

MIM THEORY

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narchist Ideal & Communist Revolution



INSIDE: Panasianism, Letters to MIM Theory, Japanese Polemics, and More...

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MIM is an underground party that does not publish the names of its comrades in order to avoid state surveillance and repression that has been historically directed at communist parties and anti-imperialist movements.

In the text, "MC" means a MIM Comrade, "MA" means a MIM Associate.

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What is MIM?



The Maoist Internationalist Movement is a revolutionary communist party that upholds Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.



MIM is an internationalist organization that works from the vantage point of the Third World proletariat; its members are not Americans, but world citizens.

MIM struggles to end the oppression of all groups over groups: classes, genders, nations. MIM knows this is only possible by building public opinion to seize power through armed struggle.

Revolution is a reality for the United States as the military becomes over-extended in the government's attempts to maintain world hegemony.

MIM differs from other communist groups on three main questions: (1) MIM holds that after the proletariat seizes power in socialist revolution, the potential exists for capitalist restoration under the leadership of a new bourgeoisie within the party itself. In the case of the USSR, the bourgeoisie seized power after the death of Stalin in 1953; in China, it was after Mao's death and the overthrow of the "Gang of Four" in 1976. (2) MIM upholds the Chinese Cultural Revolution, 1966-1976, as the farthest advance of communism in human history. (3) MIM believes the North American white working class is primarily a non-revolutionary worker-elite at this time; thus, it is not the principal vehicle to advance Maoism in this country.

MIM accepts people as members who agree on these basic principals and accept democratic centralism, the system of majority rule, on other questions of party line.

The theory of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin is universally applicable. We should regard it not as a dogma, but as a guide to action. Studying it is not merely a matter of learning terms and phrases but of learning Marxism-Leninism as the science of revolution.

—Mao Zedong, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 208.

MIM Theory

Number 8 • 1995

THE Anarchist Ideal *and communist revolution*

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Editor's Introduction

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MIM has often challenged anarchists to produce evidence that anarchism ever liberated anyone from oppression or offered a concrete alternative to the gains of communist revolution led by the proletarian party. In this issue of MIM Theory we offer our present and past critiques of anarchist theory and practice, specific anarchist groups, and great moments in anarchist history. We also present MIM's recent battles against anarchist ideology within our own Party — reasserting the need for an organized vanguard party as the only effective way to defeat the imperialists.

Anarchism and anti-party sentiment is largely a phenomenon in the First World, where the majority enjoys the privileges of bourgeois democracy — and “opting out” of the oppression of capitalism, imperialism and patriarchy looks like a real option. But as historical materialists and internationalists, MIM looks toward the successful times when the oppressed masses have risen up and actually created socialist production relations. These circumstances have necessarily included an organized party that was not afraid to seize and wield the power of the state to administer revolutionary change in the interests of the proletariat. The Soviet Union from 1917-1953 and China from 1949-1976 provide such historical inspirations.

Communists and the better anarchists all seek to abolish power of people over other people. That common element lends a heightened urgency to our arguments: We don't want people with that devotion wasting their time in dead-end movements. But communists know that it takes power to destroy power, whereas anarchists see power itself, independent of its conditions, as the enemy of the people. In the era of capitalist restoration in the Soviet Union and China, they proclaim vindication for their view that a revolutionary government is a contradiction in terms. Maoists recognize the potential of a new bourgeoisie under socialism. But rather than allowing that knowledge to prevent us from waging socialist revolution, we look toward the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China (1966-1976) — a full-blown attack on established power and the state in a socialist country — as evidence that the vanguard party can lead a society toward communism.

—MC44

May 1995

What do Anarchist, Trotskyist & Pacifist movements have in common?

- A) Their members have good imaginations and goals.
- B) They are critics of Maoism, the world's most successful communist movement.
- C) They have a success rate of 0% in transforming society toward their goals.
- D) Some of their adherents have seen the light and advanced to Maoism.
- E) All of the above.

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Take credit for your actions. We Maoists do!

- We take responsibility for J.V. Stalin's excessive executions in the USSR.
- We take responsibility for Chinese Communist mistakes in the Great Leap Forward (1958-60).
- We take responsibility for the unjust sufferings of thousands of people in the Cultural Revolution in China, led by Mao Zedong (1966-76).

We'd rather have responsibility for the bad side of revolution than have responsibility for the injustices of the established order. What we can't stand is people who think they have no responsibility for anything — e.g., anarchists, Trotskyists, pacifists: all people using pretty words to criticize real-world revolutionaries taking real-world action to end oppression.

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Maoist Internationalist Movement (MIM)

In the late 1960s, students from imperialist countries around the world demonstrated their internationalism principally through their protest of the imperialist genocide in Vietnam. MIM has written about the American story of these movements, in articles about Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), and Weatherman, an underground splinter group from SDS. Here we examine the student movement in France, which was, like so many other First World political movements, heavily influenced and led by anarchism.

Daniel Cohn-Bendit was a student leader and anarchist theorist in the 1968 French student-worker uprising, involving tens of thousands of students and the "largest general strike in French history"(1). *Obsolete Communism: The Left Wing Alternative* is Cohn-Bendit's treatise on the French student movement. By reviewing this book, written weeks after the events of May, MIM forms a criticism of his anarchist analysis and the movement it helped guide. We also discuss age as the principal contradiction within imperialist countries and the role of students in advanced capitalist societies.

BACKGROUND OF THE STRUGGLE

The nearly two weeks of street fighting in May between university and high school students and workers on one hand and the French riot police on the other was, as most accounts of the story claim, spontaneous and without centralized leadership. But radicalism among students had been building for months before the struggle reached beyond the university walls or to the point of armed confrontation.

Cohn-Bendit puts the student revolt in France in an international context, pointing to similar struggles in Berkeley and Berlin. Particularly, he draws on the experience of the German student union SDS (Sozialistischer Deutscher Studentbund), praising it for rallying for university reform. According to Cohn-Bendit, the French students were disillusioned with their own reformist union, the National Union of French Students (UNEF), and also by the left alternatives who were "devoting all [their] energies to making a scientific, Marxist analyses of the situation, which, despite their learned character, did little to mobilize the students for their own struggle."(2)

The first student actions of that year were in February, and they revolved around repealing university restrictions on dormitory access. Militants at the Nanterre campus of the national university saw it as their responsibility to "liberate the prisoners." "This culminated in male students forcibly entering the women's hostels."(3) So while anarchists, including Cohn-Bendit, claim that their movements have no leaders, this story reveals that the French student movement was actually led by men. Throughout *Obsolete Communism*, Cohn-Bendit does not address the role of women in the student struggle, or gender at all.

At Cohn-Bendit's own campus, Nanterre, huge student strikes (of some 10-12,000 students) were aimed at "improving working conditions," (i.e. reducing overcrowding). In January 1968, Cohn-Bendit had first basked in the spotlight, calling the Minister for Youth a "Hitler youth." When the authorities

The Pitfalls of French Anarchism

May 1968

by MCB52

started extradition proceedings against Cohn-Bendit (a German citizen) and the university started expulsion procedures, students demonstrated in protest.(4)

The Dean called in the riot police, whom the students forced off campus. With this small victory, "the students had felt the iron fist under the glove of the liberal university."(5)

The students' protest grew with the escalation of the war in Vietnam, which angered students "not only because it represents an attempt by Americans to dictate to the rest of the world, but also because 'socialist' bureaucracies are prepared to stand by and let it happen."(6) French students, according to Cohn-Bendit, took "direct action against the representatives of U.S. imperialism in France."(7) Not wanting to alienate the essentially patriotic French labor aristocracy, he neglects to mention that France had started Western involvement in the war and that its own capitalist enterprises would have been as appropriate bomb targets as American Express offices.(8)

THE ROLE OF STUDENTS

According to Cohn-Bendit, while the vast majority of French students came from bourgeois families, the need for



more trained workers had allowed some working-class and petit-bourgeois students into the university system and created a heterogeneity that called into question the "objectivity" of bourgeois sociology. True objectivity, he argued, would reveal the purpose of training a class for 'disinterested' research of a society they control. For example, according to Cohn-Bendit, sociology students were allowed to study either poverty or racism but not the two together.

Despite their heterogeneity, then, student's common social role provided the basis for their demonstration in support of the Algerian revolutionary war of independence from France in the late 1950s, and also for the demonstrations in 1968.

The French working class was conspicuously absent in the Algerian demonstrations. Like other revisionists who cannot see the role of imperialism in creating labor aristocracies, Cohn-Bendit blames the Communists for that absence: "The absence of organized protest outside the universities can be laid squarely at the door of the Communist Party — it was both unwilling and unable to organize effective opposition to the war and support the Algerian revolutionaries." (9)

*... no way of building
of consolidating
the people's power.*

Cohn-Bendit blames the Communist Party for all political shortcomings of the French workers, as though the party had power to forcibly prevent the workers from having their own demonstrations. That said, MIM does not uphold the French Communist Party

(PCF). The group claiming a Maoist line in France, the Union of Communist Youth-Marxist Leninist (UJC-ml), called the PCF the "PCF(R)," with the "R" standing for revisionist. (10) Heeding the economism of the workers, the PCF was indeed grossly non-committal about opposing imperialism in Algeria. But a revisionist party representing imperialist country workers is neither the source nor the obstacle of anti-imperialist action. French workers had a material interest in maintaining French imperialism, and the PCF supported this material interest.

But in 1968, young workers, "most of whom were not members of the trade unions, proved the most militant and tenacious." With this in mind, Cohn-Bendit came close to saying that the principal contradiction within French society at the time was age. "Modern youth is not so much envious of, as disgusted with, the dead empty lives of their parents. This feeling began among bourgeois children and has now spread through all levels of society." (11)

Cohn-Bendit attributes the radicalism among the younger workers to their "a bellyful of low wages" (12) and their "direct economic oppression and misery." (13) But the young workers shared with the young students the potential of embracing the imperialist state fully and fully rewarding from it. Thus, both groups were betraying their own material interests when they protested the state, and it was their youth that united them.

Students, of course, have more personal freedom to participate in political action than do their worker counterparts. In Cohn-Bendit's sexist language: "He rarely has a wife and children to feed. He can, if he chooses, take extreme political positions without any personal danger." (14) And so it is logical that student revolt would begin first and labor-aristocracy workers (with more to lose in the short-term) would join the movement only later, after some of its demonstrated successes.

SPARKS OF THE MOVEMENT

The March 22 Movement was the real beginning of the events of May. Following the arrest of six National Vietnam Committee militants, about 150 students at Nanterre who had gathered spontaneously decided to take over the administration building. The students decried the "black lists" of radical students that university and police authorities kept and said that



the time for peaceful protest was over. They announced that "anti-imperialist debates" would be held on March 29.

