Educational Packet for

Entering an Epoch of Social Revolution

League of Revolutionaries for a New America

National Education Committee
League of Revolutionaries for a New America
LRNAeducation@lrna.org
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Author’s Note</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Real World</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Communist Labor Party</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Begin the Inquiry</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophical Discussion and Inquiry</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Process of Development</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialectics: Quantity, Quality, the Antagonistic Element</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Content of the Time</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stages of Revolutionary Development</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Revolutionary Process</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Conditions for Proletarian Revolutions and Their Consequences</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Crisis of Socialism</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Communist Party of the United States Of America And The New Left</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Communist Labor Party and Our Tasks</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Footnotes</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
AUTHOR’S NOTE

This pamphlet, like most inquiry into something new, was a long time birthing. It began with scattered statements during the late 1960s and early 1970s noting the shift from labor saving to labor replacing means of production.

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

This understanding had to be transferred to the comrades and friends of the Communist Labor Party (CLP). It was correct to write the pamphlet despite our scattered and scanty knowledge. Were it to be rewritten many of its foundations could be strengthened. Many of its projections could be clarified.

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

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

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

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

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

Characterized by Lenin, this era produced a communist movement that reflected the time.

Industrial development could be carried out by the bourgeoisie for its benefit, or by the workers for their benefit. Which class would win depended, to a great extent, on moral and ideological factors.

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

The new era is producing a new movement. For the first time, an actual, practical communist movement of the workers is emerging. Production without work demands distribution without money. The cause of communism is practical.
The objective character of the movement demands, more than ever, its subjective, i.e., political, theoretical, ideological expression. The creation of a communist movement is the overwhelming demand of our time. This pamphlet was written to call attention to, and to clarify this demand.

Nelson Peery
January, 1993

**Author’s Note Discussion Points & Questions:**

1. What is qualitatively new about the new means of production? In what sense are these means of production “in deepening antagonism with private, capitalist ownership?"

2. Why is the development of an “objective communist class” of decisive importance?

3. What is the historical significance of this pamphlet? How is it signaling the end of one political era and the beginning of another?
INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

The think tanks have coined new phrases such as “revolutionary societal transformation” to avoid “social revolution” but they are more aware of the depth of change than many of the so-called revolutionaries. Since the late 1950s scores of books have been written analyzing each step as this economic revolution took shape. Twenty years ago, the outlines of the economic revolution emerged. Today the outlines of the resultant social revolution are clear.

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

“The Third Wave affects everyone... challenges all the old power relationships, the privileges and prerogatives of the endangered elites of today, and provides the backdrop against which the key power struggles of tomorrow will be fought.”
Introduction Discussion Points & Questions:

1. What creates an epoch of social revolution, and how is today’s epoch different from all that have come before?

2. The development of productive forces is crossing a nodal line via electronics. What is qualitatively new about the new means of production?

3. How has the revolutionary struggle developed in ways Marx, Engels and early communist revolutionaries could not foresee?

4. What is meant by the statement, “Qualitatively new productive forces inevitably call forth, and are used by, qualitatively new motive forces”? What are today’s qualitatively new productive forces? What are today’s new motive forces?
The Real World

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

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

Our cities are becoming police-occupied, brutally controlled fiefdoms.

Tens of millions of workers searching for ideological and moral stability are caught up in fundamentalist religious cults.

There is a frightening rise of fascism. The fascists are not simply the Nazi thugs or the KKK murderers. The workers know and reject them. The workers do not know or they belittle the serious fascist danger that is arising within the chambers of government, from secret groups of officers in the military, from the growing unity between a certain section of the trade unions and the most reactionary, jingoist, chauvinistic sections of finance capital — its industrial wing.

The labor unions are moving toward a split. There is a growing militancy within the economically unstable section of the unions. There is a spirit of rejection of the “business unionism” that developed during the past 30 years. Though five out of six workers remain unorganized, the government is working through the center and left-wing unions to co-opt the growing spontaneous struggles of the class.

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

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

During the late 1940s Ford’s River Rouge auto plant had 60,000 workers. Today it has greater production with 16,000. This peaking out and decline in the number of workers concentrated in a single plant reflects the decline of mechanically-based industry and the growth of a new type of instruments of production: computers, robots and high technology. The use of electricity as a source of power was a stage of the development of the mechanical forces and created labor-saving devices. Electronics, made possible by the semiconductor and micro-chip, totally separate from mechanics, is the basis of labor-replacing instruments. Superconductivity will open a whole new world. As a result of these economic changes, property relations built around mechanics are becoming untenable.
Our country is entering a political, moral, social, cultural and economic crisis. It is the final stage of the general crisis of capitalism. The crisis is splitting society into its right and left polarities. The right polarity is splitting between its reactionary and fascist wings and the left polarity is splitting between its reformist and revolutionary wings. Such political motion will create millions of serious revolutionaries.

