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Brothers and Sisters,

The attached paper was written by a group of Asian-Americans. After a few years of practice, we felt very strongly the pressing need to search for more direction in our theory and practice. Specifically, we felt it most urgent to address ourselves to the Asian national question in America. We have started with the Chinese national question.

This paper represents a preliminary draft only. We hope it serves to stimulate discussion and to bring more clarity to some of the issues confronting us. We also hope it helps to promote more unity among the Asian-American movement.

We invite your criticisms and comments.

IN UNITY AND STRUGGLE!

PRELIMINARY DRAFT ON THE
ASIAN NATIONAL QUESTION IN AMERICA

Part 1. The Chinese National Question

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I. WHY STUDY THE NATIONAL QUESTION NOW?

The rise of US capitalism did not come about at the spur of some technological invention. It was the result of a long human process. Indeed, the birth pangs took more than a century and a half and the labor was borne exclusively by the toiling masses here as well as abroad. With it, there arose a singular multinational state.

Vast sums of capital, the first prerequisite of capitalism, were accumulated by the relentless extraction of surplus value and by mercantile plundering. It was done by the outright slavery of Blacks seized from Africa; by the coolie gang labor of kidnapped Asians and subjugated Chicanos; by the indentured service of immigrants from Europe; and by the systematic robbery of the land and lives of Native Americans. Opium was dumped for bullion in China; rum exchanged for tribes in Africa and the sword of manifest destiny swept from shore to shining shore. Thus out of untold miseries and devastation did the monstrous head of US capitalism raise itself, did the multinational USA come to be incorporated.

The cup is now full. US imperialism - the highest stage of US capitalism is everywhere on the retreat. "Countries want independence, nations want liberation and the people want revolution." This is the main trend in the world today. Within the bastion of US imperialism, the oppressed nationalities now stand at the forefront of class struggle. The national question is the burning question of the day. But a people without a past can neither ask nor answer such a question. To unravel Chinese-American history - this has to be our first task.

The Chinese National Question in America as Part of the General National Question In America

The Chinese national question is part and parcel of an extremely complex and multifaceted national question in this country. To understand it correctly, we must view it in the general context of American history. We realize the Chinese national question in America takes on a less central role than the Black national question; nevertheless, it is important to understand for the following reasons:

- 1, From its very inception, the Chinese national question was bound with the fate of the American proletariat. The Chinese national question has a clarity that the Black national question doesn't have, because the Chinese national question was never a peasant or land question that at a later stage changed into a proletarian question.

2. The Chinese national question illustrates vividly the scab role of the American labor aristocracy. It traces the growth, the struggles against, and the later dominance of revisionist ideology in the form of social and white chauvinism, under the ideological influence and material bribery of rising monopoly at home and imperialism abroad, Anti-Chinese ideology was the "weakest link" in the growing and progressive labor movement of the time. It

tells us why revisionist and racist ideology have subsequently, although temporarily, disarmed the whole working class,

3. We must clarify the tasks for Asian-American communists. What are the roles of mass and revolutionary organizations of Asian-Americans? What impact will the proletarianization of Asian-American communities have on the US and its revolution? What is the greatest contribution that we as Asian-Americans can make to proletarian revolution in the US?

II, HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prerequisites for the Rise of Capitalism

To understand the US national question as a whole and the Chinese national question in particular, we will examine the basis and the conditions for the rise of US capitalism in its formative years.

There are 2 prerequisites for the rise of capital and the constitution of modern nations. They are:

1. The accumulation of huge sums of capital by a few individuals,
2. The existence of a labor pool where such workers are "free" to sell their labor power, i.e., "free" from the feudal and slave relations of production. Since labor is the only source of capital, the amount of surplus extracted is directly proportional to the number of laborers the bourgeoisie can get.

The first process requires a gigantic sum of initial capital (or accumulated labor) in the form of machine tools, food supplies for increasing the urban population, etc., to get started. This starting point is what is known as the primitive accumulation of capital. Primitive capital accumulation can only be acquired through the ruthless exploitation of the peasantry and by unequal trade (unequal because equal trade does not create surplus value).

Uneven Trade

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, American merchant capitalists set up trade routes between America, England, India and China. In this route they traded slave-grown cotton from the South for textiles from England, and then shipped the textiles to India in exchange for opium (which the British introduced to India). The opium was then forced on China in exchange for silk, tea, .jute, gold and silver. Up to 50% of all the opium imported to China was carried by American merchant capitalists. With the profits thus choked off at each point of the robber-trade cycle, the merchant capitalists of America were able to amass a tremendous amount of wealth, which they reinvested in projects of internal development (industry, canals, railroads) in the US. These merchant capitalists were later to become the first of the national bourgeoisie of this country.

The Open System of labor

How was labor acquired to meet the second prerequisite for the rise of capitalism? Traditionally, in Europe, as the embryonic industries built from primitive capital accumulation developed and required more labor, the laboring masses of the native country, who were historically bound to the land, were expropriated. But capitalism in America, unlike capitalism in nation-states such as England or France, was an "open system" which drew most of its labor not from rural areas surrounding the cities, but from countries beyond its borders. This is the origin of the melting pot theory that gives the American working class its multinational, multi-racial aspect, of which

we, the Chinese, are an integral part.

In this open system, during the rise of capitalism, immigrants constituted a pool of reserve labor and were sucked in as sources of cheap manpower. Between 1790 and 1880, America's population increased from 3.9 to over 40 million, an unheard-of 10-fold leap in a brief 90 years. People immigrated to the US in search of a new life and the new life awaiting them was the lowest wages for the most menial work in rapidly expanding competitive industries. During the cyclical depressions of America's capitalist economy, these same immigrants, once welcomed to the golden shores of America, became scapegoats. For taking the only jobs they could find, for accepting the only wages they could get, they were accused of depressing the over-all standard of living. But in actuality, it was always the inability of a progressively anarchic, fluctuating economy to absorb the available labor supply that gave rise to unemployment and its attendant symptoms. Unemployment was and is rooted in the economic system, not in immigrant labor.

The Uneven Development of Capitalism in America

Between 1830 and 1890, US capitalism flourished at an unprecedented level. Whereas, for example, in 1850, 68% of needed manufactured goods was imported, by 1911 only 11% was. By 1890, industrial products had already overtaken agricultural products as the main area of national income. By the turn of the century, America, once a colony of Europe, was already producing half as much as what all of Europe produced. Along with the flourishing of capitalism came the development of monopolies. In 1889 American lead producers formed into a trust controlling 95% of production. In 1901 US Steel was established and produced 50% of the steel in the US.

In the West, however, capitalism was undergoing a period of intensive primitive capital accumulation. Aside from building the transcontinental railroad, land had to be reclaimed and local industries developed. How to get the utmost out of labor's surplus value was the capitalists' only concern - this was the golden West that awaited the kidnapped Chinese after the Civil War.

Basis for Chinese Immigration to the West Coast

Toysan County in Kwangtung Province, southern China, was the home of most of the Chinese immigrants to America. The soil there was alkaline and poor and the people had easy access to nearby ports. But imperialism was the principal reason why our forebears migrated to America. China's mid-19th century, semi-feudal economy was systematically destroyed by rapacious imperialist powers (US, France, England).

Trade with the West brought nothing but increasing misery. Opium was forcibly introduced to the Chinese ruling class of merchants and landlords, and as a result, the exploitation of the peasants was increased in order to support the ruling class's costly habit, The natural feudal economy of

southern coastal China was converted into a capitalist cash-crop economy, where the peasants were forced to grow for export cash crops such as silk, tea and jute. Not only were these crops particularly vulnerable to natural calamities, but raising them had an adverse effect on the peasants because it meant that the growing of much-needed rice and other grains had to be abandoned. This disrupted the basic means of livelihood of the peasants and discharged them into the swelling numbers of the uprooted and unemployed. Many drifted into the ports or cities to look for jobs, and were subsequently kidnapped to America. With opium and trade and the misery that followed in their wake, the basis for Chinese immigration to the US was laid.

We do not subscribe, then, to the efforts of bourgeois historians to depict our forebears as boggle-eyed, gold-hungry "John Chinamen" escaping from their overpopulated land of opium dens to make their fortunes in gold in the new world. Rather, we are very clear that the principal force behind the success of the campaign of the bourgeoisie to draw Chinese into California to meet its growing need for hard labor was the material destruction of China's feudal economy by imperialistic exploitation. The feudal economy was the basis and colonialism was the condition that triggered off tens of thousands of our forebears being helplessly thrown into an abyss independent of their will.

In the 1850's and 1860's, the US imperialists worked hand in glove with China's comprador bourgeoisie and certain criminal elements. Plagued by workers' strikes and a labor shortage in the mid-19th century, the US government kidnapped and spread lies about a mountain of gold to draw the first wave of Chinese peasants and laborers to this country. American mercantile capitalists bought off Chinese gangsters in order to set up a Bana Coon system in Fukien and Kwangtung provinces to kidnap poor peasants to the US as contract laborers. The peasants would sign, or be forced to sign, contracts in China with a merchant or ship captain specifying what job they would have to take, at what pay and for what length of time. Sometimes they would be contracted out like indentured slaves on the docks of San Francisco. In one instance, 300 Chinese who had been herded aboard an American ship in China were asked if they wanted to go to the US. All refused and so were forcibly chained down and brought to the US regardless, under the most brutal conditions, conditions paralleling those of the Africa slave trade. The death-rate on these ships plying the Pacific Passage sometimes reached as high as 50% of their "passengers". More often than not, these were the same American ships that carried opium to China,

The Making of a Chinese Proletariat in the US

The Chinese national question from its inception was a proletarian question, because we came to the US as proletarians at the time of rising capitalism. Although in China, most of us had been peasants of different levels, in the US we were objectively part of the proletariat. The national

question for the Chinese has never been a land question - we were never sharecroppers and we were never in any way bound to the land.

For of entry American labor was as manual laborers, cooks, laundrymen, tailors and as _ in the mining and metals industries. By the late 's, independent mining was starting to phase out to company continental railroad that would extend the hegemony of the Northeastern industrialists * Building the railroad included clearing forests on the frontier and laying out whole new cities. Many Chinese workers died while laying out the railroad across the Rocky Mountains, for winter blizzards did not stop the capitalists from driving the Chinese to finish, because for every mile of track completed, the Central Pacific Railroad and the Union Pacific Railroad could expect alternate sections of public land on each side of the track as outright gifts from Congress Since the two companies were in competition to complete the most miles of track, the lives of the Chinese railroad workers were entirely expendable. When the transcontinental railroad was finished in 1869 and the capitalists had no further use for the Chinese in that industry, more than 9000 were shipped like cattle to the cities. With the passing of the stage of primitive accumulation in California, the Chinese were no longer economically necessary. They were now "free labor", without jobs, without homes, without families. In the ensuing years, those that remained were expelled from the inland Western states by brutality, arson and gunfire: forced out by taxes and mob violence from the mining claims and jobs that a few held, their homes burned, and their compatriots murdered. Because of this, all the Chinese were forced to take refuge in the coastal cities of California (particularly San Francisco).

Chinese workers laid the foundation for California's agricultural and consumer goods industries in California, for they cleared the swamps of the Santa Clara Valley. But, then, they could find no work other than as harvesters on the fruit and vegetable farms of California. Others moved into the cigar, boot, and woolen goods industries where they were soon attacked by small capitalists for propping up the big entrepreneurs.

A Mr. Brooks of the time said "Increase in the value of property of this state, created by Chinese labor in building of the railroad, and in claiming the lands alone... is \$289,700,000... It is wealth owned, held and enjoyed by white men, and not Chinamen."

Systematic exclusion from the industrial labor unions and skilled kinds of trades reserved for "American" laborers reduced the mostly male Chinese laborers to "petty bourgeois" service work of laundries, restaurants and shopkeeping. Their conditions of life and work, however, were no better than that of their proletarian counterparts.

Thus, it is undeniably clear from the foregoing that our ancestors were,

* Six companies reported 58,000 Chinese in the US in 1866; by 1868 this figure had swollen to 90,837.

from the first day that they stepped foot on American soil, overwhelmingly members of the proletariat class. Any attempt to deal with the Chinese national question must reflect this historical fact. In the mining days, only a tiny number - 2-6% - had ever engaged in individual prospecting, and the other 94-98% toiled as common laborers. What remained of the mountain of gold that we had heard about had essentially crumbled at our feet into so many tons of gravel. In the days of railroad construction, too, we constituted a proletarian work force.

