it always upheld the capitalist system, in fact increasingly so whenever it was in office; and that it misled the working class by steering its struggles into reformism within the system, instead of using struggles to illustrate the need to overthrow the system.

Taken overall, the Party’s material did not deny the progressive social democratic aspects of policies or actions by the ALP, when social reforms benefitted the people. Much of the Party’s material in *Vanguard* and *Australian Communist* acknowledged that there were differences between Labor and the LNP [Liberal National Party] in social reform. Ted Hill especially wrote a great deal on this. Equally most articles had simultaneously insisted that the ALP is a party of capital. Often the language was dogmatic and mechanical, but the ideology behind it was right. Everything has its swings between right opportunism and ultra-leftism, especially in the heat of struggle. In mass work,

our members took account of the level of consciousness of the people, many of whom were/are Labor Party members and supporters.

Nevertheless, in the heat of intense working class and people’s struggles where Labor was/is selling out workers, a sort of shorthand reference to Liberal and Labor as Tweedledee and Tweedledum sometimes emerged. As a generalisation this was wrong. If they were identical, Labor would have no credibility and could not successfully mislead the people. The ALP maintains some slightly more progressive policies on social spending, and tries to straddle the divide between labour and capital. This creates illusions among many people that the ALP is genuinely progressive. However, these mildly progressive policies always buckle and vanish under pressure from the capitalist class when Labor is in office.

Labor’s principal role as a capitalist party, and its principal service to the capitalist class, is to mislead the working class, and other classes, into containing its struggles and aspirations within the capitalist parliamentary system, and to head off any movement towards a revolutionary challenge to the system. To do this, it has to be, and to appear, slightly different from the more open parties of capitalism.

This capacity for misleadership has declined over recent decades, as working class loyalty to the ALP has reduced, and been fractured in varying degrees, and as the strength of the union movement has declined. Deepening capitalist crisis and the necessity for capital to monopolise and intensify the exploitation of labour, with capital having less capacity to manoeuvre and make progressive concessions in response to working class pressures, in particular made the ALP’s maintenance of the post-war welfare state untenable. The ruling classes, influenced heavily



by finance capital as the dominant sector of imperialist capital, demanded policies of deregulation and privatisation together with wage freezes and cutbacks in government spending. In Australia, the change from the welfare state to neo-liberalism was pioneered by Labor governments under Hawke and Keating. This accelerated the disillusionment with parliamentary politics and traditional parties, evident around the capitalist world (e.g., Trump, Brexit, right-wing populism in Europe, India, Brazil) and has weakened the hold of Labor and like parties, although many workers and progressive people still default to supporting Labor as the lesser of two evils.

The CPA (M-L) understood and advocated that the main purpose of agitation and organisation among the working class and the unions is to build revolutionary awareness and organisation. It disavowed the old tendency, whether it was explicitly stated or tacitly followed, to emphasise winning leadership positions in unions as being primarily important.

The Party explained the domination of Australia by imperialism, and advocated an anti-imperialist struggle. The strategy of the anti-imperialist phase of socialist revolution arose from the examination of Australian concrete conditions at that time. The patriotic national bourgeoisie, progressive intellectuals and cultural workers aspiring for national independence (and their survival) had considerable presence in the progressive movements of the people, with some joining working class struggles. Generally, there was a tide for a progressive national Australian identity – and some resistance to cultural domination by the US. The Party recognised the objective existence of an anti-imperialist united front of workers and patriotic sections of other

classes (including the national and petty bourgeoisie) with common interests in the struggle for independence. The desire for independence (in different degrees) was strongest during the Whitlam era.

The Party's development of the theory of the national independence stage of Australia's socialist revolution was based on concrete conditions at that time and was correct for that time. However, it lacked clarity on the pause between the independence and socialist stages of the revolution. For a time, the Party presented the anti-imperialist phase of achieving independence as a separate first stage of the Australian revolution. This was confused and confusing. Party publications never spelt out what this anti-imperialist stage would look like. Would it merely provide restrictions on foreign ownership, a more independent foreign policy, handing

over previously foreign-owned companies to local capitalists? Obviously, this would be both inadequate, and a betrayal of the working class-led fight to overthrow imperialism.

In reality, because imperialism so dominates the Australian economy, as well as the military, political and ideological institutions, the overthrow of imperialism should and would entail the immediate socialisation of all the major sectors of the Australian economy; independence and the first major step in building socialism are identical, not separate stages. This confusion has recently been clarified.

It should be kept in mind that political differences (and struggle) on strategies, tactics and even ideological questions, are always present in the communist party. It is a reflection of classes and

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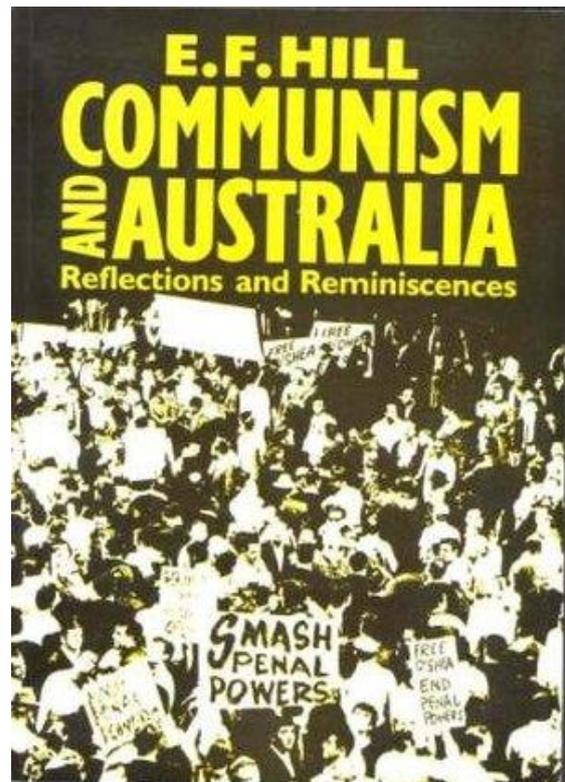


class struggle in society, different areas and levels of political work and experiences, industries, mass work and backgrounds of cadres. It is also a reflection on constantly changing concrete conditions. The proper handling of these differences requires party discipline, listening and learning collectively, striving to see the whole, not just the part. Problems arise when the particular is turned into a general, or general is imposed on the particular, without proper investigation of all sides and aspects. As individuals we make mistakes, blinded by subjectivism.

Party publications, like Hill's *Communism in Australia: Reflections and Reminiscences*<sup>1</sup> dealt at length correctly with the need for locally-driven analysis and decision-making. He stresses that socialism is a long-term goal in Australia, not attainable in the short-term, contrary to the prevailing approach for decades in the CPA of expecting a successful socialist revolution in the short-term, and advocating socialist ideas to all and sundry. Hill advocated the need for a long-term strategy, based on patient mass work among the people, building on their issues and consciousness at the time.

The lack of immediate prospects of socialism does not mean that the CPA (M-L) should stop advocating socialism. The Party has to be realistic that achieving socialism is highly likely to be a long-term project, but that does not dilute the goal. It has to develop the necessary understanding, strategies, patience and mass work. At the same time, it needs the flexibility and ideological depth to adapt to any new situation that may be brought on by capitalist economic crisis or inter-imperialist war.

The establishment of the CPA (M-L) entailed the re-establishment of Leninist organisation; of a revolutionary party, disciplined and largely underground, so that it could withstand



*Written in the last years of Hill's life, Communism and Australia looks back and reflects on nearly seven decades of communist theory and practice in Australia*

surveillance and suppression. Development of understanding and practice in this difficult and complex task has been, and is, a continuing process.

The Party is of a "new type", in that it is not a party that seeks or purports to represent the people electorally, asking for their support so that it can act on their behalf. The CPA (M-L) strives to be a party that embodies and enables people to take their own action, to make change, and ultimately make revolution themselves. This is the process of "dual power" in which the people challenge the capitalist system by steadily taking control of their own lives and situations, and resist and finally overthrow the power of the capitalist state. The Party strives to provide the leadership of mass action necessary for ultimate revolutionary success. It does not act on behalf of the people: the Party and allied mass

<sup>1</sup> E.F Hill, *Communism in Australia: Reflections and Reminiscences*, 1989  
<https://www.marxists.org/history/erol/australia/hill-last/index.htm>



organisations are the people in action, the people in motion.

While the Party has strongly and successfully maintained and advanced the revolutionary heart of Marxism, it needs to better develop its strategic planning: setting priorities and strategies, so that its short, medium and long-term goals are clear, and its resources deployed and concentrated to achieve them. We have both a General Program and a Fighting Program and they are reviewed at each Party Congress. One of the main problems is in the concrete implementation and guidance by these programs (delegation and carrying out tasks in areas of responsibility).

The new party set itself the task of rectifying the old revisionist party's abandonment of the study of Marxism. Our reading of Marxism, particularly in the first few decades of the Party, was almost exclusively confined to Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao Zedong, plus Ted Hill. These authors are at the opposite end of narrowness of outlook. When used as a scientific tool, not a static dogma, Marxism exposes the crushing and stifling anti-revolutionary theories of the bourgeoisie. Marxism used as a tool is liberating, but as a dogma it shackles the working class. Some of our comrades took to chanting the names of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Zedong at anti-war rallies in the late 60s and early 70s. It was an act of revolutionary hubris, of subjective over-enthusiasm, designed to draw a clear line of demarcation between ourselves and the revisionists. That, together with a rather narrow selection of readings from these authors, was dogmatic and narrow. That narrowness meant we largely missed the contributions and ideas of many revolutionaries around the world, who explored and articulated useful and creative ideas about Marxism. However, on the other hand more attention was given to Marxist study and analysis of Australia's people's history and conditions of class struggle, culture, First People's resistance to colonialism, and imperialist domination.

While the CPA gutted the revolutionary heart of Marxism, and jumped on any faddish bandwagon, some in the CPA (M-L), on the other hand, defended a rather narrow, static interpretation of Marxism and closed their minds to the need to continuously develop and refine Marxist theory. For examples: *Vanguard* in the '70s argued against changing pronouns from "he" to non-exclusive pronouns such as (s)he or he/she, arguing that "he" validly represented all people. Meanwhile the world was moving on. Some were slow to understand and embrace the positive aspects of the women's liberation movement, gay rights, and environmental issues. Others contributed positive leadership on these issues. A number of women party members were involved in the women's liberation struggles and organisations. They were active in the women's liberation struggles in the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s, introduced and fought for class analysis of women's oppression by capitalism and the double exploitation of working class women. They strongly criticised male chauvinism but also warned against positions promoted by some women liberationists that men were the main cause of women's oppression. The main emphasis of women's oppression was on working class women, including the exploitation and oppression of migrant women workers amongst whom some members worked.

Party members were involved in and led environmental struggles as far back as the 1980s. They were national and local community environmental struggles – against industrial pollution, fossil fuel emissions, petrochemical emissions into the environment and local communities, logging and deforestation of native forests, and many others. The Party strongly supported the Franklin River struggle with Party members directly involved in the national campaign, including in Tasmania. Party members were involved in the campaign against Nuclear Testing in the Pacific and in the regional campaign for an Independent and Nuclear Free Pacific; members were active in the national



People for Nuclear Disarmament movement, and Green Bans initiated by the Builders' Labourers' Federation in the late 1960s. However, apart from the big environmental struggles they were not frequently featured in our publications. Our organisational principles concealed much of our work as Party members in the people's movements.

It should be noted that once elements of dogmatism by some abated, the influence of the Party grew widely throughout the independence movement, with collectives of progressive individuals producing journals such as *Bowyang* and the *Independent Australian*, which popularised historical and cultural developments that largely aligned with the policies of the Party. These were supported also by weekly newspapers produced in some states by the Worker-Student Alliance which was favourably disposed to following the Party's leadership.

Now the issue of "identity politics" confronts us. If it is promoted in opposition to or apart from our General Program, it can be used to divide the unity of people's movement and the working class. This should not be a problem. Of course, we should recognise and respect people's sexual identities, then say "Everyone is welcome to join the revolution." We make this clear in our Program: "Diversity of the working class is a great strength. The Party welcomes that diversity in its own ranks. It fights for a society where mutual respect exists between all races and genders, where racism and gender inequalities are not tolerated, where gender identities and sexual preferences are respected. The Party upholds these standards amongst its membership."

Communist parties, including the CPA and CPA (M-L), have often been too deferential, even slavish, toward the Soviet and Chinese Parties, in the socialist heartlands. These parties had, of course, enormous prestige and influence among the world revolutionary movements. However,

we too readily acquiesced to their leadership, or even insistence, even when their policies were dictated more by their own geopolitical interests than the interests of world revolution.

During the late 1920s, the 1930s and beyond, the Comintern required, as a condition of membership, that affiliated Communist parties follow the dictates of the Comintern; in effect, the dictates of the Soviet Communist Party. Local or national analysis of conditions and needs, and the development of locally-appropriate strategies, were discouraged and overridden.

The CPA, as a Comintern affiliate, had to support the 1928-1933 ultra-left policy of sectarian refusal to build unity between workers who were Communist and those under social-democratic influence. It then had to support, after 1933, the right-opportunist line of building "popular fronts" against fascism. The Communist parties were now encouraged to unite with social-democratic and bourgeois liberal parties, surrendering their ideological communist independence and forgoing attempts to provide leadership by the organised working class.

