



P.O. Box 13051

SACRAMENTO SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

Sacramento, CA 95813

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SELF CRITICISM ON THE "PEOPLE'S LAWSUIT"

In the last issue (Number 6) of the Peoples Witness, we printed up "The People's Lawsuit" and offered criticism/ self criticism and analysis at the end of the article. However, it was not until we had finished printing the paper that we noticed that we had completely omitted our self-criticism. After collective discussion and analysis, we found that this error was based on our failure to meet article deadlines. Because of this failure, we were in a rush to meet our mailing deadline, which made us very lax in proof-reading the layout before printing. At this time we would like to offer an excerpt from "The People's Lawsuit" and a self-criticism pertaining to this very crucial issue:

"The white partisan, constantly reminded of his/her middle class origin, over-mindful of the racism ingrained in his psyche by traditional attitudes, burdened with the sins of his fathers, does not wish to offend the slave. He has committed his life to radical social change, and recognized the greatest revolutionary potential in the ex-slave. It is his own racism, from which he is trying desperately to escape, that does not permit him to openly attack the Black Renegade."

Self-criticism pertaining to the above excerpt from "The People's Lawsuit":

Since all of the members of our organization are white, we have hesitated to criticize Third World individuals and organizations. This was a result of the liberal manner in which we have dealt with our racism concerning this matter. We stand resolved to eliminate these weaknesses from our ranks, for liberalism and racism are tools used by the ruling class to keep the people apart and,

therefore, serve to destroy and sabotage the ability of the people to develop honest, progressive relationships in the struggle.

GENERAL DEMANDS

For the past two months we have been exploring the concept of the General Demands. Many brothers inside have sent their support and ideas. Now two outside groups have expressed interest in working on this concept--the Prison Law Collective and Inside Out/Join Hands. It is a beginning, and, if we all continue to work, support will grow in many areas. Let us hear from you--tell the brothers and sisters around you--talk to outside contacts. **SUPPORT THE GENERAL DEMANDS!!**

"NEW DAWN"

Every other Saturday night, the Sacramento Solidarity Committee presents a radio show on the prisons. On April 6, we presented a program on the New Dawn Collective inside Vacaville, and one brother's experiences in the strip cells there. We would appreciate any additional information on this collective from the people inside in order to educate the people outside about it. We give our support to all progressive actions taken by the people. **All Power to the People!!**

The Peoples Witness is the monthly newsletter of the Sacramento Solidarity Committee. It is sent free of charge on request to interested people or organizations.

Please address all requests, criticisms, and/ or materials for the newsletter or radio show to the SSC at PO Box 13051, Sacramento California 95813.

INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL PRISONERS

In the last issue of the Peoples Witness, we defined the term "political prisoner." In this issue, we will look at the root cause of people being made political prisoners on the international scale.

"The U.S. has established itself as the mortal enemy of all people's governments, all scientific-socialist mobilization of consciousness everywhere on the globe, all anti-imperialist activity on earth. The history of this country in the last fifty years and more, the very nature of all its fundamental elements, and its economic, social, political and military mobilization distinguish it as the prototype of the international fascist counter-revolution. The U.S. is the Korean problem, the Vietnamese problem, the problem in the Congo, Angola, Mozambique, the Middle East. It's the grease in the British and Latin American guns that operate against the masses of common people."

--Comrade George Jackson from Blood in My Eye

We can understand from the above statement that fascism is not restricted to one country or national set of circumstances. As capitalism has undergone an expansion from national to international exploitation (imperialism), liberation struggles have arisen to combat it. International fascism is the means by which the imperialists seek to maintain their power.

One of the methods fascism uses is to capture and imprison or assassinate political activists and terrorize the masses to keep them from joining the liberation movement. Some examples are as follows:

South Vietnam is a clear cut case of the open fascism that results when the ruling class can remain in power only by the total repression of the people. There are over 200,000 political prisoners in South Vietnam. Arrests are massive, indiscriminate sweeps. There are decrees outlawing any beliefs, organizations, and activities that are not anti-communist. There are no appeals. All trials are in military courts where there are no standards of evidence, and no rights for the prisoners at all. There is always conviction. Chile. After the junta overthrew Allende's Popular Unity government in Chile, a mass roundup of "leftists" was conducted. 3,000 were imprisoned in the National Stadium in Santiago. Since this time, all schools and institutions are totally under the direction of the military.