It is also undeniably clear that we made tremendous contributions to the development of the Western frontier, to the development of California's consumer industries, and the realization of her agricultural potential. Like the Blacks in the South, the Chinese created the primitive capital accumulation which spurred the development of the West.

Like the song that goes:

"I'm the man that built the bridges,
I'm the man that laid the tracks,
I'm the man that built this country with my shoulders and my back..."

we, the Chinese in America, along with all the other nationalities of America's great multinational working class, can truly say that we laid down the cornerstone of this great land of ours.

Common Destiny of Black and Chinese Workers in America

Reminiscence of a Chinese immigrant worker in America (1880's):

"There was an estate in the South about h-5 years ago. The Americans employed African natives as hard labor. The laborers' skins are black so they were called the black slaves. Their masters were extremely cruel. They were never fed with decent food nor were they provided with proper clothing. They were forced to work continuously from day-break to night without any rest. If any one of them would choose to take it easy a little, they would be beaten with a wooden stick - as if they were lower than a work-horse or oxen. Even us yellow-race men, who were not related to them by blood, would break into tears at such a sight. But hold on, compatriots. Don't weep so soon. From now on the same fate will fall on us..."

III. ACTS OF OPPRESSION AGAINST THE CHINESE IN THE US

Almost as soon as our forebearers arrived in the US, they were subjected to manifold forms of national oppression. As early as 1849, white miners forced Chinese workers out of mining operations. Three years later, the California legislature called for, but did not secure, the prohibition of Chinese immigration. Throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century, the expulsion of Chinese workers from mining and other occupations often culminated in violence, murder, and the burning down of the Chinatowns where the Chinese lived. In Rock Springs, Wyoming, for instance, some 30 Chinese were killed by a white mob in the year 1885. Similar kinds of savage violence took place in Eureka, San Francisco, and Los Angeles, California, and in Tacoma and Seattle, Washington,

Along with the brutality of outright violence, national oppression of our forebearers in the US took a "legal" form of oppression by the state. In 1850, the California Congress passed a law stating that all alien miners must pay an extra tax of \$20 per year. In 1853, this same tax was raised to \$48 a year, forcing some 4,000 Chinese laborers to leave the US because of their inability to pay this tax. Another example of the denial of basic democratic rights to our forebearers was their not being allowed to testify or press charges in court. Other examples of legal harassment and oppression abounded, such as ordinances requiring 500 cubic feet of air space per person in the places where they lived (enforced only against Chinese), prohibiting Chinese from working in certain businesses, and many absurd taxes to which only our forebearers were subjected.

In 1882, the US Congress passed the only immigration law ever directed against a specific national group. The Chinese Exclusion Act attempted to do what none of the other forms of national oppression could – to drive the Chinese out of the US. While not totally unsuccessful, it did at least hold down the number of Chinese in America.

The Rise of Chinese Resistance to Oppression

But whenever there is oppression, there is resistance. A Marxist-Leninist analysis of the history of the Chinese in America reveals a rich and long tradition of resistance to national oppression. Although the Chinese workers were to a greater extent isolated from the other workers in the society and were discriminated against, they showed great courage in fighting back against the ruling class and the oppression which weighed down on them.

In 1867, 3,500 Chinese workers employed by the Central Pacific Railroad near Cisco, California, struck for a 12-hour day and \$40 (instead of the \$30 they were getting) a month. The railroad owners refused to meet their demands and threatened to import white labor from the East Coast as well as abandon the Chinese workers in the middle of nowhere. The strike was broken and the Chinese workers were forced to return to work, but their pay was raised to \$35 a month.

In 1919, when the San fan shi Gongyi Tongmeng Zonghul (Workers' League of San Francisco) was formed, nine demands were presented to Chinese owners of shirt factories in San Francisco and Oakland, Those included a 9-hour work day, overtime pay, paid holidays, and other basic rights. After strike threats and several negotiating sessions, agreements were signed with 32 factories. This was the first big victory of the struggle of Chinese workers in the US.

In 1936, Chinese workers cooperated with American labor to attack the notorious Chinese contract system existing in the Alaskan salmon canneries and to demand collective bargaining rights. After a hard struggle with the factory owners, the workers gained a victory: the right to unionize, and the abolition of the contract system, A group of Chinese workers returning from a canning season in Alaska then developed the idea of forming the Chinese Mutual Aid Association (Huagong Hezuohui) and did so in 1937.

In the 1880's, during the height of anti-Chinese mob actions, a San Francisco mob threatened to attack Chinatown, Our forefathers fortified the hills they lived on, and armed with hand grenades and pistols, awaited the attack. The mob realized that the "peaceful" Chinese would defend themselves to the bitter end, and consequently dispersed.

Not only the Chinese workers, but also the Chinese small shop owners have shown a heroic tradition of fighting back against oppression. The Chinese Hand Laundry Alliance was formed in 1933 to fight the proposed New York City ordinance which would charge \$25 a year as a license fee for all public laundries, on top of a security bond of \$1,000, This act was directed against the Chinese laundries. After a hard struggle, the fee was reduced to \$10 and the security bond to \$100.

The acts of resistance that Chinese in the United States have carried out have been principally a result of the oppression we faced here. These acts, however, have also been influenced by the development of the struggle in China against imperialism. For instance, in 1905 there was a boycott of American goods by patriotic Chinese students and merchants in southern China in protest against the exclusion policy of America against Chinese. This movement had a reciprocal effect on the movement in the Chinatowns in the US. In 1911, the Chinese in America raised large sums of money to support the bourgeois democratic revolution in China, later, during the Sino-Japanese War, the Chinese in the US reacted strongly to the aggression from Japan and supported the Chinese revolution.

The forms of struggle that the early progressive organizations engaged in were dictated by the objective conditions they faced. The outright attacks on Chinese and Chinatowns by racist mobs and politicians, the police raids and government harassment, the threats of deportation and arbitrary prosecution on criminal charges - all these had forced the progressive organizations in Chinese communities to be small, tight-knit, left-opposition groups. They were for the most part organized outside of the traditional

Chinatown mass organizations and engaged in open activities which put forth a public, left point of view opposing the Six Companies in the early period and later, the Kuomintang.

But, the Chinese community was relatively isolated. Furthermore, because of the questionable immigration status of a number of Chinese residents, the anti-Communist propaganda spread by the KMT and the US government among the Chinese population in the US, and the repressive terror of the US ruling class, the left organizations in the Chinese communities were generally isolated from the left movement in the US as a whole. Except in a few cases, as when the Chinese Laundry Workers Union and the Chinese Mutual Aid Association worked actively with the AF of L and the CIO, the Chinese in the US were systematically excluded from the industrial proletariat and therefore were not able to link up their struggles in an effective way. The weakness of the progressive organizations was the result. This was painfully shown after China was liberated in 1949 and when the McCarthy period ensued, in which many progressive organizations were destroyed or decimated because of the white terror unleashed against them. Many activists, most of them nationalistic, were deported. As in the rest of the US, the Chinese left suffered a heavy blow which crippled it for at least a decade.

In the present day, however, we are seeing a resurgence of activity by progressive Chinese-Americans, a part of the powerful tide that is sweeping the nation. Although mistakes have been made in the past by our forebearers in their fight against oppression, we know that we will ultimately win, As Chairman Mao says, "Fight, fail, fight again, fail again, fight again... till their victory; that is the logic of the people, and they too will never go against this logic. This is another Marxist law."

IV. EMERGENCE OF A LABOR ARISTOCRACY

In 1885 over 85% of cigar makers in San Francisco were Chinese. Chinese were hired to do the least skillful work in cigar manufacturing process.

Cigar Maker's International Union, under such "socialist" leadership as Adolph Stresser and Samuel Gompers, only organized "skillful" members (white workers) of the trade. Under both process of rationalization by the bosses and selective organizing by the unionist, a section of privileged workers - labor aristocracy emerged in the trade. The overwhelming majority of workers in the trade - the Chinese - were left unorganized, The other sector of workers, due to their privileges, identified their interests with the bosses. During the period of depression, massive number of unemployed white workers flooded into the West Coast to seek jobs. The Chinese were immediately driven out of the trade as a result. However, wage differential and job gradations remained. From then on there existed a large number of poor white workers and a small number of labor aristocrats side by side under the same factory roof. The working class, even among the white workers, remained effectively divided. The extensive effect of such practice can be appreciated only if we realize that by the year 1900, fully 90% of all manufacturing labor in California were Chinese. Such methods and precedents later led bosses to evict black workers from this and other area of manufacturing.

As we've noticed earlier, US economy after the Civil War was characterized by a rapid transition from industrial capitalism to financial capitalism, i.e., to parasitic, decaying, moribund capitalism, in other words, imperialism. The "manifest destiny" simply couldn't come to an end at the sight of the Pacific Ocean, It had to look yonder, to the Islands and to the vast expanse of China, The anti-Chinese labor movement, aside from being a diversionary tactic of the monopoly capitalists in fear of mounting working-class struggle, also served as a war dance in prelude to imperialist schemes in Asia. Dancing in feverish abandon, the labor aristocrats gave the monopoly capitalists all the propaganda they needed for conquests abroad.

But what monster is this labor aristocracy? Lenin defined it as "a section of the petty-bourgeoisie and certain strata of the working class who have been bribed out of imperialist super-profits and converted into watch dogs of capitalism and corruptors of the labor movement." Specifically, they are the "labor ministers", "labor representatives", "labor officials, workers belonging to the narrow craft unions, office employees etc." These are the people who worked hand in glove with the monopoly capitalists in enriching imperialism upon the backs of Asia and Africa. Opportunism, social-chauvinism and revisionism in the communist movement all were organized from the existence of this aristocracy.

The crime of selling out the working-class struggle to stagnation and reformism must be squarely laid on their shoulder. In America, the long history of selling out the interest of the working class must start with the anti-Chinese movement.

AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM

American Exceptionalism as espoused by A.C. Cameron etc. must be regarded as outright revisionism. As Cameron put it himself, in comparing the difference between Europe and America that "institution and state of society in Europe..." are "a legitimate offspring... the inevitable off-shoots of despotism". "Therefore, for social changes there it is necessary for overthrow of state as outlined by the principle of the First International." America, however, is very different, according to him. In America, the evils were not due to the nature of state but only bad administration and corrupt politicians. Consequently the necessity for overthrow of state "do not apply to the state of affairs existing in our country". Such was the misleadership of our labor movement at that time.

Due to the limited development of Imperialism at that time, Marx did not foresee the subject people of colonial plunder, such as the Chinese or the Philippine people, in becoming the proletariat of the exploiter country so soon. At that time, some "Marxists" have purposely misinterpreted the principle "Workingmen of the World Unite" to mean the workers of Europe and America only and nowhere else. Lenin later correctly described these opportunists who took advantage of the limited development of Marxism at that time to suit their social-chauvinist needs as those who "betrayed the working people and objectively defending the enslavement of the workers by the imperialist bourgeoisie" and accused them to being the "servants, the agents of the bourgeoisie and the vehicles of its influence in the labor movement." He emphasized that "unless the labor movement rids itself of them, it will remain a bourgeois labor movement."

True to his words and to the best tradition of American Exceptionalism, A.C. Cameron and his kind were succeeded by some worthy heirs - such as J. Lovestone, E. Browder and today, the "C"P USA Incorp.

Bribed materially by the super-profits squeezed from abroad and succumbed to the political pressure of the monopoly capitalism, these revisionists have and are still working overtime to derail the American proletariat movement. American working class are made to pay a high price indeed for the crumb.

WEAKEST LINK

An American socialist leader once concluded that "labor's successes depend most fundamentally on strengthening the weakest part of the labor force, for the main strength of the capitalist class consisted in the divisions existing in the labor's rank". His words apparently went unheeded. For the Chinese labor question was the "weakest link" of the American labor movement. Unlike other struggles, such as the black people's civil rights, women workers, Eight Hour work day struggles etc. have all been successful in one degree or another, on the Chinese labor question, however, opportunism and social-chauvinism completely prevailed. Its fateful effect was seen later

in having the same chauvinist approaches and divisive tactics being successfully applied to the whole working class. Thereby the whole labor movement was derailed and bogged down in the stagnant pool of reformism. The anti-Chinese labor movement in the last quarter of the 19th century must be remembered as the original fall of the American labor movement.