**The Australian party should have made a better job of analysing the concrete conditions of our own situation, and working out locally appropriate tactics and strategy.**

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Although it was an unexpected development and took many parties by surprise, the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, a non-aggression pact between the Soviet Union and Germany, was generally defended by the Communist parties around the world. They regarded the war that preceded the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union as an inter-imperialist conflict.

The Nazis invaded Belgium, Holland and Luxemburg in May 1940, and occupied France. This brought to an end the "phoney war" that followed the German invasion of Poland when British and French declarations of war were



followed by complete inactivity, by a failure to engage with the Nazis by military means. During this period, many Communist parties were suppressed by their governments. The Australian Party was declared illegal.

The Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941 required Communist parties to change their line again, reflecting the changed political and military circumstances. The war was now a war in defence of the Soviet Union and socialism. It was no longer a fight between rival imperialist blocs but had now become a war against fascism in which one set of imperialist powers were now allies of the Soviet Union and were henceforth called “democracies” (it could be argued that the widespread use of this term by Communist Parties helped engender illusions that took the form of revisionism after the war). The illegality of the Communist Party of Australia was lifted in recognition of its change to all-out support for the war effort. In many countries, Communists emerged as the unchallenged leaders of the anti-fascist fight.

The Soviet leaders were correct to sign the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. They were correct that the invasion of the Soviet Union had changed the nature of the conflict. They were correct to enter an alliance with the imperialist bloc that was also fighting the Nazis.

Immaturity on the part of many Communist parties, and their tendency to change their own line on the basis of Soviet or Comintern policies, in place of deep and honest discussion at the local level, also made them vulnerable, after the war, to Khrushchev’s attacks on Stalin and his raft of new revisionist policies.

Later, during the dispute between the Soviet Union and China, over Soviet revisionism and its aggressiveness toward China, China decided that Soviet social-imperialism was the greatest threat to the world – greater even than US imperialism. Despite clear and candid criticisms of the previous experience of deference to, and control by, an overseas centre, the CPA (M-L) leadership at the time followed the Chinese line. However, this position on Soviet revisionism and social-



*CPA (M-L) Founding Chairperson E.F. ‘Ted’ Hill meeting with Mao Zedong in 1966.*

*Comrade Hill met with Mao Zedong and the Chinese leadership several times during the 60s and 70s and the Chinese revolution had a strong influence on the CPA (M-L) at the time*



imperialism was not simply blindly following China's line. The Party's position also had a concrete material base in Australia. The Moscow Narodny Bank established a Singapore branch on 22 November 1971. It became a base for expanding its influence across Australia, funding bullying developers destroying working class housing for profit, plus a network of financial and ideological connections, including in the ALP. The Soviet embassy was cultivating relations with ALP politicians and ALP members. The pro-revisionist Soviet social-imperialist ideology and political line was being aggressively pushed in some unions dominated and led by the Soviet aligned Socialist Party of Australia (renamed as CPA today). The invasion of Afghanistan and Soviet political and economic influence in some African countries was increasing. We overstated the threat of Soviet social-imperialism in Australia which led to some in the Party advocating that it was threatening to replace US imperialism as the more aggressive imperialist power. They were out of touch with the masses who understood US imperialism was still much more powerful in Australia. Even after huge defeats, it still held the reins of state power here. But we should not ignore or underestimate the intensity of the historic concrete conditions at the time these policies were developing.

The blind following of directives from the

international communist centre was a reflection on the immaturity and inexperience of the international Communist and revolutionary movements. The lesson is the importance of each Communist party thinking and deciding independently for itself, rather than following some socialist centre or dominant line. The CPA (M-L) is now strong in this regard, and that strength must always be maintained. Even in the future, when there are successful socialist revolutions in other countries, (as there most certainly will be), each party must think for itself and make its own decisions. None should feel bound by the views of any socialist states, whether these views are well-motivated interpretations of Marxism, or conflation or confusion of the socialist state's national or geopolitical interests with those of world revolution. Whilst we learn from socialist countries and other communist parties striving to build socialism and progress their struggle for socialism, we chart our own country's path to socialism in our conditions.

In summary, the Party must always combine vigilant, militant maintenance of the revolutionary essence of Marxism, with creativity, intellectual honesty and open-mindedness to ideas and possibilities that can help develop and refine Marxism, so that it is always an up-to-date, accurate and sharp revolutionary tool.

***In summary, the Party must always combine vigilant, militant maintenance of the revolutionary essence of Marxism, with creativity, intellectual honesty and open-mindedness to ideas and possibilities that can help develop and refine Marxism, so that it is always an up-to-date, accurate and sharp revolutionary tool.***



# Jefatura: On the (anti-)Maoist Principle of Great Leadership

by A Party Study Group

**W**e are a group of Party members who recently held a study session on the Gonzaloist principle of “Great Leadership” - *Jefatura*.

One of the documents we looked at was from the US Gonzaloist online *Struggle Sessions* publication, an article called “On the Maoist principle of Great Leadership”.<sup>2</sup> We have amended that title, above.

*Jefatura* is an ideological trend that claims that “Great Leadership”, enunciated in the form of “Great Thought” by “Great Leaders”, emerges as the culmination of struggle and theorisation in the course of revolutionary struggle in a particular country. This Great Thought then guides that revolutionary struggle.

“Revolutions give rise to a thought that guides them.... A guiding thought... indispensable to reach victory” (Gonzalo).

Communists are then enjoined and expected to follow this Great Thought, through to the success of the revolution. Marx, Lenin, Stalin, Mao and Gonzalo are most commonly held up as the Great Leaders, and their thought as the guiding thought.

However, the reification of the revolutionary theories of these and any other leaders misunderstands the ongoing dynamic, dialectical process of cognition and understanding. It risks and encourages congealing and blocking the constant dialectical process of practice, reflection and theorisation and the refinement of theory, then testing theory again in practice, further modification, and so on. (See Mao: On Practice).



*“Great Leaders” upheld by the Gonzaloists – reducing living revolutionary theory to dead figure heads?*

Mao and Maoism are extolled as examples of “Great Leadership”. This is the same political line that proclaims that its ideology is “Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism”.

However, part of Mao’s greatness lies in his rejection of deference to the Great Leader of the time, Stalin. Having begun to study Marxism-Leninism, Mao went out to the countryside, investigated the class relations of the peasantry, and developed and refined revolutionary theory that was applicable to the Chinese situation. He, and the other Communist leaders, developed revolutionary political and military strategies against the advice and dictates of the Soviet and Comintern leadership. Chinese Communist theory constantly evolved to address the changing situation of the Japanese invasion, then the revolutionary civil war, then the construction of socialism, the handling of contradictions among the people and between the people and the class enemy. Along the way, Mao and his comrades realised that the ideological and political struggle against those resisting the building of socialism could not be restricted to inner-party rectification campaigns, and that

<sup>2</sup> Struggle Sessions, “On the Maoist Principle of Great Leadership”, 2018  
<https://struggle-sessions.com/2018/07/20/on-the-maoist-principle-of-great-leadership/>



mass involvement in a cultural, i.e., political, revolution was required. Ultimately, this was unsuccessful. The Chinese leadership had mobilised the masses for public works, health campaigns and economic reform, but had not built independent organisations of the masses to supervise the government, to exercise a real dictatorship of the proletariat. The masses had neither the organisation or experience to conduct the struggle against capitalist-roaders, and the cultural revolution turned into a mix of genuine mass democracy and contending misleaderships. Mao Zedong Thought came to be exercised largely as an almost-biblical set of quotations, and idolatry of the man himself. Recitation of the Great Thought was not enough to arm the masses to prevent the restoration of capitalism. Mao Zedong Thought was a constantly evolving theory, fed also by the contributions of the collective revolutionary leadership. Its reification into a set of fixed, often glib, dogma, promoted and treated biblically, by well-meaning zealots or deliberate misleaders, blunted its validity and effectiveness. Properly understood, respected and applied critically and creatively, Mao's ideas and theories remain extremely insightful and useful.

### **Wasn't Mao a "Great Leader"?**

Whilst Mao publicly accorded Stalin the respect he deserved, had it not been for his determination to think independently of Stalin as a Great Leader, our Gonzaloists would never have had the Maoism that they purport to promote. And Mao took the same attitude towards promotion of himself as a Great Leader.

Mao was plagued both during the revolutionary years and after the founding of the People's Republic of China, with a personality cult. He had made it plain at the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee held in March 1948, that it was forbidden to give birthday wishes to party leaders and to use the names of leaders as names of places, cities, streets, buildings and factories. On four separate occasions prior to his death, he forbade the printing of his portrait on the currency of the People's Republic of China.

The height of his personality cult was reached during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Mao discussed this quite openly with Edgar Snow. He told Snow that at the start of the Cultural Revolution the power of the Party had been out of his control and that he "began to invoke his enormous personal prestige and popularity, using it as a major weapon in his struggle to recover full authority over the orientation of revolutionary power. Now there was, in 1970, no such need, and the "cult" would be *cooled down*, he said."

At the start of the Cultural Revolution, Mao had been eulogised with the "four greats": Great Leader, Great Teacher, Great Helmsman and Great Commander-in-Chief. He said he hated this and in future wanted to only be known as a teacher, that is, a school teacher, a profession for which he had trained and a position he had worked as when a young man.

However, it was difficult to "cool the cult down", particularly when careerists like Lin Biao continually fanned its flames for their own purposes. Both Lin Biao and Chen Boda promoted the theory of Mao's "genius", saying that such a genius appeared in China once every two or three thousand years. They said every sentence of Mao's was worth ten thousand of anyone else's.

Such idealist nonsense was rejected by Mao. At the Second Plenum of the Ninth Central Committee in Lushan in August and September 1970, Lin Biao proposed that Mao fill the vacant position of State President, a position he hoped to inherit himself as Mao's successor.

At subsequent talks with provincial leaders during a tour of regions after the Second Plenum, Mao refuted Lin Biao and Chen Boda. He said that he was no genius in the sense they were using the word, that genius depended on collective wisdom. He accused them of using his "sentences" to establish their own prestige.

So, in what way can we say that *Jefatura*, or Great Leadership, is a Maoist principle when Mao so clearly rejected its earlier manifestations during his own lifetime?



***Jefatura* promotes the theories of some leaders as a fixed thing.**

This approach fails to understand the dialectical process of constant change and the need for theory to keep pace with changing reality. Theory is merely the best intellectual approximation of reality at a particular time. Knowledge is provisional. As evidence and experience accumulate, all theory is reviewed, improved and updated. This is the science of Marxism. Marx and Engels, Lenin and Mao are excellent examples of theoreticians whose theories kept pace with different and changing realities. Stalin contributed powerful theoretical and practical leadership to the construction of socialist industry and agriculture, to the need to introduce elections (in the 1936 constitution), and to the defeat of fascism. However, the very brief period of practice in the construction of socialism did not provide him and the Soviet Communist Party with the depth of knowledge and understanding of the ongoing class struggle under socialism and the differentiating between antagonistic and non-antagonistic contradictions. After the World War II devastation of the still young socialist Soviet Union, it was easy to fall into a geo-political policy, prioritising a ring of friendly socialist nations around the USSR, sending the Communist leaders back from Moscow to Italy, France and Greece with instructions to build blocs against reaction, after fascism had been defeated. Mao Zedong and the Chinese Communist Party learned from these mistakes and deepened the Marxist-Leninist theory of continuing class struggle under socialism and upholding the independence of Communist Parties and the working class in steering their own country's

revolutionary pathways to socialism and communism.

All theory and practice need to be constantly and critically reviewed. Setting some leaders' thoughts in stone is unscientific, and Marxism is scientific socialism.

**The Great Leader**

The proponents of *Jefatura* seem to slide too easily from the promotion of Great Leadership to deference, even unquestioning loyalty, to the Great Leader.

"There exists no revolution, nor has there ever, without a central figure at its head."<sup>3</sup>

Such idolatry is dangerous.

**The loyalty of communists is to the revolution, to the welfare of the people, not to an individual, no matter how smart they are.**

One proponent cites glowingly the pledge of allegiance and loyalty to Gonzalo by Peruvian communists.<sup>4</sup> (This has eerie reminders of pledges of loyalty and obedience to past dictators).

The loyalty of communists is to the revolution, to the welfare of the people, not to an individual, no matter how smart they are.

All individuals are fallible. The smart and honest ones recognise that their knowledge and ideas are provisional, and constantly review them and accept contribution and critique from others.

History is littered with examples of revolutionary or insurgent leaders who lost their way, slid into revisionism, or were corrupted by power. Tito in Yugoslavia, Mugabe in Zimbabwe, Muzorewa in Uganda, and Prachanda in Nepal, Afwerki in Eritrea are recent examples.

This is evidence of the dangers of idolatry, of setting leaders on a pedestal, of failing to insist

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> Ibid



on collective leadership, of misunderstanding or misrepresenting the dialectical process of theory-practice-theory.

**Mass support**

The *Jefatura* proponents talk of needing a guiding thought in order to guide the revolution and win the support of the proletariat.

