

**Phony Communists Urge: Toughen Up!**

# Is the U.S. Really a Toothless Tiger?

Some so-called communists these days seem to have been carefully studying and copying Ronald Reagan's "revolutionary" international line. Listen, for example, to this rather typical quote from the pages of *The Call*, newspaper of the Communist Party Marxist-Leninist: "Appeasement among U.S. ruling circles has and is allowing the Soviets to gain clear military advantages during negotiations. It is, thus, encouraging Soviet aggression and bringing the world closer to war." This is hardly a communist condemnation of the war preparations of both imperialist superpowers; it is a nearly naked appeal for the U.S. ruling class to stop "giving in" and start arming to the teeth—or perhaps we should say "to the eyeballs"—since they have already armed to the teeth.

Behavior like this is nothing new. It has long been condemned by *real* communists all the way back to the Russian revolutionary Lenin as "social-chauvinism." This means "socialism in words, chauvinism in deeds"—that is, communists miserably tailing behind their own ruling class in its war propaganda against "the foreign enemy." The effect is to grease the skids for worker to fight worker in a war to see which bloodsucker will come out on top. Today, this act is being played out in an endless and boring series of articles in *The Call* which pretend to contain a "Marxist" analysis of SALT II. And after wading through all the CPML's official-sounding missile counts and graphs straight out of *Time* magazine, their message is inescapable: *the U.S. rulers, poor fellows, are quite incapable of defending their world empire and are hell-bent on "appeasing" the Soviets by allowing them to get the military edge.*

Just who are these "appeasers" anyway? Are we honestly to believe that Carter, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and all who favor SALT II are soft on the Soviets, unable to look out for their own imperialist class interests? Apparently so. On the other hand, there are the James Schlesingers and Henry Jacksons who are valiantly opposing the SALT treaty because it is "giving away" too much to the Soviet Union. And it is clearly the latter who are



**A recent Call subscription ad (put in proper perspective).**

preferred by the CPML, since they have taken to glorifying them in the pages of *The Call* for their opposition to SALT II.

These "hardliners," we are informed in a recent issue (July 23), "make a more realistic assessment of Soviet military strength. They have also targeted the appeasement policies which have marked the SALT negotiations..." We are even told that the U.S. rulers' phony SALT "debate" can "be used to the people's advantage because it spotlights appeasement, the most dangerous trend among the U.S. rulers..."! Come on, CPML—get serious!

"While condemning all imperialist war preparations," the CPML drones, "it is especially important to oppose the appeasers." To this we can only answer—huh? This doubletalk roughly translates to: "While condemning all im-

perialist war preparations, it is especially important to support even more blatant calls for war preparations by the U.S. imperialists"! The mind strains to comprehend such a totally illogical and contradictory statement, especially when it dribbles from the mouths of those who proclaim themselves to be "communists." What, pray tell, is behind this silly appeasement line and this unashamed support for the basic policy of the U.S. ruling class, which is nothing but massive military build-up against the Soviets?

## U.S. Appeasers?

It is certainly not that the U.S. rulers are in fact soft on the Soviets. In today's world this is utter nonsense. The two superpowers are smack up against each other, battling for hegemony in every corner of the globe. Far

from pursuing a policy of placating or "giving ground" to the Soviets, the stance of the U.S. rulers in the '70s has been increasingly marked by heightened contention with their social-imperialist rivals, although the facade of "detente" is still of some value to both the U.S. and the USSR in preserving the illusion that they are "lovers of peace."

Take Angola, for example—the CPML claims the U.S. "appeased" the Soviets there. Evidently, we are to believe the UNITA mercenaries and South African troops financed by the U.S. were using toy pistols and rubber bullets when they fought the Soviet-backed MPLA to see which superpower would dominate the area after U.S.-backed Portuguese colonialism bit the dust. Or look at Portugal, where the pro-Soviet Communist Party had a lot of influence in the government for a while, and threatened to take still more. Did the U.S. stand aside? Hardly. Instead the Portuguese CP was knocked way back by some heavy moves by the U.S. together with its European allies.

And what about Chile, where the CIA helped the military junta of Pinochet to drown in blood the Allende government in which the pro-Soviet CP had a dominant influence? More recently, what are we to think of the thinly concealed U.S. sponsorship of the Chinese invasion of Vietnam only two weeks after Carter met with Teng Hsiao-ping? Wasn't this military thrust to match the Soviet-backed Vietnamese invasion and occupation of Kampuchea (Cambodia) welcomed (and almost certainly approved in advance) by the U.S. rulers?