In putting forth this position we're by no means saying that the strategy for proletariat revolution is to direct main blows against white supremacy everywhere. A proletarian strategy, determination of the direction of main blow, has to be aimed at a class. White-supremacy is not a class. The ruling class always tries to set up situations where people of different nationalities are pitted against each other. If we were to dispose our class forces randomly against any manifestation of white supremacy, we would be dancing to the tunes of our enemy. Racist and white supremacy ideas and practice of members of the working class has to be challenged. But this cannot be elevated to the level of theory of the proletarian revolution. The major weakness of the white blindspot theory, which elevates racism to the principal contradiction, are as follows. First, it blurs the distinction between friends and enemies. Secondly, it is idealism of the worst kind. Without removing the material basis of racism, to wait for all the white people to repent their sins and to repudiate their privileges, as if it is the conflict between the workers that is the principal contradiction, is to put off the revolution till eternity. We believe that it is the misleadership of the workers who should be considered as the main enemy along with the monopoly class.

Typical and representing points of view of most of his peers, A.C. Cameron, our representative to the FIRST INTERNATIONAL wrote in 1869 in an issue of the Workingmen's Advocate:

"Bring them along, Chinamen, Japanese, Malays, and monkeys, make voters of them all, acknowledge them as men and workers, mix them all up together, water down the old Caucasian race."

Logically following his racist and revisionist ideas, he later forcefully detached the American workers' movement from the international workers' movement.

V. REVISIONISM AND THE INTEGRATIONIST LINE

Close in step with the headlong betrayal of Marxism-Leninism by the Communist Party (USA) during World War Two, Earl Browder, then its First Secretary, started pushing in earnest the "integrationist" line as the guiding principle for the Black national struggle. The baneful effect of this revisionist line was felt for decades to come. According to Browder, "the crisis of history has taken a turn of such character that the Negro people in the US have found it possible to make their decision once and for all", that "under the present system", they can achieve "complete integration into the American nation" and "complete equality". This, in a nutshell, was the Browderite line on the national question, the line of labor aristocrats soiled with class collaboration, a line in total conformity with the strategy of peaceful transition.

Historically, integration was a relatively progressive concept in the context of blatant Jim Crowism – the official policy of the US ruling class. But it cannot be a substitute for the communist strategy for Black liberation, it is a hodgepodge of bourgeois pacifism, legalism and guilt-ridden reaction to racism. Its essence is the mechanical juxtaposition and mixing of whites and Blacks from their given class and social positions devoid of any understanding of the roots of Black oppression and the dynamics of the Black movement. The revisionist integrationists are either ignorant of the Marxist- Leninist idea of "free union based on equality" - or else regard IT as "separatist" . They either obliterate the difference between the oppressed and oppressor nations or they brand such distinctions "nationalist". They have gone so far as to denounce, in the case of George Jackson, "acts of defence on the part of the victim of violence as perpetration of violence". In short, their aim is to bind the oppressed minorities hand and foot so that their strategy of peaceful transition and civil disobedience may prevail.

In practice, their slogan is "integrate from the top down". Thus the "lowly poor" must first upgrade themselves in this capitalist society before they can claim the benefits of integration. Such a policy is no different from the avowed policies of such ruling class organs of oppression as the Ford Foundation. It is a line of "assimilation" and capitulation. The revisionists in their efforts to peddle legalism have completely exposed their disregard and disdain of the masses. They regard civil rights legislation as the goal of national struggle, rather than as a step in bourgeois democratic reform. This is certainly not the same as the socialist struggle for communism.

But the laws of history are independent of man's will. From the early '60's on, the centuries-old criminal system of slavery and its vestiges, racial oppression, began to explode in the face of these despicable revisionists. The mass upsurge of the Black people, and in their wake,

movements of oppressed nationalities of all colors, have shattered the lies of "integration". Revolutionary gains made in the course of militant mass struggle have proved beyond a doubt the Marxist-Leninist principle that even in striving for just democratic rights, communists must arouse and rely on the masses in forcefully demanding and wresting such rights. The revisionist line of "integration" has since been thrown in history's garbage heap.

Recent Indictments against the "C" PUSA

In their attempt to hoodwink the labor leaders, the "communists" recently supported and filed lawsuits to keep Mexican immigrant workers out of this country. This was done in the name of unionization and the labor movement. But isn't this precisely the kind of social chauvinism and opportunism of the "socialist" in the oppressor country against the people of the oppressed country that Lenin talked about? They are, once again, in the name of the oppressor country, obscuring the most profound distinction between the people of the exploiting country and the exploited. And in so doing, they have tried to separate the imperialist politics abroad from the monopolies' economic policy at home. This is not even modern revisionism. This is original revisionism through and through. Can it be an accident that suddenly they have forgotten that it is the very plundering of the oppressor country that caused the migration in the first place? Have they also forgotten that it is historical experience that capitalists regulate the immigration flow strictly according to their needs? That it is a function of their business cycles independent of whatever legislation existed before? Monopoly regulates the "flow" legally or illegally. Thus it is totally bankrupt for communists to push for the bourgeois state to keep out the workers of another oppressed country. When the bourgeoisie needs labor, do you expect them to enforce immigration restrictions? This is classical social chauvinism and opportunism pure and simple. On account of the so-called interests of the workers of the oppressor country, they have prostrated themselves before the mercy of bourgeois legalism. It should never be forgotten that this very same social chauvinism and opportunism has derailed the American working-class struggle for over 100 years!

VI. HOW THE SOVIET REVISIONISTS HANDLE THE NATIONAL QUESTION

In their polemics against the modern revisionists during the late 50's, the Chinese Communist Party pointed out that the politics of the modern-revisionists on the national-colonial question were as bankrupt as that of the 2nd International, "The only difference", they stated, "is that the latter served the imperialists' old colonialism while the modern revisionists serve the imperialists' neo-colonialism".

Usurping the power of the party of Lenin & Stalin, the revisionists have unreservedly put into practice the entire theory of revisionism. Their line on the national question has meant the total liquidation of the question. There is an ever-widening gap between the economic development of the different national minorities in the Soviet Union, still widespread practice of feudalism in some national minorities & rampant Great Russian Chauvinism among the revisionists and yet, the renegade Brezhnev declare! to the Supreme Soviet on December 21, 1972 that "the national question in the USSR has been solved fully, ultimately & irrevocably."

The cause that prompted the renegades to make such claim is not hard to find. The Soviet economy, with capitalism restored, is now in the grip of a deep crisis. The natural course for the revisionists to take, as all imperialists & colonists have done in the past, is to super-exploit the weaker nations. They revealed this in their scheme to redivide the existing 18 "national planning regions" that follow national boundaries within the Soviet Union to 7 by riding roughshod over national boundaries and economic unevenness.

Internationally, on the same pretext of economic expediency and "defense" against the imperialists, they push and enforce their policies of "limited sovereignty", "integrated socialist economy", "socialist community of nations", etc. "Uniting the Soviet republics into a single union of USSR," they brazenly declared, "was necessary to withstand the military onslaught of imperialism, to defend the gains of revolution and to accomplish by concerted action the peaceful, creative tasks of socialist construction, THE SAME PRINCIPLE APPLIES TO THE FRATERNAL COMMUNITY OF SOVEREIGN SOCIALIST STATES UNITED UNDER THE WARSAW TREATY AND IN THE COUNCIL FOR MUTUAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE (COMECON)" (emphasis added). Thus the sovereignties of Eastern European countries are now at the ready disposal of the USSR. What a barefaced admission of great power chauvinism!

The social imperialists have by virtue of their dominant economy converted the rest of the fraternal "community" into its neo-colonies. As the director of the Soviet International Institute of Economics, in justifying the social imperialistic policies within COMECON, put it "Socialist and capitalist economic integration processes both reflect a general and objective tendency towards internationalization of economic life, For maximum effectiveness, modern production calls for mass organization of markets and

for specialization. The purpose of integration, both the socialist and capitalist, is to solve these problems". This is their version of "rapprochement" theory, except that this so-called objective "integration" is by no means "objective" or voluntary. Is there any difference between this kind of mass production and specialization and the mass production and specialization that US multinational corporations push in Europe?

In fact, what we are witnessing now is nothing less than the arrogant execution of the blueprint of the social chauvinists of the Second International. Condemning the theory that either does away with frontiers under socialism or delineates them in accordance with the needs of production, Lenin had the following to say; "In actual fact its frontiers will be delineated democratically, i.e., in accordance with the will and 'sympathies' of the population. Capitalism rides roughshod over these sympathies, adding more obstacles to rapprochement of nations. Socialism, by organizing production without class oppression, by ensuring the well-being of all members of the state, gives full play to the sympathies of the population, thereby promoting and greatly accelerating the drawing together and fusion of the nations."

Communists have always believed that in order for classes to wither away, it is first necessary to institute the dictatorship of the proletariat. Similarly, Communists believe that in order for countries and nations to wither away, it is first necessary to give them the right of full independence and, in practice, to support their independence against the imperialists' "objective tendency" to "amalgamate" for "maximum effectiveness" for "mass organization of markets and for specialization". For such "internationalization" in this period of imperialism objectively plunders and subjugates the weaker and smaller nations and countries. Only through the independence of countries and liberation of nations can conditions be created such that amalgamation of countries and nations be achieved on an equal footing in the interests of the working people.

VII. REVISIONISM AND TROTSKYISM, TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN

Unlike the "practical" revisionists who are engaging in full-scale military, political and economic maneuvers to smash national liberation movements by "limited sovereignty", "integration" and other tricks, the Trotskyites are idealists as well as mechanical materialists who have played a bourgeois agents' role in revolutionary struggle around the world.

Trotskyites do not see that the characters of national struggles and movements differ in different historical periods. For them, national movements represent an immutable struggle between the national bourgeoisie at all times. Trotskyites do not see stages in working towards socialism and believe in a one-shot approach to "world revolution".

1. Because Trotskyites believe in mechanical economic determinism they see only workers as potentially revolutionary. They justify their position that peasants are unstable and potentially reactionary under all circumstances by using general "productive forces and productive relations" arguments. This puts them in the same camp as revisionists such as Liu Shao-chi in the a priori theory of "productive forces". In such an interpretation, the economic base is everything while the political superstructure and the role of the communist party is nothing thus making it seem impossible for the communist party to influence the peasants to ally with the working class. And peasants must play a prominent role in the national question for in essence the national question is a peasant and land question, during the period of the rise of capitalism. The a priori position of Trotskyism and Revisionism on the peasant question makes their practice in national liberation movements counter-revolutionary.

Trotskyites have a mechanical interpretation of the dictatorship of the proletariat, which is diametrically opposed to Lenin's concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat as a special form of class alliance with proletarian leadership. This mechanical interpretation of the dictatorship of the proletariat has led Trotskyites to deny the role of peasants (a majority in Russia, China, and the world today) in the revolution. This has resulted in not just isolating the proletariat but more importantly, in condemning the essential form of class alliance necessary to establish socialism in one country. For Trotskyites, only after uprisings of the proletariat in capitalist countries will it be possible to consolidate the revolution. But Lenin opposed this idealist conception of history by correctly pointing out the unevenness of the development of capitalism and the possibility of using inter-imperialist contradictions as an indirect reserve in consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat. Trotskyites then, in opposing worker-peasant alliances oppose the main form whereby national liberation struggles have been able to overthrow imperialism.

While revisionists advocate "all unity no struggle" within the anti-imperialist united front, the Trotskyites and ultra-leftists advocate an "all

struggle no unity" policy which not only excludes peasantry but other intermediary strata and national bourgeoisie who objectively oppose imperialism. Ostensibly although the Trotskyites advocate a "purer" line, they play the same role as the revisionists for their policy has led to momentary isolation and setbacks in national struggles.

Because Trotskyites do not understand the different roles of national struggles in different historical periods and have divorced national struggles from class struggles, they have ended up with a strategy of world revolution by exporting revolution. By constantly underestimating the internal basis of countries concerned and overestimating the potential of external causes, they have ended up with the position that world socialist revolution can be brought about through the armed intervention of socialist countries.

Trotskyites share with petty-bourgeois revolutionaries the romantic notion of revolution through a few machine-gun carrying super-revolutionaries who will bring revolution into a country. They also advocate a metaphysical theory between revolution in one country and another - a sure sign of idealists divorced from social reality.

They have elevated their idealism into a seemingly consistent school of thought - namely, the belief of "permanent revolution", which is "a negation of the national movement".