The March 22 Movement set aside May 2-3 for teach-ins on imperialism, but instead the radicals built up defenses against the rumored raid by the right wing student group, Occident, on the campus. The dean ordered that Nanterre be closed and that seven of the movement's members, along with one prominent Trotskyist, appear before a university disciplinary board at the Sorbonne campus in Paris.(15)

University authorities thought that this action would fatally cripple the movement, because at this time the radicals were still a minority. But supporters of the March 22 Movement converged on the Sorbonne in solidarity with the leaders, joined by hundreds more. The rector called in the police, who, with orders to clear the courtyard, filed hundreds of students into police vans.

Cohn-Bendit praises the spontaneous crowd that hurled insults and rocks at the vans with cries of "free our comrades!" He points to the barricades that they set up as proof that the masses do not need a vanguard but are perfectly able to engage in the fighting themselves. The well-publicized brutality of the police did indeed win public sympathy for the students, especially in Paris. This support held up for the next couple of weeks, marked by street-fighting and barricades. The rioting students had three main demands: the release of incarcerated demonstrators, police withdrawal from the university, and the re-opening of the university.

Cohn-Bendit appropriates some revolutionary rhetoric in his glorification of the student struggle. Like Mao, Cohn-Bendit explains that people learn the theory of revolution by waging revolution. Unlike Mao, and any other successful revolutionary, Cohn-Bendit disregards the importance of a party in leading both practice and theory. As for the faltering of radicalism among the students, Cohn-Bendit retreats into anarchist idealism:

"There were some 35,000 demonstrators present in the Champs Elyses alone and — *mirabile dictu* [a religious phrase meaning 'it is marvelous to relate'] — they managed without any leaders at all.(16) Unfortunately, the bureaucratic officials of the UNEF, that moribund Student Union, who had been frustrated in their earlier attempts to take over the movement, now called in the help of trade union bureaucrats who, at the Halles aux vins and in the demonstrations that followed, were able to divert the movement from its original aim: the recapture of the Sorbonne ... [A]ll hierarchical and bureaucratic organizations must necessarily pervert all activities in which they participate to their own ends."(17)

The trade unions and the mainstream student union

opposed radicalism, not because they were bureaucratic, but rather because they supported the interests of their constituencies. Anarchists speak of "bureaucracy" as if it was an ideology or political line unto itself, but in fact bureaucracy is merely the form, not the substance of any movement. When anarchism fails, that failure cannot be blamed on "form," but is the result of anarchism itself.

When the head of the Sorbonne announced it would be reopened under police protection, the students organized a "teach-out." Behind barricades, they experimented with putting direct democracy into practice. Some professors joined the students and decried police repression as the teachers' union fused with the student strike committee. In their closest approximation of independent power, the students organized a "summer university" which would have the task of developing new teaching methods, running political seminars, and organizing art exhibitions.

THE WORKERS JOIN THE REVOLT

On May 13, the trade unions called a 24-hour general strike. For Cohn-Bendit, this action represented the attempt of the General Confederation of Labor (CGT), the Communist-led trade union, to seize control of the student movement. This "leader" was worried that his "leaderless" movement would fall prey to a more established one.

Professionals joined the strike, as well as cinematographers and others. Cohn-Bendit essentially ignores them because he misidentifies the heart of the contradiction, which was not about wages but about ideology. It was not about the contradiction between the capitalists and the workers but about the contradiction between the youth and their more established elders.

Cohn-Bendit notes that the struggle is not just about redistributing wealth, but he does not have the materialist tools to explain this. He says "liberals, Stalinist bureaucrats, and reformists alike, all reduce the evils of capitalism to economic injustice. And when they extend their criticism of capitalism to other fields, they simply imply that everything would be solved by a fairer distribution of wealth."(18)

Besides this incorrect assessment of Stalinism, there are no references anywhere in *Obsolete Communism* to the Chinese Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution that was underway at the time of this unrest. The Cultural Revolution was waged precisely because the simple redistribution of wealth is not the end of the struggle.

THE STUDENTS MARCH ON

On May 22, in a desperate but unsuccessful attempt to quiet things down, the government granted amnesty to arrested students. The CGT, for its part, was more than ready to slow the movement and get some big concessions while it could. It organized two marches in different sections of Paris that were

Cohn-Bendit
disregards
the importance of
a party in leading
both practice
and theory.

meant to be as peaceful as possible so as not to provoke the police. The March 22 Movement wanted to pour out of the Latin Quarter (the students home turf) and fly the banner of revolution all over Paris. Maoists wanted to head for the working-class suburbs and get the masses there involved. Instead the different groups appealed for a mass assembly at the Gare de Lyons. The slogans included, "No to negotiations which only prop up capitalism!" "Enough referendums, no more circus!" (19)

Two hundred thousand workers participated in the CGT demonstrations. The March 22 Movement and the action committees started with far fewer but grew through the day. Tens of thousands marched on the Stock Exchange, captured it, and set it on fire. Cohn-Bendit wrote: "Paris was in the hands of the demonstrators, the Revolution had started in earnest! Everyone felt it and wanted to go on. But then the political boys stepped in..." (20)

Cohn-Bendit blames the Trotskyists for turning the students back toward the Latin Quarter, even though it was the one place that was most heavily occupied by the police. And "it was the UNEF and PSU who stopped us from taking the [less well-guarded] Ministry of Finance..." (21) And so on. Cohn-Bendit takes no responsibility for the chaos of a student movement with no unified line.

THE DECLINE OF THE MOVEMENT

Cohn-Bendit holds that if, on May 25, the people of Paris had woken up to occupied Ministries, then the government would have toppled. "It has been said, and rightly so, that for the first time in history a revolution could have been made without recourse to arms." (22) This is pure idealism. If one Trotskyist student had been able to misguide tens of thousands of students and destroy their revolution in one move, how would the new society after Gaullism prevent others who wanted to misguide the revolution?

That night alone turned Cohn-Bendit away from revolution. "When 24 May drew to a close, revolution was still in the cards — nothing seemed settled either way. But by the 25th, our failure to take the Ministries enabled the state and the trade union bureaucrats to rally from the blows they had been dealt the night before." (23)

The CGT negotiated what became known as the "Grenelle agreement," a package of remarkable reformist gains: increase of the minimum wage by one-third, general wage increases of 7% immediately and an additional 3% in October, reduction of the work week, increased family allowances, payment for half the time lost in the strike. These were the most impressive gains made by union negotiating in 30 years. (24) And of course the Third World proletariat would continue to pay the price.

The PCF went back to doing what it had been trying to do for years: join the various social-democrats as a "respectable" party and form a social-democrat coalition to compete with Gaullism on bourgeois democratic terms. It called for ending the strikes, accepting the Grenelle agreements, and the election of a "popular government." Francois Mitterand was the chosen candidate for the new "Left" coalition.

STUDENTS "HELP" THE WORKERS FIGHT ON

The events of May did not die overnight. Some strikers held out and the March 22 Movement organized "Support and Solidarity" committees that brought supplies to the striking workers and helped communication among the islands of strikes. But the March 22 Movement was understaffed. Its last big move was to reinforce the occupying strikers at the Renault plant in Flins, which had been taken over by the police. This particular factory had only a small union membership and a foreign majority, so the CGT did not hold much sway there.

Twelve hundred students began stopping cars of workers on their way to work to tell them that returning was a betrayal. (Cohn-Bendit does not explain why workers needed students to tell them!)

Three days of battle ensued between the students and workers and the CRS, (the National Security Guards, famous all over Europe for their brutality), against the advice of the anti-provocation CGT, which cautioned:

"Rigorously oppose every attempt to mislead the workers' movement. While negotiations are proceeding in the metal industry, and while consultations prior to a return of work continue in various other branches, dangerous attempts at provocation are being made. These take the form of questioning our undoubted achievements and misleading the workers into adventurist escapades." (25)

**If one student could
derail the movement,
how would the new
society have survived
real attacks?**

Cohn-Bendit never accepts that reformism was in the interests of the workers, and so he reads the CGT statements as being opposed to the workers' interests. In fact, the CGT in repeatedly calling the workers to reason, was trying to gain for them what the Labour Party had gained for the labor aristocracy in England: solid union partnership with the bourgeoisie.

During the fighting, one student who was a Maoist and a member of the UJC-ml, died after being chased by the police. Cohn-Bendit claims his death as his movement's own, not mentioning that the student was a Maoist. (26) Maoists, endeavoring always to "serve the people," made great efforts to serve the group they misidentified as the proletariat. While MIM disagrees fundamentally with the UJC-ml's pandering to the labor aristocracy, it also calls the anarchists to task for not recognizing the contributions of Maoists.

THE MEANING OF REVOLUTION

When Cohn-Bendit speaks of "[t]he real meaning of revolution [being] not a change in management, but a change in man," (27) he fails to recognize that the change in management must precede as well as reflect the change in man. Had he examined the process in China, he would have seen that process as dialectical, that the proletarian party cannot change the social relations of the society without state power. An anarchist and an idealist, Cohn-Bendit wants no part of state power

until social relations have already been transformed. This has never happened.

"This change must take place in our lifetime and not for our children's sake, for the revolution

**An anarchist and an idealist,
Cohn-Bendit wants no part of
state power until social relations
have already been transformed.
This has never happened.**

must be born out of joy and not of sacrifice." (28) But revolution is about both joy and sacrifice, as those who have waged it would tell Cohn-Bendit.

In the end, the problem of the French left was not, as Cohn-Bendit argues, that the vanguardism and scientific thinking are incorrect. Its problem was its failure to recognize the material conditions that imperialism brought to the working class that the leftists were trying to serve.

The Maoist UJC-mi, in its newspaper "Servir le Peuple," correctly upheld Stalin, Mao, and supported the National Liberation Front in Algeria and other struggles. But its misunderstanding of First World workers led it to struggle in vain to bring French workers to Maoism. Many young revolutionaries quit their studies to work in factories, serving the wrong

people. Worse, in the events of May, by urging workers to revolt for material gain, they wound up playing the rear guard to the anarchists. (29)

Conversely, young workers and students liked the anarchist agenda of the March 22 Movement, because it addressed real concerns that they had. Its message to, "destroy this society because it is alienating and unjust," rang true with the youth of France. Youth from objectively oppressor groups will sometimes forgo the material incentives to engage in oppression and instead work for justice for subjective rewards. And this is likely only among a small minority. Without adopting the perspective of the truly oppressed (the international proletariat) this revolutionary energy has no anchor and thus no sustenance.

