

GUN CONTROL - A STEP TOWARD FASCISM



HARRIET TUBMAN, WHO FOUGHT IN AND LED NUMEROUS MILITARY BATTLES, TOOK UP ARMED STRUGGLE TO FREE HER PEOPLE.

World-wide and at home, the working class and its allies are rising up against oppression and exploitation at the hands of the monopoly capitalists. As the capitalist crisis deepens everywhere, the monopoly capitalists (bourgeoisie) step up their preparations for war abroad and for controlling uprisings at home. In the Congress and in newspapers, on T.V. and radio, bourgeois politicians are all preparing for gun control: the bourgeoisie's attempt to take from us one of the necessary weapons of our liberation.

Gun control is an important step toward fascist rule - the total and naked repression by force of the working class by a monopoly capitalist class. In the U.S., the working class is struggling to smash all bourgeois rule, "democratic" or fascist, and to build socialism. Revolution means war, and, just as in war, we need a general staff to lead us. That is why the principal task in the U.S. today for communists and the working class is the struggle to build a new communist party, an advanced organization of the working class to lead us in overthrowing monopoly capitalism and building socialism.

What we want to build, however, is an anti-revisionist party which fully grasps and grasps tightly the understanding on the nature of the state. Revisionist parties either believe in "peaceful transition to socialism" or have a "maybe, maybe not" attitude towards the armed repression by the state. Or else they agree in principle but don't practice Marxism on this question, which has historically served as the watershed between Marxists and revisionists. Lenin characterized these revisionists as those who are afraid of sharp turns of events and disbelieve in them. For Communists, the only question is when.

The struggle over which direction our party will lead us is crucial, but one thing about that direction is clear: the capitalist class, the Rockefellers and the Kennedys, will never go down peacefully. If the company bosses will shoot down workers who are on strike, they will definitely shoot down any workers who want to confiscate their property and seize state power. If the government will use the police and national guard against demonstrations revolts for civil rights, and general strikes, they will definitely use all their armed forces against uprisings and insurrections for socialism. They know that if they finished.

But everyday working people - especially oppressed nationalities and oppressed national minorities - face the violence of the government - police, courts, jails, army, FBI, etc. - the bourgeois state apparatus. Throughout our history, the working class has had to protect itself against a brutal state which destroys our right to a decent life: the armed struggles against the ruling class at Attica and Wounded Knee, against police brutality in national minority neighborhoods (Fred Hampton died fighting an army of police) armed defense of the miners' strikes, are just a few recent examples.

FOLLOW LENIN'S TEACHINGS ON ARMED STRUGGLE

We understand the need to arm the entire working class, not just a few headline-seeking "terrorists" like the S.L.A. and Patty Hearst, who are built up by the bourgeoisie. The bourgeois press pushes as "revolutionaries" these small bands of terrorists who are divorced from the masses, but we must grasp the correct revolutionary line on armed struggle. Marxist-Leninists must follow the path of Lenin, who wrote during World War I:

A bourgeoisie armed against the proletariat is one of the biggest fundamental, and cardinal facts of modern capitalist society... An oppressed class which does not strive to learn to use arms, to acquire arms, only deserves to be treated like slaves. We cannot, unless we have become bourgeois pacifists or opportunists, forget that we are living in a class society from which there is no way out, nor can there be, save through the class struggle... (Therefore) to "demand disarmament" (read: gun control)...is tantamount to complete abandonment of the class struggle point of view, to renunciation of all thought of revolution. Our slogan must be: arming of the proletariat to defeat, expropriate and disarm the bourgeoisie. ("The Military Programme of the Proletarian Revolution," Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 23, p. 80-1.)

We must use this teaching to grasp the correct position on gun control and to smash all incorrect stands put out by the bourgeoisie and all its agents in our ranks.

WHY THE "LIBERALS" PUSH GUN CONTROL

Before the 1960's, there was little gun control in most of the country. New York had the strictest law, called the Sullivan Act, which kept anyone except the bosses and their agents, the police, from owning a handgun. Meanwhile, large areas in the South and West had no gun control laws at all, except for the Federal laws against arms like cannons and bazookas.

What really gave gun control a big push was that between 1966 and 1968, the bourgeoisie was faced with mass, armed rebellions in the Afro-American communities of Detroit, Watts, Philadelphia, Harlem, Washington, D.C., and elsewhere. Ex-attorney general Robert Kennedy, whose own assassination the bourgeoisie later exploited in order to win over the undecided Midwest liberals who were blocking gun control, urged that "we must take away these tools of the urban rioters." All the time that they were trying to make like they were protecting us, they were really only worried about their own property and keeping their factories and cities running smoothly!