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

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

The Real World Discussion Points & Questions:

1. Discuss and describe the examples given in this section. How you see the real world developing now?

2. Though American workers generally reject fascism, what leaves us vulnerable to the fascist developments in the current epoch? How does the League face this fascist threat?

3. How is society splitting into left and right polarities? How are those polarities splitting? Why?
We have taken these points:

1) Restate the foundations of Marxism as the science of society and revolution;
2) Describe the current revolutionary stage;
3) Identify the revolutionary forces;
4) Outline the tasks of the Party in the process of its becoming the subjective expression of the objective process; and
5) Begin an inquiry into the theory of the revolution in the United States of North America,

and developed them into the methodology used by the League to constantly analyze, assess and plan the work of the organization. Why is this kind of methodology one of the most important things an organization of revolutionaries must carry out?

Please use these additional readings and organize a time this can be discussed further:
- The request to Areas from the Strategy Conference
- League Organizer on Planning
- LRNA Organization Resolution
THE COMMUNIST LABOR PARTY

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

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

Activity alone is the struggle for reform. Lenin detailed how each stage of the struggle prepared the way for the next. From this conclusion he formulated the slogan “an organization of revolutionaries inseparably connected to the spontaneous movement” to bring that class consciousness into the struggle.

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

The Communist Labor Party Discussion Points & Questions:

1. The situation is beginning to create the objective base of agitation. What is the most important role of a political organization of the proletariat in this period of history?

2. Why are new ideas vital to the development of a revolution? Why is it necessary for "an organization of revolutionaries inseparably connected to the spontaneous movement” to bring that class consciousness into the struggle?
BEGIN THE INQUIRY

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

The revolution of the capitalists against feudalism had objective guidelines because capitalism was formed and functioned inside feudalism. The bourgeois revolutionaries needed only to “do what comes naturally” to win. The communist has no such luxury. There is no communism operating inside capitalism. Therefore all our guidelines are subjective -- philosophical and theoretical. Errors in philosophy inevitably mean errors in theory and practice. Understanding and mastering the theory of the proletarian revolution requires a basic understanding of the revolutionary, scientific philosophy of dialectical and historical materialism.

Let us first define our terms.

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

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

Theory is a coherent group of general propositions used as principles of explanation for a class of phenomena.5

Begin the Inquiry Discussion Points & Questions:

1. Why does a communist revolution demand philosophical and theoretical guidelines that were not necessary for the capitalist revolution? What is philosophy?
PHILOSOPHICAL DISCUSSION AND INQUIRY

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

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

Our philosophy is not simply materialist; its approach to phenomena is dialectical. The basic laws of dialectical materialism are:

1) Nature is a connected and integrated whole.
2) Nature is in a state of constant change: development, disintegration, dying away and arising.
3) Internal contradiction, the basis of development, is inherent in all things.
4) Changes are from lower to higher order and occur as negations.¹
5) Qualitative changes begin with the quantitative introduction of the new quality into the quantitative development of the old. Qualitative changes occur as leaps.
6) Quantitative changes are definite and indispensable.

Historical materialism, the application of dialectical materialism to history, shows that the method of securing the means of subsistence determines the character of a social system. People organize (create productive relations) around their tools and the knowledge of using them (the productive forces) for the production of their food, clothing and housing. The dialectical development of the struggle between the constantly developing productive forces and the static productive relations is the motive force for the quantitative development of social systems. Qualitative change (negation) in the motive force used in production is the basis of qualitative changes between economic formations.

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

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

1. Why does dialectical materialism demand constant study of the world’s changing conditions?

2. What are the common themes of the six basic laws of dialectical materialism?

3. Please discuss: “Historical materialism, the application of dialectical materialism to history, shows that the method of securing the means of subsistence determines the character of a social system.” Can you give examples?

For Further Discussion and Study

Please discuss and sum up why these “basic laws of dialectical materialism” form the foundation of the philosophy of the League.