COHN-BENDIT ON THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

The last sections of *Obsolete Communism* claim that the Russian Revolution was not led by the Bolsheviks, but was rather a spontaneous uprising hindered and eventually sold out by the Party. Any anarchist after 1917 has a responsibility to justify their failed path compared to the success of communism. He quotes no historian other than Trotsky, and asserts that Trotsky was a brilliant anarchist who only upheld the vanguard party because he had a religious allegiance to Lenin. (30)

Perhaps it is simple racism that accounts for Cohn-Bendit leaving the Chinese practice of socialism completely out of his analysis. But this omission is symptomatic of another trend: failing to recognize historical advances of socialism and instead looking backwards, to a time when socialism was more "pure" (that is, of course, when it had no victories or setbacks under its belt). The March 22 Movement wanted to reverse history, and do it right this time. But material conditions had changed as imperialism bourgeoisified the French working class, as the police state was mastered, as capitalism developed responses to socialist challenges. (31)

COULD THE REVOLT HAVE BECOME A REVOLUTION?

The 1968 movement was an extraordinary showing of the strength of the youth who are willing to make material sacrifices for subjective gains. The French bourgeois democracy came closer to being toppled than in any other imperialist country, and there may indeed have been a moment in which the government could have been forced to fall.

But in the absence of a vanguard, there would have been a vacuum. The few anarchist Action Committees, which enjoyed only small support and had no coordination of efforts, were not capable of confronting this vacuum, and they were ambivalent about confronting it at all.

Anarchism has no way of building or consolidating the people's power to combat the reactionaries' power. Cohn-Bendit whines about the CGT trying to mislead the workers during the crisis, but surely greater threats to their power would have occurred after the fall of the government. There is no rhetorical substitute for the correct political line and coordinated military effort.

'...the anti-authoritarians demand that the political state be abolished at one stroke, even before the social relations that gave birth to it have been destroyed. They demand that the first act of the social revolution shall be the abolition of authority.

Have these gentlemen ever seen a revolution? A revolution is certainly the most authoritarian thing there is; it is an act whereby one part of the population imposes its will upon the other part by means of rifles, bayonets and cannon, all of which are highly authoritarian means.'

—F. Engels, "On Authority," 1872

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UNDER 21 HERE IS YOUR BALLOT

Notes:

1. Ronald Fraser, ed. 1968: *A Student Generation in Revolt*. Pantheon Books: New York, 1988. p. 203
2. Daniel Cohn-Bendit, trans. from German Arnold Pomerans, *Obsolete Communism: The Left Wing Alternative*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968 p. 24.
3. Ibid., p. 29.
4. Insults about Cohn-Bendit's German citizenship were common, the PCF's newspaper deriding him as a "German anarchist." This led to the chant among students of "We are all German Jews." Richard Johnson, *The French Communist Party versus the Students: Revolutionary Politics in May-June 1968*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972, preface.
5. Cohn-Bendit, op. cit., p. 35.
6. A key rallying point for the students was the distinction between the slogan of the French Communist Party (PCF): "Peace in Vietnam," and their own: "The FNL will win." Daniel Singer, *Prelude to Revolution: France in May 1968*, New York: Hill and Wang, 1970, p. 56.
7. Cohn-Bendit, op. cit., p. 32.
8. The reason for this error is hard to pinpoint. Cohn-Bendit criticizes the PCF for pointing to "a handful" of bosses rather than class interests as they existed, but does not show how his own finger-pointing at foreigners is dissimilar.
9. Cohn-Bendit, p. 44.
10. Patrick Seale and Maureen McConville, *Red Flag/Black Flag: French Revolution 1968*, New York: Putnam, 1968, p. 49.
11. Cohn-Bendit, op. cit., p. 91.
12. Ibid., p. 91.
13. Ibid., p. 107.
14. Ibid., p. 47.
15. The UJC-ml was for the most part not participating in the university events as of this point, focusing on their work in factories and skeptical of the strategy of provocation that posed great risks to revolutionaries. Alain Touraine, *Le communisme utopique: le mouvement de mai 1968*, Paris: Conditions du Seuil, 1968, p. 122.
16. The Latin phrase he uses is from French Catholic lingo of the day which reflects on his mystical adoration of leaderlessness.
17. Cohn-Bendit, op. cit., p. 61.
18. Ibid., p. 103.
19. Ibid., p. 69.
20. Ibid., p. 70.
21. Ibid., p. 70.
22. Ibid., p. 71.
23. Ibid., p. 71.
24. Bernard E. Brown, *Protest in Paris: Anatomy of a Revolt*, Morristown, NJ: General Learning Press, 1974, pp. 20-21.
26. Touraine, op. cit., p. 186.
25. Cohn-Bendit, op. cit., p. 76.
27. Ibid., p. 112.
28. Ibid., p. 112. Amerikan Yippie Jerry

Rubin said the same thing: "We are not going to organize the people around our ability to suffer. We are going to organize the people around our ability to have fun and to survive." *We Are Everywhere*, Harper & Row, N.Y.: 1971. p. 232.

29. Brown, op. cit., pp. 78-80.

30. The Makhno movement and the Kronstadt rebellion, major issues that many anarchist theorists bring up regularly, are discussed elsewhere in this theory journal. Cohn-Bendit's arguments are by no means original, so turn to the next articles for MIM's response.

31. The bourgeois apologist famous for recognizing the anarchism of the students as being a step backward in historical development, Raymond Aron, is wrong on many scores but has stumbled across this correct analysis. He uses the point in a fundamentally different way, however, to suggest that the anarchists would either become bourgeois with age or become "Stalinist totalitarians" like their elders in the PCF. MIM would challenge anarchists to instead take note of historical developments after revisionism took power in the Soviet Union, which is to say, work for Maoism. Raymond Aron, trans. from French Gordon Clough, *The Elusive Revolution: Anatomy of a Student Revolt*, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1969.

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR ACTIONS. WE MAOISTS DO.

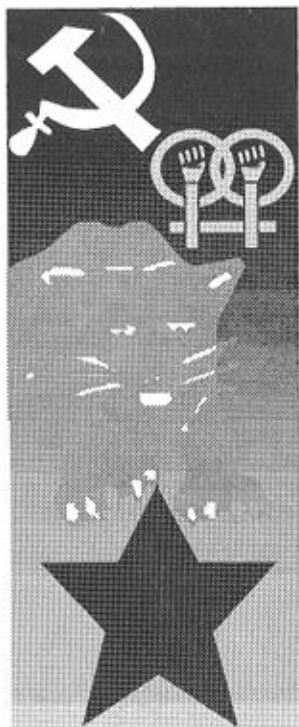
We take responsibility for J.V. Stalin's excessive executions in the Soviet Union. We also take responsibility for the creation of the world's first socialist society and the defeat of Hitler's Germany. We take responsibility for Mao Zedong's mistakes in the Great Leap Forward in China. We take responsibility for the unjust sufferings of thousands during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). We also take responsibility for the Liberation of China; the doubling of life expectancy from 35 to 69 years, and the furthest communist advance in history. What MIM can't stand is people who take no responsibility for anything in the world—anarchists, Trotskyists, pacifists—all people using pretty words to criticize real world action. We prefer to take responsibility for the bad side of revolution than to live with responsibility for the injustices of the established order.

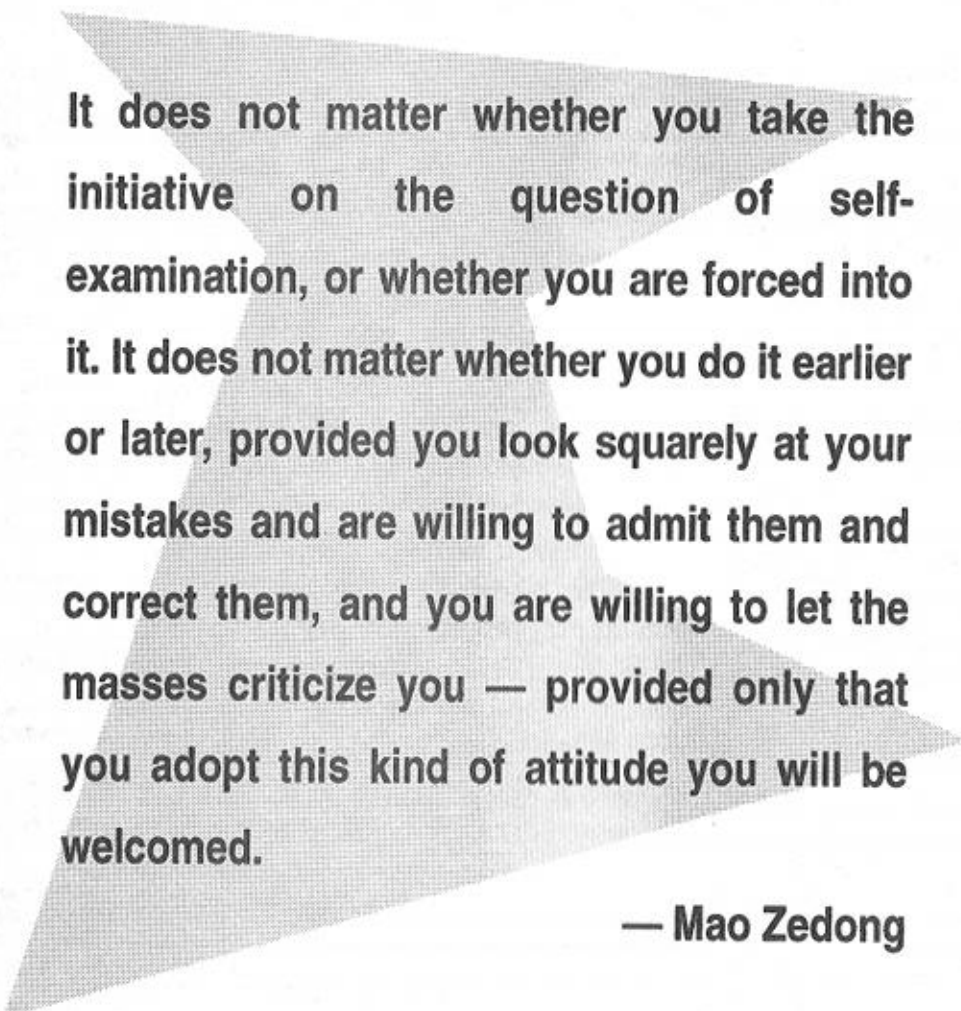
Struggle with, work with, support and join MIM.