Then the rush of political assassinations in the 1960's provided a convenient cover for the bourgeoisie, led by Johnson, Rockefeller, Kennedy, Dodd and Tydings - to push for a stiff national gun control law which would supposedly take all arms away from the "civilian population" or make them register with the police if they wanted to keep, say, hunting rifles. Very clearly, they saw the rising trend toward mass armed resistance to oppression, the inevitable post-war economic crisis, and all those guns around for the asking, and decided that they'd better do something quickly!

The bourgeoisie takes the genuine mass demand for an end to crime and violence and uses it to hide the real cause of crime - their rule of monopoly capital - which exploits people to such desperation that they are driven to rip off their class brothers and sisters. So the ruling class passes laws like the gun control act in the 1968 Omnibus Crime Control Bill which bans the interstate mail-order sale of all guns, the "Saturday Night Special," and the importation of assembled guns. Gun parts can still be bought but the bourgeoisie is now trying to ban that, as well as ammo sales.

Instead of controlling crime, however, laws like these are the first steps in a scheme to actually disarm the working class, leaving us unprotected against the capitalists.

Recently, Ford and Attorney General Levi have been pushing total disarming of the people in 11 major cities, making it clear just who the bourgeoisie really wants to disarm: the urban working class, mainly Afro-American, Latin and other oppressed nationalities and national minorities

Now that gun control has clearly become part of the bourgeois plan to smash revolution, there are no less than 120 various gun control bills waiting in Congress, with hundreds more in every state house around the country. The recent Massachusetts

state gun control law was praised all over by the bourgeoisie as the "strictest gun control law of any state." But they can't rely on getting state laws passed, so they won't stop pushing for a Federal law to centralize and streamline their control over our weapons. Combined with other plans like the S-1 Bill, arrests without a warrant, "preventive action" by agents infiltrating workers and communist organizations, beefing up the police forces, arming fascists and at the same time disarming the working class, the bourgeoisie is clearly getting ready for fascist rule.

THE BOURGEOISIE ARMS THE FASCISTS- TRIES TO DISARM OUR CLASS

We stand for the armed self-defense of the working class and oppose the use of guns to exploit and oppress us. There is a big difference between the armed violence we use to defend the rights of workers and the violence the bourgeoisie uses to dictate over us. The bourgeoisie try to make it sound like they would disarm all political groups from Communists to the John Birch Society, but we know that all the while they're disarming the working class, the bourgeoisie is arming their fascist gangs like the KKK and the Minutemen to the teeth! In fact, in 1968, it came out that all this time the Army had been giving free guns, ammo, and training to hundreds of civilian groups. You can be sure these groups weren't training their sights on the bourgeoisie. Recently there was a bill in Congress to replace these Army programs with public rifle ranges, complete with government instructors. Nassau County outside of New York City plans to set one up. Under the disguise of "public safety in hunting", the bourgeoisie seeks to use these ranges, set up outside large industrial areas or cities, to train more efficient fascist gangs. Although for now the working class can use them too, under fascist rule or with stronger gun control, only the fascists will be able to train at these ranges.

Even though the "gun lobby" -- mainly the National Rifle Association and other right-wing fascist organizations, along with the arms manufacturers -- oppose gun control, they do not do so because they are on the side of the working class. In fact, the gun dealers pimp off the sufferings of the working class, providing arms mainly to the army, police and fascist governments abroad, and to the sector of society -- the lumpen ("broken" or declassed) proletariat -- which lives by ripping off the working class. Under fascism, the bourgeoisie, through the Mafia and other elements of organized crime, the labor aristocracy and petty bourgeoisie, organizes these pimps and hustlers into their roving gangs to put down any working class uprising.

The lobbyists may fight the liberals' argument that gun control will "stop crime" but their "solution" to crime is more police repression against the working class and oppressed nationalities and national minorities, and stiffer jail sentences and more death sentences for "criminals."

FIRMLY GRASP MARX'S AND LENIN'S TEACHINGS ON THE STATE

To not grasp this question tightly is not to grasp it at all. The bourgeois state apparatus, Marx and Lenin taught, is the instrument which the bourgeoisie uses to oppress the workers. The bourgeois state can never be "neutral"; it always works

for the ruling class. And the "democratic" form of the bourgeois state (bourgeois democracy) is the most efficient, "best political shell" in which the oppression and violence of capitalism can be hidden. The U.S.A. is history's most developed example of bourgeois democracy. Just recently, for example, Rep. Murphy (D-NY) said, in defense of his gun control bills, that the "purpose of government is to allow the individual to live freely, to do for him what he cannot do for himself." The bourgeoisie, ever since the Declaration of Independence (and earlier) has used lies like this to cover up the real truth about their rule.

Lots of gun control groups are coming out now, filling the press and TV with lullabys about non-violence under capitalism. Listen to this recent example from the head of the National Council to Control Handguns: "I cannot buy the need for the most free country in the world to be armed against ourselves and to always fight violence with violence." This garbage tries to make us forget that violence is always there for the bourgeoisie to use, and they use it regularly, most often against the working class, oppressed nationalities and national minorities, and always in the name of "democracy". The bourgeoisie finds itself driven sooner or later to use naked terror in order to smash proletarian revolution. The bourgeoisie, in order to survive, must show its true face.