There are many variations of Trotskyism. One sect - the largest Trotskyite sect in America - is the Socialist Workers Party. The SWP performs an empirical adjustment on the Trotskyites' unworkable line on the national question in order to tail after all forms of nationalism - cultural nationalism included. This is an opportunistic expression of Trotskyism in the US.

For a Trotskyite group such as the National Caucus of Labor Committees, economic determinism has led them to the racist practice of backing the New York United Federation of Teachers against the legitimate grievances of the oppressed communities of Black, Latin and Asian people in America. Trotskyism, thus, can be seen as taking a stand identical to that of the social-chauvinist revisionists. Trotskyism or revisionism, whatever their "left" or right theoretical viewpoints, in practice amount to the same thing - they objectively retard the people's struggles against the US ruling class and thus are two sides of the same coin.

VIII. ANALYSIS OF CLASSES OF THE CHINESE IN AMERICA

From our historical analysis of the Chinese national question, we understand that the national oppression of Chinese people in the US was clearly the result of the needs of an expanding imperialist system. The contradiction between the Chinese people and the US ruling class has thus been primarily a class contradiction. A class analysis of the Chinese in the US will enable us to understand our role as part of the revolutionary forces. It will also enable us to identify who our real enemies and friends are in the long struggle to overthrow the reactionary US monopoly capitalists.

It is important to know how to utilize contradictions that the petty bourgeoisie and middle bourgeoisie have with the monopoly capitalists, to know how to unite with these potentially progressive forces, in order to isolate the monopoly capitalist class. As Marx pointed out in the Communist Manifesto, One distinctive feature of capitalism is that "society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camp, into two great classes directly facing each other: bourgeoisie and proletariat." The "lower strata of the middle class" - the small shopkeepers, independent tradesmen and craftsmen, etc., find themselves increasingly squeezed out of existence by capitalists and monopolists. Unable to become a part of the bourgeoisie, they are forced, against their will, to sink into the proletariat. Because of this, they are potential allies of the working class in the struggle to overthrow the reactionary US monopoly capitalists and win complete emancipation.

The proletariat - the leading force and the main force of the revolution

The proletariat are the wage workers who own no means of production and who have to sell their labor for a living. Included are those who are directly engaged in producing and creating surplus value and those who perform socially necessary services. It also includes the commercial workers, whose function is to enable the capitalists to realize the surplus value created by the labor of the proletariat and whose wages are derived from the labor of the proletariat. More than two-thirds of the Chinese working population in the US belongs to the proletariat - about 37,000 (20%) are in agriculture, mining and manufacturing (including the garment industry); more than 65,000 (35% or more) are in the restaurant, grocery store, and laundry businesses; 24,000 (about 14%) are in social services such as transportation and communications, health and postal services, primary and secondary school education; and about 13,000 (7%) are clerical or sales workers.

The Chinese workers in the industrial sector are the most advanced element among the Chinese proletariat. They have been systematically excluded from "labor aristocracy" jobs and from positions as reactionary labor union leaders, i.e. excluded from corruption by the monopoly capitalists. They are potentially the most class-conscious and disciplined workers.

Chinese workers in the service industries, the telephone company, post

office, large hospitals, primary schools and secondary schools, etc., whose work is becoming increasingly socialized and whose consciousness has been developing due to the concentration and/or political actions taken collectively (i.e., strikes, unionization) are also becoming advanced elements among the Chinese proletariat.

The most oppressed sector of the Chinese workers are those who work in the garment sweatshops, restaurants, coffee shops, groceries, and Chinese laundries. Among the 11,000 garment workers (over 95% of whom are women) older Chinese women work for as little as 60¢/hour, while younger women with more skill and speed can only make about \$2.00/hour. These Chinese women work more than 10-12 hours/day, six days/week, and sometimes even take work home (ILGWU minimum wage in New York is \$2.65/hour for a 35-hour week). Similarly, the 65,000 Chinese workers in restaurants, groceries, laundries, etc., have to work for long hours at low wages, with no union protection. This sector of the Chinese proletariat is mostly first-generation immigrants. They are discriminated against and prevented from getting better jobs due to their language difficulty, lack of training and education in the US, and, in particular, because this capitalist system needs them to be the "reserve army of labor" to fill in the bottom of the working class. This most oppressed sector, this largest sector of the Chinese proletariat, like all first-generation immigrants, has objectively moved up from its deteriorated economic conditions in Hong Kong or Taiwan, which are the results of US imperialism. Because of the small-scale, individualized nature of the work in the garment and service industries (i.e. piece work in garment sweatshops) and because of the feudal relations between the owners and the bosses, it is very difficult for these most oppressed Chinese workers to develop proletarian consciousness and proletarian discipline. It is important to organize around the needs of the people in these work places, but it is strategically incorrect to depend on this sector of the Chinese proletariat to be the vanguard of the revolution. However, when the revolutionary tide surges ahead, these oppressed workers' consciousness also takes a leap forward. Recent examples are the struggles and demands around free day care in New York City and the demonstrations against HEW cutbacks at the Gouverneur Hospital.

The commercial workers, such as clerical workers, sales personnel, business service workers, etc., although working to enable the capitalist to realize the surplus value of the proletariat, by and large are in the same position as the rest of the wage workers vis-a-vis the ownership or production.

The petty bourgeoisie - the primary ally of the proletariat

This sector includes small proprietors who own restaurants, grocery stores, garment sweatshops, laundries; the self-employed craftsmen and professionals (doctors, lawyers, accountants, professors, engineers, and

scientists); and middle and lower-level civil service workers. Altogether, there are more than 40,000 Chinese (more than 25%) who can be classified as petty bourgeoisie.

The majority of Chinese proprietors are small owners. They are no better off than their proletarian counterparts. They have to work for 10 or 12 hours/day, 6-7 days/week, and many times have to employ their own family members in order to make a small profit, or just to break even. Included are most of the store owners, contractors in Chinatown, owners of Chinese laundries, and owners of the family restaurant or take-out stand in the suburbs. These small proprietors are mostly first-generation immigrants who saved up a small amount of money from years of toiling in a restaurant or laundry, and who have no hope to become rich. They are the primary ally of the proletariat.

A large part of the Chinese population are the 15,000 professionals - professors, researchers, or engineers - and the more than 11,000 civil service workers. These people are either second-generation Chinese immigrants who obtained higher education degrees, or they are first-generation immigrants who came from the better-off families in China (pre-1949), Hong Kong, or Taiwan, and acquired their graduate training here. They have relatively high incomes. Because their work is extremely individualized, and because they enjoy privileged positions and function either as the guardian of the bourgeois ideology or the bourgeois state, they have developed an anti-working-class consciousness and an individualized world outlook. However, because objectively they are also the victims of national oppression, and many times are denied promotions or decision-making positions, a large number of them can be won over.

The lumpen-proletariat

A small sector of the Chinese population in Chinatown, members of the tongs who engage in illegal businesses, and some members of the youth gangs who are the lackeys of the tongs, is the lumpen element. The tongs originally started for the protection of the Chinese population and the Chinese-owned stores from the attacks of the white population in the West. They then started to engage in illegal businesses such as operating gambling joints, etc. Youth gangs in Chinatown were also started by the youngsters to protect themselves from the attacks of Italian gangs, Puerto Rican gangs, etc. With the sudden increase of Chinese immigrants since 1965, problems such as housing, unemployment, school drop-outs, etc., have been intensifying. Many youths who dropped out of school and became unemployed joined gangs and were used by the criminal elements in the tongs to push drugs or to guard gambling joints. These youth should be given proper guidance, and should be won over to the side of the revolution. However, they are not the vanguard of the revolution

The middle bourgeoisie

A small number of the Chinese population (less than 1%) are the bigger proprietors: owners of a few restaurants, a few garment factories, or a few groceries. Some of these proprietors acquired higher educational degrees and may work as lawyers, accountants, etc. A handful of them operate illegal businesses. They are, by and large, the presidents of the tongs, the Chinatown Consolidated Benevolent Associations (CCBA), family associations, members of social service agency boards, and usually have close ties with the KMT and the Republican or Democratic parties. It is in the vested interests of these so-called "leaders" of Chinatown to keep Chinatown under their control and a place of super-exploitation. They are the target in the struggle for democratic rights but not the target of the revolution, as are the monopoly capitalists.

A small sector of the Chinese population in the US are not the monopoly capitalists but have their vested interests in the imperialist policies of the US. Included here are the comprador bourgeoisie who escaped from China around 1945-1949, who want to recoup their losses; the top KMT lackeys who represent the interests of Chiang Kai-shek and of the comprador bourgeoisie class in Taiwan; and a few reactionary intellectuals whose research is closely tied up with defense and counter-insurgency. Because their number is very small they do not constitute a class by themselves. However, they are the enemy of the revolution and of all oppressed Chinese people in the US.

The real enemy of the revolution is the monopoly capitalist class, the owners of multi-million dollar corporations and banks, top level officials of the federal government, the military and of other organs that actively protect the interests of the monopoly capitalists. It is this class that ruthlessly exploits the working class for their profit, brutally oppresses the working class politically and leads all the imperialist aggression against the third world countries. No Chinese people in the US belongs to this class.

To sum up, the majority of the Chinese in the US, at least two-thirds, is an integral part of the leading force and the main force of the revolution - the proletariat. Another quarter of the Chinese population here is the primary ally of the proletariat - the petty bourgeoisie. Only a small sector of the Chinese population belongs to the middle bourgeoisie class. And no Chinese belongs to the monopoly capitalist class.

IX. NATIONS AND THE RIGHT OF NATIONS TO SELF-DETERMINATION;
NATIONAL MINORITIES AND THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION

What is a nation and what is a national minority? This is an urgent question regarding the strategy for proletarian revolution facing both the Asian-American and the general communist movement today.

We must understand that the basis for a nation does not exist for just any society. Tribal societies, for one, do not fulfil these criteria. "A nation," according to Stalin, "is not merely a historical category but a historical category belonging to a definite epoch, the epoch of rising capitalism. The process of elimination of feudalism and development of capitalism was at the same time a process of amalgamation of people into nations." The national question in this period was a question between the national bourgeoisie of different nations. As a result of the resolution of the contradiction between the feudal forces of production and feudal relations of production, the subsistent feudal agrarian economy was forcefully superseded by an industrial one with huge surpluses. The question of who owned the resources and the markets became pushed to the forefront. Only during this period of rising capitalism was the basis for independent national states operative and the characteristics of modern nations delineated.

Based on this criterion alone, there are no historical grounds whatsoever to argue for nationhood for the Chinese in America during the rise of capitalism, for the Chinese were never peasants on the land who were in feudal-agrarian America before the rise of capitalism. We came to the US because of the urgent need of flourishing capitalism for a pool of reserve labor.

The years from 1850 to 1890, when we were recruited in large numbers to the US, was a period of developing monopoly capital in the Eastern US and primitive accumulation in the Western part. The power of American capitalism had already been consolidated for several decades. The Chinese were exploited by the national bourgeoisie of American capitalism which had already been shaped and taken hold of the reins of power. It was "too late," so to speak, for the Chinese in the US to develop a separate modern nation of our own with a certain degree of economic cohesion.

We were members of the proletarian class from the very day we stepped on American soil, and the national question from its inception was for us inseparable from the larger American proletarian question. This is the essence of the difference between the Chinese national question and the Black national question in America. Blacks were here before the rise of capitalism. They were sharecroppers and were bound to the land. The Black national question was, at one time, a land and peasant question. But the form of our national oppression was never a question of the deprivation of land. Rather, the Chinese national question in America is and always has been a question of

the deprivation of our democratic rights.

Given that the Chinese in the US do not satisfy the basic historical requirements for nationhood, even if one were to try to argue for a Chinese nation now, we know from Stalin's Marxism and the National Question that, in addition to being a phenomenon of the period of rising capitalism, a nation must also satisfy all of the following material bases:

1. Be an historically constituted stable community of people, with
2. a common language,
3. a community of economic life and economic cohesion,
4. a community of territory, and
5. a common psychological and cultural makeup.

While it may generally be possible to stretch one's imagination to argue for "nationhood" for the Chinese around any one of these 5 criteria, it would be rather difficult to demonstrate that the Chinese have ever satisfied all of them. We are using these 5 criteria as social factors to depict the social reality of the Chinese community in America. This is part of an effort to understand the characteristics of the Chinese national question in the US.