And what of SALT II itself, the CPML's big "appeasement" boogymen? Since SALT was signed, the U.S. has been flexing its muscles like an Olympic weightlifter. The first fruit of the SALT "disarmament" agreement was the announcement by Carter that the U.S. would deploy the MX mobile intercontinental missile. Next came the launching of the first heavily MIRV'ed Trident submarine. And now the latest "timid" step—the rather blatant U.S. proposal to plant hundreds of new nuclear missiles in Western Europe (not covered by SALT) aimed directly for the first time at the Soviet Union. This, of course, is an unmistakable signal on the part of the U.S. imperialists that they do not intend to give the Soviets an inch in Europe!

Only a fool or an idiot (or, synonymously, the CPML) would consider these and countless other aggressive moves as "appeasement" on the part of the U.S. imperialists! For the peoples of the world who are being victimized by

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# Toothless

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the belligerent nature of U.S. imperialism as it fiercely contends with the Soviet Union for world domination, the CPML's portrayal of the U.S. rulers as "appeasers" may be ridiculous but by no means funny.

## What Was Appeasement?

"Wanna Borrow My Umbrella, Jimmy?" This headline appeared in the June 25 issue of *The Call* next to a picture of Neville Chamberlain, the British Prime Minister who carried an umbrella to Munich in 1938 where he informed Hitler that the Allies would do nothing to stop the Nazi invasion of Czechoslovakia. This Allied policy came to be known as appeasement. The implication, of course, is that Carter and Co. are coming from a position of weakness, "appeasing" the Soviets just as the supposedly weak-kneed Allies appeased Hitler.

But this superficial historical analogy completely misses the point. While appeasement was a definite policy pursued by the Allies for a few years toward fascist Germany, it was not in the least a policy of weakness as the CPML (and American history books) suggest. In fact this attempt by the Western imperialists to lure Hitler into a war to the east, toward the then-socialist Soviet Union, was a cold and calculated decision.

This strategy, the Allied bloc hoped, would dispose of the Soviet Union and the revolutionary Bolsheviks, which represented a more fundamental threat than Hitler. This first socialist country in history, while it would not attack the Western capitalist countries, represented their future doom and posed the greatest long-term danger to their dreams of world expansion and plunder. At the same time, by diverting Germany into such a war, they hoped to weaken this up and coming imperialist rival for their own eventual attack. As Mao Tsetung penetratingly summed up, it was a case of the U.S., British and French imperialists attempting to be in a position of "sitting on top of the mountain and watching the tigers fight."

Far from "giving in" to Hitler, appeasement was thus an imperialistic policy carried out for imperialistic reasons. It was the flip side of the imperialist coin of aggression, particularly in this case an expression of the Allies' desire to annihilate socialism in the Soviet Union (and wear Germany down) indirectly instead of through their own open attack, which would doubtless prove to be most costly. While keeping a wary eye on Germany and stepping up their own war preparations, the Allied imperialists actually pumped up the German economy, trying to push Hitlerian fascism to conduct a "holy war against the Bolsheviks."

Of course, appeasement mainly proved to be a flop even though the Soviets eventually had to bear the brunt of fighting Germany. When Hitler turned against the West before attacking the Soviets, the Allies dropped appeasement like a hot potato. Perhaps the CPML and the Chinese revisionists, whom they follow, think they are the first bourgeois forces to sum up the failure of this policy. The U.S. imperialists summed it up quite adequately when they decided to declare war on Germany, and they are capable of applying this lesson today.

But considering the fact that in the early stages of World War II appeasement was a policy of aggression directed against the then-socialist Soviet Union, did this mean that the task of communists was to "fight appeasement," to line up in support of the war drives of their own imperialist ruling classes? Not at all. As Mao said at the time: "On whichever side, the Anglo-French or the German, the war that has just broken out is an unjust, predatory and imperialist war." While there was a place for exposing appeasement, through agitation and propaganda, as an attempt to instigate an attack on a socialist country, the main task of communists in the Allied countries was to take advantage of the sharpening crisis and the upheaval brought about by war

to work for the defeat of their own imperialist bourgeoisie with the aim of overthrowing them.

## Defense of a Socialist Country?

However, when Hitler attacked the Soviet Union in June 1941, the character of the war changed. It then became necessary for communists to temporarily subordinate the struggle of the proletariat for revolution in the Allied countries in order to safeguard the gains of the proletariat internationally. This meant uniting tactically with the Allied imperialists, utilizing the contradictions among the warring imperialists to defeat Hitler and defend the first country where the proletariat held state power. It was also correct to oppose the tendencies of the Allies to "sit back" while Germany went after the Soviets.

In this situation, with the working class in power under attack, and only on this basis, was it necessary to fight a line of appeasement. One form this took was calling for the opening of a "second front" in Europe to relieve the military pressure on the USSR, which did the bulk of the fighting.