The working class all over the world has been fed bullshit for years, for centuries.

Workers are therefore sceptical and often cynical enough not to readily swallow exhortation to follow a great leader, just as they walk past religious nutters on street corners.

Agitation among the people requires rational, well-grounded presentation of ideas that connect with people’s experience and readiness and understanding at the time. Zealots preaching with absolute certainty never convince practical people, who have been burnt too often.

**Ideological Struggle**

The Great Leadership proponents present their *Jefatura* theory with absolute evangelical conviction, brooking no disagreement or questioning. They act like they are on a mission from God. They sound altogether too much like Lin Biao, who said: “I have always said that Mao Zedong Thought must be implemented both when we understand it and when we may temporarily not understand it.” Nothing can be properly implemented when it is not understood, and it is wrong to suggest that it can be, or should be.

Their doctrinaire certainty does a disservice to

the need for all communists to investigate, to think for themselves, to be prepared to critically reflect on their ideas and actions, to be part of the creative process of developing revolutionary theory and strategy. The struggle for correct ideas is not helped by evangelical certainty and exclusiveness.

Rather than deifying a few individuals, as brilliant as they may be, communists need to listen to the masses, to their comrades, and formulate their ideas.

Marxist-Leninist parties have often been remiss in failing to recognise and take on board ideas and contributions that may originate outside the M-L organisational tradition. The ideas of people like Cabral, Fanon, Malcolm X and Steve Biko should be studied and incorporated into Marxist theory, as appropriate. Recent work by Ajith in India is a good example of the creative development of Marxism (but let’s not anoint him with Great Leader status; let’s read and evaluate his ideas).

Reifying revolutionary theories restricts and blunts the effectiveness of Marxism.

All Communists have a role to play in testing, evaluating and updating Marxist theory and strategy, to sharpen the revolutionary edge.

How does all of the above relate to a proper evaluation of the contributions of Chairman Gonzalo? His achievements in launching and leading a people’s war in Peru will always be acknowledged. However, the reasons why that could not be sustained need to be properly analysed by comrades more conversant with the particular conditions of Peru.

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(Some resources accessed by our study group:)

- <https://struggle-sessions.com/2018/07/20/on-the-maoist-principle-of-great-leadership/>
- <https://queer-bolshevik.medium.com/important-ideas-of-presidente-gonzalo-71bd9388544>
- [http://www.redsun.org/pcp\\_doc/pcp\\_0788.htm#BM2](http://www.redsun.org/pcp_doc/pcp_0788.htm#BM2)



# Understanding the Need to Restrict Bourgeois Right

by Nick G

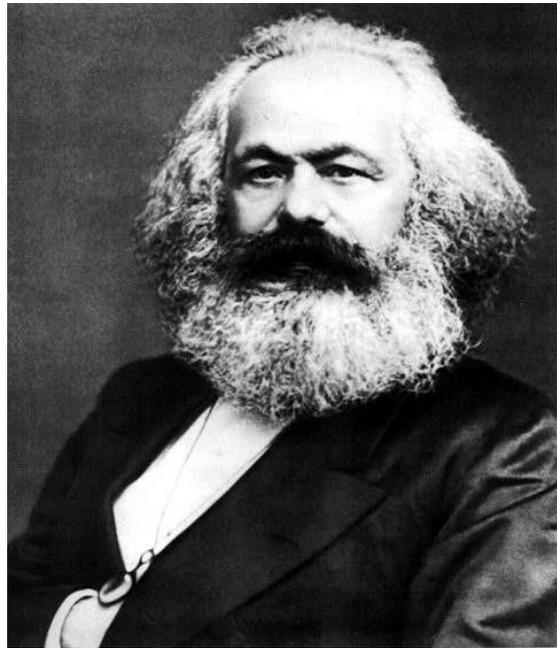
**I**n 1875, Karl Marx wrote *A Critique of the Gotha Programme*. It is a relatively short document based on a letter written by Marx to the German Social Democratic Workers' Party.

In it, Marx upholds the necessity of the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism by the working class and its replacement by a state having the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In this criticism of some reformist illusions embedded in the German Party's programme, Marx introduces, possibly for the first time in his writings, the concept of bourgeois right. The expression uses not the plural form of "rights", which reduces to separate identifiable and legally defined items those conceptions of "freedom, liberty and equality" developed by the European bourgeoisie in its struggle against the landed feudal aristocracies, but to "right" as a single, powerful, interconnected expression of class domination by the bourgeoisie over the proletariat.

Marx focusses on the Program's plans for a "fair distribution of the proceeds of labour" and warns against replacing socialism's "materialistic basis (which demands serious objective study from anyone who tries to use it) by modern mythology with its goddesses of Justice, Freedom, Equality and Fraternity". In a letter the following year to Friedrich Sorge, he refers to the drafters of the Programme as a new variant of utopian socialists, "playing with fancy pictures of the future structure of society".

His rebuttal of the Programme leads to the well-known observation that "What we have to deal with here is a communist society, not as it has *developed* on its own foundations, but, on the contrary, just as it *emerges* from capitalist



Karl Marx

society; which is thus in every respect, economically, morally, and intellectually, still stamped with the birthmarks of the old society from whose womb it emerges".

And it emerges from capitalist society as a commodity economy of socialised – not private - ownership. It is as a commodity economy that the distribution of the so-called "proceeds of labour" will mirror those of the equal exchange of commodities under capitalism, but without capitalists to extract surplus value and continue their theft from, and exploitation of, the workers.

So, he continues:

Accordingly, the individual producer receives back from society – after the deductions have been made – exactly what he gives to it. What he has given to it is his individual quantum of labour. For example, the social working day consists of the sum of the individual hours of work; the individual labour time of the individual producer is the



part of the social working day contributed by him, his share in it. He receives a certificate from society that he has furnished such-and-such an amount of labour (after deducting his labour for the common funds); and with this certificate, he draws from the social stock of means of consumption as much as the same amount of labour cost. The same amount of labour which he has given to society in one form, he receives back in another.

Here, obviously, the same principle prevails as that which regulates the exchange of commodities, as far as this is exchange of equal values. Content and form are changed, because under the altered circumstances no one can give anything except his labour, and because, on the other hand, nothing can pass to the ownership of individuals, except individual means of consumption. But as far as the distribution of the latter among the individual producers is concerned, the same principle prevails as in the exchange of commodity equivalents: a given amount of labour in one form is exchanged for an equal amount of labour in another form.

Hence, *equal right* here is still in principle – *bourgeois right*, although principle and practice are no longer at loggerheads, while the exchange of equivalents in commodity exchange exists only *on the average* and not in the individual case.

In spite of this advance, this *equal right* is still constantly stigmatized by a bourgeois limitation. The right of the producers is *proportional* to the labour they supply; the equality consists in the fact that measurement is made with an *equal standard*, labour.

It should be noted that ten years earlier, in his address to the International Working Men's Association, Marx declared "Workers ought not to be exclusively absorbed in these unavoidable guerilla fights incessantly springing up from the never ceasing encroachments of capital or

changes of the market. [...] Instead of the conservative motto, 'A fair day's wage for a fair day's work!' they ought to inscribe on their banner the revolutionary watchword, 'Abolition of the wages system!'"

### **Bourgeois right and its entry into socialism**

Bourgeois right in fact continues the wages system into socialism. It abolishes the capitalist wages system based on private ownership of the means of production, which entitles the capitalist (or the corporation with its executives and shareholders) to extract surplus value from the labour power of the workers employed for wages. Socialism does not cancel out surplus value, but it renders it non-exploitative and socially available as a means of meeting the social needs of the workers and the economic needs of the state for accumulation of funds for ongoing and future planned investments. In practice, the wages system has continued as a payment of actual wages, rather than, as Marx envisaged, as an issuing of certificates measuring the amount of labour which are then redeemed as items of consumption. The closest thing to his labour vouchers were the work point systems developed on the Soviet collective farms and Chinese agricultural collectives and people's communes.

Rather than socialism ushering in a "fair distribution of the proceeds of labour", as the Gotha Programme said, the continuation of commodity exchange carries an initial inequality into socialism. The socialist principle of "from each according to ability, to each according to work" results in a situation of unequal distribution. Marx continues:

But one man is superior to another physically, or mentally, and supplies more labour in the same time, or can labour for a longer time; and labour, to serve as a measure, must be defined by its duration or intensity, otherwise it ceases to be a standard of measurement. This *equal* right is an unequal right for unequal labour. It recognizes no class differences, because everyone is only a worker like everyone else; but it tacitly recognizes unequal individual



endowment, and thus productive capacity, as a natural privilege. *It is, therefore, a right of inequality, in its content, like every right.* Right, by its very nature, can consist only in the application of an equal standard; but unequal individuals (and they would not be different individuals if they were not unequal) are measurable only by an equal standard insofar as they are brought under an equal point of view, are taken from one *definite* side only – for instance, in the present case, are regarded *only as workers* and nothing more is seen in them, everything else being ignored. Further, one worker is married, another is not; one has more children than another, and so on and so forth. Thus, with an equal performance of labour, and hence an equal in the social consumption fund, one will in fact receive more than another, one will be richer than another, and so on. To avoid all these defects, right, instead of being equal, would have to be unequal.

But these defects are inevitable in the first phase of communist society as it is when it has just emerged after prolonged birth pangs from capitalist society. Right can never be higher than the economic structure of society and its cultural development conditioned thereby.

In a higher phase of communist society, after the enslaving subordination of the individual to the division of labour, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labour, has vanished; after labour has become not only a means of life but life's prime want; after the productive forces have also increased with the all-around development of the individual, and all the springs of co-operative wealth flow more abundantly – only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be crossed in its entirety and society inscribe on its banners: From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!

Marx made his comments in relation to an ungraded, base level measurement of work performed, and hence of access to consumer necessities. But a further extension of bourgeois right into the socialist era is the differential payment of lower and higher wages according to the intellectual skills and traditional privileging of one profession over another, or of professions generally over manual labour. This cannot be abolished immediately without destroying the basis for the cooperation and support of the petty-bourgeoisie and the intellectuals for the replacement of capitalism with socialism. To immediately attack the wages and social privileges embedded in the differential between manual and mental labour is to turn friends into enemies and active counter-revolutionaries.

### **Bourgeois right and the Soviet Union**

When Lenin devoted part of *The State and Revolution* (see Chapter 5, parts 3 and 4) to an endorsement of Marx's explanation of bourgeois right, he says, almost in exasperation, "It follows that under Communism there remains for a time not only bourgeois right, but even the bourgeois state – without the bourgeoisie!"

At this point, readers may well ask – 'Well, if that's all that changes during the socialist transformation, what is the point?'

The point is, that under socialism, there is no longer a capitalist class exploiting workers. Workers are able with the support of the Party and government, to regulate their conditions of work and to direct how the profits of enterprises are to be distributed as wages and state-level accumulation funds. Even before the seizure of state power in Russia, the Petrograd Soviet, on March 11, 1917, had decreed that working hours would be reduced to eight hours a day (seven on Saturdays) with "no effect on workers' wages". The standard working day at that time was ten hours. Very early in the Soviet Union, working hours were further reduced for those occupations where there was a recognition of the "unhealthy nature of the work" to six hours. As labour productivity improved following the Civil



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War and the armed imperialist intervention, the working day was, in 1929, further reduced in the vast majority of enterprises from eight hours to seven hours. Corresponding with the reduction in working hours was a steady increase in wages. "In the large-scale industries they increased 17 per cent in 1927. Wages of office workers are generally higher than those of industrial workers. Wages in Moscow are about 35 per cent higher than in other cities."<sup>5</sup>

Although there is no longer an exploiting class of capitalists, bourgeois right sustains a range of unhealthy beliefs and practices. The flaunting of privileges and the exercise of bureaucratic authority are manifestations of practices that require the continuation of class struggle during the socialist period.

Stalin, who is alleged by Trotskyites to have encouraged a deformed workers' state characterised by an entrenched bureaucracy, fought bureaucratic tendencies. In 1920, he observed:

But after the October Revolution, power was assumed by the workers and peasants, who had never governed before, who knew only how to work for others, and who had no adequate experience in governing the country.

That was the first circumstance which was the source of those shortcomings from which the administrative machinery of the Soviet country is now suffering.