1. Chinese communities in America were formed by a process of forced urbanization. Their growth and decline have been directly linked to the national oppression of the Chinese people and the increase and decrease of Chinese immigrants. After we were expelled from industrial jobs in mines, on the railroad and in manufacturing, we were forced to work in service industries, for the sole reason that these were the only occupations open to us.

In the early 1900's, a majority of the Chinese population in San Francisco lived in Chinatown. Forced segregation in ghettos was a result of rampant racism, the official, conscious policy of the US ruling class. The US government also carried out a genocidal policy of systematically excluding women and children from coming to this country in order to keep the Chinese from becoming rooted here. Under such a ruthless policy, over 90% of the Chinese in America was male around 1900, and the Chinese population dropped steadily from .21% of the entire population in the US in 1880 to .06% in 1940. This was a drop of over 300% while the general population increased over 250% in the same period. In the period 1911-1920, the Chinese population hit a record low - it had declined to just around 61,000 from more than 105,000 in the decade 1871-1880.

During and since World War Two, the population of Chinatowns has become especially transient. For one, the war created a shortage of labor power, and Chinese, just like Blacks, were brought into regular American industries, government jobs and professional jobs in order to keep the war machine going. This was a reflection of the gradual normalization of the means of livelihood of Chinese in this country. For another, the Immigration Act of 1965 has facilitated a tremendous growth in the population of Chinese in America via the influx of Chinese immigrants from Hong Kong and Taiwan. Many immigrant

and second and third generation families, after a decade or so of hard toil, moved out of the Chinatown ghettos to seek a better living in the suburbs. According to the 1970 census, only 56.4% of the total Chinese population in San Francisco (33,069 out of 58,696) lives in Chinatown. Another 17.5% is concentrated in the Richmond District, and the rest is dispersed throughout the city. In New York City, only 42.4% (29,422 out of 69,324) of the Chinese population lives in the expanded area of Chinatown (lower East Side below 14th St.); 12,855 (18.5%) live in Queens; 11,779 (16.9%) in Brooklyn and the rest in the Bronx and other parts of Manhattan.

The nature of Chinatown as a way station is also indicated by the statistics that show that the total number of Chinese in America has doubled since 1957 while the sizes of Chinatowns have remained nearly constant or shrunk. Some Chinatowns, e.g. Detroit, have disappeared entirely as a result of urban renewal. Lack of a stable population is lack of one of the important bases for a nation.

2. Chinese in America do not possess a common language. Most of the newly-arrived immigrants from Hong Kong speak Cantonese, while those from Taiwan speak Mandarin, but their children quickly pick up English as soon as they enter the school system. Second and third generation Chinese are even further removed from the Chinese language and sometimes can just barely, if at all, converse with their grandparents. Neither Mandarin, Cantonese, nor English is the common language among all Chinese in America.

3. There has never been an "internal economic bond" that welds the Chinese community together. From our study of the history of Chinese immigration to the US, we know that the reason we were originally recruited was to perform jobs in the mines, on the railroad, in the consumer industries and in other ways to serve the ruling class in a burgeoning capitalist economy. After we were driven out of these jobs and were segregated in our own communities, the service forms of labor that we performed were consumer-gearred and depended on the "outside" for their business. This is still the case. Chinatowns have no basic industries of their own which can sustain an independent economy. Since World War Two more and more Chinese have been moving into industrial, technical and professional positions outside Chinatown. Let us examine the industries that are the backbone of Chinatown.

Most of the garment factories are owned by Chinese who are small sub-contractors. In New York City alone, the garment industry has mushroomed in the last 15 years: there were only 5 factories in 1959, 59 in 1966, and now there are more than 200. Because of the uneven development of capitalism and the inevitable crises inherent in it, the system needs a reserve of industrial labor to cushion the crises. Immigrant Chinese, and specifically garment workers, have always served as the cushion. This is the economic character of the super-exploitation of immigrant Chinese - a process of unusually intense exploitation of labor power to compensate for the greater surplus value facilitated by machinery and colonial labor.

The sweatshops are at the mercy of the larger American part of an increasingly obsolete and non-lucrative sector of the American consumer industry, which is being squeezed out by modern machinery and encountering especially fierce competition from the clothing industries in other colonial and capitalist countries. Because of its marginal nature, this industry can hardly be a stable means of livelihood for immigrant Chinese for many more years to come. It is everything but "cohesive".

The 800 Chinese restaurants in metropolitan New York City employ about 15,000 workers. Most of them are prospering, but obviously they are not doing so by serving the other super-exploited Chinese workers. The Chinese restaurant business is not a self-contained industry whose cohesiveness is derived from the needs and demands of the people in the Chinese community. It depends primarily on tourists and other "outsiders" to survive, and is subject to the same vicissitudes as the general American economy. Restaurants are constantly changing hands or closing their doors permanently.

Chinese hand laundries, which also depend on a regular stream of outside customers for business, are fast becoming a relic of the past. From 2000 in 1960, in New York City, their number has declined so startlingly that less than 500 remain today. The traditional pattern of locking the laundry into the family from generation to generation is being challenged by youth who would rather get a higher education and better jobs. This factor, together with the soaring costs involved in maintaining a laundry, the rising incidence of crime, and the recent technological innovations of corner laundromats and permanent press, have forced many of them to fold.

Another sector that is an integral part of the economic life of Chinatown is the grocery shops. They are specifically geared to the requirements of the Chinese and are relatively free from regulation by general patterns of American consumption. Since the grocery shops are part of the retail distribution industry, they cannot be considered "cohesive" and to have an economic life of their own.

4. We learned, from our study of the conditions giving rise to Chinese immigration, that the Chinese have never been bound to the land as peasants. For us, it was never a question of staking out our own territory and developing a modern nation. Rather, we came during the rise of capitalism and went directly as laborers wherever the capitalists needed our labor most. From the very beginning, we constituted a proletarian work force, and were dispersed among other groups of immigrant laborers.

Even when racial oppression compelled us to band together, we settled in communities that were non-contiguous with one another. Since we have never had any common territory with clear boundaries, it has been impossible for us to live together from generation to generation. This dispersed character violates one of the most important criteria for a nation - common territory.

5. The strongest argument can perhaps be made for a common culture and psychological makeup among the Chinese in America. But even then, it becomes

difficult to define our national culture when we try to reconcile the more American-oriented culture of second and third generation Chinese with the culture of first-generation immigrants.

On all counts, we conclude that the Chinese in America do not constitute a nation. We lack both the historical and the material bases for a nation. We never constituted a nation in the past and don't constitute one now, but this does not mean that there is no national oppression or national question for the Chinese in America. Although we never formed a nation, there was never a period when there was no severe national oppression against us. A Marxist-Leninist cannot seriously argue that national oppression against the Chinese in this country has ever been any less than that against any existing nations here or abroad, now or in the past. But to say that a Chinese nation in this country never existed does not liquidate the national question. It only poses the question at another level. And it serves as the departure point for posing the questions of how to fully use the initiatives of the oppressed Chinese minority, how to work out a correct strategy as an integral part of the American proletarian strategy for the American proletarian revolution, and how to wipe out national oppression.

It would be profoundly wrong to think that the national question ceases to have any meaning once the basis for a nation is lost. We believe the national question will be of the highest concern to Marxist-Leninists for a long time to come. It is based on this conviction that we do not fall into the despair of inventing a Chinese nation, here and now, in the US.

X. CRITIQUE OF CULTURAL-NATIONAL AUTONOMY

In the recent history of the Asian-American movement, there have been various currents of thought which have advocated "nationhood" for Chinese in America. Such viewpoints have ranged from calling Chinatown a "red base area" to sophisticated formulations of who constitutes the national bourgeoisie, comprador bourgeoisie, etc., in Chinatown, to demands for cultural autonomy. Some people also subscribe to the view that the American economy and politics are an exclusive function of racism; and that Chinese and other oppressed national minorities must concentrate on building their own communities until such time as the racists have sufficiently overcome their racist attitudes. They say only then can we possibly work with them on an equal basis. We feel it is just the other way around. Racism was derived from the American economy at a particular point in its development - the period when the Southern slave owners had to justify its vicious enslavement of Blacks in order to sustain its cotton economy. Slavocracy and bourgeois democracy are two aspects of a contradiction. They coexisted and supported each other only up to a certain point - the end of primitive capital accumulation. As Northern industries began to grow and to demand a "free" labor pool not bound by the slave relations of production, the inevitable antagonism between the vested interests of the Southern slavocracy and the Northern industrialists exploded into the Civil War. Today racism still exists - it is perpetrated by the ruling class in order to keep the majority of the people at one another's throat and to add national oppression to class oppression upon the national minorities. To look at racism as something above material and class bases, to consider that racism only serves the interests of whites, ignores the dialectics of the national question.

Cultural-national autonomy, according to Stalin, has three defining characteristics; (1) autonomy is granted not to a geographical area but to a national group without regard to territory; (2) the people within the national group who are scattered over the various parts of the country, taken personally, as individuals, are to be organized into integral nations, and as such are to form part of the state; and (3) the all-national institutions are to have jurisdiction only over "cultural", not "political", questions. With Stalin, we believe that this is a demand that objectively serves not the interests of the Chinese-American and Asian-American working class, or of the working class in general, but those of the petty bourgeoisie. We understand that this proposal is one which has its roots in national oppression, but its objective class basis is petty-bourgeois, for it replaces the socialist principle of class struggle by the bourgeois principle of "nationality", thus abandoning the proletarian class position and adopting the path of nationalism. Although we see that the comrades who raise the demand for cultural national autonomy are sincere in their aim of fighting the national oppression of Chinese people in a revolutionary way, we also know that this

type of demand has been historically used by the petty bourgeoisie to elevate themselves into the position of a new national bourgeoisie.

Since World War Two, Chinese-Americans have moved up in the professional and technical fields very rapidly - their numbers increased 212.9% and 352.3%, respectively, between 1950 and 1960. This huge increase in the number of petty bourgeois Chinese-Americans is the material and social basis for the ideology of cultural-national autonomy. On the national scale, groups of Asian-Americans professionals have been forming national organizations to lobby for funding from foundations and the government, for community control over their resources and programs, and even for a cabinet-level position for an Asian-American.

Our position is that only after a successful proletarian revolution in this country, and under the dictatorship of the proletariat, can the national question begin to be truly solved. We feel that cultural-national autonomy would lead to the political disintegration of the working class, and would destroy a great weapon of the working class: class unity and class solidarity. With its overemphasis on culture and the formation of "alternate" or cultural institutions (at this stage culture is primarily bourgeois culture), cultural-national autonomy further divides the workers from one another: separate trade unions, separate schools, etc. Rather than trying to solve the contradictions of capitalism through revolution, it tries to solve the contradictions of capitalism within the capitalist framework, through the strategy of "culturally controlled institutions." Rather than face up to the question of the seizure of state power through proletarian revolution, the only way possible, cultural-national autonomy tends to avoid it, and diverts too much of the people's energy into "cultural self-determination."

Why has the question of cultural-national autonomy and the "Chinese nation" presented itself at this time? Two reasons are because of the tremendous victories that the three Indochinese peoples have gained, and the rise of a socialist China, which have shown that Asians are standing up and defeating US imperialism. A mistake has been made by some comrades, however, in confusing the struggle of Asian semi-feudal, semi-colonial countries like Vietnam or the Philippines with the struggles that Chinese-American and other Asian-American peoples face in this country, which is dominated by monopoly capital (the highest stage of capitalism). When the Chinese say that "countries want independence, nations want liberation, people want revolution," they mean that these are different fronts in the world revolutionary struggle which is the main trend in the world today. While these different fronts seemingly are not connected, they objectively do weaken the common enemy: imperialism and social-imperialism.. They are not, however, the same struggle. They assume different forms, have different goals, and use different means to reach these goals. By liquidating these differences and collapsing the different forms of struggle into one (that of national liberation), the mistake is made of assuming that the material base

of the struggle (the stage of social development) is irrelevant. The error is then made of assuming that the only form of struggle for Chinese-Americans and other Asian-Americans at the present time is that of protecting the community. While we feel that this is necessary, we strongly disagree with the line that the Chinese-American or Asian-American communities are "internal colonies." The national question of the Chinese-Americans is not one of the colonial type (where a pre-existing state was captured by another state, and where the principal form of struggle is the war of state independence), but that of a multi-national state, where the principal form of struggle for us as a national minority is for democratic rights and for complete equality, carried out in a revolutionary way.