As defense of a socialist country is the only correct justification imaginable for raising the danger of appeasement, one would expect the CPML to raise this question in the course of drumming out their "appeasement" cry. After all, they are fond of promoting the false illusion that China is still a socialist country elsewhere in the pages of *The Call*. But nowhere in their ponderous recent volume of articles on "appeasement" and SALT II do these "Marxists" even bother to try. They don't say: "Make a temporary compromise to defend a socialist country." Far from making even the slightest pretense of applying Marxism-Leninism, of making a class analysis of the world situation and trying to show the revolutionary interests of the working class, they are content to slavishly echo the John Wayne, Green Beret-type war calls of the bourgeoisie.

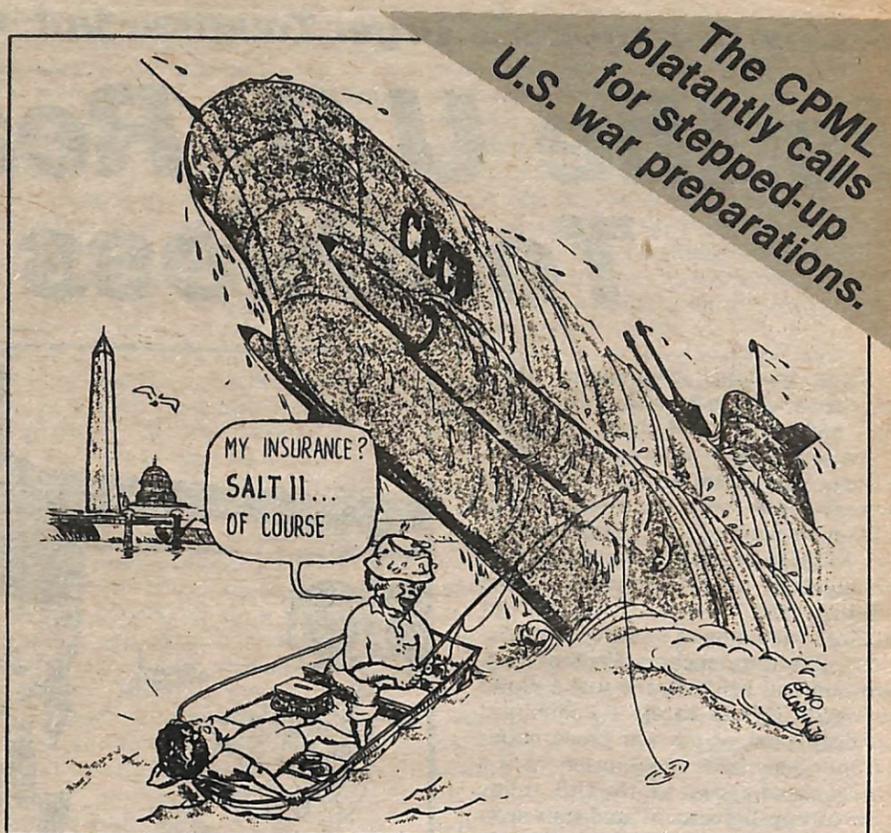
A year ago, however, CPML did make a feeble attempt to raise this argument in a series of articles (beginning 9-25-78 in *The Call*) in which they tried to do some "general education" on the history of appeasement. There it was briefly mentioned that "There are still those among the U.S. imperialists who cherish hopes that Brezhnev can be turned against socialist China," and that U.S. stalling on normalization of relations with China was "another important example of appeasement." (Of course, since then China's unholy wedding to the U.S. has been consummated by Teng's visit last January. Since then any talk of the U.S. sacking the Soviets on China has completely disappeared from the "appeasement" articles in *The Call*.)

That China has been anything but socialist since Mao's death is a subject our Party has already dealt with in great detail and one which is too lengthy to be restated here. And that China has become little more than a pawn of imperialism, particularly the U.S. at this time, is painfully obvious for all to see. (One wonders just what the CPML would do if China decided to capitulate over to the Soviets!) But let's give CPML the benefit of the doubt and just for a minute grant them their argument that China is socialist. Unfortunately, their "appeasement" logic still falls flat on its face.

Even if China were socialist, and even if the U.S. rulers were appeasing the Soviets to encourage them to attack her, this would not mean that the task of communists would be to shamelessly bow down before the U.S. imperialists' war preparations, to rally behind their imperialist motives for going to war, or to rely on them to carry out the defense of a socialist country.