The Maoist Internationalist Movement

PO Box 3576, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-3576 or

PO Box 29670, Los Angeles, CA 90029-0670.





It does not matter whether you take the initiative on the question of self-examination, or whether you are forced into it. It does not matter whether you do it earlier or later, provided you look squarely at your mistakes and are willing to admit them and correct them, and you are willing to let the masses criticize you — provided only that you adopt this kind of attitude you will be welcomed.

— Mao Zedong

Chairman Mao Talks to the People, Talks and Letters: 1956-1971. Pantheon Press: New York, 1974. p. 163.

MIM's Anarchist Wind

Resisting the Wind Within

Since Maoism and real anarchism have the same long-run goals, it is not surprising that the two get confused sometimes. Some anarchists take up ideas from Mao, consciously and unconsciously, and some Maoists take up anarchist ideas unconsciously. In 1994 at its Party Congress, MIM had its first serious two-line struggle involving two camps of comrades. Anarchism was at the center of this conflict.

When anarchists start to move in a Maoist direction, the first step is inevitably confusion. MIM has written of an anarchist organization in the Midwest that tried to take a communist anarchist line, but found itself in contradiction on questions of leadership and organization.⁽²³⁾ Leadership and organization takes up considerable time in anarchist politics. The inevitable joke is that anarchists can never have a meeting, because whoever started the meeting would not have the authority to do so. This literally caused the break-up of our Midwest comrades' organization.

Most anarchists would claim they are not opposed to organization per se, just leadership, hierarchy and coercion. At this time in history, MIM believes that revolutionary organization without leadership and hierarchy is not possible, any more than water can be stopped from boiling at 212 F°. MIM believes that anarchists who push for politics similar to Maoism but without the "coercion" are in fact bowing to the unconscious tyranny of structure that exists within the status quo. Thus, contrary to what one would expect of a movement dedicated to classlessness, genderlessness and a world without borders, rich white men play a disproportionate role in the world anarchist movement.

The most consistent "communist anarchists" abandon questions of organization and take up lifestyle politics or lifestyle anti-politics. Such anarchists believe in spreading change on an individual level without coercion. This kind of anarchist, necessarily a pacifist, tends to be environmentally-minded and oriented toward collective living right here and now. In the 1960s, Black Panther Minister of Defense Huey P. Newton referred to the entire white "left" as anarchist on account of its late to non-existent

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appreciation of the teachings of Lenin and Mao on party organization. Even those self-proclaimed Maoists in the leadership of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) didn't form new vanguard parties until the mid-1970s.

In an ideal world, MIM would prefer the pacifist, anarchist approach. Right now anarchism is wrong, because classes, nations and genders concretely exist and have refused to give up their privileges without being forced to do so by (organized) armed struggle.

Back in the first edition of "What Is MIM?" we wrote:

"MIM believes that in a group whose goal is to seize power from the bourgeoisie, discipline and unity are essential if it is to have any chance of success. The government and capitalism's ruling classes are working from an extremely well-fortified and entrenched structure. The only effective way to fight it is to create another more powerful structure that works to dissolve power on the same level. This is the function of a vanguard party."⁽¹⁾

Even though anarchism has brought no significant progress for the human race in its last two centuries of existence, some people continue to cling to it, almost exclusively in the imperialist countries.

In the United States in particular, economic conditions going back to Europeans settling individual farms on the "frontier," individualism has been a central fact of American culture and politics. Even to this day, some anarchists seek to live on agricultural communes as if that is the best way to promote social change. They forget the coercion which created the communes' plot of land, and are in practice uncritical of the structure of capitalism.

ANARCHISM AS LIBERALISM

The lifestyle anarchists who actually seek communist goals — and there are few — have a consistent position that merges with Liberalism. Indeed the final goal of communists, anarchists and Liberals can be the same in a world without class, nation and gender hierarchy. In fact, such shibboleths as "free trade" can only really occur under communist anarchism.

Until that time, powerful groups coerce each other in their economic and gender relations.

Under Liberalism, the rules tend to be fair if everyone has equal power. For instance, the rules of Liberalism are fair for the bourgeoisie or for the male landowners who founded the United States. As long as the less powerful, (and the powerless) are ignored — slaves, women and the poor — then Liberalism makes perfect sense and seems to be a fair way of organizing conduct among equals. To some extent, Liberalism exists within the white nation as a whole. "Free speech" for Euro-Americans exists to some extent, but only at the expense of the "free speech" of the Third World, where the U.S. government backs fascist government repression.

In the ideal Liberal scheme, groups are not organized or acknowledged to oppress other groups. However, at this time, Liberalism is in fact a gross camouflage for oppression of groups by other groups.

Although imperialists are few in number, they are powerful enough to win any one-on-one fight with oppressed people, who are deprived of economic and political power. The way the imperialists retain their privileges is by organizing for Liberalism — a rule by which fights are one-on-one. Hence, the most powerful people support individualism.

ANARCHISM AND ANTI-IMPERIALISM

When some less powerful, or powerless, people suggest that they organize to deliver one simultaneous blow against the oppressors, anarchists protest. They don't like the demands of working together in a group and coordinating actions.

In order to land one effective blow at the same time against oppressors, there has to be coordination. Someone has to give the signal. Otherwise it just doesn't happen and people fight their own ways at their own times — and in history thus far get whipped by oppressors who merely divide and conquer.

Anarchism is impractical. Anarchists want consensus decision-making among oppressed people, arguing that any idea coming from the oppressed is a good one and no one idea should be imposed over the idea of another oppressed person. To these anarchists, the leadership of one communist is as bad as the oppression of any capitalist or imperialist. The anarchists ignore that the communist leader can always be recalled by the masses, because communist leaders have no real power under capitalist or imperialist rule that does not derive from the masses.

Furthermore, anarchists share the glorification of the individual (against the group) with the imperialists. When they see oppressed people gaining any power at all as individuals, they see it as people "making it on their own." This problem is especially great in the United States, where the middle class is so large and the pull of middle class economics on anarchists is very great. These anarchists do not account for the subsidy paid by the Third World proletariat for the middle class of the imperialist countries. These anarchists also don't have any practical plan for paying reparations to the Third World.

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Organizing the ships, railroads and planes to make reparations will by itself require coordination and it is not practical to do as individuals. The volunteer fire department model way of getting things done is not going to work for doing our internationalist duties.

ANARCHISTS IN MIM

In 1994, MIM had an internal struggle that started out over gender — as do so many struggles that end with the political degeneration of comrades in the First World. If someone leaves the party without stating cardinal differences, or stating cardinal differences and then not putting equal time and money into another party or organization with a different line, then we know the issue is just political degeneration. Some comrades lie to themselves about their reasons for degeneration and come up with grandiose political reasons for their break with MIM when they either never had much political commitment or they wish to cut back their commitments.

This experience again shows us that the vanguard party needs to be the most committed to the scientific leadership of the proletariat, and hierarchy in the party should be based at least partly on that commitment.

The career ball-and-chain turns many comrades' heads from revolution. Some find the acquisition of real estate and other wealth to be the ball-and-chain. Finally, there is the ball-and-chain of romance culture, which is probably the single largest diversion of both male and female young comrades. Since the vanguard party is supposed to be the collection of the best leaders of the proletariat, MIM members are supposed to put their politics ahead of careers, the acquisition of wealth or typical middle-class lifestyle and the pursuit of romance. Since capitalists do not pay us to be revolutionaries, revolutionary politics is something that happens in the "leisure-time" of a society. Even full-time revolutionaries are in part funded from a surplus in society that would otherwise make leisure possible.

MIM'S STRUGGLE

Though it started on what everyone thought was a minor issue, the struggle at MIM's Party Congress took a substantial detour into democratic-centralism and organizational questions and became a two-line struggle connected to gender in its own

right.

Some comrades wanted to drop MIM's revolutionary feminism symbol from the MIM Notes and Notas Rojas mastheads. They drew support from some long-smoldering anarchist elements who themselves took the opportunity to light a verbal brushfire for anarchism in the party. However, by this point MIM was already making progress in the resolution of the conflict and the majority of comrades became alarmed with the gust of anarchist wind.

Anarchists implied that oppression by communists in the party was worse than oppression by imperialism. Making the matter even easier for the party, they also adopted some Orwellian anti-communist rhetoric as well as some Trotskyist poses.

The opening salvo of the anarchist wind at the 1994 Party Congress attacked the elected leadership of the party, who served in a party structure that included definite hierarchy, as is the universal practice in Maoist parties. The structure had been nearly unanimously accepted, previously.

HIERARCHY

The anarchists in MIM began by attacking hierarchy outright. Referring to MIM's formal leadership and "informal 'Power Circle,'" they attacked internal party hierarchy that had been accepted without previous complaint at a prior Congress.

"What the [leadership] learned is that it had not yet awarded itself sufficient 'top-down' power to effect its unstated hegemonic goals. Notice that the ... Power Circle now openly declares itself to be the 'top.'"(2)

Actually, as the same document acknowledges later, the "Power Circle" had already been voted the "top" in a previous Congress. The same person started referring to a bourgeoisie in the party, though s/he later retracted that language.

"Like all bourgeois aspirants to power, the ... Power Circle learned from its own errors and came up with a new, improved version of a system to perpetuate itself and fool the masses. MCs X and Y and their supporters now actually propose to put the ... Power Circle in a position to tell a comrade how long a shit they can have."(3)

The now ex-comrades fail to distinguish between the "power" of Maoist comrades and bourgeois totalitarian states: "Like all bourgeois, the ... Power Circle doesn't impolitely mention 'who' will hold what 'office' — because it is seizing power not for itself just as individuals, but as a class!"(4) At the same time, the anarchist critic did not put him/herself up for a vote as party leader, as the party structure allowed, until the very last two days of the Congress.

Further, the rule of the party hierarchy was so oppressive to these anarchists that they referred to it as "star chamber proceedings."(5) The Star Chamber was the monarch's court in England, before bourgeois democracy, and the phrase is synonymous with kangaroo court.

Another charge the anarchists slung at the rest of the party: "the way to get ahead in MIM (if we vote in the corporate structure) will be by not even THINKING anything that disagrees with what you guess the power elite is thinking."(6)

The fact that no one in MIM's political hierarchy had access to the means of production, a state or even an army did not at all stop our anarchists from their irresponsible divisiveness. As MIM pointed out before, anarchists attack everyone organizing to overthrow bourgeois rule with an organized party, as if the revolutionaries were the same as bourgeois oppressors. Thus, these ex-comrades in MIM suddenly came to oppose MIM's line distinguishing communists from the power structure to be overthrown.