Those who mechanically apply the demand for secession, regional autonomy and other ready-made historical solutions, are performing a disservice to the oppressed Chinese in this country. They separate the Chinese population in America from the general American working people and counterpose its struggle against the American working people's struggle as a whole. The fundamental task of all workers of all nationalities within a monopoly capitalist multi-national state is to build the advanced detachment of the working class, the thoroughly revolutionary and anti-revisionist Communist Party, in order to overthrow the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and end the oppression common to all: the blood-sucking rule of capitalism. Then, and only then, can the basis of national oppression be torn out by its roots, and the Chinese-American and Asian-American masses embark upon a path of liberation.

XI. THE POST-REVOLUTION NATIONAL QUESTION

Oppressed Nations and Oppressor Nations

One thing we should always bear in mind when talking about the national question is national oppression. By that we understand the pogroms, the exclusion laws, the endless varieties of apartheid and so on and so forth. We mean a people weighed down in a class society for no other reason than their identity as a people. This is our point of departure. Other aspects of the national question, such as whether a people constitute a nation or not, whether a national movement strengthens proletarian unity and weakens imperialism or not, cannot be adequately explained if the nature and extent of national oppression are lost sight of. In Switzerland, Lenin tells us, the question is unheard of for the simple reason that national oppression is unheard of. Many comrades today, overzealous in their opposition to bourgeois nationalism, have forgotten why the question should ever be raised in the first place. Mechanically interpreting the unity of the international working class, they have become numb to national injustice, blind to chauvinism.

They have their predecessors. Struggling against this callous dogmatism, Lenin pointed out "an abstract presentation of the question of nationalism in general is of no use at all. A distinction must necessarily be made between the nationalism of an oppressor nation and that of an oppressed nation, between that of a big nation and that of a small nation." For to him, the cardinal idea of the Marxist thesis on the national question is exactly the making of that distinction. Thus Marxist-Leninists of a nation that launches imperialist wars, according to Chairman Mao, should work resolutely for its defeat, while those of a victimized nation should fight to the end for victory. For the dialectics of class solidarity and national liberation lies not in separating the two but in linking them up. "The fundamental interest of proletarian solidarity, and consequently of class struggle," Lenin says, "requires that we never adopt a formal attitude to the national question, but always take into account the specific attitude of the proletarians of the oppressed (or small) nation towards the oppressor (or big) nation." "Thus in wars of national liberation," Chairman Mao states all too explicitly, "patriotism is applied internationalism."

The Democratic Right of Self-Determination

The rise of capitalism gave a cohesiveness hitherto unimagined to disjointed feudal localities. Nations were awakened to life and national bondage became the yoke to be cast off. At that stage, national movements formed an integral part of bourgeois democratic revolution, having no connection with the proletarian struggle for socialism. Marxist-Leninists were urged to wage an uncompromising struggle against "contamination of the proletariat with bourgeois nationalism," against "making a fetish of the national question." But these admonitions were clearly made in view of the class nature of the movement at that stage, its limitations and inevitable

transformation to chauvinism. The focus of attention remained the democratic aspect of the movement. Lenin stated as follows: "The bourgeois nationalism of any oppressed nation has a general democratic content that is directed against oppression, and it is this content that we unconditionally support" (emphasis in original).

The Marxist-Leninist position on the right of self-determination has never been in doubt. It is "on the one hand, the absolutely direct, unequivocal recognition of the full right of all nations to self-determination; on the other hand, the equally unambiguous appeal to the workers for international unity in their class struggle. And how is this working-class unity achieved in concrete situations? Some comrades would have us believe that it is cemented by begging the workers of the oppressor nation to appreciate the right of self-determination and by pressing the workers of the oppressed nation to renounce that right. Anyone who has the slightest knowledge of Marx's stand on the Irish question and Lenin's analysis of Norway's secession from Sweden must feel ill at ease at such an interpretation. Marx talked about the possibility of federation after secession and Lenin stressed, among other things, the "freedom of union," but the thrust of their arguments is that the unity is achieved by removing the source of oppression. For "without the freedom to secede, the freedom of union is but a false phrase."

National Liberation In the Era of Monopoly-Imperialism

After capitalism reached its highest stage, the national question underwent a radical change. The bourgeoisie of colonial countries could no longer assume leadership of national movements because of the imperialist dominance on the colonial economy. For the same reason, the colonial proletariat stood face-to-face with the imperialists. The peasants through the experience of imperialist wars came to know that landlords have no country of their own. They realized that the land question cannot be solved without freeing their country from the yoke of imperialism. Thus the alliance of the colonial proletariat and peasantry became the dominant feature of the national liberation movement on the eve of capitalism's downfall.

The class content of the national question of this historical period now bears no resemblance to that of the era of rising capitalism. With its direction of the main blow pointing unmistakably at the imperialists, it has become a component part of world socialist revolution. The national question is transformed from a negative, juridical, reformist question of bourgeois democratic rights into part of the "general question of the proletarian revolution, a part of the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat."

Such is the dialectics of the national question. And, if only for the interest of its own success, national liberation of this historical period must subordinate itself to the interests of world socialist revolution; must transform itself objectively "from a reserve of the imperialist bourgeoisie

into a reserve of the revolutionary proletariat."

In the case of Bangla Desh, however, when a national movement was actually aided and instigated by the social-imperialists for the obvious aim of striking at socialism, it cannot be supported by Marxist-Leninists.

Resolution of the National Question in the United States

The difficulty of the Chinese national question and possibly that of the others in the US lies in the fact that we do not constitute a nation in the Marxist sense of the word, yet our oppression finds few parallels in history. Around the turn of the century, the Jews in Europe, amidst a ferment of national movement, faced similar difficulties. So driven to desperation were they that they were to claim that "a nation is an aggregate of people bound into a community of character by a common destiny." Thus with the stroke of a pen a nation is created and the right to self-determination clutched. This is of course absurd. For by exactly the same criterion we may as well say the bourgeoisie of the whole world forms a nation, and so does the proletariat. It reduces the word nation to nonsense.

Still we see today variations of the same approach. Either a new definition is advanced or the Marxist-Leninist definition of a nation, as formulated by Stalin, is recklessly stretched to justify one's claim to nationhood and hence to a ready-made solution. This is a great disservice to historical materialism. It shows a scholastic mind that functions only in the context and logic of questions well-formulated and fully resolved. It shows a suspicious tendency to opportunism that tries not to give Marxist-Leninist analysis to a concrete problem but to appeal to mass followings led by petty bourgeois reflex to national oppression. Most of all, it shows a position that equates the loss of nationhood with the liquidation of the national question. But is it possible for a country so steeped in the wrongs of national oppression to absolve itself of the question precisely because it has so brutally rooted out the basis for a nation of its national minorities? The Communist Party of the USA answers it in the most affirmative manner by striking out the term national question altogether from its 1969 New Programme. But Marxist-Leninists are not in the habit of agreeing with revisionists. Nor do we engage in the futile exercise of inventing a Chinese nation here in America, because we do not believe it possible to liquidate the national question as long as national oppression exists.

With the rise of national liberation movements within the very bastion of imperialism, the national question leaped into a new stage. It is the stage where oppressed national minorities are scattered to the four corners of the continent, their languages muffled, cultural heritages suppressed, their common economies the free sale of labor in the marketplace. It is the stage when national oppression goes hand in hand with the march of bourgeois democracy; the stage when peoples of different national minorities, overwhelmingly proletarian, rise in revolt and thus eradicate any doubt that

their liberation begins with proletarian revolution. Is it any wonder then for a Marxist-Leninist to conclude that the pallid concept of bourgeois equal rights cannot be the solution to their national question, that the question must be seriously taken up in a revolutionary way during the long historical period of socialist transition, and finally resolved with the arrival of communism?

"Socialist society," Chairman Mao teaches us, "covers a fairly long historical period. In the historical period of socialism there are still classes, class contradictions and class struggle. There is the struggle between the socialist road and the capitalist road, and there is the danger of capitalist restoration. We must recognise the protracted and complex nature of this struggle. We must heighten our vigilance. We must conduct socialist education. We must correctly understand and handle class contradictions and class struggle, distinguish the contradiction between ourselves and the enemy from those among the people, and handle them correctly. Otherwise a socialist country like ours will turn into its opposite and degenerate, and a capitalist restoration will take place." That restoration has been accomplished in the Soviet Union, the first socialist country in the world. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of this historical fact. It should put to rest forever the romanticism that envisions that once proletarian dictatorship is established the rosy dawn of communism is only hours away. Classes and class struggle will remain notwithstanding the expropriation of the private ownership of the means of production, for the bourgeois superstructure dies hard. By the same principle, racism and chauvinism will persist under proletarian dictatorship irrespective of the loss of their material basis. Since national oppression in this country is a concentrated expression of class oppression, it is our contention that the struggle to abolish national oppression and to eradicate racism forms one of the central tasks of the proletarian dictatorship in the post-revolutionary era. If it fails in that task - and without a most determined struggle there is no telling if it will not - it means not the coming of communism but that of revisionism.

It is for the emancipation of the entire proletariat and not just for the oppressed nationalities alone that a ceaseless struggle must be waged during the period of socialist transformation. This is why when we talk about the national question in this country, we must look beyond the revolution. This is why we affirm its central place in the long march of American society to communism.

XII. TASKS - COMMUNITY

The Chinatown community is a historical product shaped and molded by a ruthless process of super-exploitation. It is crystallized evidence of class and racial oppression in American society. Among all the Chinese in America, the section that has been deprived of their democratic rights the most and is the most conspicuous target of national oppression is the Chinese immigrants. Many work 6-7 days/week and 10-12 hours/day. In spite of their back-breaking industriousness, they still barely eke out a living. In spite of long weary hours, the average Chinese family in New York Chinatown only earned \$4,500 in 1969 while the average family income for NYC was \$8,980 (1970). In San Francisco, the average Chinese family earned \$8,826 in 1969 against the city average of \$12,507. Our standard of living can only be compared to the general standard of living of Americans achieved during the turn of the century - fully 70 years ago! The recent large influx of immigrants has accentuated this condition and has consequently raised the question of the struggle for democratic rights, and all its concrete implications, to the forefront of the social agenda.

What is to be done to alleviate the suffering of our people? What and where is the principal area of work such that we can best prevent a repetition of the harsh experiences of our forefathers? We contend unequivocally that the main areas where our fundamental rights are being deprived, and where our work should be directed, are at the point of production and services, whether it be the garment shop, restaurant or other areas where socially necessary labor is performed.

Relations between the Superstructure and Base in the Chinese Community

The superstructure of Chinese communities consists of the intellectuals (who may live outside the community), the leadership of the traditional institutions, and various community newspapers. It has historically influenced and controlled the social opinion of the community. It is true that most of the superstructure changes only when the base changes. Until recently, the superstructure was under the influence of the Kuomintang (KMT), the chief reactionary force in the Chinese community. It was neither readily accessible nor open to change. Progressive organizations were forced to be small, tight-knit left-opposition formations in order to survive and function. They were also forced to maintain ideological and organizational independence from the superstructure by relying principally on work among the base, i.e., the masses. However, because of the normalization of relations between the US and China, conditions have changed such that the superstructure is now the "weakest link in the chain of process" and it is now possible to work within traditional institutions.

The KMT and its henchman are weak and isolated. What remains in their hands are only some newspapers and other mass media. At this particular time, then, it is especially important to know how to adopt flexible methods of

work. Consistent work must be carried on to actively combat the KMT's last desperate attempts to retain a semblance of power in the community. At the same time, people must be encouraged to implement programs to channel the already heightened consciousness of the masses in the right direction. One way this can be done is to see that more progressive newspapers reach the newsstands. To the extent that we can neutralize, influence or determine the attitude and practice of the leadership of the traditional institutions away from the reactionary KMT, the struggle for democratic rights among the masses would be facilitated.

Family Associations and other Traditional Institutions

Many progressive organizations still have an across-the-board anti-establishment mentality and preclude work in the traditional institutions on the pretext of working with the "broad masses". In response to some of the reactionary deeds and unresponsiveness of the traditional institutions - they have been labelled anywhere from "ineffective" to "totally reactionary". Usually such views stem from either total ignorance of the Chinatown community or from extreme isolation from the lives of the people who live there. We regard this rejection of the traditional institutions as only partially correct, but in practice totally incorrect, for in practice, this means a boycott and hostile attitude towards these organizations and the building of "purer" organizations as substitutes for them.