Further, with the abolition of the old

apparatus of state administration, bureaucracy was smashed, but the bureaucrats remained. They disguised themselves as Soviet officials and installed themselves in our state apparatus, and, taking advantage of the inadequate experience of the workers and peasants, who had only just come to power, they started their old tricks for pilfering state property, introduced the old bourgeois habits and customs.<sup>6</sup>

In 1923, speaking in support of some proposals by Lenin for improvement in the work of the state, Stalin said:

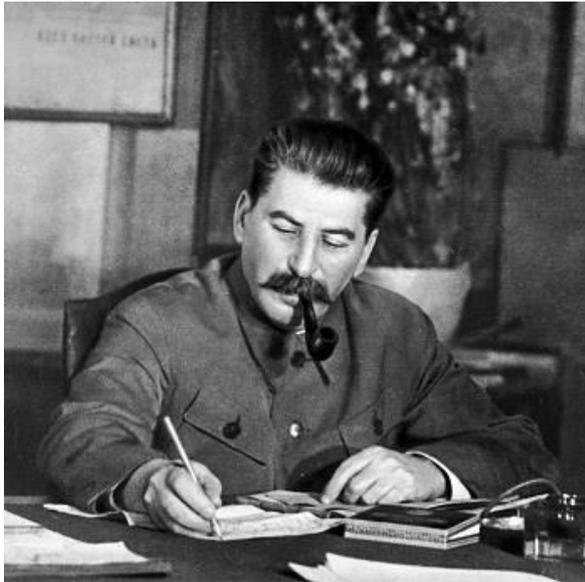
The state apparatus, I repeat, is of the right type, but its component parts are still alien to us, bureaucratic, half tsarist-bourgeois. We want to have a state apparatus that will be a means of serving the mass of the people, but some persons in this state apparatus want to convert it into a source of gain for themselves. That is why the apparatus as a whole is not working properly. If we fail to repair it, the correct political line by itself will not carry us very far; it will be distorted, and there will be a rupture between the working class and the peasantry...

There is yet another side to Comrade Lenin's proposals. His aim is not only to improve the apparatus and to increase the Party's leading role in it to the utmost —for the Party built the state and it is its duty to improve it; but evidently he also has in mind

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<sup>5</sup> [The Soviet Union: Facts, Descriptions, Statistics — Ch 17 \(marxists.org\)](http://marxists.org)

<sup>6</sup> [Speech at the Opening of the First All-Russian Conference of Responsible Personnel of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection \(marxists.org\)](http://marxists.org)



*Stalin*

the moral side. His aim is that there should not be left in the country a single official, no matter how highly-placed, concerning whom the ordinary man might say: he is above the law. This moral aspect is the third aspect of Ilyich's proposal; it is precisely this proposal that sets the task of purging not only the state apparatus, but also the Party, of those traditions and habits of domineering bureaucrats which discredit our Party.<sup>7</sup>

Later the same year, he said:

In 1917, when we were forging ahead, towards October, we imagined that we would have a Commune, a free association of working people, that we would put an end to bureaucracy in government institutions, and that it would be possible, if not in the immediate period, then within two or three short periods, to transform the state into a free association of working people. Practice has shown, however, that this is still an ideal which is a long way off, that to rid the state of the elements of

bureaucracy, to transform Soviet society into a free association of working people, the people must have a high level of culture, peace conditions must be fully guaranteed all around us so as to remove the necessity of maintaining a large standing army... Our state apparatus is bureaucratic to a considerable degree, and it will remain so for a long time to come. Our Party comrades work in this apparatus, and the situation—I might say the atmosphere—in this bureaucratic apparatus is such that it helps to bureaucratise our Party workers and our Party organisations.<sup>8</sup>

Bureaucratic privilege led to a separation of the leaders from the masses, to what was later, in China, criticised as the Liu and Deng line of looking down on the workers, of commanding them from the heights of Party privilege, and keeping them away from political and ideological participation. Stalin recognised this in 1925 and was as scathing of this attitude as Mao was later to be in China:

Not long ago, it appears, when the representative of a Gubernia Committee asked the secretary of a volost Party unit why there were no newspapers in his volost, the answer was given: "What do we want newspapers for? It's quieter and better without them. If the peasants begin reading newspapers they will start asking all sorts of questions and we shall have no end of trouble with them." And this secretary calls himself a Communist! It scarcely needs proof that he is not a Communist, but a calamity. The point is that nowadays it is utterly impossible to lead without "trouble," let alone without newspapers. This simple truth must be understood and assimilated if we want the Party and the Soviet power to retain the leadership in the countryside.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> [The Twelfth Congress of the R.C.P.\(B.\) \(marxists.org\)](#)

<sup>8</sup> [The Party's Tasks \(marxists.org\)](#)

<sup>9</sup> [The Results of the Work of the Fourteenth Conference of the R.C.P.\(B.\) \(marxists.org\)](#)



At this point in time, Stalin had not accumulated sufficient experience in the struggle against the bureaucratic tendencies that flourished in the soil of bourgeois right. He railed against the type of bureaucrat who, before undertaking any work, “considers it necessary to inflate his staff of assistants, to provide himself with an army of stenographers and typists, and, of course, to provide himself with a car, and he incurs a heap of unproductive expenditure—so that later, when the accounts are made up, it is found that our exports do not pay”.<sup>10</sup> And he knew that the answer had to come from the working class and peasantry, referring to Lenin’s view of a cultural revolution in which the literary and cultural levels of the working people would have to be raised:

One can curse and denounce bureaucracy in the state apparatus, one can stigmatise and pillory bureaucracy in our practical work, but unless the masses of the workers reach a certain level of culture, which will create the possibility, the desire, the ability to control the state apparatus from below, by the masses of the workers themselves, bureaucracy will continue to exist in spite of everything. Therefore, the cultural development of the working class and of the masses of the working peasantry, not only the development of literacy, although literacy is the basis of all culture, but primarily the cultivation of the ability to take part in the administration of the country, is the chief lever for improving the state and every other apparatus. This is the sense and significance of Lenin’s slogan about the cultural revolution.<sup>11</sup>

But it was still a long way before the struggle against bourgeois right took the form that it did under the great movement launched by Mao Zedong in China – the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

Although Stalin could see that involvement of the

masses in state affairs was the chief lever for overcoming manifestations of bourgeois right, he could not yet find the openings for the development of such participation.

In the meantime, he relied on other levers that were, in fact, still of the nature of bourgeois right. Encouragement was given to opportunities for individuals to live in more and more affluent circumstances under the socialist system, if they worked hard enough to enrich socialist society. In the early 1930s, the Soviet government introduced monetary and material incentives to encourage fulfilment of the First and Second Five Year Plans. And during the Second Five Year Plan, the Stakhanovite movement developed when Stakhanov, a coal miner, spectacularly increased his labour output. On the one hand, the movement promoted socialist enthusiasm and a raised ideological level; on the other hand, Stakhanov and fellow labour heroes were rewarded with higher wages and their ability to purchase the good things of life was emphasized in publicity associated with the movement.

Incentives were not without their critics. In her novel *Harvest* (winner of the 1950 Stalin Prize), Galina Nikolayeva writes about Vasili Kuzmich Bortnikov, who has returned from the war against fascism as the Chairman of the First of May Collective Farm. The farmers are despondent after a prolonged summer drought. Vasili orders team leader Frosya’s team to finish hoeing a hillside. She objects, saying it is useless to do so and accusing him of wanting to “show off before the district authorities. All you want to do is to be able to report that you have fulfilled all that was required of you.” They are joined by another team leader, Alexei Alexeyevich Berezov, who criticises Frosya for not helping to water another team’s seed plot. Each team has been allocated its own separate plot in a move away from the collective path, and Frosya angrily retorts, “Now really, judge for yourself, what

<sup>10</sup> [The Economic Situation of the Soviet Union and the Policy of the Party \(marxists.org\)](http://marxists.org)

<sup>11</sup> [The Fifteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.\(B.\) \(marxists.org\)](http://marxists.org)



interest have we to break our backs working on their plot when we're competing with them and they're beating us? We're to work on their seed plot while their group's to get the extra pay for giving a high yield. Is that fair? There's no sense in my girls working on someone else's plot." It typifies the sorts of arguments amongst workers under conditions of bourgeois right.

Under the impact of war preparations, and - after the war - of the requirements of reconstruction, the improved labour productivity associated with material incentives outweighed Stalin's belief in the workers making "trouble" and directing state administration from below. For example, on January 25 1946, notes from a discussion with I.V. Kurchatov, lead scientist for the Soviet nuclear effort, had Stalin saying of the intellectuals selected for the top-secret and urgent project:

Regarding the scholars, Comrade Stalin was preoccupied by thoughts of how to, as if, make it easier, help them in their material-living situation. And in prizes for great deeds, for example, on the solution to our problem. He said that our scholars are very modest, and they never notice that they live badly--that is bad in itself, and he said that although our state also had suffered much, we can always make it possible for several thousand persons to live well, and several thousand people better than very well, with their own dachas, so that they can relax, and with their own cars. In work, Comrade Stalin said, it is necessary to move decisively, with the investment of a decisive quantity of resources, but in the basic directions.<sup>12</sup>

The expansion of bourgeois right in support of such a crucial project is understandable, but it was being expanded in other areas as well. The previous November, in a meeting with Poland's Gomulka, he had explained how:

Changes are occurring in the Soviet Union in the laws managing labour. In the past, the rule was that as the most qualified, metal

industry workers earned the most. We suffer the "misfortune of no unemployment," and therefore people do not want to do hard labour, such as mining, for example. Therefore, we pay more to unqualified workers performing hard labour, such as miners, than we pay metal industry workers.<sup>13</sup>

When the Khrushchevite revisionists came to power after Stalin's death, they had all the conditions they required for further expanding bourgeois right. Piece work in manufacturing industries exploded, managers were given rights to dispose of state property at a profit to themselves and their enterprises, profits were put in command, and state-owned means of production, beginning with Machine Tractor Stations, were sold off and privatised. Whereas the overthrow of a capitalist state could only occur through the violence of revolution and the destruction of the existing machinery of state; the undermining of a socialist state through the expansion of bourgeois right allows the revisionists to more or less peacefully use socialist state machinery to transform it back into a bourgeois state, to replace the socialist road with the capitalist road, and to stymie the development of socialism and to restore capitalism.

### **Bourgeois right in the People's Republic of China**

In the more than two decades of the Chinese people's fight against feudalism, bureaucrat-capitalism and imperialism, the bulk of the revolutionary forces were drawn from the countryside. In the cities, the small proletariat was accustomed to the wages system, but this was experienced in a more limited way in the rural areas. Once liberated areas were established, from the highest generals to the lowest level orderlies and foot soldiers, a free supply system was more commonly experienced. At most, a few coins of personal pocket money were distributed through the ranks of the Red

<sup>12</sup><https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/111533.pdf>

<sup>13</sup><http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/117153.pdf>



*Bombard the Headquarters – an artistic take on the big character posters that proliferated during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution to push back the capitalist roaders and proponents of bourgeois right*

Army and the People’s Liberation Army that developed from it. In general, basic items of consumption such as food, clothing and medical attention were provided under the free supply system. The heightened revolutionary enthusiasm and ideological awareness sustained this method of distribution as an embryonic form of distribution based on the Communist principle of “from each according to ability, to each according to need”.

As the time for entry into, and liberation of, the cities approached, Mao warned of the danger that Communists who had faced and survived the enemy’s real bullets, would now be tested by “sugar-coated bullets”, and that some would succumb. He regarded the cities as a bourgeois environment where there would be the danger of abandoning the communist ethics of plain living, modesty and hard work, and the temptations of seeking privileges, enjoying extravagance and wasteful pleasures, and becoming bureaucratic, commandist and arrogant – all of which implied becoming divorced from the masses and seeking a bourgeois lifestyle.

These problems were immediately manifested in corrupt activities and bourgeois behaviours. In the Yan’an Rectification Movement, Mao had guaranteed that in China, the death penalty would not be used to resolve contradictions among the people, and specifically not used to resolve disagreement over policy within the Party. However, almost as soon as the Party entered the cities, Mao had to launch a “three-antis” mass campaign – anti-corruption, anti-waste and anti-bureaucracy. In the course of this campaign, a case of serious embezzlement and theft of state assets by leading Party cadres in Hebei Province was uncovered. The two highest officials, Liu Qingshan and Zhang Zishan, were put on trial, and Mao argued, against the objections of other Party leaders who reminded him of his Yan’an pledge, for their execution. Their crimes were different in nature to those who merely argued for wrong ideas, and an example had to be made of them in the fight against using one’s position to seek privileges and personal gain.

Between their execution in 1952 and the Great Leap Forward, which began in 1958, a wages



system was developed in the cities alongside a work points system in the rural areas. Both were a move in the direction of an acceptance of bourgeois right and its replacement of the free supply system that had characterised the revolutionary movement in the pre-Liberation countryside. The free supply system was formally ended in 1955.

In the middle of 1958, Zhang Chunqiao, a member of the Shanghai City Committee of the Communist Party of China, published an article attacking bourgeois right and calling for the reintroduction of the free supply system. He said that the wage system was “the core of bourgeois right”, that the supply system had “got a bad name” from the bourgeoisie, and claimed that “Shanghai’s workers, as a result of free airing of their views, incisively pointed out this kind of theory, means ‘money in command,’ but not ‘politics in command’”, and that “This truly hits the mark with a single comment!”