## Repeating History's Errors

In fact it is precisely these mistakes (made by many communists in the '40s) that the CPML avoids discussing like the plague. They are conveniently left out of the CPML's "history lessons" because they are the same errors they are raising to a principle today without even the necessity of defending a socialist country. One serious error made by communists in World War II was not teaching the workers that the only basis on which to ally with one



(Above) a recent cartoon from the CPML newspaper—*The Call*. They show the U.S. as a leaky boat—no match for the mighty power of the Soviet Union. And supposedly Jimmy Carter, the "appeaser," doesn't even notice. The hundreds of billions the U.S. is spending on war preparations must all be going for Jimmy's fish bait.

group of imperialists against another was the defense of a socialist country under attack. Instead they took the "easy road" of portraying the imperialist countries as being divided into "aggressors" and "non-aggressors," just as the CPML now paints the Soviets and the U.S., respectively. This tendency to see the Western powers as the "good guys" instead of as the imperialist bandits they were, and to hinge everything on aiming the "main blow" against fascism (just as CPML directs the main blow against the USSR, the "up and coming Hitlerites"), led the CP's in many Western countries into easy accommodation with their own bourgeoisies.

When the war broke out, these parties were ill prepared to lead the struggle for revolution at home; and when the USSR was attacked, they were even less prepared to lead the battle for the defense of socialism under a proletarian line and to avoid the poison of national chauvinism so as to be in the best position to step up the struggle for revolution at home after Hitler was defeated.

A case in point was the rapid degeneration of the CPUSA which, particularly under the leadership of Earl Browder, steadily betrayed the interests of the working class in the name of fighting fascism and winning the war. Within three years, the CP went from opposing the U.S. imperialists' arms sales and war preparations to chauvinistic calls for "a big armaments program for our country"—long before the USSR was even attacked. When Hitler finally did attack the USSR, many communists correctly joined the imperialist army to fight the Nazis, but by this time it was under the national banner and on the bourgeoisie's terms. After the U.S. entry into the war, the CP sank to enthusiastically championing the return of piecemeal and supporting no-strike pledges by the AFL, CIO and railroad brotherhoods. By 1944 the CP dissolved itself as a party in the name of "national unity."

## First Time Tragedy, Second Time Farce

But today there is nothing resembling the situation of WW II. There is no socialist country which if attacked could change the character of the war on one side into a "war in defense of the future" as far as the working class is concerned. World War III is shaping up as a strictly inter-imperialist affair, a war between rival robbers preparing to go for each other's throats, and communists should be putting forward their defeat. Even if the U.S. were appeasing the Soviets in the SALT negotiations (which they most certainly are not), any genuine revolutionary would be tempted to ask—so what? Lenin's statement was never more true: "A revolutionary class cannot but wish for the defeat of its government in a reactionary war, cannot fail to see that its military

reverses facilitate its overthrow."

But is there a spirit that emerges from the CPML about working for the defeat of one's own government? Hardly. It's more like a spirit of strengthening it. The odor emanating from the pages of *The Call* is unadulterated chauvinism, a pure and simple attempt to revive Teddy Roosevelt's "big stick" with only the most transparent attempt to perfume it with a "Marxist-Leninist" cover. What we get is columns of quotes from "Scoop" Jackson, hysterical cries that "U.S. policies have, in fact, mandated that the Soviets be allowed to catch up with the U.S.," reams of reprinted bourgeois analysis to fill us with alarm that "the ascending curve of Soviet military capabilities intersects the declining curve of our own."

And despite the CPML's standard one-line disclaimer about how the people must oppose all war preparations, it is clear what message is being hammered home. It's the same old song and dance about how the Soviets are the "main danger", "the most aggressive," the "main source of war," coupled with absurd formulations about how strengthening the U.S. imperialists' war machine will somehow "delay the outbreak of war"! This is little more than a warmed-over version of the U.S. rulers' line of "peace through strength!"

All this, of course, inevitably leads to spineless groveling at the feet of the U.S. ruling class. "Ruling class criticism of SALT II," we are told in the June 25 issue, "found its most forceful expression in Sen. Henry Jackson's charge on the very eve of Carter's departure for Vienna.... Jackson raised the spectre of appeasement openly.... Jackson's remarks were made at a 'freedom awards' dinner where he warned that 'seven years of detente are becoming a decade of appeasement'...." How forceful indeed! Too bad the CPML couldn't have attended the dinner to present this bald-faced, flag-waving John Wayne re-run with an award for "Staunchest American of the Year"!

All that remains to be asked is this: Does the CPML sound like a party which will lead the proletariat and the masses to, as Lenin said, "convert the imperialist war into a civil war," to take advantage of the war that is brewing to make revolution in the U.S.? Or does it sound like the social-chauvinists of Lenin's time who deserted the ranks of the proletariat, voted for war budgets and called on the masses to line up as cannonfodder under the imperialists' national banners and "defend the fatherland"?

When World War III breaks out, we can rest assured that the CPML will rush out waving the red, white and blue, yelling at the top of their lungs: "Stars and Stripes Forever! And Don't Spare the Ammunition!"