Although their direction may be reactionary or reformist, the traditional institutions in Chinatown are products of national oppression and the official policy of isolation of the US government, as is Chinatown itself, Although they are inconsistent or ineffective, they are mostly mass organizations with a stable base and superstructure. Having been socially excluded and segregated by American institutions, Chinese were forced to erect and sustain their own social 'institutions. The traditional institutions have fulfilled cultural and recreational purposes and function as trade unions, unemployment agencies, and chambers of commerce for the shop owners. They play a definite role in the economic, cultural and political lives of an oppressed community. And therefore, we should adopt an attitude of unity, struggle, unity in working within them. When a protracted, consistent and firm stand in defence of the national and class interests of their membership is carried out to win over the hearts and minds of the masses, the correct ideology will prevail in the long run and root itself among the people.

As Lenin said, "If you want to help the 'masses' and win the sympathy and support of the 'masses' you should not fear difficulties or pinpricks. chicanery, insults and persecution from the 'leaders' (who, being opportunists and social-chauvinists, are in most cases directly or indirectly connected with the bourgeoisie and the police, but must absolutely WORK WHEREVER THE MASSES ARE TO BE POUND (emphasis in original). You must be

capable of any sacrifice, of overcoming the greatest obstacles, in order to carry on agitation and propaganda systematically, perseveringly, persistently and patiently in those institutions, societies and associations - even the most reactionary in which proletarian or semi-proletarian masses are to be found." This, in short, is our attitude towards the traditional institutions in Chinatown.

Cooperative and Service Type Organizations

To stress the need to work in traditional institutions is not to preclude work in newer, service type organizations, There are many services which the traditional organizations are not equipped for or capable of doing. Yet, as we know, housing and other conditions in Chinatown are among the worst. Our compatriots, due to their insecure and unorganized trades, are most vulnerable to inflation and the spiral of food prices, Such a situation demands urgent solutions. It demands initiative, however small, from the concerned brothers and sisters in the neighborhood. Student uprisings and the ferment of Black and Latin communities in the past decade have made community work - the "back to the grass roots work, so to speak - particularly attractive. This is in the light of a growing sector of highly conscious youth who resist and fight national oppression and want to serve their own oppressed people in whatever way they can. For these reasons, countless store fronts, coops, and health clinics have sprung up everywhere on the grass roots level.

We feel such a development is good in the general context of the struggle of the overseas Chinese people for a decent living. It symbolizes people's initiative to defend themselves against attacks on their already subsistent standard of living. Out of broad movements for democratic rights which mobilize masses of people behind rent strikes, demands for daycare centers, and decent health care have come the establishment of some facilities to provide such services. However, such movements are not final solutions to social ills. Many well-intentioned people in their eagerness to fight against national oppression, have restricted themselves to a Utopian version of "serve the people", In reality, they have partially disintegrated the revolutionary movement and restricted it to serving the people ineffectively. In one-sidedly stressing the national interests of the Chinese immigrants, they have diverted the energy of a whole section of younger progressives coming out of campus and schools.

For example, we feel the running of small cooperatives enterprises has done more to confuse the ranks of activists as to the direction of the American revolution and its relation to Chinese in America, than it has done to help the masses. This is because the development of monopoly capitalism has concentrated the ownership of wealth into fewer and fewer hands, and the running of such enterprises only challenges the small producers who themselves live on small profit margins, the garment subcontractors or the

middlemen in food distribution chains. They do not challenge the larger contractors and the monopolies that control the chain stores. That is not to say that co-op type organizations do not concretely help a few immigrants, or a few hundred immigrants. They are good and they do help some people. But they are short-sighted in that they do not see the class interests of the Chinese immigrant workers in the context of the whole American society as their principal interest.

As Marx noted in 1864 in relation to the cooperative movement:
"Restricted, however, to the dwarfish forms into which individual wage slaves can elaborate it by their private efforts, the cooperative system will never transform capitalist society. To convert social production into one large and harmonious system of free and cooperative labor, general social changes are wanted, changes of the general conditions of society, never to be realized save by the transfer of the organized force of society, viz,, the state power, from capitalists and landlords to the producers themselves."

Forms of Struggle

For an oppressed nationality, with the hub of the national question being the deprivation of bourgeois democratic rights, legal struggle as a particular form of struggle should be used. This means being familiar with our existing constitutional and legal rights and working through legitimate channels in the interests of the majority of the people. In order to mobilize the maximum number of people, to propagate our program, to present to the broad section of people the discriminatory nature of the government, to force concessions from the American monopolies and government in the day-to-day interests of the people, and to know how to utilize the contradictions between the liberal politicians and KMT diehards, it is necessary to know how to engage in legal struggles. This aspect of work has been much neglected in the past because of primitiveness in our work and over-reaction to revisionist ideology which ponders to "parliamentary struggles" and "peaceful transition to socialism".

Legal struggles cannot be conducted apart from day-to-day, rank and file work. They should not be limited to closed-door negotiations, parliamentary speeches, etc. Efforts must be made to continue to engage in the immediate struggles of the people, raise their consciousness and build up their organizations. On the one hand we oppose strict legalism as the sole means for social change, for even though it is possible to win small concessions, these concessions will always be nullified by the soaring cost of living, etc., from now on until liberation. Each step-by-step concession will never alter the fundamental relationship between the monopoly class and the super-exploited workers of an oppressed - national minority - the basic relation of an exploiter to an exploited.

On the other hand, we oppose the ultra-left position that concessions under capitalism are neither desirable nor obtainable, and that therefore we

should not engage in the immediate day-to-day struggles of the people. Marxist-Leninists have a firm and unshakable stand on the side of the oppressed; at the same time, we must also stand against everything dogmatic, static and inflexible which would prevent us from maneuvering against the oppressor. We feel that struggles for democratic rights - struggles in their all-embracing aspects for concessions - are feasible. To label them infeasible is to liquidate all struggles. To us, struggling for the democratic rights of all oppressed people, including Chinese people, is not a question of feasibility - rather, it is a question of whether it is in the interests of the people, and how.

XII A. COMMUNITY CONTROL

The courageous struggles of the Afro-Americans, Puerto Ricans, Chicanos and other national minorities have exposed the intense national oppression and class contradictions that have been building up in the ghetto communities for decades. The general deterioration of conditions is part of the gradual and inevitable decay of a capitalist system and it is attaining near crisis proportions now. The heroic challenges of our brothers and sisters to the total breakdown of social services, racism in the schools and hospitals, and police repression have shaken up the ruling class and have forced it to bow to their challenges and seek solutions. It is in this historical context that the issue of community control comes to our attention.

Community control usually means that the residents of a community demand the right to exercise power over the institutions that affect their lives - in particular, the right to determine the nature and quality of the services these institutions render.

In recent years, many Chinese professionals and concerned individuals in Chinatowns have agitated for community control over their schools, hospitals, social service agencies, auxiliary police forces etc. This is in direct response to the pressing problems of school drop-outs, poor housing, street crime and poor health services that are deeply felt by every individual in Chinatown. Some comrades feel that community control is a plot of the ruling class to shift our attention from the real target, and to divide the people. (As it is rightfully suspected, community control was a program designed by McGeorge Bundy and the Ford Foundation to cope with ghetto problems.) Therefore, these comrades feel that any demand for community control has to be thoroughly smashed. Some other comrades, mainly cultural nationalists, falsely raise the struggle over community control to the level of the struggle for the seizure of state power. They even take this to the point of replacing struggles at the point of production and struggles to build a genuine multi-national communist party with struggles on the community level only. We strongly feel that it is the responsibility of every Marxist-Leninist to formulate a correct position on the community control issue in order to combat both these "left" and right errors.

We have to apply the basic, and highest, principle of dialectical materialism: One divides into two. Community control is a demand by Afro-Americans, Puerto Ricans, Chicanos, Asians and all other national minorities for equality and democracy. It is a direct attack on institutional racism, segregation and inequality. It is a struggle in the forefront for democratic rights, and is politically progressive for the community as a whole. However, the struggle over community control has also caused intense conflicts among the different national minorities, and between different social groups in the communities. The struggle over the distribution of funds and allocation of jobs, the struggle over whose interests are to be served first - the

community's or the teachers', the community's or the workers' - has not only caused tremendous splits and frustrations among the progressive forces but has also played into the hands of the ruling class. We must constantly be on our alert for these attempts by the ruling class to foment conflict among national minorities.

To do so we must understand that objectively the interests of the different minority communities are intimately bound together. All national minorities have suffered from national oppression to different degrees and we all have the same enemy and the same struggle. Between the national minority communities, the teachers' union, and the workers' union, contradictions many times arise due to local reactionary union leaders or reactionary union policies that work against the interests of the community people. However, these contradictions are internal contradictions among the people. The reactionary union leaders and union policies should be struggled against but the teachers and hospital workers are not our class enemy as the monopoly capitalists are. We must unite all who can be united.

We cannot support the demand for community control in the abstract. We must always familiarize ourselves with the issues concerned and analyze every struggle in terms of "Who demands community control?" "Whose interests does it serve?" We must give direction to these campaigns, use them to raise the consciousness of people in Chinatown, and organize people around the issues to advance the struggle for democratic rights. We strongly support the demands for community control in Chinatown when put forth by progressive forces, and urge these forces to unite with the progressive forces among the Blacks, Puerto Ricans, Chicanos, and other national minorities and poor people, to work out a clear program in every struggle. We must combat national chauvinism! We must combat petty-bourgeois sectarianism! We at no time harbor any illusions about community control. We realize it is only a stopgap measure that expresses the militant resistance of oppressed people. We realize that we must ultimately isolate the real enemy and unite with our real friends to win our common struggle.

XIII. TASKS - STUDENT WORK

Within the last decade, the student movement has been a part of the powerful wave of revolutionary protest which has swept the U.S. Starting with the struggles of the Blacks and moving to the struggles against U.S. aggression in Indochina, the student movement has sometimes reached revolutionary proportions. Through the struggles of the sixties, the advanced elements have gained a high level of political consciousness and militancy, and have moved to the level of a consciously anti-imperialist struggle.

The hard and bitter struggles of San Francisco State in 1968 and CCNY in 1969, as well as many similar actions across the U.S., are testaments to the students' revolutionary resistance to the national oppression they face. Many of these struggles centered around such issues as open admissions and the SEEK program which would allow more Asian-Americans, Blacks, Puerto Rican and Chicano students into schools previously shut to the majority of them. The recent free-tuition struggle in New York followed similar lines. While some Trotskyist organizations like Progressive Labor (PL) have opposed these struggles, saying that these demands would lead to the "bourgeoisification" of the students of national minorities, we take a diametrically opposed line to their reactionary stand. The fight for educational rights in a revolutionary manner is part of the struggle for democratic rights of all oppressed nationalities in the U.S. To oppose this demand would be to perpetuate the racist character of the U.S. educational system and to oppose and sabotage the struggles of national minorities and oppressed nationalities for genuine equality.

The correct mass organizational form of these struggles of Asian-American and other national minorities is national. We recognize that national minority students have often been the vanguard force in student struggle because of national oppression. It would be utopian to call for only multinational organizing among students at this time, although when conditions permit, principled multinational coalitions should be established based on equality in dealing with common issues,

Chinese Americans, along with other Asian-American students, are becoming part of the advanced sector of the student movement, and have an important role in the U.S. student movement. One important area of work in terms of Chinese-American and other Asian-American students is the newly developing Asian-American studies programs. We feel that the development of Asian-American studies is a progressive step in combatting the ideological aspect of national oppression of the Chinese in America. Probably, the chief role it can play is to smash the web of lies, slander, and omissions that the bourgeoisie has concocted to subjugate us and keep us from breaking the iron grip it has on our history and culture. Asian-American studies can, if infused with proletarian ideology and the spirit of "serve the people", break the hegemony that the racist bourgeois historians and academics have had on

this important part of our knowledge,

To achieve this and other revolutionary goals, we should attempt to draw, organize, and mobilize as many of our brothers and sisters as possible into the student movement. We should explain, through a Marxist-Leninist analysis, the causes of alienation and oppression as students and as Asian-Americans. It is necessary to point out how the imperialists cause both the oppression of the Chinatown community and the students themselves. More importantly, we should learn from them about their own experience, problems, feelings, and ideas on resolving existing contradictions.