Please use these laws and the additional readings and organize a time to further discuss our philosophical outlook:

- Dialectics of the Leap and the Destruction of Capitalism
- Revolutionary Change in America
THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Each quantitative stage is further preparation for the introduction of a new quality which replaces contradiction with antagonism. The quantitative introduction of the new quality into the process is the catalyst for the leap into the new quality. For instance, the invention of qualitatively new machinery called forth the perfection and application of the steam engine. Together they revolutionized not simply the economy, but the social order. The early development of computers and robotics called forth the semiconductor and micro-chip. Together with the superconductor, they are creating the electronic technological revolution. Social production with electronics is in antagonism, active hostility, with the existing economic relations. It is expressed as antagonism between the method of production and the method of distribution.
The Process of Development Discussion Points & Questions:

1. What are the two fundamental elements within the process of development?

2. How does the revolutionary process shape and change social classes through each quantitative stage of development? (Please refer to paragraphs 7 and 8)

3. Please discuss: “The quantitative introduction of the new quality into the process is the catalyst for the leap into the new quality.”
DIALECTICS: QUANTITY, QUALITY, 
THE ANTAGONISTIC ELEMENT

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

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

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

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

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

Contradiction does not grow into antagonism. Antagonism replaces contradiction.

Internal contradiction is the basis of development and growth. Antagonism is the basis of destruction and transformation to a new quality.

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

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

Qualitatively new productive forces inevitably call forth, and are used by, qualitatively new motive forces.

Let’s glance at this process and the overthrow of feudalism. Manufacturing was the highest and final stage of the manual labor system. The last stages of manufacturing prepared the ground for mechanical labor and made its introduction inevitable. A qualitative change in motive force was necessary. “Not till the invention of Watt’s second and so-called double-acting steam engine was [such] a prime mover found.” 8 In a leap, manufacturing changed to industry.

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

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

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

---

**Dialectics: Quantity, Quality, the Antagonistic Element**

**Discussion Points & Questions:**

1. Though we need both terms to understand the process of change, why can’t qualitative development be completely separated from quantitative development?

2. Define contradiction and antagonism. Why doesn’t contradiction grow into antagonism? Why is this important, and how does it relate to the quantitative stages of development of capitalism?

3. What is meant by the statement, “Qualitatively new productive forces inevitably call forth, and are used by, qualitatively new motive forces?” What are today’s qualitatively new productive forces? What are today’s new motive forces?
THE CONTENT OF THE TIME

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

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

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

Marx referred to the conflict of the productive forces with the relations of production. He makes it clear that the spontaneous advance of the forces of production which increasingly conflict with the static productive relations is the basis of the revolutionary process. The revolution is the restructuring of productive relations to accommodate and unfetter the qualitatively new productive forces. From this point of view, the forms, not the stages of social development, are from primitive communism to slavery to feudalism to capitalism to socialism to communism. The content, or stages, have been from the club, spear, sling, bow and arrow, to the plow to machinery to electronics.

The various forms of manual and animal motive power (i.e. the bow and arrow, animal husbandry, agriculture, manufacturing), mechanical motive power, or electronic motive power determine the stage of social development. Feudalism or capitalism may have been the forms that these stages took, but under certain conditions the form was socialism.

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

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

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

Could there have been a proletarian seizure of power during the struggle for reconstruction after the Civil War in the United States? A great economic and social revolution was underway. The impulse toward proletarian revolution was there and conditions were somewhat similar to and more favorable than in Russia in 1917. There
was talk of “putting the bottom rail on the top.” There was no organization to do it. We didn’t have a Lenin or a Bolshevik party.

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

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

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

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

The Content of the Time Discussion Points & Questions:

1. Please describe the content of the last great Epoch, the qualitative transformation from manual agricultural labor to industrial mechanical labor. Please give examples of forms of those revolutions.

2. What is the argument that imperialism saved capitalism, and what are the reasons that this argument is erroneous?

3. Why is this so important to us: “Only a qualitative change in the productive forces can destroy a system. Qualitative change comes with the introduction of a qualitatively new and antagonistic quantity.”
STAGES OF REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT

Revolutionaries cannot struggle against the quality “capitalism.” They must deal on the quantitative level with specific stages of development. The revolutionary Left of our country fails when it simply counterposes capitalism to socialism, rather than defining the stage of development and fighting it out stage by stage.

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

The quality “revolution” demands the same treatment, and we are the doctor. Marxists understand that “the communist party is midwife to a society pregnant with change.” Qualitative statements such as “Smash Imperialism” or “For the Dictatorship of the Proletariat” are easily stated. Any sectarian leftist can do this. The rub comes with trying to understand and work within the concrete and specific stages of development. It means we have to understand when the growth of the baby in the womb is complete and it is time for birth. It means we have to understand at what point the struggle is no longer reformist and economic, but leaping to political and revolutionary.