Mao thought the article had merit and arranged for it to be published in *People’s Daily* on October 13, 1958. Knowing that it would be opposed by those favouring the wages system and the hierarchy of privileges that came with it, he wrote an Editor’s Opinion to introduce it: “This essay of Comrade Zhang Chunqiao appeared in the Shanghai “Liberation” semi-monthly, number six, [1958], and is now reprinted here for discussion by comrades. This question needs discussion, because of the important issues now facing us. We think that Zhang’s essay is basically correct, but somewhat one-sided, precisely because what is said about the historical process may not be the complete explanation. The author put forward this issue clearly, however, and attracts attention. The essay is also quite understandable, and very good to read.”<sup>14</sup>

In November 1958, as the people’s commune movement unfolded, Mao made several remarks that showed that he was actively considering

wages disparity and bourgeois right. At a talk with directors of various cooperative areas, he observed that “The wage disparity is rather great, around four-fold or more...The wage disparity in the Soviet Union is too great. We cannot follow suit.”<sup>15</sup>

That same month, he talked with leading comrades about Stalin’s *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*. He recognised that socialist society was a society of commodity production under the law of value, and that bourgeois right could not be eliminated in its entirety at this early stage of development:

Bourgeois right is manifested as bourgeois law and education. We want to destroy a part of the ideology of bourgeois right, the lordly pose, the three styles [the bureaucratic, the sectarian, and the subjective] and the five airs [the officious, the arrogant, the apathetic, the extravagant, and the precious]. But commodity circulation, the commodity form, the law of value, these, on the other hand, cannot be destroyed summarily, despite the fact that they are bourgeois categories. If we now carry on propaganda for the total elimination of the ideology of bourgeois right it would not be a reasonable position, bear in mind...We must eliminate a part of bourgeois right, but commodity production and exchange must still be kept.

He added that the key to constructing socialism was increasing production. “Once output is plentiful it will be easier to solve the problem of raising collective to public ownership. To increase production we need ‘More! Faster! Better! More economically!’ And for this we need politics-in-command, the four concurrent promotions, the rectification campaigns, the smashing of the ideology of bourgeois right.”<sup>16</sup>

For much of 1959, Mao was consumed with

<sup>14</sup> For Zhang’s essay and Mao’s note, see [BourgeoisRightWeb \(marxistphilosophy.org\)](http://BourgeoisRightWeb(marxistphilosophy.org))

<sup>15</sup> [Talks With Directors Of Various Cooperative Areas \(marxists.org\)](http://Talks With Directors Of Various Cooperative Areas (marxists.org))

<sup>16</sup> [Concerning Economic Problems Of Socialism In The USSR \(marxists.org\)](http://Concerning Economic Problems Of Socialism In The USSR (marxists.org))



finding out what was actually happening as the Great Leap Forward unfolded. Discovering exaggeration and boastfulness in the reporting of harvest yields, and inefficiencies in the small backyard iron furnaces, he struggled to rein in excesses whilst keeping to a socialist orientation. For a time, he was distracted from further consideration of how best to control bourgeois right. In undated comments from probably the latter half of 1959, in relation to Stalin's reply to two economists contained in his *Economic Problems...*, Mao said;

"All for one, one for all." This phrase is incorrect. It was not translated properly. Systems are the principal manifestations of the concept of bourgeois rights. A portion of our educational system has been destroyed. The three bad styles of work and the five undesirable airs have also been eliminated. With the production of commodities and the law of value yet to be implemented, it is not possible to expect the elimination of all concepts of bourgeois rights... The commune must, on one hand, develop production for its own consumption and, on the other hand, develop the production of marketable commodities. Our nation is deficient in commodities. It is a country insufficient in marketable grains. Communes should further develop the production of commodities to improve livelihood. This is the problem our economists avoid discussing. If the production of commodities is not carried out wages cannot be paid. The concept of bourgeois right must definitely be eliminated. Wages, [preferential] treatment and grades are all wrong. The 1956 wage reform was correct and the concessions made at that time were necessary. There were flaws when it was implemented. The number of grades grew too large. Similar to the relationship of the cat and the mouse, all these must be eliminated.<sup>17</sup>

In 1960, debate was still occurring around the free supply system and Mao offered his opinion on it at the Beidaihe conference on August 21. The previous September Lin Biao had replaced Peng Dehuai as Defence Minister and had started to reverse Soviet military influence in the PLA, including restoring the democratic relationship between officers and soldiers, placing ideology above weapons, and removing the hierarchy of rank and distinction within the PLA. There was also an attempt to restore the free supply system, with Mao enquiring whether this had been carried out by the PLA unit leaders. He said that the Marxist style of work and the bourgeois style of work were opposed on how to handle the free supply system. He asked why some people found "building communism unacceptable? Why must we grasp a wages system? This is offering concessions to the bourgeoisie ..." He then gave examples of bourgeois right that required doing away with:

We must eradicate bourgeois right and ideology. For example, contesting for position, contesting for rank, wanting to increase wages and giving higher wages to the intellectual worker and lower wages to the physical labourer are all remnants of bourgeois ideology. To each according to his worth is prescribed by law and it is also a bourgeois thing. In the future do we want to have a division into classes when riding vehicles? We don't necessarily want to have a special car. We want to show some consideration toward the elderly and the weak, but we don't want different classes for the others.<sup>18</sup>

It was clear that Mao did not want China's future to be dependent upon or shaped by bourgeois right. But equally, he understood that there had to be a commodity system under socialism, that it would operate according to the law of value, and that distribution of commodities within that system required a wages system. Until society's

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<sup>17</sup> [Comments On Reply To Comrades A. V. Sanina And V. G. Vinshire \(marxists.org\)](#)

<sup>18</sup> [Opinion On The Free Supply System \(marxists.org\)](#)



productive forces developed to the point where everyone's needs could be met through a universal free supply system, it was too early to speak of an abolition of the wages system.

In 1962, Mao launched the Socialist Education Movement, also known as the Four Clean-ups. The four areas to be cleaned up were in the fields of politics, ideology, organisation and economy. In the first half of 1962, there had been vigorous promotion of individual farming ("going it alone"), of "three reconciliations and one reduction"<sup>19</sup>, and "three freedoms and one contract"<sup>20</sup>. In the cities, the Socialist Education Movement focussed on eliminating corruption. Mao advocated the participation of cadres in collective productive labour as a means of combatting corruption:

The problems of corruption and enjoying more benefits can be resolved only where there is participation in labour. Hence it is possible to understand the situation of production, not simply float on the surface. If cadres do not participate in labour, they inevitably must become divorced from the labouring masses and revisionism must inevitably arise.<sup>21</sup>

Mao did not accept the bourgeois right of cadres to not participate in labour, and this participation became a socialist measure with Mao's May 7, 1966 directive to Lin Biao, which led to the creation of May 7 Cadre Schools throughout China.

Qi Benyu, who had been recruited to the Central Cultural Revolution Group in 1966, recalled how wage disparity still concerned Mao:

### **Chairman Mao on reducing the gap in wages**

Having worked in Zhongnanhai for so many years and having attended countless meetings, I have rarely heard any leader think as constantly as the Chairman about how to realise the ideals of communism....

The Chairman himself attached great importance to the "May 7th Instruction". He was always thinking about how to mobilise people's enthusiasm without widening the gap. At a meeting of the Central Committee, the Chairman asked me how much workers were paid now. I told him that it was about 30 or 40 yuan on average. He said, "Oh, I'm more than 400 yuan, that's a difference of ten times, which is still far from the principles of the Paris Commune". He said to us that there was such a big difference in wages and that this problem had to be studied to see how to solve it. He specifically told me to get someone to look into it and see how it could be solved. I hurriedly got Meng Xiangcai and others from the Department of Philosophy and Social Sciences and organised a team to go and make a research study. Later on, a proposal was also put forward, the main content of which was to lower the wages of the top and increase the wages of the workers. I met him some years ago and he told me that he still had all the materials from the research we had done back then. I remember that the proposal we made was to reduce the wage at the level of Chairman to about three hundred, which would make the difference

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<sup>19</sup> On February 9, 1964, Mao Zedong said in a conversation with a foreign party leader: There are a few people in our party who advocate "three reconciliations and one reduction." "Three reconciliations" means peace with imperialism, revisionism and reactionaries of various countries. "One reduction" means less aid to countries and parties that oppose imperialism. This is essentially revisionist thinking."

<sup>20</sup> "Three freedoms" refers to private land (allowing members to cultivate private land), free markets (allowing peasants to run family sideline businesses), self-financing (allowing more than self-sufficient products to enter the rural market trade); "one contract" refers to the household contract responsibility system which promoted individual farming in opposition to collectivisation.

<sup>21</sup> *Summary of the Discussion of the Hangzhou Conference, May 7-11, 1963, "Selected Works of Mao Zedong Vol IX", Foreign Languages Press, Paris, p. 14.*



with the workers only seven or eight times. The Paris Commune proposed a difference of eight times. In fact, ten times should still be more reasonable. As soon as this proposal was put forward, Chen Boda looked at it and opposed it, saying that we could not even live on the basis of such a proposal as yours. Chen Boda was a fourth or fifth class, I can't remember, only a little less than the Chairman. According to the price level at that time and Chen Boda's living expenses, he would indeed be in a situation where he could not make ends meet. So the proposal we studied was subject to further refinement. Then the Cultural Revolution movement underwent a major change and the proposal was put off.<sup>22</sup>

Mao's preference for restricting bourgeois right by a reduction of wages at the top of an eight-grade wage scale, and an increase in the wages at the bottom was the preference of a genuine Communist and proletarian revolutionary who wanted to abolish class differences and place the workers and peasants in the position of a socialist ruling class. However, bourgeois right was not only embedded

in the wages system. It also operated within the work points system in the rural areas, where the inequalities in their respective physical strengths and the sizes of their families and the number of dependents therein, all contributed to an unequal distribution based on the equality of contribution through labour.

William Hinton had lived at Long Bow village in 1948 and chronicled the struggle for land reform

in his book *Fanshen*, published in 1966. He returned in 1971 to Long Bow and lived there long enough to write a lengthy follow-up, *Shenfan*, published in 1983. In one chapter, he describes the arrest of a lower-middle peasant Chi Chung-ch'i (Ji Zhongqi), who is accused of theft. He was "...a stunted youth, lean to the point of emaciation...clearly must have always had trouble holding his own at field work. We were told that he could only earn seven points a day, while his peers earned ten." He had two dependents: a crippled 70-year old father and a 14-year old brother still at school. He is discovered having stolen a locked box from his neighbours, the Li's. When asked why he had stolen it, he replies "Because they are so rich."

They weren't, but his perception was that "the Li family has more people working than we do. In our family of three, I'm the only one working. It's hard for me." Hinton sympathises with him: "He could only earn seven points a day, hardly enough to support one person, yet he had to support three...While he slid deeper and deeper into poverty, his neighbours, with four people working, prospered, saved money and stored it in a trunk."

**Mao's preference for restricting bourgeois right by a reduction of wages at the top of an eight-grade wage scale, and an increase in the wages at the bottom was the preference of a genuine Communist and proletarian revolutionary who wanted to abolish class differences and place the workers and peasants in the position of a socialist ruling class.**

Hinton concludes "Perhaps the diverging fortunes of these two families had to be seen as an example of the polarisation brought about by the application of the socialist principle – 'to each according to the work performed.' The equalitarian promise of 'equal pay for equal work' could not but be undermined by unequal labour power and unequal needs and burdens. The able-bodied with few dependents tended to

<sup>22</sup> Translated from Qi Benyu's *Memoirs* (Chapter 3.4) at [www.marxists.org](http://www.marxists.org) [www.marxists.org](http://www.marxists.org) (2016) ([marxists.org](http://www.marxists.org))



accumulate surpluses while the weak with many dependents gradually fell short and went under. Such polarisation plagued the population wherever 'bourgeois right' held sway, as Mao Zedong so forcefully pointed out a few years later. Yet no country could abolish 'bourgeois right' – such things as 'equal pay for equal work' – as long as the productive forces remained primitive."<sup>23</sup>

In 1971, Mao was shocked when his nominated successor, Lin Biao, died fleeing after a failed coup attempt. Mao was increasingly seeing that bourgeois right was generating capitalist-roader preferences among the top leadership of the Party. He had identified this with Liu Shaoqi as the Cultural Revolution unfolded, and had now seen how quickly the party vice-Chairperson had succumbed to the promises of the capitalist road.

### The Shanghai Textbook

Mao recognised that an understanding of Marxist political economy was required throughout the Party and that there had been too much reliance in the past on Soviet political economy texts. In 1959 he had made a major study of Stalin's *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR* affirming its views on commodity production and the law of value, but finding it deficient in areas relating to the superstructure, to the ideological development of the masses and their ability to place politics in command.<sup>24</sup>

Throughout 1973 and early 1974, a team of economists in Shanghai's Fudan University, working under the direction of Zhang Chunqiao, produced a text book on political economy primarily intended for youths going from the cities to spend time in the countryside. Published in May 1974 in two volumes, the second was mainly concerned with the political economy of socialist construction, an area which had not been well-covered in Soviet text books. Several

revised editions were printed, and by December 1975 the text gave greater prominence to the question of bourgeois right.

Two versions of what became known as the Shanghai Textbook are available in English. George C. Wang translated and edited the first, which contains both volumes and generally follows the original 1974 text<sup>25</sup>, while a version edited by Raymond Lotta omits much of volume one, dealing mainly with the political economy of capitalism, and follows the December 1975, Chinese text. The Lotta version contains 109 references to bourgeois right, and is the preferred version for its focus on this issue.<sup>26</sup>

In the passages below, various aspects of bourgeois right under socialist conditions are explored. The text used is the Lotta text.