Listening to these ex-comrades, one would have thought the party leadership had an army, a court system, a prison and other instruments of coercion. Unfortunately, we must inform the world that MIM does not have any of these instruments of state power or access to the means of production. MIM does not have so much as incipient Soviets of the type the Chinese Communist Party had in the base areas where they led guerrilla warfare in the 1930s and 1940s.

But the anarchists made repeated references to their "persecution and hounding" by the elected party leadership. The anarchists went so far as to say that MIM leaders, had they been in state power, would be executing comrades for nothing. Asked if they thought the Communist Party of China in state power would have repressed them for saying what they did, they had no answer.

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After the first ex-comrade finished attacking the "mutating bourgeois political machine" in MIM, other comrades (now ex-comrades) took even more forthright and less contradictory positions to support the anarchist wind. These ex-comrades simply attacked hierarchy in movement organizations outright:

"Well, in the first place, why should the party have a [Theory Minister] in the first place?"(7) (The Theory Minister is the person with the highest authority in the party, who sees to the day-to-day representation of MIM's theoretical line.) Another chimed in, "what makes the TM right all the time? Such blind allegiance smacks of paranoia and a personality cult."(8)

The only paranoia was by the anarchists who could not stomach any leadership, not even

leadership without a state or capital. On the one hand, they claimed someone was asking for blind obedience; on the other hand, they later complained they were tired of so much arguing and struggle. With their own confused line, no wonder the anarchists only decided to run for the top party offices at the very last minute of the Congress; they weren't sure there should be any party leaders.

Finally, on the subject of hierarchy, another ex-comrade wrote:

"The structure proposal is hierarchical and pushes responsibility inward, not outward. The outline leaves a few key MCs in positions of supposed power, which in reality they cannot have in a Maoist party. The rank-and-file cadres and the branch formations actually carry out MIM's practice and are responsible for recruiting and creating public opinion. It is a mistake to support a structure that is modeled after your basic bourgeois corporation. And unlike a corporation MIM's MCs are not in contact with such a hierarchy enough for such a plan to be even functional. But this is not the main problem. The main problem is that this proposal does nothing to support the growth that comrades must go through to become functioning Maoists."(9)

This ex-comrade thought that hierarchy was not part of Maoism. When shown Mao works to the contrary, this ex-comrade had nothing to say. Maoists do not choose hierarchy

It is impossible to have democratic centralism for a party without hierarchy — a mechanism for deciding questions of differing interpretations of the 'general line.'

because they like it; we choose hierarchy because it works to make revolutions under the horrible conditions of imperialism. Idealistic visions of the non-hierarchical future now only get in the way.

DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM

MIM anarchists argued that "upholding the general line (which ought not to be subject to daily interpretations by either [of MIM's top leaders]) and not betraying people and fomenting revolutionary thoughts and PRACTICE among the people is democratic centralism."(10) Under this definition, many people outside the Party would be upholding democratic centralism. While this anarchist definition describes an honorable way to live one's life, it says nothing about the importance and organization of a vanguard party. The bottom line is, it is impossible to have democratic centralism for a party without hierarchy — a mechanism for deciding questions of differing interpretations of the "general line."

Through this struggle, comrades realized again what it means to have a cardinal principle. Cardinal principles require unanimity and there are only four for MIM — the Cultural

Revolution, the ex-Soviet Union, the Euro-American working class — and democratic-centralism on all other questions. To advocate abolishing democratic-centralism, openly or in essence, and in the face of repeated counter-argument, is to abandon Maoism. There is no point to being in a Maoist party with such views. No one is stopping these anarchists from being anarchists. They should just stop claiming Mao and instead run their own progressive organizations.

For example, the instigator of the anarchist wind began the struggle by saying, "I will, of course, submit to the majority will of this Party." As the struggle went on, however, MIM learned that these anarchists saw discipline among small groups of comrades as primary and party-wide discipline as secondary. The anarchist leader at one pointed opted out of party-wide struggle claiming that s/he was "bowing" to the authority of a small group of comrades with whom the anarchist was working directly.(11) This small group was not elected by the party majority to have authority to override the elected leadership. Finally, when the party majority demanded self-criticism and a period of study before returning to party membership, this comrade quit all party discipline.

There must be unity between local and continent-wide work, because without merging the two together, provincialism and dogmatism will result. Promoting local politics over party-wide discipline is a common mark of anarchism. Like the mistaken slogan, "think globally, act locally," the anarchist

line in MIM inherently distrusted organization beyond a very narrow local sphere. The MIM anarchists correctly saw that continent-wide organization required hierarchy, but they concluded therefore that continent-wide organization (the party) is a mistake. For all practical purposes, they replaced Mao's "practice is principal" with "my local practice is principal" — an inevitably subjectivist and provincialist view.

MAO ON PURGES

Several comrades raised general doubts about self-criticism and purges. (See accompanying article.) They raised doubt, pondering the consequences of purging the wrong comrade at the wrong time. This is liberalism, and it can be destructive to the growth of the Party. To this logic, MIM responds "as long as everyone is on the Maoist path, it won't matter in the end." Mao wrote:

"Why should a person only go up and never go down? Why should one only work in one place and never be transferred to another? I think that demotion and transfer, whether it is justified or not, does good to people. They

thereby strengthen their revolutionary will, are able to investigate and study a variety of new conditions and increase their useful knowledge. I myself have had experience in this respect and gained a great deal of benefit. . . .

"What I am saying is that in every stage of mankind's history there have always been such cases of mishandling. In class societies such cases are numerous. Even in a socialist society such things cannot be entirely avoided either, whether it be in a period of leadership by a correct or an incorrect line." (24)

SECURITY

The MIM anarchists asked,

"Why should we hide our problems from the masses? Let's tell the masses how MIM handles its internal contradictions. Don't let security hold you back. Who cares if the masses know what MIM's 'structure' is on paper? The CPP and PCP [Communist Party of the Philippines and Communist Party of Peru] broadcast their basic operating structures to the world. Any pig can figure MIM out in a hot second. The ONLY security is reliance on the masses. Let the masses approve MIM's administrative 'structure.' We serve the masses, remember, shouldn't the masses have a say in THEIR Party?" (19)

The MIM anarchists also suggested that MIM put its internal discipline "in front of the masses." (20)

Going to a logical conclusion, the leader of the anarchist wind advocated that MIM elect its leaders in public through majority vote of the masses and thus do away with wrangling over internal party structure! While raising this, our anarchist leader denied s/he was attempting to water down our cardinal question on the masses in the imperialist countries. Nonetheless, s/he refused to say how we would decide who should vote and thus left it open that the majority of Euro-Amerikans in the public would have the majority of votes in forming a supposedly internationalist proletarian party.

It was an apparent contradiction that if we could not decide "top-down" on the basis of crystallized rational knowledge, then we would have to let anybody vote. Perhaps because they realized this, our anarchists advocated this position and didn't seek to develop it very far, having been exposed for both Liberalism and chauvinism on the Euro-Amerikan working class question.

To these far-fetched suggestions from the anarchists, the majority replied sarcastically:

"No need for a party with [democratic centralism] at all. Let's just campaign our way to the top! There's no security problem, because there is no repressive state here! No, not here, only inside the MIM party is there a repressive state with Thought Police. In North America, shit, we can put up our party leaders for public election, no problem, because there is no [state] repression of communists, just 'persecution' of communists inside communist parties." (22)

In the highly organized era of imperialism, a revolution cannot be waged without organization, hierarchy and democratic centralism in the proletarian party. Maoists do not exalt this reality, but neither do we turn away from it or attempt to wish it away. We intend to remain organized and to emerge victorious.

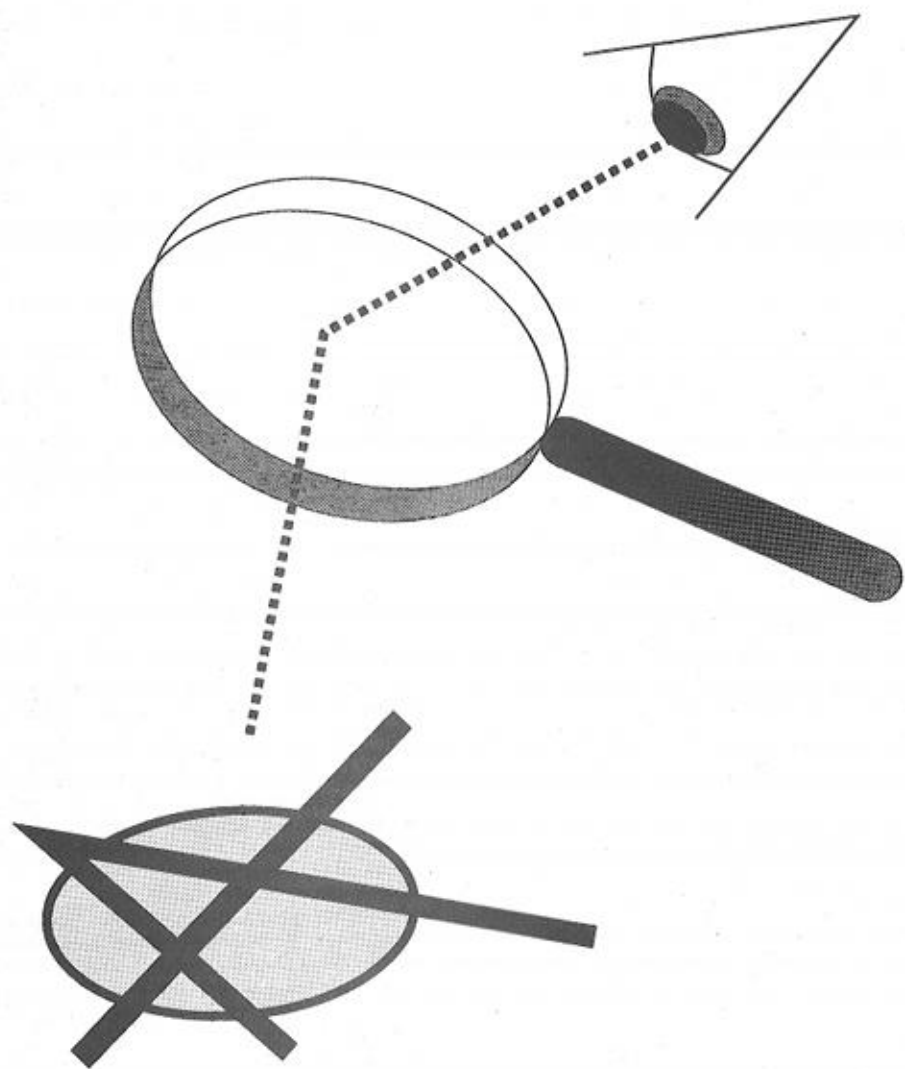
Notes:

1. "What Is MIM?" 1991. p. 13.
2. Anarchist Wind Internal Document of MIM, "MIM/Senses," July 19, 1994.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Anarchist Wind Internal Document, "Chai," July 23, 1994.
7. Anarchist Wind Internal Document of MIM, August 3, 1994.
8. Anarchist Wind Internal Document of MIM, July 21, 1994.
9. Anarchist Wind Internal Document of MIM, July 20, 1994.
10. Anarchist Wind Internal Document of MIM, "Where I Stand," July 31, 1994.
11. Anarchist Wind Internal Document of MIM, July 21, 1994.
12. "MIM/Senses," op cit.
13. "MIM/Senses," op cit.
14. Anarchist Wind Internal Document of MIM, July 23, 1994.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. "MIM/Senses," op cit.
18. Anarchist Wind Internal Document of MIM, July 21, 1994.
19. Anarchist Wind Internal Document of MIM, July 23, 1994.
20. Ibid.
21. Majority reply, August 13, 1994.
22. Majority reply, July 23, 1994.
23. MIM Notes Bound Volume, available from MIM for \$10.00. Send check made out to MIM Distributors to PO Box 3576, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-3576.
24. *Chairman Mao Talks to the People: Talks and Letters, 1956-1971*. Pantheon Books: New York, 1974. p. 162.