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

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

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

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

1. Why will we fail if we simply present socialism or communism as an alternative to capitalism?

2. What is the importance of class consciousness to our revolutionary struggle?

3. What is the role of a political party of the proletariat within and across the quantitative stages of development of capitalism?
THE REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS

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

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

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

The revolution is a political not an economic struggle. There is no way to transform the economic struggle to a political one. One leaps to the other. Marx points out:

“The political movement of the working class has as its ultimate object, of course, the conquest of political power for this class, and this naturally requires a previous organization of the working class developed up to a certain point and arising precisely from its economic struggles.

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

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

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

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

The unemployed, in their various stages of disintegration, are part of the working class. They are not a lumpen-proletariat. Let’s settle this question once and for all. The rise of
capitalism meant the crisis of feudalism. The serf ran away into the towns seeking food. One section of the serfs became the bourgeoisie. Another section became the proletariat. For objective reasons some could not enter either the bourgeoisie or the proletariat. They existed along the edges of society as a flotsam, a lumpen-proletariat. We today have an employed section of the working class, an unemployed section, a homeless section, a section on welfare. All are part of the proletariat.

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

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

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

In our country’s history, slavery was the crudest and most backward expression of the manual labor system. There were many forms of manual labor including the highly skilled craftsman. After the Civil War, mechanical labor negated but did not eliminate manual labor. The inevitable result was that the favored sections of manual labor (which were white) took over mechanical labor and the worst of the remaining manual labor went to the ex-slaves. On this basis the labor movement was split and the split institutionalized as white supremacy.

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

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

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

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

---

**The Revolutionary Process Discussion Points & Questions:**

1. What is meant by “the political movement does not simply quantitatively grow from the other? They are two different processes”?

2. When “the state power interferes with the circulation of the necessaries of life,” why does the struggle depend “upon the subjective”?

3. How has the history of white supremacy continued to play a role as electronics negates mechanical labor?

4. How is the fight in the streets a fight for political power?

5. What is the difference between today’s class that is unemployed, underemployed and/or homeless and the class called the lumpen proletariat during the transition from feudalism to capitalism? Why does the bourgeoisie sometimes refer to the new section of the working class that is destitute as an “underclass”?
For Further Discussion and Study

Please have a short discussion or have a short report on the difference in the material reality epoch of the 1840’s and the impact and conclusions of the Communist Manifesto.

Please discuss the qualitative changes of today’s epoch of revolution and the conclusions described in “The Revolutionary Process” (page 20).

Manifesto of the Communist Party
https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/pdf/Manifesto.pdf
TWO CONDITIONS FOR PROLETARIAN REVOLUTIONS AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES

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

The Soviet revolution occurred at such a moment of historic transition from manual to mechanical labor. It proved that Soviet socialism, like capitalism, was a form for the development of industrial mechanical labor. In 1917 Russia was “pregnant with revolution” but by the steam engine and not by the proletariat. First, the bourgeoisie seized power and lost it. The Bolsheviks seized power and held it. Given the quantitative stage of the productive forces Russia could have gone capitalist. Lenin and the Bolsheviks seized power under adverse circumstances. They rejected the mechanical approach that the socialist revolution could not take place in a country that had not gone through the stage of capitalism.

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

Before the Russian socialist revolution most Marxists held the theoretical position that the development of productive forces incompatible with the bourgeois system would create the conditions for the communist revolution. The Russian revolution occurred with the development of the productive forces incompatible with the feudal system. So far, the only communist-led revolutions have occurred during a transition from agriculture to industry. The revolution has been won through insurrection and/or civil war. These revolutions have all had the task of industrializing their country. In doing so they create their counterrevolutionary force.

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

We have often stated that Stalin is a bone in the throat of the revolutionary movement. He cannot be swallowed or coughed up. There is no possibility of uniting the international movement without settling Stalin’s position in and contribution to history. We are perhaps the first to describe an objective basis for achieving this.

The understanding that capitalist reorganization of Soviet socialist industry was possible answers questions that have haunted communists for years. This point of view
clarifies the Stalin period in the USSR. The subjective “Stalin period” and the objective industrialization of the USSR overlay. Stalin’s assumption of power and his passing away took place at the beginning and ending of a whole quantitative stage of Soviet economic and political development. The Stalin period began and ended coincidental with the beginning and ending of Soviet industrialization. Industrialization is a qualitative stage in the development of the productive forces. Very often the two processes become intertwined and confused in people’s minds.