As regards social relations, the bourgeoisie and all exploiting classes resist being ruled over and remoulded. They try to utilize and expand the traditions and birthmarks of the old society that still exist within the system of socialist ownership, and they will attempt to expand the bourgeois rights that have not been entirely abolished and restore those that have already been abolished. In this way, they will bring about the steady erosion and sabotage of the system of socialist public ownership and its eventual transformation into a system of capitalist private ownership. (P.61)

The historical experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat, nationally and internationally, tells us that whether the socialist system progresses or retrogresses is tightly bound up with whether or not the mutual relations between people can be adjusted. When bourgeois right is restricted under the conditions of proletarian dictatorship, and the communist elements

<sup>23</sup> William Hinton, *Shenfan*, Picador, 1983 p. 469-70.

<sup>24</sup> See: [Critique of Stalin's Economic Problems Of Socialism In The USSR \(marxists.org\)](http://marxists.org/critique-of-stalin-economic-problems-of-socialism-in-the-ussr)

<sup>25</sup> See: [fundamentals.pdf \(marxists.org\)](http://marxists.org/fundamentals.pdf)

<sup>26</sup> See: [MaoistEconomics-ShanghaiTextbook-Lotta-OCR-sm.pdf \(bannedthought.net\)](http://bannedthought.net/MaoistEconomics-ShanghaiTextbook-Lotta-OCR-sm.pdf)



are promoted, making it possible to gradually establish mutual relations between people on the basis of socialist principles, the activism and creativity of the laborers can be more fully developed, the socialist orientation of enterprises can be more solidly ensured, the system of socialist ownership can be further consolidated, and the relations of distribution can be further perfected. When bourgeois right is strengthened and expanded, giving free play to capitalist money relations, capitalist labor relations, and capitalist relations of competition, and making it possible for bourgeois elements to violate and sabotage socialist mutual relations, the position of the masses as masters will be threatened and their socialist activism will be suppressed and inhibited. As a result, socialist ownership and relations of distribution will be damaged—indeed, they may even degenerate and change their nature. (P. 78)

From the above analysis, it can be seen that capital funds, costs, profits, and other value categories in socialist economic accounting reflect socialist relations of production. These categories are used by the proletariat to serve socialist construction. Hence, in handling the contradiction between use value accounting and value accounting, we cannot treat the question of fulfilling the value targets assigned by the state as unimportant but must rather take it seriously and actively strive to fulfill various value targets in an all-round way. On the other hand, it must also be recognized that value categories are, after all, remnants of the economic system of private ownership. Value categories are bound up with the commodity system and embody bourgeois right. For example, since prices will deviate from values, enterprises expending an equal amount of labor to produce products of different varieties and specifications will obtain unequal amounts of output value and profit. If enterprises set out to produce more products yielding high value and high

profit, they will have an easier time fulfilling the targets of output value and surrendered profits assigned them by the state. If enterprises find themselves producing more products yielding low value and low profit, they will have a much harder time fulfilling the targets of output value and surrendered profits assigned them by the state. Here we have another example of bourgeois right. (P. 200)

The bourgeoisie and its representatives in the Party want to use and expand bourgeois right, carry out the line of "output value first" and "profit in command" in the departments and enterprises they control, produce more of what yields high profit, produce less of what yields low profit, and produce none of what yields no profit. The "total economic accounting system" implemented by the Soviet revisionist renegade clique is designed to carry out this thoroughly capitalist principle of profits in command. In the "total economic accounting system," "the most important summary indicators of the financial activities of enterprises are profits and the rate of profit." In actuality, the enterprise determines the variety and quantity of production according to the expected profits. To increase profits, the enterprises can dismiss workers and increase labor intensity to "reduce production costs." This "total economic accounting system," which puts profits in command, has already become a system of exploitation imposed on the working people of the Soviet Union by the Soviet revisionist bureaucrat-monopoly bourgeoisie, and is an important means through which capitalism has been restored in the Soviet Union. (P 200-201)

How does the proletariat restrict bourgeois right in the sphere of circulation? The most important thing is to bring the production and exchange of commodities into the orbit of the state plan. It is absolutely impermissible to carry out "free trade" in violation of state plans. The bourgeoisie and



their representatives in the Party will use any means possible to oppose such restrictions. Whenever there is a chance, they will sabotage the state plan and carry on "free trade." Hence, sharp struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie over the question of restriction and counter-restriction in the sphere of circulation is inevitable under the dictatorship of the proletariat. Such struggle in our country has been extremely acute. (P. 210)

The proletariat must maintain the flow of exchange in materials and goods between town and country, strengthen management of the market and price, and prevent capitalist forces in town and country from disrupting and sabotaging the market. Only on this basis can we effectively restrict bourgeois right in exchange, continually dig out and eventually eliminate the soil breeding capitalism and the bourgeoisie, and can socialist exchange be made to better serve industrial and agricultural production, better serve the worker-peasant-soldier masses, and better serve proletarian politics. (P. 211)

In the money form, bourgeois right has attained concentrated expression. Before money, people are formally equal. Anyone can own money. Everyone can use money to buy the commodities they need. It is the same for everyone. But this equality actually embodies inequality. Those who own more money not only can enjoy a higher standard of living but also can use it to exploit others under certain conditions. In capitalist society, operating a factory, speculation, usury, and corruption are essentially the same: they are all exploitative methods of owning another's labor and exploitative means of obtaining more money. In socialist society, not only does the system of distributing money income according to work embody inequality; there also exists

the possibility of using exchange through money to secure ownership over another's labor. These exploitative activities are of course illegal under the dictatorship of the proletariat. But as long as money exists, the old and new capitalist forces of the city and countryside will risk disobeying the law to practice speculation, operate underground factories, engage in usury, etc., in order to secure ownership over another's labor and grab huge amounts of money. (P. 224)

A fifth manuscript of the Shanghai Textbook, believed to have introduced Mao's theory that the bourgeoisie included not just the remnants of the overthrown classes, but a section of the working class and a section of the Party engendered by bourgeois right, was seized at the printers following the arrest of the Gang of Four, and has not yet surfaced.<sup>27</sup>

#### **Mao: "...such things can only be restricted"**

From the 23<sup>rd</sup> to the 27<sup>th</sup> December 1974, Mao heard reports in Changsha from Premier Zhou Enlai and Vice-Premier Wang Hongwen on preparations for the Fourth National Congress. On the 26<sup>th</sup>, he met alone with Zhou Enlai and had a long discussion on theoretical problems. On January 7, 1975, Zhou Enlai gave Mao Zedong his notes of the main talking points of this discussion. Mao made some individual text revisions. On January 8, Zhou Enlai sent these talking points to all Politburo members and alternate members for circulation.

The four major points (Mao said he had also made these in a discussion with the Danish Prime Minister Paul Hartling on October 20 1974), are quite well-known and were widely used in the subsequent debate over bourgeois right which was carried out in 1975-76, up until the arrest of the Gang of Four. These are the main points:

Why did Lenin speak of exercising dictatorship over the bourgeoisie? It is essential to get this question clear. Lack of

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<sup>27</sup> [Shanghai Textbook Introduction \(thisiscommunism.org\)](http://thisiscommunism.org)



clarity on this question will, lead to revisionism. This should be made known to the whole nation.

In a word, China is a socialist country. Before liberation she was much the same as, a capitalist country. Even now, she practises an eight-grade wage system; distribution according to work and exchange through money, and in all this differs very little from the old society. What is different is that the system of ownership has been changed.

Our country at present practises a commodity system, the wage system is unequal, too, as in the eight-grade wage scale, and so forth. Under the dictatorship of the proletariat such things can only be restricted. Therefore if people like Lin Piao come to power, it will be quite easy for them to rig up the capitalist system. That is why we should do more reading of Marxist-Leninist works.

Lenin said that 'small production engenders capitalism and the bourgeoisie continually, daily, hourly, spontaneously, and on a mass scale'. They are also engendered among a part of the working class and of the party membership. Both with the ranks of the proletariat and amongst the personnel of state and other organs there are people who take the bourgeois style of life.<sup>28</sup>

What is not so well-known, because this part of the notes has not been translated before, is the comments made by Mao to Zhou prior to explaining the need for a campaign on bourgeois right. He said:

Why did Lenin say he should write about the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie? Chunqiao

should be told that Wenyuan found several references to this question in Lenin's works, printed it in large print and gave it to me. Everyone should first read this, then write some articles. Ask Chunqiao to write such articles. If this problem is not made clear, it will become revisionism. The whole country must know.<sup>29</sup>

It is important to understand that it was Mao's idea to promote the study of bourgeois right. The revisionists in China today allege that the question of bourgeois right came from the Gang of Four. Here is a typical presentation of their distortion of fact:

The "Gang of Four" also distorted Chairman Mao's instructions and made counter-revolutionary statements under the revolutionary banner of "restricting bourgeois right". Just as they used their participation in the democratic revolution and their current leadership role as a political criterion for classifying "capitalist-roaders", they absurdly used high rank and high salary as an economic criterion for classifying "capitalist-roaders". They deliberately confused the difference in distribution between the leading cadres of the party, government and military and the general public with class exploitation, and put forward so-called economic arguments for their fallacious theory that there is "a bourgeoisie" in the party and military. This is a complete reversal of right and wrong, confusing black and white.<sup>30</sup>

Mao's observation that "such things" – the surviving examples of bourgeois right in the socialist society – "could only be restricted" led to his encouragement for Zhang Chunqiao to

<sup>28</sup> See: <https://daydaynews.cc/en/history/during-his-trip-to-changsha-in-december-1974.html>

The Chinese original is here: <https://www.bannedthought.net/China/Individuals/MaoZedong/Mao-CW-Chinese/51-NoOCR-Secured.pdf> pp 501-2

<sup>29</sup> Ibid (Chinese original)

<sup>30</sup> This is a contemporary paraphrase of the Communiqué of the 11<sup>th</sup> National Congress of the CPC. See: [The 11th National Congress -- Beijing Review \(bjreview.com.cn\)](http://www.bjreview.com.cn)



provide leadership on this question. This included changes to the manuscript of the Shanghai Textbook. Where he could encourage them to do so, newspapers and journals made the question of restricting bourgeois right a mass issue.

On February 18, 1975 the Central Committee sent out a notice distributing these talking points to all party committees in provinces, cities and autonomous regions; to party committees in major military regions, provincial military districts, and field armies; and the leading groups or party caucuses of the ministries of the central and state organs, the headquarters of the military commissions, and the party committees of the various military branches, and demanded that "these be earnestly studied by the broad masses of party members, cadres and the masses outside the Party". The 33 quotations from Marx, Engels and Lenin on the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, extracted according to Mao's instructions, were published in the People's Daily on 22 February 1975 and in the third issue of the Red Flag magazine on 1 March. The main content of this talk by Mao was published in the editor's note of the People's Daily and the Red Flag magazine.

Even before Yao Wenyuan and Zhang Chunqiao had completed their respective articles on bourgeois right, workers' groups around the country were developing theory for the restriction of bourgeois right. Unfortunately, little of this has survived the suppression carried out by Deng and Co. when they seized control of the Party and state, and even less has been made available in English translation. One such example is the Jinan Workers' Group's *Break down the ideology of bourgeois right in the field of distribution*, written in February 1975 and translated recently.<sup>31</sup> This relatively advanced

ideological discussion of the problem contained the warning that revisionist leaders "are trying to widen the hierarchical differences in distribution, to cultivate a privileged class and to expand the social basis for their restoration of capitalism."

In the March edition of Red Flag magazine, Yao Wenyuan had his *On the Social Basis of the Lin Biao Anti-Party Clique* published, and a month later, in the April edition, Zhang Chunqiao's *On Exercising All-Round Dictatorship Over the Bourgeoisie* appeared. Both were written around the theme of having to restrict bourgeois right under the dictatorship of the proletariat. Both were soon released in English and are available on the [www.marxists.org](http://www.marxists.org) website.

On May 30, 1975, the English language Beijing Review republished an article from the April Red Flag magazine called *An Ideological Weapon for Restricting Bourgeois Right*<sup>32</sup>. It had two very useful supplementary articles: *What is Commodity Production* and *What is Exchange Through Money*<sup>33</sup>.

On 24 August 1975, Chen Yonggui submitted a report on agricultural work to Mao. Chen was the leader of the famous Dazhai Production Brigade in Xiyang County, Shanxi Province, which Mao had nominated as the model to learn from in agriculture. Chen had been elected to the Central Committee in 1969 and to the Politburo in 1973. In January 1975 he was appointed Vice-Premier of the State Council. He had divided his time into thirds: one-third on inspection tours, one-third on work in Beijing, and one-third still working at Dazhai. (There is considerable attention devoted to Chen and Dazhai in Hinton's *Shenfan*; Qin Hailu's study of Chen, *Ninth Heaven to Ninth Hell* can be downloaded in English<sup>34</sup>).