Why is MIM underground?

Read *Agents of Repression: The FBI's Secret Wars Against the Black Panther Party and the American Indian Movement*, by Ward Churchill & Jim Vander Wall. This history of the birth of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and a detailed account of the FBI's work infiltrating and splitting and wrecking revolutionary organizations, including murders and frame-ups, helps answer the question. The book demonstrates the extent of the threat to anti-imperialist movements, and the long-term futility of the FBI's work.

Send \$17 to: "MIM Distributors,"
PO Box 3576
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-3576.



MIM's mushy critic stand on these questions?

7. MIM's critic reveals his/her class standpoint with this statement. Clearly s/he assumes that all readers will be horrified by the mere mention of Pol Pot's name. See MIM Notes 41 for MIM's refutation of the myths about Pol Pot that MIM's critic assumes are universally believed facts. (Available from MIM for \$2.)

8. Shadow readers? (Seriously, anarchism, like Trotskyism, has a disproportionate influence in First World nations where bourgeois ideology has the most influence.)

9. Perhaps MIM Notes' consistent exposure of the relationship between U.S. imperialism and the privilege enjoyed by the North American white nation has left MIM's critic feeling guilty? If so, s/he should work with MIM against imperialism, instead of either wallowing in his/her own guilt or walking away from it.

10. Where's the beef?

The Shadow is available for \$1/copy bulk rate or \$2/copy first class from Shadow Press, P.O. Box 20298, New York, NY 10009. They prefer cash, but also accept checks made out to "Shadow Press."

5th Estate Hates MIM

*reprinted from MIM Notes 60
January 1992*

MIM received the following letter in response to a request to exchange publications

Mao-oids:

We don't exchange subscriptions with admirers of dictators and mass murderers. We cast our lot with our comrades from Hong Kong who produced the enclosed poster.

Remember what the Beatles said ...

—The Fifth Estate
November 1991

MC17 responds: The enclosed poster was one of Mao with bloody bullet holes through his head. The slogan on the poster was "no more emperors, down with authoritarianism of all kinds."

MIM sees this letter as a classic example of the anarchists' incorrect practice which makes it impossible for them to achieve anything. MIM exchanges publications with a range of political groups hoping to expand our sources of information and further improve our line as we work to build the most pro-

gressive organization possible. These particular anarchists can not even see past their own blinders of unsubstantiated propaganda to exchange potentially useful information or enter into intelligent dialogue with a group like MIM whose ultimate goal is quite similar to their stated purpose.

The difference between Maoists and anarchists is one of practice. Maoists are the real anarchists, the ones who will ultimately bring about communism: a society without power of any people over people. This difference is seen historically: Maoists have a practice and a history of success; never has there been a successful anarchist revolution.

Anarchists have never posed a threat to capitalism and so are themselves complicit with the system they profess to hate.

MIM offers any believers in anarchism essays and books to back up our politics. Write to us for a list of literature on anarchism including a review of the publication of the Fifth Estate. People interested in MIM's work defending Mao against the charge of being a butcher should send \$2 to MIM Distributors for back issues.

f@#% off!

*reprinted from MIM Notes 61
February 1992*

*MIM received these two letters in
response to queries about
exchanging newspapers:*

Send your disgusting Maoist-Stalinist-Leninist trash to China! Eat the rich and bury the Leninists!

—Anarchy Magazine
December 1991

Dear Friends,
Here's the latest SHADOW. Sure, let's exchange subs — our politics may be different, but it's good to exchange stories, info and viewpoints. Keep in touch!
peace on earth,

—The SHADOW
December 1991

MC17 responds:
Some anarchists are better than others.

Review: IWW's Industrial Worker

reprinted from MIM Notes 42
June 18, 1990

Industrial Worker
April 1990
\$10 per year/12 issues
3435 N. Sheffield Ave.
Chicago, IL 60657

by MCØ

Count the IWW among those left groups still hankering for "one big union" in the American white working class. The most theoretical piece in this issue, "Expanding the Struggle," exposes the general shallowness and primitive Marxist analysis of the IWW.

After a general rundown of the problems in organizing — existing union leadership is bought off, sexism, workplace hierarchy — ways to "expand the struggle" are proposed. The IWW would like international networks of workers, direct links between strikes, and a city wide rent strike. Seizing power from the state by force didn't seem to make the list.

The author concludes: "It means challenging the system by breaking down the chains that exist in our minds as well as the economic and legal ones." (1) This adds up to liberal individualist guilt, especially because the IWW proposes no mechanisms to break the economic and legal chains. Certainly MIM believes in attitudinal and cultural revolution but these are products of concrete actions. To the IWW's credit, they are putting out a newspaper.

The IWW makes several fundamental mistakes in its analysis of the American working class. First, it fails to recognize that this class has something in common with its employer: in a revolution, workers who are paid more than the value of their labor will lose a hell of a lot more than their chains. It is ironic that the IWW doesn't see the writing on the wall in the union leadership-membership distinction decried by so many left groups. In the majority of these unions the membership is not to the left of the leadership (which is nowhere near communist). Greyhound drivers and Pittston workers want more money and better jobs, not revolution.

Second, the character of the working class in Amerika is no longer industrial. Although the IWW recognizes this to the extent that they make overtures to service workers, for example, they do not realize that Americans are remunerated for non-productive (in the Marxist sense) and non-exploitative jobs. Sure organize all organizable classes, but no longer will "All Power to the Soviets" and workers holding the means of production hostage bring down the economy. OK, Mr. Bourgeoisie, I've got your typewriter and office files...

MIM's main beef here is people wasting their time when this effort could move on in the more revolutionary groups first, namely students, non-white workers, prisoners, etc.

A front page article naively pushes the IWW constitution-

al plank to "build a new society within the shell of the old." Attempting an alternative government and economy is a common strategy among anarchists. The IWW has selected out a community-oriented "bread bank" where members withdraw flour and bake bread for sale. This ideology does not realize the inherent weakness of such alternative systems which exist on a whole different scale from the imperialist system which drives the American economy. The system forces peoples participation in the national economy via taxes and the need for wages. Moreover, even if alternative economic programs grew tremendously in size they would still only work toward escapism. They do not confront the international parasitism of the United States, nor do they build for a revolution.

Some of the better articles in the paper focus on El Salvador and the Philippines. But even these fall into crass, workers-in-the-ford dogma. The piece on the Philippines covers a KMU union leader who says all the Aquino promises fell through. True enough, but the article does not bother to point out that the KMU opposed the NPA boycott of the Aquino election and constitutional ratification. (2) The IWW managed to find a reformist force and talk about imperialism solely in terms of worker's struggles.

Notes:

1. Industrial Workers, p. 3.
2. See Gregg R. Jones, *Red Revolution Inside the Philippine Guerilla Movement*, 1989.

Review: Fifth Estate

reprinted from MIM Notes 36
March 1989

Fifth Estate
Spring 1988
\$5/year, \$7 foreign
PO Box 02548
Detroit, MI 48202

Fifth Estate is a long-standing anarchist effort. It contains news of actual anarchist organizing, something that is often hard to put a finger on. For example, there was the anarchist "unconvention" and a direct action by some radicals that ripped up the train tracks where Brian Wilson was run over.

In this issue there is a nice review of some Palestinian history to put the uprising in some context, lengthy discussions of Earth First!, ecofeminism and the ecology movement and a piece on Spanish anarchist history.

The line of Fifth Estate is summed up as follows in contrast with another anarchist trend: "Our critique of technology and technological civilization; our reappraisal of primitive society and its relevance, both as a model for anarchy and as an alternative, visionary epistemology for people today; our critique of scientism, positivism and rationalism; and our affirmation of a sacred or spiritual dimension in nature." (p. 5)

By the way, Fifth Estate is anti-communist as in anti-totalitarian. The organizing news is peppered with comments about the RCP, RSL and others.

The Fifth Estate line is more deeply thought out and researched than most of what passes for anarchism. Comrades should come to grips with Fifth Estate or more similar lines of thought.

Review: Black Flag

reprinted from MIM Notes 35
January 23, 1989

Black Flag: For Anarchist Resistance
No. 181, 4/25/88
BM Hurricane
London WC1N 3XX
6 Issues
£5 Free to Prisoners, non-earners pay postage

This monthly newspaper is hard-core anarchist. It calls for one big union of industrial workers and opposes any form of the state.

The statement of principle is "for a social system based on mutual aid and voluntary co-operation — against State control and all repression. To establish a share in the general prosperity for all — the breaking down of racial, religious, national and sex barriers — and to fight for the life of one world." One also gathers that it opposes all Marxism.

With the exception of an article about genocide against Aborigines in Australia, Black Flag, like most anarchist and Trotskyist newspapers has almost nothing on the Third World. It has plenty to say about white workers and the liberties of people in white countries, however.

On the whole, though, quite interesting.

Review: Duel in Peru

reprinted from MIM Notes 76
May 1993

S. Colman, 1993

by MC45

MIM applauds S. Colman's efforts in this play. While the Peruvian revolution has most anarchists these days falling to agnosticism or pacifism, Colman — a self-described anarchist — is working to popularize the fact of the revolution. "Duel in Peru" demonstrates a commitment to developing the level of debate between anarchists and communists, on the tactics and strategy of revolutions.