Stalin assumed leadership of the USSR with the completion of the first stages of the consolidation of Soviet political power. The First Imperialist World War had ended. The Red Army crushed the counterrevolution. The economy stabilized. The New Economic Policy (NEP) had run its course. Stalin turned his strength and singleness of purpose to the obvious task at hand. That task was the gathering up of the scattered economic energy of the Soviet Union and concentrating it in the form of giant industry. The capitalist countries accomplished this over a long period of time by starving the small producer out of the market. The USSR accomplished this in a very short period with persuasion where possible and with legally sanctioned force when necessary. The productive relations of industrialization were not at odds with the proletarian dictatorship. While there is capitalist industrialization, industrialization is not capitalism. Socialist industrialization is faster and better. Stalin’s death occurred at the end of industrialization and with the introduction of a new qualitative stage of the productive forces, electronics.

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

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

Marx points out:

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

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

Would Stalin’s critics dare compare Soviet industrialization to what happened in the USNA during its period of industrialization? These crimes include the genocidal slaughter of the Indians, the looting of Africa of perhaps 20 million human beings to transport barely a million alive into the most brutal, exploitative and complete slavery the world has ever known. They include the rape of Mexico, the destruction of the Philippine Islands and Puerto Rico, the plunder of Canada and the continuing blood-soaked exploitation of Latin America. The crimes include the “white slavery” period of Northern industrial
development. The list is endless. The Stalin period was the gentlest, most benevolent industrialization the world has ever known. His “crime” was to consolidate the political dictatorship of the proletariat, build socialism in one country and crush the fascist invaders. The world bourgeoisie has never forgiven him.

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

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

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

Discussion Points & Questions:

1. How did Russia transition from feudalism to socialism? What was the economic content of this transition?

2. What are the two conditions for social revolution? How are they different and why is this important? Why is the second condition for revolution, compared to the first, “more a historical act than a subjective act”?

3. “...the counterrevolution had an objective base during this entire period.” What are the ramifications of this? What strategy and approach was compelled by these circumstances? In what ways has the world changed since this period of history?

4. How have the historical revolutions to industrialize countries through socialism created “their counterrevolutionary force”?

5. How does the Stalinist movement to industrialization compare to the cost paid by those in the United States transition to industrialization?

6. What is the difference in the role of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the early-industrial era and the electronics era?
THE CRISIS OF SOCIALISM

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

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

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

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

The diversity and struggle within the socialist camp over the past thirty years was the result of different levels of productive development. China was beginning industrialization when the Soviets were leaving it and beginning to grapple with electronics. The internal social struggles within China and the USSR today arise from the transition from industry to electronics. Both are going through the same process. Thus, they are moving to relax the tension between them.

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

1. Why did bureaucratic necessity become an obstacle to revolutionary progress in the Soviet Union?

2. What is the fundamental mistake by the USSR and China in terms of confronting the process of change?

3. In terms of what is happening today in world politics, what are the consequences of Russia and China relying upon “market exchange instead of planning the next quantitative stage to communism”? 


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

History is stepping into the arena of revolution and the revolutionaries have never known such confusion. Led by the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA) much of the so-called “left” is entering its final stage of degeneration.

The objective side of history is passing a certain line in the process of change and the next step is the sudden leap of social response to this change. The first step in this process is the disintegration of the political organizations that arose out of the passing period and are unable to adjust to the new conditions. Let us take a quick look at the basis of the growth and decline of the CPUSA and the New Left.

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

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

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

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

The CPUSA grew with the growth of the industrial unions and after its isolation during the late 1940s it simply transferred its syndicalism to the mass struggle. There were new slogans but they had the same syndicalist content. Instead of calling for one big union the call was for national unity under a Roosevelt coalition, all-class black unity, unity of the unions -- everything in the name of unity. It never recognized the existence of the dialectic.

Lacking Marxist theory, the CPUSA transformed the objective demand for revolutionary unity into a slavish tailing behind whoever was temporarily in control of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). This final crisis of the CPUSA evolved as the industrial stage of the USSR began to transform and Soviet society, economics and politics were thrown into antagonism.
The CPUSA cannot explain to its membership why the Soviet government is doing things that are against the interests of the world’s workers. Their Party arose from an ideological tendency that limited them to a certain stage of history. They are adrift. Like the old soldiers of “The Barracks Ballad,” they will now begin to fade away.