The liberal tactics of the bourgeoisie dictate that they must try to put off the use of open terroristic rule for as long as possible and try to rule by granting "concessions," through subterfuges, and by deluding us into thinking we're being helped when we're actually being shafted. They either try to put everyone to sleep with pie-in-the-sky dreams of "democracy" and "moral promises" or they create divisions within the ranks of the working class with their court-ordered busing schemes, welfare forced-work programs and cutbacks, etc. In order to divide the class they must rely on their petty-bourgeois community misleaders and the "labor aristocracy" in the leadership of the trade unions. The gun control bill sells us anti-crime, but in essence is meant to disarm us. The forced busing plans sell us equal education for all, but only divide us with racial violence. The same thing goes for school "decentralization," welfare "reform," social "service" bills, and tax "rebates." They always say that this or that reform will help us, when in reality, the only ones being helped are themselves -- to better exploit our labor!

Just as they did for Hitler fascism in Germany, the liberal bourgeoisie of every country have always played a cover-up role for the sneaking-in of fascism. Unlike German fascism, however, American fascism "tries to portray itself as the custodian of the constitution and 'American democracy.'" (Dimitroff, On the United Front, Proletarian Publishers, p. 41) The liberals' role is to lay the groundwork: getting people's hopes up with all sorts of reforms and subterfuges and disarming the masses. These all make it easier for the bourgeoisie to impose their fascist rule on us. Because of this, the liberals are more dangerous than those who come out openly against gun control. This is the lesson we must learn about reforms like gun control.

REVISIONISTS DISTORT THE TRUTH ABOUT BOURGEOIS RULE

We know the correct stand on armed struggle and the bourgeois state. What about the incorrect stand taken by the revisionists and Trotskyites -- agents of the bourgeoisie in the working class.

The "C" PUSA and the Socialist Workers Party peddle lies about a "peaceful transition" to socialism, about how we can "vote socialism in" and "nationalize" the big industries without first smashing the capitalist state. These traitors to the working class, along with the October League and others, march in Boston to demand that the National Guard -- the capitalists' own troops! -- "protect" Afro-American people against violent attacks. The "C" PUSA and Trotskyites also told us that President Allende could make a "revolution" for the people in Chile by "voting it in" and hoping that the capitalists in Congress and the US-trained and supplied army would remain neutral or even defend the workers, whom Allende himself had disarmed by law! Today, because they were disarmed by the revisionists, the blood of the Chilean working class runs in the streets under the military fascist dictatorship set up by the US to overthrow Allende's government.

Revisionists clearly distort what Marx and Lenin taught, that the bourgeois state constantly uses armed force to oppress the working class, and that we must organize to smash it with our own armed might. Every party which calls itself Communist must put this understanding into practice. The Communist Party of Indonesia, at the time the largest outside of China, was virtually wiped out along with millions of workers during the CIA-backed coup in 1967. Those who survived concluded that their big mistake was to have had illusions about the "dual nature of the state," that the bourgeoisie could be "used" by the working class instead of seeing the necessity to smash it. Let us learn from these mistakes of our class brothers and sisters. Oppose this deadly line now peddled by the social-imperialist Soviet Union and their lackeys, the "C" PUSA!

As Lenin said, "The necessity of systematically imbuing the masses with this and precisely this view of violent revolution lies at the root of all the teachings of Marx and Engels." (State and Revolution, emphasis in original)

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST REVISIONISM
IS A LIFE-AND-DEATH STRUGGLE!

POLITICAL POWER GROWS OUT OF THE
BARREL OF A GUN!

FIGHT FOR WORKERS' RIGHT TO
ORGANIZED ARMED SELF DEFENSE!

DEFEND THE RIGHTS OF OPPRESSED NATION-
ALITIES AND NATIONAL MINORITIES TO
ORGANIZED ARMED SELF DEFENSE!

SMASH THE GUN CONTROL BILLS!

GUNS DON'T CAUSE CRIME-CAPITALISM
DOES; FIGHT TO END ALL CRIMES
AGAINST THE WORKING CLASS!

WORKERS VIEWPOINT is the political organ of a communist org'n. The theory guiding our thinking is Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought. We view ourselves as a part of the general communist movement in the U.S. and look forward to uniting with other communist organizations on the basis of a common program, strategy, tactics and organizational principles. We view the present tasks of our movement as the study of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought and the linking up of the working class movement with the communist movement to help build an anti-revisionist communist party in the United States.

We welcome your suggestions and criticisms. Also, if you would like to support us financially, be placed on our mailing list, or receive additional copies of our newspaper (25¢) or our journal (\$1) please write to us. Address to:

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