MIM's criticism of this play includes a critique of anarchism as an ideology and a center of organization, as well as Colman's thin treatment of Marxism. This review is written as part of what we hope will be a continuing debate between anarchists and Maoists on the questions of world revolution, and towards the most effective means of organizing in the interests of the people of Peru and the world.

MARXISM AND ANARCHISM

Colman is attempting to develop and strengthen the connections between Marxism and anarchism. Colman takes on the title of "a hyphenated anarchist — like anarcho-Marxism (along with anarcho-pacifism, anarcho-feminism, etc.)." (1) MIM calls people like Colman, who recognize the need for dialectical analysis and for the elimination of oppression, communists in ideology. Materialists, such as Colman, recognize that anarchism is an ideal at this stage, not a means of eliminating oppression.

"Anarchism's strength is in its ability to provide an idealistic utopian vision. Without a vision, change cannot happen. But a vision is not enough. The communist method of materialism can get us from here to the stateless, classless society. Idealism alone will get us nowhere. Keep fighting the power — one winnable battle at a time," said one ex-anarchist turned Maoist. (3)

Colman spends a lot of time playing with the tension between individualist ideology and revolutionary analysis. Individualist theory is used as a prop for capitalism and is difficult for revolutionaries to get rid of entirely. This tension becomes the principal contradiction in the play—superseding the political debate and focusing on the personal. This approach discounts the importance of revolution and political struggle. But MIM's cultural tastes dictate that people starting political projects should finish them—to do otherwise is to demean the political struggle you intend to help.

THE DUEL

The plot centers on the debate between Marxism — in the

you/ and there's just no pleasing you/ and i care enough/ that i'm mad/ that half the world don't even know what they could'a had".

In "Letter to a John," Defranco again advocates the anarchist revenge that many pseudo-feminists opt for. Her hard-ass attitude is her way of saying that she is in control of the situation and her life as she rationalizes that prostitution is the way to take back the control she lost as a result of being sexually abused as a child.

"I'm just gonna sit on your lap/ for five dollars a song/ I want you to pay me for my beauty/ I think it's only right/ 'cause I have been paying for it all of my life/ I'm gonna take the money i make/ and I'm gonna go away/ I was eleven years old/ he was as old as my dad/ and he took something from me/ I didn't even know that I had/ So don't tell me about decency/ Don't tell me about pride/ Just give me something for my trouble/ 'cause this time it's not a free ride."

The solution that Defranco proposes is reactionary because she seeks the power that will benefit herself only. MIM knows that the best revenge for violence against women is to build a revolutionary struggle. With her younger, more anarchist take, Defranco ends up advocating the same that rich yuppie women advocate — "Now I just want to take/ I'm just gonna take/ I'm gonna take / and I'm gonna go away" — she just doesn't have it yet.

When First World women are enraged at the relative inequality within the white nation and seek revenge against the violence against women, they must also take a step further. Unless First World women are willing to fight against patriarchy and capitalism, they are accepting that they benefit from the status quo.

The most disgusting display of women being socialized to enjoy their submission on this album is where Defranco sings: "we are made to fight/ and fuck and talk and fight again/ and sit around and laugh until we choke." When women are fascinated with violence and eroticize their loss of control, it only makes sense to find solace in the fact that you do not have to stand up and fight because you know you will not win.

Women have less economic and political power. In order to justify their passivity toward this, pseudo-feminists and anarchist feminists must play the game that they have some sense of power. Both groups are also actively on the side of the patriarchy when they do not organize and fight against the system itself.

Individual acts of power are temporary and revenge against all men is reactionary. It must come also with the understanding that the enemy is the system and the ally to the struggle of women are revolutionary feminists. MIM warns the revengeful anarchist feminists out there that you are not solving the origin of the problem if you are taking power back for the momentary image of control it gives. Feeding into this is feeding into the fact that anarchist feminists are merely taking advantage of their relative privilege under patriarchy.

Review: rage against the machine

reprinted from MIM Notes 74
March 1993

rage against the machine is relentlessly political, and their points of reference are rooted in internationalism. The CD cover pictures a Buddhist monk burning to death in protest of south Vietnamese war policies and the liner notes are printed on a background photo of the Vietnamese masses. The band gives thanks for inspiration to, among others, the Mohawk Nation and Huey Newton. In their lyrics the Black nation, Azania, Indigenous people in North America are all "my people." They also put on a damned good show.

"Bombtrack," the first cut on the CD, lays out the band's agenda attacking "Landlords and power whores/ On my people they took turns," and calling out so-called radicals who aren't dealing the whole truth to their audiences. "Killing in the Name" corrects that error, hammering home the fact that cops and the Klan are the same folk. Which is why they do the same job.

"Take the Power Back," "Bullet in the Head," and "Know Your Enemy" stress education as the key to revolution. They point to the fundamental contradiction of imperialist teachings. On the one hand, capitalism feeds its youth on the American dream: "compromise, conformity, assimilation, submission/ Ignorance, hypocrisy, brutality, the elite" so we can grow up to be good soldiers and tax-payers. But the reality of the system based on this ideology breeds enemies within its ranks.

In "Wake Up," the band goes after "The networks at work, keepin' people calm," who cover up the history of Black nationalism to try and justify FBI murders of Black revolutionaries. The song is a brief lesson on how none of this is any accident, and how imperialism is expedient about eliminating individuals and organizations that threaten to make revolution. rage against the machine closes this song with their own threat: "how long? Not long/ Cause what you reap is what you sow."

"Settle for Nothing" slams reformists for leaving capitalism intact: "If we don't take action now/ We settle for nothing later/ We'll settle for nothing now/ And we'll settle for nothing later."

But in the final analysis, rage against the machine leaves listeners with no action to take, and no viable way to destroy the machine.

The closest rage against the machine gets to offering a practice is in "Take the Power Back." They call on their audience to "get it together then/ Like the mother fuckin' weather-

men," but they make no accounting for the ultimate demise of the Weather Underground or even their failure to make any significant dents in imperialism when they were around. MIM wonders if rage against the machine consciously shares the weather brand of internationalism: solidarity with the international proletariat in words but a practice that leaves American imperialism intact. From the final cut on the CD, "Freedom:" "What does the billboard say/ Come and play, come and play/ Forget about/ the movement/ Anger is a gift."

The flip side of revolutionary internationalist consciousness is the strategic confidence to plan to take on the imperialists eventually. MIM invites all people who are turned on to rage against the machine's music and lyrics to struggle through the anger and pain of imperialism to a revolutionary practice.

Punk Protest Bangs a Gong For Privilege

*reprinted from MIM Notes 68
September 1992*

by MC12

At two consecutive weekends of punk political and cultural activity in Washington, D.C. at the end of July and beginning of August, the white punk movement demonstrated real revolutionary potential, but also showed how deeply it is currently mired in both reformism and anarchism. The reformism is a more advanced stage of political decadence, but it apparently represents what happens to the youthful anarchism if it is never organized for revolution. The "advanced," older leaders do a lot to retard potentially revolutionary development in this movement.

At its best, the movement trashes the whole system, at least making it possible for real revolutionaries to have some influence on people within the movement who want to go beyond just destroying the system. Many of these people enthusiastically buy MIM literature. At its worst, it is a preachy call to white self-interest, and is therefore both harmful and useless to truly oppressed people.

A flyer from Positive Force, the organizers of the Punk Percussion Protest and concert which drew about 1,000 mostly young white people near the capitol on July 25, screams, "Revolution begins with you." But then it takes off after a bunch of recent Supreme Court decisions which will make life more inconvenient for privileged white people, as if the Court itself had not been a tool for genocide and exploitation since

its creation.

The flyer even says, "The Court, once a strong protector of free speech, has increasingly swung towards tolerating stricter limits on expression." This kind of statement represents the ugly, privileged side of the white youth movement. Contact with, study and understanding of the lives of oppressed people—principally oppressed Black, Latino and indigenous nations—shows the emptiness of this kind of longing for better days gone by.

The organizers eventually descended into complete Democratic Party politics, when they emphasized "unless we act now, our society will be dominated for most of the rest of our lives by a Supreme Court that resembles a Moral Majority rogues' gallery." In other words (although the writers would likely object to this characterization), "You better vote for Clinton, gang, or white people are in trouble!"

The pamphlet did also mention rolling back affirmative action and the prison system as areas where the Supreme Court has recently caused harm. A spokesperson for the League of Indigenous Sovereign Nations also addressed the crowd, demanding a seat at the United Nations for indigenous peoples. (MIM says: one seat?! We can do better than that.)

The pamphlet listed a handful of reformist, mostly Democratic Party groups such as the National Organization for Women, Amnesty International, the American Civil Liberties Union; as well as a few more progressive groups such as the Washington Peace Center and the D.C. Student Coalition Against Apartheid & Racism. Then it said: "If you don't like any of these, then start your own!"

This appears to be the work of a jaded leadership simply mimicking the angry alienation of its youthful counterparts; the list of organizations would then represent the decrepit state of the writers themselves, while the call to "start your own!" is a hollow echo of rebellious sentiment.

One young person interviewed by MIM at the rally explained of the Supreme Court, "I just think they're wrong. Maybe this'll do something to change their views on the world."

When pressed, however, he agreed that was unlikely. What about overthrowing the whole government and building a better society altogether?

"That could work, maybe..." although "greedy people are going to keep wanting the power."

So what do we do?

Eventually he conceded, "We have to organize and start a new culture."

At the concert, members of Riot Grrrl, an organization of angry young punk women, took the stage to explain its views on feminism and women's revolution. Women are oppressed the world over, one woman explained, and "that is why we must band together for a revolution that is our own."

"The revolution has started," she said, "and it is like no other... it is a Grrrl revolution... it is Grrrl power."

Prior to reviewing Riot Grrrl literature or conducting an

interview, MIM won't yet assess Riot Grrrl as a whole. But MIM urges the militant women in this group to read and critique MIM literature and struggle over the revolutionary course for feminism, which means adopting the perspective of the world's truly oppressed.

The Riot Grrrl is also currently tailed by paternalist "pro-feminist" men, who tell men, for example, to cross the street when walking near women at night. Men who have this condescending view of women will never be able to take women seriously as warriors, political leaders, or comrades. This is a kinder, gentler chivalry for which revolutionary women have no use.