As for the New Left, all that was new was its slogan “participatory democracy” in place of anarchism for the doing away with government restraints. Enraged by the decision to draft students, they became enamored with anything that challenged the power of government. A section of this radical student movement emerged as a quasi-Marxist, anarchistic group that lived by attaching itself to various external revolutionary movements or states. The conditions for the development of the New Left were the rapidly expanding economy, the war, the bribery of the working class and the radicalization of the world’s petty bourgeoisie. As these conditions deteriorated, so did the New Left.

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

---

**The Communist Party of the United State of America and the New Left Discussion Points & Questions:**

1. Why did anarcho-syndicalism become a key tenant of American Left political development?

2. Why is the CPUSA tied to (and limited by) “a certain stage of history”? How have the conditions that developed the New Left come to deteriorate?

3. Why is studying Marxism, history and philosophy critical for avoiding errors of the left? What are the reason that the U.S. left today is unable to function as a revolutionary actor?
Please organize further discussion of syndicalism using this material:

- “On Syndicalism: An Interview with Nelson Peery”
  *Rally, Comrades!* November/December 2015 Vol. 25. Ed 6

- Video interview with Nelson Peery, “What are your thoughts on syndicalism?” https://vimeo.com/138919244
THE COMMUNIST LABOR PARTY AND OUR TASKS

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

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

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

The entire world is moving toward a revolutionary transformation. The bourgeoisie is preparing for a sudden downturn in the economy. The trade unions are splitting. The unemployed are emerging as a political vanguard of the class. The so-called revolutionary movement is disintegrating. A spontaneous movement of the workers is demanding a leadership that comes up with precise proposals for the resolution of their daily problems. They are searching for a theory that accurately reflects their social motion. They have an instinctive distrust of the leadership of an activist. The activists simply respond to the quantitative level of struggle without any conception of the quality of the fight. Their fight is eternal, without resolution. The armchair Marxists are the opposite. They understand quality, but do not understand the role of quantity. There is a historic need for an organization of revolutionaries to boldly step forward and provide leadership. The Communist Labor Party can be that organization. The Communist Labor Party is firmly inside this revolutionary sector of the class. The People’s Tribune is now qualitatively different from the Left political newspapers. The practical leaders accept it as their paper.

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

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

Comrades, the moment we have trained for is at hand. We must actively and aggressively seize that moment.
The Communist Labor Party and Our Tasks

Discussion Points & Questions:

1. What was the initial goal of the CLP that set it apart from others on the Left?

2. What does the CLP offer the spontaneous movement that activists and armchair Marxists cannot?

3. What is our most “urgent and serious task”? Why?

4. What are the most important elements within a “theory of our revolution?” What are the intellectual and political elements that would comprise such a theory?
CONCLUSION

What does this mean for us, an organization of serious revolutionaries? We are completing the move from the unavoidable sectarian position we occupied. The revolutionary process is getting underway. It is posing the question, will electronics continue to add to the burden of misery borne by the working class, or will it be the instrument of liberation? The answer will be forged in the crucible of struggle. We are getting into position to carry out our historical task. We, the comrades of the Communist Labor Party, have the responsibility of introducing the catalyst into the social struggle. That catalyst is class consciousness. It is the first quantitative stage of a new quality that will replace contradiction with antagonism between classes. Though this is a historically inevitable stage of development, it will not be easy.

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

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

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

We submit this report for one simple reason: to prove that our political task of bringing class consciousness from outside to inside the social struggle conforms to the dialectical process in all spheres of motion. Electronics could not grow spontaneously from the application of electricity to industry. In the same manner, class consciousness cannot grow spontaneously from the social struggle or social consciousness. Our task, our historical purpose, is clear.

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

1. How and why are we moving away from a sectarian position necessary of a past era?

2. Please discuss our responsibility to Unite the class. How is the struggle to reach the white worker today tied to the history of the country? How is it tied to the history abolitionism?

3. How is does the goal of developing class consciousness “conform(s) to the dialectical process in all spheres of motion.”

4. Please sum-up the proposition that “electronics could not grow spontaneously from the application of electricity to industry. In the same manner, class consciousness cannot grow spontaneously from the social struggle or social consciousness.”

---

**For Further Discussion and Study**

Please organize further discussion of fascism using this material:


- “The Changing Situation and the Tasks of Revolutionaries”

- “The Objectivity of Fascism Today”
  “The Culture of Fascism and the Role of History”
  “Edging Toward a New Stage of Consciousness”
FOOTNOTES


7. *Random House Unabridged Dictionary*