Iran. In the fascist regime of the Shah of Iran, who was put into power by the CIA, repression is strong. Open fire by government troops into unarmed demonstrations is commonplace. In 1965, five members of the Confederation of Iranian Students (CIS) were jailed for "adherence to a collective outlook", "preparation for armed uprising," and "attempted murder of the Shah." All were sentenced to life imprisonment. CIS was declared illegal in 1971.

Of course these terrorist tactics cannot and have not succeeded in stemming the tide of international revolution.

As peoples' victories against imperialism around the world are won, the economic and political repression becomes more intense here in the U.S., and therefore the political nature of incarceration in this country has and will continue to become much more evident. The political consciousness and resistance of prisoners is growing every day. Actions such as the strike at Folsom, the Attica uprising, and the writings of comrades such as George Jackson must be seen as being in the mainstream of the world revolutionary struggle.

In India
a gentle beggar
collapses of hunger.

In a city
an explorer is
caught in the embrace
of a truck.

In a courtroom a
lazy lawyer yawns
away the life of a man.

In a gold plated
legislature,
two gold toothed,
gold braided
generals beg for a war
of annihilations.

And high above this sterile world,
and the struggling lovers
and the dead.

In the gray, unzipped sky,
a heavy cloud hangs limply,
like the phallus of a fat god.

A Comrade Inside

QUESTION FOR DEBATE: THE LUMPEN PROLETARIAT

The question for debate and definition was: What is the Lumpen Proletariat, and is it a revolutionary class? To begin with this issue, we must first define the class structure in America. The failure of the left to clarify the class strata in America has led to a lack of clear-cut strategy to be applied to the American experience.

CLASS STRUCTURE IN AMERICA

BOURGEOISIE: The owners of the means of production and the employers of wage laborers.

PETIT BOURGEOISIE: The large land owners, speculators, owners of small factories and higher echelons of the corporate management.

MIDDLE CLASS: Upper: White Collar management, small businessmen, executives and corporate management (lower), professionals
Lower: Higher paid workers who have been able to appropriate a modest amount of possessions from their labors and participate in modest stock and land speculation.

PROLETARIAT: Industrial: The most advanced form of the proletariat, the producers of wealth who possess nothing except for credit buying (slavery) and who must work continually for a living.
Semi: The service workers and highly exploited workers who do not necessarily produce wealth; but are essential for the economy to run (garbage collectors, etc.).
Lumpen: The unemployed people who make up the vast pool of reserve labor for the capitalists.

It must be noted that within the USA there are remnants of different classes (e.g. the peasant class), but their numbers are insignificant.

This class analysis does not take into account all the aspects of racism and colonialism in America, nor does it attempt to analyze the role nationalism and racism play in the revolutionary makeup of any particular class. But our failure to deal with this does not infer that we minimize the question, only that it is too deep and heavy a question to be touched upon lightly. The revolutionary role of Third World workers and Lumpen in the proletariat is of strategic importance, and to

understand how racism has fostered revolutionary potential is crucial. This question will be dealt with in depth in the next issue.

IS THE LUMPEN A REVOLUTIONARY CLASS?

The Lumpen proletariat is a revolutionary segment of the American proletariat class. Although it is a highly unstable and at times dangerous segment, the revolutionary position and potential cannot be ignored.

Why is the Lumpen unstable and dangerous at times? The Lumpen is the most alienated and impoverished section of American society and has been denied social organization, culture and class identity. It is truly the "have nots" of American society. At the bottom of the pile, the Lumpen demands a piece of the affluence that it has been systematically denied. Because of extreme poverty, the Lumpen has historically been used and bought off by the ruling class to further its oppressive rule over the working segment of the proletariat. The Lumpen has been traditionally used in the form of scabs (strike breakers), informers and provocateurs. As long as the capitalists are able to expend the small handfuls of money and play upon the lack of class identity and extreme poverty, many elements of the Lumpen are easily bought off.

