

Marxism vs. Terrorism in the US

Are Patty Hearst & the SLA Really Revolutionaries?



WHERE THEY WOULD LEAD US.

"Terrorists bow to the spontaneity of the passionate indignation of the intellectuals who are incapable of linking up the revolutionary struggle with the labor movement. . . It is very difficult indeed for those who have lost their belief, or those who have never believed that this was possible, to find some outlet for their indignation and revolutionary energy than terror."

(V.I. Lenin, What is to Be Done?)

dom, she played "Tania, the Urban Guerilla" for a while, complete with beret, machine gun and "kill the pigs" philosophy. (Certainly this is an insult to the memory of the real Tania who fought side by side with Che Guevara and others to liberate Cuba.) When the glamor and romance of the SLA wore off, Patty was only too willing to turn to Daddy to save her from prison.

ON LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION

When asked in a TV interview what one thing she would do to save the world, Squeaky Fromme replied "Get Manson out of jail. . . he has it all in his head." This is just the opposite of what true revolutionaries believe; Marxist-Leninists know that the masses of people make history. While revolutionary struggles produce brilliant leaders such as Lenin, Mao and Ho Chi Minh, none of these leaders is seen as an all-knowing prophet or god. Revolutions are made in the real world by millions of real people—not in the imagination of some prophet.

"Leaders" like Manson and Cinque can only set up a top-down, obey-orders, militaristic type of commandism. Nowhere is there to be found collective work, criticism and self-criticism, democracy, education and ideological struggle, which are the lifeblood of a real communist organization.

Berkeley friends of Patty Hearst pointed out to her how sexist this commandist style of leadership was, in relegating the women "soldiers" to the role of idol-worshipping robots. In the case of Manson—who started his career as a pimp—this sexism was carried to a horrifying extreme of unrelenting sexual subjugation under LSD to bring the women "under his thumb."

WHY THE BOURGEOISIE LOVES THE SLA

Why was the SLA in the newspaper headlines across the country for weeks on end? Why were some 8,500 FBI agents (75% of the field force) employed in the SLA case at one time or another over two years? Surely many a gang of bank robbers have robbed, kidnapped, even killed and never received this kind of attention!

But the SLA were no "common criminals"—they claimed to be "revolutionaries." This is just what the bourgeoisie wants people to think revolutionaries are: a tiny band of terrorists who make little or no political sense and kill anybody who disagrees with them, all in the name of justice. And what of the hundreds of leftists and communists who work every day in the communities and factories of this country, struggling along with the rest of the working people and oppressed nationalities, writing, studying, discussing and spreading their ideas on how to make a better, more just society? You'd never find a word about these revolutionaries in the paper, unless occasionally to slander them with lies.

By avoiding looking at the true revolutionaries, the media hopes to give the word "revolutionary" a bad name. Revolutionaries are either crazy terrorists, or they are the subject of "Where are they now?" stories of ex-radicals who have settled down to law practice and suburban family life, or who have tripped off on another "bourgeois fad" such as anti-war activist Rep. (continued on page 17)

Terrorists in US society: they range all the way from the ultra-left political "Weatherman" to the real nuts like sociopath Charles Manson and his followers such as Lynette "Squeaky" Fromme. Whether their rhetoric has a "Marxist" ring to it or sounds just plain crazy, these terrorists have one thing in common: **THEY REJECT THE MASS STRUGGLE OF THE WORKING CLASS AND RELY INSTEAD ON BOMBINGS AND ASSASSINATIONS BY A SMALL GROUP.**

Terrorism grows out of the fury, frustration and even psychosis bred by the ugliness and brutality of our society. Marxist-Leninists understand this only too well. Lenin himself had a brother who was executed after taking part in an attempt to assassinate the Tsar. Lenin opposed this type of terrorism which is isolated from the mass struggle, not because he had any wish to see the Tsar live a long and healthy life, but because all true revolutionaries recognize that the work of such terrorists serves the ruling class, not the working class.

It ignores the day-to-day struggles of the working people, it ignores the need for organization (especially the communist vanguard party), it gives all "revolutionaries" a bad name, it terrifies the people it claims to serve, and it gives the police and the government a blank check for across-the-board repression against any and all progressive forces.

Isolated from the day-to-day struggles of the working people, terrorists hope to "spark" the revolution by setting off bombs or carrying out assassinations. Marxist-Leninists, however, know that a socialist revolution can't be "set off" like it was a stick of dynamite. It must be carried out steadily and methodically by the strength and unity of the organized and conscious working class.