Chen's report, previously untranslated, reads:

<sup>31</sup> See: [servethepeople: Break down the ideology of bourgeois right in the field of distribution \(mike-servethepeople.blogspot.com\)](http://servethepeople.blogspot.com)

<sup>32</sup> See: [Ideological Weapon for Restricting Bourgeois Right \(massline.org\)](http://massline.org)

<sup>33</sup> See: [What Is Commodity Production? \(massline.org\)](http://massline.org) and [What Is Exchange Through Money? \(massline.org\)](http://massline.org)

<sup>34</sup> From: [Ninth Heaven to Ninth Hell: The History of a Noble Chinese Experiment | Huai-Lu Chin, Qin Huailu, William Hinton | download \(au1lib.org\)](http://au1lib.org)



*A poster of the Cultural Revolution; the slogan reads:  
"Mobilize the whole party, develop agriculture, and strive for the popularization of Dazhai County"*

Firstly, the basic accounting unit of the People's Commune. From the situation in Xiyang, it seems that it was perfectly right to implement small-team accounting for a period of time after the People's Commune was transformed. After a few years of development in production, the small-team accounting became unsuitable. In the last two years, many of the brigades that I have visited have done a good job of accounting for the brigades. I have discussed with many comrades at the sub-county level, and they agree that in order to make a great effort in agriculture and to reduce the differences between teams, it is imperative to implement team accounting. Secondly, the question of labour management in the people's communes. The method adopted in Dazhai is called "standard work points, self-reporting and public discussion". The implementation of this system of work evaluation has put politics in charge. At present, most places in the country still use the system of fixed-rate work and live

assessment, which has the weaknesses of, on the one hand, making the work points the rule and, on the other hand, not imposing the necessary restrictions on bourgeois right and widening the differences between people. Thirdly, on the question of how to take care of the poor teams. I think that the solution to this problem cannot be to raise the value of the points at the expense of the state, but to speed up the development of the production of poor teams. Fourthly, on the issue of building houses for community members. It is better to build collectively than to build for a single family. This is an important measure to prevent the widening of differences and polarization among members. Fifthly, on the question of food owed to the collective by the members. I think that, under certain conditions, it is better to be exempted than to be in arrears, which will greatly stimulate the socialist enthusiasm of the peasants.



On 3 September 1975, Mao wrote: “Comrade Xiaoping, Please consider whether this document can be issued to comrades of the Politburo and discussed at the Politburo.”<sup>35</sup> Mao was still favouring restrictions on such matters of bourgeois right as the divisions inherent in work points based on equal contributions of labour.

In 1976, someone using the pseudonym “A Fictitious Old Man” wrote a detailed article on the development of the wages system in China. It traced the influence of the Soviet model of wages on the thinking of the Chinese leaders responsible for the 1955 introduction of such a system.<sup>36</sup>

### **Deng Xiaoping expands bourgeois right and reintroduces capitalism**

In February 1976, a Shandong University Mass Criticism Group wrote an article specifically identifying Deng Xiaoping as an “unrepentant capitalist-roader” and proceeded to criticise his “fallacious arguments against restricting bourgeois right”. Only recently available in English, it pointed out:

The revisionist arguments of these capitalist-roaders are the same, for they want to replace the socialist principle of “from each according to his ability, to each according to his work” with the so-called “material incentives”, to expand bourgeois right and the inequalities it brings without limit, to transpose the capitalist principle of commodity trading into people's mutual relations, to replace

**“You are making the socialist revolution, and yet you don’t know where the bourgeoisie is. It is right inside the Communist Party - those in power taking the capitalist road. The capitalist roaders are still on the capitalist road.”  
– Mao Zedong, 1976**

equal and mutual socialist mutual relations with money relations and employment relations, and to achieve the goal of fundamentally changing the socialist ownership system and restoring capitalism. It is easy to see what kind of communism is Deng Xiaoping’s, who refuses to change his ways and opposes the restriction of bourgeois right on the pretext that there is no material basis, and who relies on material incentives to move towards communism.<sup>37</sup>

Unfortunately, the last four decades of the restoration of capitalism in China have shown just how accurate is this warning about a failure to restrict bourgeois right.

In 1976, Mao had observed that “With the socialist revolution they themselves [i.e. the capitalist roaders—Ed.] come under fire. At the time of the cooperative transformation of agriculture there were people in the Party opposed, and when it came to criticizing bourgeois right, they were resentful. You are making the socialist revolution, and yet you don’t know where the bourgeoisie is. It is right inside the Communist Party -those in power taking the capitalist road. The capitalist roaders are still on the capitalist road.”

This was very much directed at Deng Xiaoping who had been using his come-back to push a revisionist political line and an economic line favouring expansion of bourgeois right. He had advocated taking three key directives on stability,

<sup>35</sup> The Chinese originals are here: <https://www.bannedthought.net/China/Individuals/MaoZedong/Mao-CW-Chinese/52-OCR-sm.pdf> pp 44-5

<sup>36</sup> See: [Fictitious \(marxistphilosophy.org\)](http://Fictitious.marxistphilosophy.org)

<sup>37</sup> [servethepeople](http://servethepeople.com): [From the Archives: A serious struggle between restriction and anti-restriction - a critique of Deng Xiaoping's fallacious argument against restricting bourgeois right \(mike-servethepeople.blogspot.com\)](http://servethepeople.com)



unity and class struggle as a “key link”. In exasperation, Mao declared, “What! Take the three directives as the key link. Stability and unity do not mean writing off class struggle; class struggle is the key link and everything else hinges on it.” To make his point even clearer, he added, “He does not understand Marxism-Leninism, he represents the capitalist class.”

On July 8, 1976, the Zhongshan County Party Committee wrote a paper titled “Chairman Mao’s scientific thesis on the bourgeoisie in the Communist Party is a significant development of Marxism Leninism.” It identified Mao’s teachings on the targeting of capitalist-roaders in authority in the Party during the Cultural Revolution, on the existence of a bourgeois headquarters in the Party, and on the bourgeoisie being inside the Communist Party as new developments of Marxist-Leninist theory. It stated:

An unavoidable inequality exists between the living standards of high party officials on the one hand and the workers and poor and lower-middle peasants on the other. If they do not have a communist worldview, such high officials will degenerate into the bourgeoisie within the party; regard the victory of the revolution as an opportunity for themselves to profit; regard bourgeoisie right as their just dessert; do everything possible to protect the interests of high officials; oppose the continuing revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat; or oppose restrictions on, or even strive to expand, bourgeoisie right. Clearly, the existence of bourgeois right provides an important economic basis for the formation of the bourgeoisie in the Party.<sup>38</sup>

With Mao’s death on September 9, 1976, the capitalist-roaders seized the opportunity to crush

any further discussion of bourgeois right, arresting the Gang of Four and suppressing any expressions of support for them.

Just as Khrushchev maligned the Stakhanovites, alleging that they had been supplied with the best machinery and the most desirable conditions to achieve their higher production figures, so the capitalist-roaders set out to systematically malign the Dazhai model. Both Stakhanovism and Dazhai had been upheld as proof of the superiority of the socialist system, so both had to be undermined to pave the way for further growth of material incentives, bonuses and piece work in industry, and of finishing off the People’s Communes and returning to individual efforts in agriculture.

There is no need here to go into the subsequent privatisations and restoration of capitalism in China.

It is interesting, however, that contemporary left-wing opinion in China has not ignored the question of bourgeois right. They include Guo Songmin’s 2015 article “*Restricting bourgeois right*” and the “*Nanjie Village Road*”<sup>39</sup> and Lao Tian’s *On the Distribution of Labour and Bourgeois Right - Why it is possible to dismantle the whole system of socialism*<sup>40</sup>. A person with the pseudonym “Angry Frown Viewpoint” posted a statement on 15 September 2021 titled *Why restrict bourgeois right?*<sup>41</sup> Naturally, these authors, writing in today’s China, need to be somewhat circumspect in how they present their opinions.

### Some conclusions

There is no need for Communists to be afraid of bourgeois right, or to regard its transfer from capitalism into socialism as any reason not to engage wholeheartedly and enthusiastically in

<sup>38</sup> See: [SummaryOfViewsOnTheInner-PartyBourgeoisie-English-Partial-OCR.pdf \(bannedthought.net\)](#)

<sup>39</sup> [servethepeople: Guo Songmin: "Restricting bourgeois right" and the "Nanjie Village Road" \(mike-servethepeople.blogspot.com\)](#)

<sup>40</sup> [servethepeople: Lao Tian: On the Distribution of Labour and Bourgeois Right - Why it is possible to dismantle the whole system of socialism by starting from ... \(mike-servethepeople.blogspot.com\)](#)

<sup>41</sup> [servethepeople: Why restrict bourgeois right? \(mike-servethepeople.blogspot.com\)](#)



the fight for socialism and Communism. People of an earlier age were once afraid of fire and flood and of lightning in the sky, but once these things were understood, fire, water and electricity became our servants and we knew of the potential they could unleash.

We should have the same attitude to bourgeois right. It must be studied and understood, and then it can be used to our advantage – not by expanding its use as with water, fire and electricity, but by using it and restricting it at the same time.

This study has not looked at the Eastern European countries during their socialist periods, nor at Cuba, Vietnam, Laos or the DPRK. Nor will the ways in which bourgeois right manifests itself in an advanced capitalist country such as Australia be fully understood until such time as they are revealed in the process of building socialism here. But we can assume that bourgeois right will include the continuing production of things as commodities, to be distributed according to state planning and in line with the law of value; that there will be a wages system through which the distribution of consumer goods will be facilitated; and that the wages system will include recognition of higher-level skills, intellectual effort and social and political responsibility, and be graded accordingly.

Restrictions on bourgeois right will take the form of equal access to services such as education, health, a basic level of housing, and public transport, distributed under a free supply system and with private provision of such services ended; ongoing reductions of prices for essential consumer goods on the basis of increased

production and guaranteed supply; ongoing wage increases at the bottom of the wage scale, with no increases or even a lowering of wages at the top of the scale; the ongoing reduction or abolition of market levers in all sectors of the economy; supervision of higher party and government levels by the lower levels; and regular participation in productive labour by government and party officials.

The two major capitalist restorations – under Khrushchev in the Soviet Union, and under Deng Xiaoping in China – are not grounds for pessimism or despondency. They are a gift for the working class, providing we study them and draw from them the appropriate lessons, and they will make the task facing victorious proletarians of the future so much clearer and so much less likely to be betrayed from within.

Every Communist, and every Communist Party yet to win state power, without exception, must strive to understand the phenomenon of bourgeois right, its inevitable carryover from capitalism into socialism, and embed the necessity for its gradual restriction into the Party Constitution and, when it is created as a result of successful revolutionary struggle, into the Constitution of the socialist state. It cannot be left to chance, it cannot be obscured or denied by capitalist-roaders, but must be enshrined institutionally as an objective of socialist development and achieved through raising the ideological level of the workers as the ruling class of socialist societies and by carrying out mass struggle under the guidance of that ideology.

Our future is bright and we remain optimistic.

**The two major capitalist restorations – under Khrushchev in the Soviet Union, and under Deng Xiaoping in China – are not grounds for pessimism or despondency. They are a gift for the working class, providing we study them and draw from them the appropriate lessons, and they will make the task facing victorious proletarians of the future so much clearer and so much less likely to be betrayed from within.**



## From the Archives:

# E.F Hill – A Report to the Central Committee of the CPA (M-L), May 20, 1975

*The following article is a report made by Chairman E.F 'Ted' Hill to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) on May 20, 1975. The report touches on many aspects, some of which might feel out of date today. We publish it as a historical document and for what it reveals about Comrade Hill's leadership of the Party ideologically, politically and organisationally. All footnotes are the work of the editors.*

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**T**he situation is constantly changing. It is changing in the tendencies to both war and revolution. The trend to each is deepening. The defeat of US imperialism in Indo-China has undoubtedly had a great effect on the Australian people. On the other hand, it has caused the reaction within Australia to intensify its reactionary preparations. Thus, there is great encouragement to people's struggle and also intensification of reaction. In the latter regard, after a certain lull, there has been intensification of surveillance, preparations for provocation, Nazi activity, the woman McCallum's "demonstration", Warner, Santamaria, army and police emphasis on internal suppression.

The level of people's struggle on economic, environmental, political issues is on the upsurge. The reaction cannot do a thing nowadays of reactionary import without it being challenged. Everything comes to light. If an attempt is made to hide it, someone "leaks" it – this is a significant symptom of rising people's consciousness. It is certain that this level of struggle will grow. This is not mere propaganda, not words for words sake. It is sober reality. Sometimes our comrades read about it in *Vanguard* or *Australian Communist* but they read and do not sufficiently register and respond. These matters have been spoken and written about for a considerable time. Each time they are written about, they were correct. Now there is a gathering qualitative change sparked off by the rapidity of the victories in Indo-China, the collapse of the puppet regimes and the weakening of US imperialism. While many people will not in so many words register this, the fact is that it deeply affects broad sections of the people. It is of tremendous if somewhat intangible importance. It encourages people in the struggle against the US multi-nationals and that struggle extends beyond the workers. Even the more or less Australian capitalist monopoly Coles is threatened by the US imperialist Safeways. The Australian insurance companies are under threat from the US insurance companies. There are other examples. It is a hard trend which is developing. Hence, when we say broad sections of the people are involved in the struggle, it is correct that broad sections ARE involved in the struggle. Certainly, the leading role of the working class is fundamentally important; it should never for a moment be lost sight of. There has been quite a struggle to maintain an understanding of this (the leading role of the working class) as can be seen by the number of times the question has been returned to in our publications and discussions. It must be emphasised that it is a leading role and the leadership exists over the led. Those led include all sections except the tiny handful of imperialists and collaborators. A narrow view of other sections is wrong and arbitrary ideas of working class leadership are wrong. All sections can co-operate, all streams can run into the one central anti-imperialist stream and the central and decisive role is that of the working class. By its example, its consciousness, its strength, its



solidarity, it exerts leadership. This lies in the objective reality of its most direct (of all classes) attachment to the most advanced means of production.