The Lumpen's lack of social organization and class identity has led too many times to dead end violence and action without political direction. Unlike the industrial and semi proletariat workers who have had the benefit of working in social cooperation, unions, and seeing firsthand the real enemy in the form of capitalist exploitation that oppresses them every day on the job, the Lumpen gets smokescreened and often views the working segment of the proletariat as the enemy, because they have jobs and money. And too often the working segments of the proletariat are victimized by the Lumpen in the form of robberies, etc. This is the exact thing the ruling class wants to happen, thereby making the workers feel that the greatest threat to their safety is the Lumpen and demand "police protection" from the "lawless" elements of society. But it must be noted too that the ruling class further tries to divide the workers and the Lumpen by creating "welfare bums" who steal workers' taxes because they are "too lazy" to work, thereby trying to make the workers further think that the Lumpen is the source of the

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LUMPEN PROLETARIAT continued problem.

Although the Lumpen has had a lack of social organization which heightens the class antagonisms, there are social organizations of sorts within the Lumpen. The two most predominant forms of social organization have been the "church" and the "gang." Neither of these offers the Lumpen the necessary leadership to further its revolutionary potential to move into its historic role. The ruling class's most effective opiate among the Lumpen is the "church" and its social function is at best counterrevolutionary. The "gang" offers the most promise of any Lumpen organization to be a revolutionary guide. But the "gang" as it stands alone is merely a tool to divide the Lumpen from itself and perpetuate class alienation. When the gang utilizes its potential under the proper leadership and political guidance, its potential has been proven revolutionary. The key to this, though, is that the vanguard leadership has to be present.

What, then, are the factors that make the Lumpen revolutionary? It cannot be denied that the Lumpen, above any other segment of society, has everything to gain and nothing to lose. The Lumpen is violent, as violence is an everyday fact of life--the Lumpen is not afraid to fight. And one of the most crucial factors is the inability of the capitalists to "buy off" the Lumpen in times of extreme economic crisis (depression) as we are now approaching. In times of crisis like a depression, a great downward shift of class takes place and the Lumpen grows by leaps and bounds; the only resort the capitalists have to control the Lumpen is more and more repression, which merely serves to further heighten the revolutionary potential of the Lumpen.

With this downward shift in classes, much of the working proletariat will be forced into the Lumpen segment, and with them carry the advantages of vanguard leadership, organization and class identity. The workers carry the knowledge of the class antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. When they are forced into the Lumpen, the class solidarity grows and matures and the natural class alliance is forged. Ironically, it is the bourgeoisie and capitalism itself that will unite the segments of the proletariat. With the vanguard leadership of the workers, and the awareness of class identity, the Lumpen will wage the battle to smash the bourgeoisie, and with it its own identity as Lumpen and victoriously join the ranks of the workers.

In further understanding the role of the Lumpen in the revolutionary struggle, it is crucial to examine the origins of the Lumpen. The Lumpen is the collective mass of peasant, share-cropper, and slave classes that were abolished as capitalism matured and industrialized. Its origin is from the land. It represents the industrial society's transitional phase between the peasant and the working segments of the proletariat. Uprooted from its old class, but unable to move into the new class of proletariat workers, the Lumpen flounders in spontaneous riots and isolated acts of anger and frustration at its plight.

As the revolutionary struggle matures in this country, the struggle for the land will grow and develop in the Lumpen. For the Lumpen is the link to the land that will be needed to move the revolution beyond the guerrilla warfare stage. We must understand this necessary stage in development or we will not be able to move forward, and will be isolated and smashed by the fascists. The stage of the land struggle is rapidly moving upon us, and only the Lumpen can truly forge the necessary ties between the workers and the land that will be needed to move the revolution forward. The historic role of the Lumpen will be to bridge the gap between the capitalists' city society and the socialist country/city merging.

FREE THE LAND!!

All power to the Lumpen!!

All power to the workers!!

All power to the proletariat class!!

QUESTION FOR DEBATE AND DEFINITION:

What constitutes a nation of people in the U.S.? Is there a difference between culture and nation? Does each group of people in the U.S. constitute a separate nation?

How is the revolutionary alliance forged?

INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL PRISONERS continued

We must remember that political prisoners are not "helpless victims," but are participants in a revolutionary process. Comrades who have taken the path of resistance against the fascists face the possibility of imprisonment or death. The most important thing to remember is that for every comrade captured by the enemy, two must always be ready to take his or her place.

"There are two things to remember about revolution: we're going to get the shit kicked out of us, and we're going to win."

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