We must at all times be conscious of our roles as communists in the student movement. This means that while we look after the day-to-day struggles of our brothers and sisters, we must also constantly provide political education to raise the level of consciousness. Specifically this means trying to raise the theoretical level of the student movement, especially with regard to Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-Tung Thought. We must constantly look for opportunities, for instance, to start study or discussion groups and to give a Marxist analysis of the various situations that come up at the school, local community, national, or international level.

An important task student work should take up is that of developing and recruiting potential cadres from the ranks of the Asian-American student movement. Historically, in the beginnings of a revolutionary movement, some of the most advanced communist cadres have come from the student movement where they first become "politicized". We should not expect, however, that every student will become a cadre since students usually have petty-bourgeois aspirations or backgrounds. There are many sincere and honest students who are fed up with the capitalist system and are looking for a direction to move in order to change it. We should pay close attention to these brothers and sisters and struggle with any wrong ideas that they may have without being antagonistic to them, in the spirit of "unity-struggle-unity" and "cure the disease to save the patient". With the correct attitude and correct practice, we should make a significant breakthrough both in terms of work among the masses of Asian-American students and in terms of developing potential cadres.

While providing the student movement with more direction, we of course want to avoid both "left" and right errors. Of the two, however, the most prevalent in the student movement has been errors of the "left" variety. This means that in some instances we have not clearly differentiated who are our enemies and who are our real friends. Some groups have in the past been dogmatic and sectarian in their dealing with others (especially students) who do not have the same outlook, but are nevertheless honest and sincere, and concerned with the problems of the capitalist system. It is in this respect that we must be good in doing united front work, especially keeping in mind the tactic of "uniting with the progressive elements, winning over the middle elements, and isolating the backward elements" and apply it in practice. The

overwhelming majority of our brothers and sisters are in the first two categories, with the backward elements actually constituting a very minute fraction. We must be able to relate to them, not isolate them, or pound people into submission through dogmatism.

The student struggle is significant because it reflects and focuses attention on social ills. As U.S. imperialism is being ripped apart by external and internal contradictions, as the classes increasingly polarize into two camps of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, students face a contracting economy, unemployment, inflation, and are increasingly having to make a political choice between the two class lines. Because of this, the advanced elements of the U.S. student movement (and especially students from national minorities) are increasingly moving to the side of the proletariat, and are looking towards Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-Tung Thought as a guiding ideology.

In order to mobilize the masses of Blacks, Latin and Asian students, and to spread the anti-imperialist student movement far and wide, it is necessary that we have both a correct analysis and correct practice. We reject the analysis that students by themselves can be the leading revolutionary force. We know that because of the class nature of most students, a revolutionary student movement cannot sustain itself over a period of time, while it is possible for students to be revolutionary in a specific period, if is for specific issues. In the long run, it is the revolutionary upsurge of the proletariat and its party to whom students in the final analysis must look for leadership.

XIV. TASKS: WORKERS' SECTION

Communists have always posed the national questions of different types from the point of view of how to best unite the proletariat of the various nationalities in their struggle against the bourgeoisie. Thus, our attempt to understand the Chinese national question is done from the point of view of guiding the movement for progress in the direction that is most beneficial to the American proletarian movement as a whole. As Marx succinctly summed it up: "...communists have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole."

The Asian-American movement in the last 5 years or so, as so many other movements, has belittled the role of the working class. This is understandable because of the class feature of the Asian-American movement as well as the role played by the labor aristocracy in past national oppression of the Chinese in this country. However, in the absence of proletarian ideology, lumpen ideology and narrow nationalism have prevailed. These outlooks, if left unchecked, would lead the Asian-American movement astray and harm the general American working-class movement.

Today, national movements in the United States have taken on a special character because the national question in America is irreversibly and irrevocably linked to the American proletarian movement. The only path for the creation of conditions permitting the liberation of oppressed nationalities is the path of the resolution of the contradiction between the American working class and the American monopoly capitalists through the dictatorship of the proletariat. Therefore, the question of national liberation is meaningless unless considered in the context of proletarian revolution.

The American working class is the largest working class that has ever existed on the face of the earth. This large working class gives us a distinct advantage in that it will be much easier for us to consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat, once it is achieved, than it has been in other countries having a more feudal economic base. In addition, since the national question will remain in this country long after the successful overthrow of the bourgeoisie, this large working class will definitely constitute a favorable basis for resolving the national question in America. We also believe it is the largeness of the American working class that has prompted comrade Mao Tse-tung to say "We place our hope on the American people."

The United Front to overthrow U.S. monopoly capitalism

Despite this large working class, the experience of previous successful proletarian revolutions has taught us that the proletariat, in order to succeed, must rally to its side as many allies as possible in order to overthrow the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. This is the basic reason for the united front strategy. However, it is important for communists, in

representing the interests of the proletariat, to maintain independence and initiative within that united front. This is because there must be a stable core within the united front that is firmly locked onto the securing of the dictatorship of the proletariat and uncompromising in its final goal of communism through socialism in order to withstand the difficult twists and turns of events. Marxism-Leninism teaches us that only the working class is capable of shouldering this great task. Therefore the central task of all communists is to build this core of working-class people through and around specific programs of the united front. The stronger and larger this working-class core, the more powerful and the broader the united front can be. This is an important point to keep in mind if we are to prevent the revision of the goal of proletarian communism. It is in the sense of the working class constituting the core that the proletariat is considered to be the main force of the revolution. All other classes can only be allies and reserves of the proletariat, assuming their interests do not align with those of the bourgeoisie.

Besides maintaining our independence and initiative, we must also guard against sectarianism. Sectarianism is a petty-bourgeois outlook that manifests itself as all struggle, no unity within the united front. If unchecked, sectarianism leads to the isolation of the proletarian forces within the united front. We should adopt the method of unity-struggle-unity whenever we can and never view the united front as some kind of trick to lure people into the revolution. The initial basis for unity must be real unity built around real issues, and the struggle waged must be waged in the context of being consistent with the initial basis of unity. Communists must continuously have the broadness of mind necessary to unite with friendly forces. Only this way will we be able to win the hearts and minds of the broad masses of people.

Building unity between the Chinese immigrant workers and the general American working class

Chinese workers in America should unite and resist any attempt on the part of the American monopoly capitalists to shift the brunt of the burden of their crisis onto the Chinese-American workers. To do this requires hand in glove cooperation between the Chinese-American working class and the general American working class. Historical experience shows that the best way to fight against national oppression is to unite the working class of different nationalities. But it is precisely the link between these 2 sectors of the working force that has been the weakest point in the defense of the Chinese national minority against national oppression. The task of Asian-Americans is to build this link. While past conditions were extremely unfavorable toward building this unity because of the scab role of labor aristocrats, present conditions are changing. We are at the beginning of another upswing of the American workers' movement to resist attacks against their standard of living

and in the impending social crisis, the labor aristocracy is becoming weaker and more isolated than ever before. This is the time for us to act decisively, along with the rest of the American working class, in the process of class struggle, to end the national and racial division which has been the principal social prop of the American monopoly class.

Within the context of the struggle against monopoly, we must also expose and challenge the scab role of the labor aristocrats. Labor aristocrats are the internal enemy of the labor movement and ruthless struggle against these scabs is necessary and inseparable from the struggle against monopoly. Labor aristocrats are the social base for revisionism. We should arm ourselves with Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought to combat the revisionists (such as the "Communist" Party of U.S.A.) who are apologists for the labor aristocrats.

The American working class has a rich history of its own. Its experiences, both positive and negative, must be studied and analyzed. A vigorous and protracted study program must be launched in conjunction with summing up our day-to-day practical experience in the working-class movement.

Why should we go to the point of production?

The lack of a working-class core would, in the long run, make student and community organizing aimless and ineffective. This is because the power of any society resides, ultimately, in its productive forces. And in the final analysis the class that performs the socially necessary labor is the class that holds the power of that society. Furthermore, because the contradiction between productive relations and the forces of production is more universal and potentially more gripping than any other contradiction in the social setting, it is at the point of production that the state power of the bourgeoisie can be most effectively challenged.

Because, with few exceptions, Asian-American industrial workers in this country are dispersed, it would be ridiculous for Asian-American communists to search for these concentrations and to confine our work to that particular sector of the working class. As communists we have to organize the advanced elements of the working class first and, through them, reach and organize the rest of the working class. This is the principal task of the Asian-American as well as American communist. Additional tasks in organizing the working class should include building and working with multinational working-class organizations that are anti-imperialist in character. From the above it is clear that we oppose the line that progressive Asian-Americans cannot organize workers of other nationalities. In fact, we feel that Asian-American progressives should make a special effort to organize workers of other nationalities, and, in particular, to attempt to organize Black, Latin and other national minority workers.

But to stress the importance of point of production organizing is not to downgrade the immediate struggles that flare up spontaneously outside

the points of production. When these struggles occur in working class neighborhoods, these struggles obviously cannot be separated from working-class struggles. For this reason, it is necessary for the Asian-American movement to develop a strategy which unites the struggles of the community with those of workers in social service institutions, be they schools or hospitals.

Professional revolutionaries?

Certain groups pose the position that revolutionaries should not engage in work at the point of production (as workers), but rather should perform the duties of "professional revolutionaries." While we agree that there are social issues outside the point of production around which massive agitation should be done, we still feel that point of production work is essential at this point of development in the communist movement. The work of the professional revolutionary in Russia differed from our work in that one of the main aspects of the profession of the full-time revolutionary then was a 24-hour a day struggle against the open, terroristic repression of the Czarist police. It was not that they did not want to stay in one place, rather, it was not possible for them to stay in one place. Furthermore, there were many advanced workers groups that had spontaneously developed on their own. Thus, the immediate task of the communists was to link them up. Under these conditions, communists were best advised to be professional in the sense of not being tied down to one place. But the situation is different now. There is still a certain degree of freedom to organize under bourgeois democracy, a degree of freedom not available under fascism. While we have it, we should use it.

Left-opposition caucuses in the unions

While we oppose the mechanical adoption of "professional revolutionary" as the exclusive form to follow in organizing (regarding it as a petty-bourgeois evasion of commitment and adoption of working-class stand), we must also differ with the approach to work in the working-class movement that merely builds left-opposition caucuses in the unions. While such work is a basic prerequisite to all other work, we should be clear that communist influence in the labor movement has to be achieved through work in a united front with the trade unions and often with the superstructure of progressive trade unions as well.

Forms of struggle

Legal work must be developed. The unavailability of legal tactics and resultant lack of flexibility in applying tactics will inevitably lead one to commit ultra-left errors in the course of struggle.

As stated in the "Proposal Concerning the General Line for the International Communist Movement", "In order to lead the proletariat and working people in revolution... must master all forms of struggle and be able to substitute one form for another quickly as the conditions of struggle

change. The vanguard of the proletariat will remain unconquerable in all circumstances only if it masters all forms of struggle - peaceful and armed, open and secret, legal and illegal, parliamentary struggle and mass struggle, etc. It is wrong to refuse to use parliamentary and other legal forms of struggle when they can and should be used." Of course as communists we take a firm and unshakeable stand on the side of the oppressed, but at the same time we oppose everything dogmatic, static, and inflexible which would prevent us from maneuvering against the oppressor. As Chairman Mao Tse-tung has said, in principle we have to be firm as the oak, in tactics we should be as flexible as the willow.

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CHARACTERISTICS OF PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION IN CAPITALIST COUNTRIES AND
GUERRILLA WARS IN NEO-COLONIAL AND SEMI-FEUDAL COUNTRIES

Chairman Mao Tse-tung stated in "Problems of War and Strategy" that in neo-colonial and semi-feudal countries "...war is the main form of struggle and the army is the main form of organization." For example, "In China the armed revolution is fighting the armed counter-revolution, This is one of the specific features and one of the advantages of the Chinese revolution," stated Stalin. However, "while the principle remains the same, its application by the party of the proletariat finds expression in varying ways according to the varying conditions. Internally, capitalist countries practice bourgeois democracy (not feudalism) when they are not fascist or not at war; in their external relations, they are not oppressed by, but themselves oppress, other nations. Because of these characteristics, it is the task of the party of the proletariat in CAPITALIST COUNTRIES TO EDUCATE THE WORKERS AND BUILD UP STRENGTH through a long period of legal struggle, and thus prepare for the final overthrow of capitalism. In these countries the question is one of a long legal struggle, of utilizing parliament as a platform, of economic and political strikes, of organizing trade unions and educating the workers. There the form of organization is legal and the form of struggle bloodless." This, in essence, is the difference in form of struggle between advanced capitalist countries and semi-colonial, semi-feudal countries.