The deepening of the tendencies to revolution and war emphasise the need to be at all times prepared. Our peaceful legal existence cannot go on. The trends go hand in hand. Neither can be neglected. But special emphasis must be placed on war. The contention and struggle of the superpowers increases all the time. Each superpower has a military expenditure of the order of 100,000 million US dollars. It is not necessary to go over the various focuses of struggle. Naturally, we are concerned with it all. But we live and work in Australia. The activities of US imperialism in Australia are quite conspicuous. There has been a long and solid struggle in Australia against US imperialism. Anti-US imperialist consciousness is fairly high. The US imperialists are very active in Australia. Their activities have been intensified because of their defeats in Indo-China. Soviet social-imperialist activities in Australia are not so conspicuous. Nevertheless, they are present and intensifying. The Socialist Party of Australia does quite a lot of work for Soviet social-imperialism. Its characteristic as a Party is the number of trade union officials it has and its influence on other trade union officials. Recently it has increased the frequency of its newspaper from monthly to fortnightly, it has begun an Australian magazine to popularise the Soviet Union. It runs bookshops and meetings. Its decisive membership is old in age. So far as can be gathered, it has only a few adherents amongst the young. It is heavily backed by the Soviet authorities. It is dangerous and must not be underestimated. Its leaders are less degenerate in the conventional sense than those of the Aarons group. Hence it has a certain standing over the Aarons group. But its politics are even more degenerate and dangerous than those of the Aarons group. Soviet social-imperialism is an absolute menace to the people. Again, it is not just a manner of speaking that we speak of the “new Tsars”. Soviet social-imperialism is as ruthless an imperialist exploiter and oppressor as any. It is even more so because in the era of the collapse of imperialism the struggle by an imperialist power for leadership is even more desperate than in the earlier days of imperialism. Moreover, Soviet social-imperialism flaunts the signboard of socialism and still has a certain power of deception. The Whitlam government flirts with Soviet social-imperialism. The Whitlam-Kosygin communique expressed a real Australia-Soviet position.<sup>42</sup> Since then, various Soviet statements have been made which emphasise the importance of “friendly relations” between the Soviet Union and Australia. The expansion of Soviet social-imperialism from India into Asia and the Indian Ocean involves Soviet eyes on Australia. Wherever US imperialism is, Soviet social-imperialism is bound to be interested. Not for one moment do we want to underestimate this. There is a book to be published by us in course of printing. Its title is *Imperialism in Australia. The Menace of Soviet Social-imperialism*. It ought to be deeply studied and circulated. The utmost vigilance is called for.

The struggle and contention of the superpowers inevitably means war. It is impossible to put time estimates on this. We can however say that the speed of world events is rapidly increasing. Hence a shorter rather than a longer time must be reckoned with. Everything increases in speed – the rise of the Third World, the struggles of the peoples and the struggles between the superpowers. A gigantic explosion is inevitable.

**It must involve Australia. None of this struggle follows a blueprint. It takes all sorts of changing shapes and forms. Its general direction can be seen but its particular features can be seen less clearly. The general struggle against it is clear enough but the particular struggles are rather more difficult.**

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<sup>42</sup> Whitlam visited the Soviet Union in January 1975. He and Kosygin issued a communique expressing support for, amongst others, the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace.



As a Party naturally the whole of our work is directed at leading the struggle. The need to adapt the organisation to changing circumstances is constant. Increased surveillance, danger of provocation, requires preparation. Different approaches to meetings, ways of communication, all require careful consideration. Stereotypes and getting into a rut have to be avoided. At the drop of a hat we must be prepared for far-reaching change and total underground work. Summing up experiences must be constant. At the same time as this occurs, there will be greater boldness in our work. The workers are more receptive, other sections move more rapidly so the possibilities are really enormous. Capacity for infinite initiative, flexibility and resources are characteristics that have been and are developing and will be carefully nurtured. The spirit of optimism permeates everything.

Present leadership arrangements are working very well. Still they need improvement. Any organisation, not excluding ours, tends to settle in a certain self-satisfaction. With us that just cannot be. Others may be able to afford to be self-satisfied, but not us. Self-satisfaction is in conflict with the constant change that is the fact of life summed up in materialist dialectics.

The PC and CC are working well. Each PC and CC member will get this document. The comments, proposals, criticisms of each will enrich the line. Each should endeavour to contribute by comments and proposals on mass work, struggle, *Vanguard*, *Australian Communist*, leaflets, booklets etc. etc. A PC or CC member may well have far-reaching proposals. They are required. Initiative knows no end. In the past, one or two comrades constantly repeated the existence of a problem and what the problem was (it is fair enough to repeat its existence) without putting forward proposals for its solution. It is better when one sees a problem also to think of how to solve it. It must be said that there has been a vast improvement in this respect in more recent times. It is incumbent on PC and CC members to study Marxism-Leninism even more deeply than other Party members. Questions such as the nature of the state do occupy central importance. Without a thorough understanding of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat we are bound to go wrong. But this by no means exhausts study. We need a good solid group of well-equipped all-round Marxists. And we are achieving it gradually. It cannot in the nature of things be a hustle bustle job but it is urgent. Our leading comrades can contribute more and more systematically, particularly to *Australian Communist*. It is quite a good journal but it would be greatly improved by more contributors. If you take these notes and think over your Party and struggle experiences, isn't there a rather wide field for theoretical material?

**It is an urgent task to widen and deepen the theory and practice of the Australian revolution. At no time in Australia's history has such an attempt as we have made, been made to solve the problems of the Australian revolution. But still there requires a great deal to be done.**

And it is the comrades concerned with the leadership who have the most responsibility. A special word should be said about the younger comrades. They are a great asset and have a great responsibility to make a big effort to contribute to the solution of these problems. If each PC and CC member summed up experience in the field in which he worked, generalized it and contributed it perhaps as a theoretical article or document to be circulated, it would rapidly contribute much. Another aspect of it is to study deeply the existing Australian material so that it can enrich and be enriched. This goes for *Vanguard*, *Australian Communist*, pamphlets, booklets. It is very important to study Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Chairman Mao and it is also very important to study Australian publications. In this respect, good progress is being made in the rectification of the Party's style of work. It is a constant process.



There is the ever present problem of the Australian black people and the people of Papua New Guinea. There are very many misconceptions about this. The central problem is how to get Marxism-Leninism to them. The bourgeois concept of “help” to them constantly dogs us. But it is not a question of help in this sense. The black people are rightly suspicious of “help” in any shape or form. Personally I think the word “help” ought to be shunned like the plague. The best help we can give is to get one or two or more of these people to take up Marxism-Leninism so it can be taken to their own struggle. As an example of how far bourgeois ideology goes in our own minds, the name “Kalkadoon” was simply usurped from the black people without their permission and without anyone thinking of the implications of what was done.<sup>43</sup> Like the bourgeoisie, the name was stolen. There is “help” in the wrong sense and simple theft. Truth is that the black people are standing up. They need Marxism-Leninism just as do the white workers, working and patriotic people. It is this that is of such importance. They will conduct their own struggle more scientifically and it will coordinate with other struggles given Marxism-Leninism. How to do it is the question. It must be done through them. Patronage is right out. They will do it and the way to get Marxism-Leninism to them will be found. It assumes greater urgency today. Likewise Papua-New Guinea.<sup>44</sup> The battle can only be fought by the people there. They need Marxism-Leninism. Our job is to extend to them proletarian international support and paralyse our own government in its suppression activities. The central stress is on the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism. No doubt there are difficulties in both cases of illiteracy but these can be overcome by the black peoples. They will find what help they need when the enlightenment of Marxism-Leninism grips them. This is not to say that there is nothing of Marxism-Leninism in their struggle, but its need has not been seen sufficiently clearly.

**Great tactical problems are presented by the Labour government. In a sense, one has to walk a tight rope in dealing with it. It is a dangerous trend to just blankly condemn it as a government of the bourgeoisie. It is that, but there are quite important differences between it and the Liberal-Country Party. That is obvious. Yet at the same time, we know that the Labour government is fundamentally anti-working class. It is certain to attack the workers in all round vicious ways. How to get our line and propaganda just correct, so that it just hits the spot, is a constant problem. Some of the contributions that come in approach this matter from the standpoint that the ALP is just a pack of bastards; then some praise it too much. Comrades ought to think this question over. It is going to get more acute. It is necessary to get it just right.**

It is even more difficult than that. It seems pretty clear that Fraser has a better estimate of the possibilities of war than Whitlam. Fraser is more correct. Also Fraser is more anti-Soviet than Whitlam, no doubt because he is very close to the Americans. Still, it is a fact. We have said once publicly that on the question of the war danger, Fraser is more correct than Whitlam. This same matter complicates

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<sup>43</sup> “Kalkadoon” was a bookshop run by the Party in Melbourne. Its name was intended as a tribute to the Kalkadoon people who waged a lengthy resistance against the British colonialists. Hill was probably in advance of his times in criticising as “theft” the appropriation by the Party of the Kalkadoon name. An extensive study of the need for appropriate protocols in relation to the use of First People’s identities and culture by non-Indigenous people was published by UNSW Press in 2021 (see *True Tracks* by Meriam and Wuthathi lawyer Terri Janke.)

<sup>44</sup> Papua-New Guinea was in the throes of declaring itself independent of Australia which, at the time Hill delivered this report to the Central Committee, administered PNG under a UN mandate. Independence was declared on 16 September, 1975, four months after Hill’s report.



the struggle against the superpowers. We do not want to drive out US imperialism to the advantage of Soviet social-imperialism. This latter statement points up the urgency of the struggle against Soviet social-imperialism.

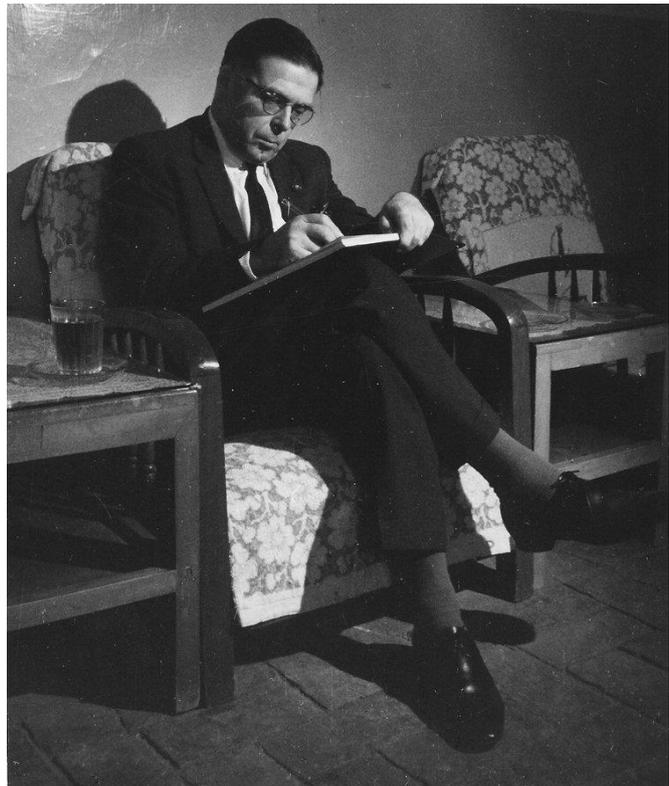
Another matter for comment too is the tendency of the left workers, particularly the young, to gravitate to the builders' labourers industry. This was a phenomenon in days of Communist leadership on the wharf and in the iron and steel industry. But it is not correct. It is based on certain trade union illusions. Our comrades ought to go to all industries and the Party ought to allocate them. In this respect there has been growing up exemplary conduct among our comrades to serve where the Party thinks best. We cannot publish details but there is a splendid attitude growing up. There have been a few examples where comrades have declined or resisted service in particular positions or changes, but these are the exception in a growing atmosphere of service for the Party and thus serving the people is dominant.

Lately we emphasised starting points on the positive in work and people and not on the negative. We did this because some gossip and slander based on negative in people was very damaging. It is fact anyway that the positive is more important, never ignoring the negative. As Chairman Mao has said, it is wrong to wholly affirm anything and everything or wholly to negate anything and everything. It is particularly important in our conditions to fasten on the positive. It is having good results and requires vigorous and constant pursuing. It must not become merely a form of words or an affirmation in words but denial in practice.

We have emphasised finance in our publications. All PC and CC members are asked to do a special job on this. Work expands and expands. Inflation goes on and on.

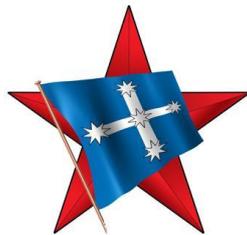
These notes will be supplemented verbally.

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*Comrade Ted Hill writing notes during one of his several trips to China*





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