Marxism-Leninism also teaches that the road to revolution is a long and dangerous one -- we must go through peaceful times and violent times, legal work and illegal work. On the one hand, we must fight for the day-to-day needs of our class -- better wages, safer working conditions, an end to discrimination. But at the same time we need to build the organization and understanding that will in the future enable our class to establish socialism.

TERRORISTS DISDAIN WORKING CLASS STRUGGLE

Terrorists can't understand this. They seek the quick and easy recipe for revolution, the Molotov cocktail. They shun the unglamorous routine of the shop-floor struggle and the union meeting, of study and teaching, of collective work and the patient building of organization.

Every idea in class society is the idea of a particular class. The kind of terrorism we're talking about is the idea of the petty-bourgeoisie "driven to frenzy" as Lenin says "by the horrors of capitalism." Essentially, it is petty bourgeois because while it shows a hatred of monopoly capitalism and the ruling class, it also shows a disdain for the proletariat. It has no confidence in the ability of the working class to wage a prolonged, steady and sustained struggle for its liberation. For mass action it substitutes the actions of a tiny elite.

THE ELITE VS. THE PIGS

Take the example of the SLA (Symbionese Liberation Army). This "army" (which was really just a sect or cult) was never more than 7 or 8 individuals—white youth from middle class backgrounds who blindly followed the command of "Cinque," a Black ex-con who hoped to change the world by "killing the pigs."

But who are the "pigs"? Who is the real enemy who must be fought? The SLA certainly had no understanding of who the enemy of the working and oppressed people is. Marxist-Leninists see the need for communists and the working class to find allies among all progressive forces, to "unite the many to defeat the few." But the SLA viewed reformist Black school administrator Marcus Foster the same way they viewed multimillionaire William Randolph Hearst.

By killing Foster, the SLA served only to isolate themselves and terrify the very people they claimed to serve! The SLA certainly found no sympathy among Black Philadelphians who remembered Foster for his efforts to improve conditions at Gratz High School. True revolutionaries *join* such movements, and point out the limitations of trying to reform the capitalist system. If we hope to make a revolution, we must win people away from the reformist and over to a revolutionary point of view, not shoot everyone who disagrees with us in the head!

"BOURGEOIS FADS"

Lenin says of such "petty bourgeois revolutionariness" that it is easily transformed into "infatuation with one or another bourgeois fad." In our decaying society—short on values and long on fads—there are all kinds of crazy groups, cults and philosophies around. Take the Manson bunch, for example. These people were very heavily into drugs, flirted with devil worship and human sacrifice, and are now into ecology coupled with political assassination.

Similarly, it seems clear that the SLA and its "political actions" like bank robbery and murder were nothing but a fad for the "poor little rich girl" Patty Hearst. Disillusioned by her parents who did not jump at the chance to trade their billions for her free-

MARXISM VS. TERRORISM, Con't.

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Posters in Berkeley proclaim support for Tania

nie Davis working for the Guru Maharaji.

The police and the other law enforcement agencies of the state love terrorists as well, for it gives them the excuse they need to investigate all left and progressive groups, violating civil liberties in all kinds of ways, passing repressive legislation, and making shows of force, such as the shoot-out in Los Angeles which ended in the deaths of all but three SLA members. The response to the police repression by segments of the left in California after this massacre was to make martyrs of and glorify the dead SLA members. Thus the shoot-out gave the SLA more credibility among certain sections of the left and in turn gave the left less credibility among the masses of people. A more correct response would have been to mobilize broad coalitions of people against police repression of any sort, while criticizing the SLA tactics which gave the police a cover for such actions.

"ULTRA-LEFTISM" IN OUR MOVEMENT

As surely as the members of the new communist movement oppose petty bourgeois terrorism, we must look also within our own ranks for less obvious forms of "petty bourgeois revolutionariness" or ultra-leftism. In the new communist movement too there is a tendency to look for the quick and easy answer to revolution, to substitute revolutionary phrasemongering for mass organizing. There are the leftists who also disdain the "mere" shop floor struggle, and who hope to create a new communist party by simply calling a founding convention. And there are the workers who won't be bothered going down to the union hall—"unless you're going down there to bomb the place." Such attitudes are certainly the product of frustration and indignation, but like terrorism, they only serve to sidetrack or sabotage the slow but relentless movement of the working class toward the day of its liberation.