At the Riot Grrrl convention the next weekend, a pamphlet called "Patriarchy Kills" lists "a few tips" on how men can stop rape, including: Don't laugh at sexist jokes, don't support sexist culture, support women who say they've been raped, don't blame women for rape, educate yourself and support self-defense for women, avoid being near women alone on the street at night (for fear that you might frighten them), demand that the State bust rapists harder ("Many authorities pay lip-service to such concerns—it's our job to see that they do more.") don't rape anyone, join them or groups like them.

The only good thing about this article was its statement that in order to not rape, men must "learn to communicate openly and honestly about your desires, and insist on that from your partner(s) ... Sex must be explicitly and mutually agreed upon, free from undue pressure, or it is rape." MIM agrees almost completely with this statement. But MIM knows that no sex under imperialist patriarchy is "free from undue pressure," and therefore it is all rape! MIM does not support the paternalistic efforts of chivalrous men to create a more acceptable form of rape, by, for example, "avoiding sex with anyone who is drunk or chemically impaired or too young or who otherwise may be vulnerable to you." It is not that simple.

The reformist side of this movement poses left and anarchist, but in reality is neither. It acts like it doesn't want to tell people what to do, but in fact it moves people toward empty reform struggles. The anarchist side is perhaps epitomized by a statement from one of the members of the band Bikini Kill, which played at the concert.

"Everybody knows what to do," she said. "I don't need to tell you."

But if "everyone knows what to do," then why is there so much groping and confusion on the "left" about how to respond to the war on women? And why have no strategies advanced by the American "women's movement" succeeded in curtailing patriarchal domination?

MIM will continue to struggle on the fringes of this and similar movements, support what can be supported and try to salvage as many white American nationals as possible. Those young people who will hold themselves to the revolutionary standard of oppressed people in America's internal colonies and in the Third World should consider themselves desperately needed for the revolution, and kiss the motherland good-bye.

Rollins Stays Punk and Disorderly

reprinted from MIM Notes 65
June 1992

The Rollins Band
Imago Recording Company
1992

by MCØ

In emetic bursts of yelling — backed by that hallmark of Black Flag: throbbing headache guitars — Henry Rollins sings, or rather screams, about how he's kept his self-esteem, an all important concept to the music of alienated white youth. The songs on this self-titled album follow a distinctly male self-esteem through failed relationships with women, the ugly judgements of society and a bout with suicide. It's not pretty, and not meant to be.

The very existence of The Rollins Band shows a certain toughness or self-esteem to which revolutionaries can relate. Of the multitude of anarcho-nihilist punk bands to come up in the 1980s, only a handful remain. While Black Flag — Rollins' first well-known band and one of the punk greats — is extinct, he is now screaming into the microphone with "the bars," Black Flag's icon, tattooed on his inflated bicep. Rollins still has his rage against assimilating into society, selling out, growing up, being normal and is, in a word, still "a punk."

The first two tracks, "Low Self Opinion" and "Grip," examine the mind of someone on the edge, someone out of sync with society. In "Low Self Opinion" Rollins sings, "You withdraw deeper inside/You alienate yourself/And everybody else." Yet at the end of the song Rollins essentially tells this angry, self-hating individual that he needs to look at his actions from the outside and get some self-esteem.

In "Grip," when the walls close in all around a similar pro-

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tagonist, Rollins is yelling that "You've got to jump back/Keep your self-respect intact."

Both these songs really capture the dialectical nature of the concept of self-esteem. On the one hand, it is a reactionary prescription for social problems, as in the cliché said of people on welfare that they ought to "pull themselves up by their bootstraps." On the other hand, no revolutionary movement has ever succeeded without instilling in party members and the masses enough confidence and "self-esteem" to believe that they can smash the system.

Where does The Rollins Band fall on this continuum? Like most punk music, somewhere in the middle. It can't conceive of a political movement, but it won't tolerate life under the present system.

"Tearing," "You Didn't Need," and "Almost Real" make up a triumvirate of songs where women, and fickle actions in relationships, send men to emotional hell. In "Tearing," two lovers rip on each other until its time to tear away. Unfortunately the song is very agnostic about the causes of such break ups: "Sometimes things don't work out/It tears you apart, it tears me apart/Sometimes happens all the time/And I'm feeling torn apart."

MIM can sympathize that relationships in a patriarchal context suck, but know that people are no more likely to find suitable partners through break ups than struggling to maintain existing relationships. Ironically, "You Didn't Need," a tune about how the singer feels after a woman leaves him for no reason, suggests one of the other alternatives: "Some people are better left alone." MIM often says if people can't hack the struggle of sexual relationships that they should opt for celibacy.

"Almost Real" is a bit of a sexist inversion. It is the story of a woman who goes man to man, and how the protagonist, who has already been with her, sees her future prospects "lined up like broken heroes." While there are many women in this position, it is certainly a better summary of male interest under capitalism and patriarchy.

The coup de grace for The Rollins Band is "What Do You Do," a song for those who "see yourself and want to kill." The endless crescendos of harsh chords bring this whole ugly tour of darkness to a head.

Feel the pressure
Feel it squeeze
The eyes in your head
The heart in your chest
Where's the answer
Where's the release
What do you do

Don't commit suicide from listening to The Rollins Band. Join MIM, write the occasional record review, and get out on the street and struggle with the people.

Self-help Abortion Won't Liberate Women

reprinted from MIM Notes 67
August 1992

by a comrade

In June [1992], the Supreme Court upheld all but one of Pennsylvania's restrictions on abortion, and privileged women are somewhat justifiably scared that their "right" to legal abortion will be impeded. Those hardest hit by this ruling are young teenage women who will increasingly need the written consent of their parents or permission from a judge.

Poor women of America's oppressed nationalities do not have access to adequate health care of any kind, and the ruling makes that situation worse. For poor women, the discussion of health care includes far more than the "right" to terminate a pregnancy; without a larger discussion of how to abolish imperialism and patriarchy, abortion is not the principal contradiction. Important as access to abortion is, only women for whom gender is the only contradiction can devote their entire political practices to a demand for one procedure.

Examining the practices of feminists and pseudo-feminists will help revolutionaries separate friends from enemies. It can also provide a basis to struggle with feminists who have an analysis of patriarchy but who don't have the necessary revolutionary practice. The self-help movement is an example of feminism minus real revolutionary theory.

Self-help refers to both a "medical" procedure and a philosophy — women take their own health care into their hands and perform at-home abortions, also called menstrual extractions (ME), on one another. Broadly, the term self-help means women learning about and being responsible for their own health care, including pelvic exams, treatment of vaginal infections, and menstrual extractions. The groups are intimate collectives of friends and acquaintances who grow to trust each other with their bodies and their confidences.

SELF-HELP PRE-DATES ROE

The ME self-help movement began in 1971, pre-Roe v. Wade, in response to white women's anger and frustration at back-alley abortions and often-resulting deaths. In the decades before Roe, more than a thousand American women died each year as a result of illegal abortions.(1) In the early 1970s, women began teaching themselves how to perform menstrual extractions, the process of extracting the contents of the uterus to eliminate a pregnancy. ME lost much support of "feminists" after Roe v. Wade, but in 1989, after the restrictive Webster decision, women thought that their "right" to abortion would be taken away.(2) For the past several years women trained in

the technique of self-help have travelled across the country and given presentations on menstrual extraction and other health care issues. Self-helpers say that thousands of menstrual extractions have been performed since its inception as a procedure.(3)

The self-help movement is still an underground movement, and its presence in cities around the country is not publicly advertised. There is no evidence that this movement has reached rural women, or inner-city poor women. There are groups in Cleveland, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, San Francisco, Honolulu, New York, Boston, and Salt Lake City, as well as other cities. Self-help is promoted primarily by the LA-based Federation of Feminist Women's Health Centers; however, there is no obvious way for women to find information on self-help groups in their area. Since 1989, the Federation has received hundreds of phone calls from women requesting information on menstrual extraction.

Self-helpers emphasize that women do not actually give themselves abortions; you must have this group support and it is physically impossible to perform one on yourself using this procedure.

The materials used to make a kit for the procedure, patented as the Del-Em, can be obtained from various sources, including pet supply stores and hardware stores.(4)

Fifteen white women, roughly between the ages of 21-35, attended a local meeting in Washington D.C. on July 8, 1992. MIM spoke with one woman, a self-helper since 1975, who indicated that this movement primarily serves women who already have the best access to health care in the world. The self-help underground network fails to reach Black, Latino, and Indigenous women. Organizers express remorse at this fact, but are not willing to risk exposure and the state repression that a public campaign may engender.

TOUGH CHOICES FOR FEMINISM

MIM knows that the self-help approach still leaves the patriarchy right in place and keeps women in theirs. While ME can be an important, revolutionary step for women and their allies to be taking, it denies the ability and power of women to

be able to seize and control the state apparatus, so that under socialism all women will have good health care.

Self-help is not an attempt to change the system, it is rather an attempt to completely circumvent it. The system, alas, remains as strong as ever and women denied access to health care and political power will not get it through this movement. MIM says that circumventing the system at the point at which women need abortions is way too late.

The capitalist patriarchy denies women full access to true political and social choices. It is only through socialist revolution that all people will gain control over their bodies and their lives. Self-help may provide some women with some more options some of the time, but the patriarchy remains and Third World women continue to be exploited in order to provide American women with what control they do have.

Self-help is not supported by mainstream pro-choice pseudo-feminist groups, such as Planned Parenthood and NARAL. These groups believe that self-help diverts attention from the cause of legal and political battles in the existing capitalist structure—that is, asking the men who control this country to please give women this "right to choose." MIM says that these legal battles are just reformist methods that will never give women true freedom or power.

Self-helpers themselves are not organized into a structure, such as a vanguard party, that will lead the revolution for women everywhere. This movement is an anarchist feminist movement that is satisfied with empowering women to look at one another's bodies and perform menstrual extractions, without ever really challenging and confronting the system that produces an underground movement to address the needs of even the most privileged strata of women.

MIM says take a political risk and fight for true power and control for the people! Continue to learn and teach the science of menstrual extraction, but also learn the science of revolution. Work with MIM to build an internationalist, revolutionary feminism.

Notes: 1. *The New Our Bodies, Ourselves* 1984, p. 295. 2. The Ottawa Citizen 9/8/91. 3. The Houston Chronicle 9/22/91. 4. In Health 11/91, p. 52.

Review: Max. Rock & Roll

reprinted from MIM Notes 42

June 18, 1990

February 1990, No. 81
\$15 for 6 issues
PO Box 288
Berkeley, CA 94701
by MCØ

MRR is a healthy mix of punk nihilism and cynical anarchy. As one of the best sources of scene news and information on underground and alternative music MIM continues to endorse the publication.

This issue has good coverage of the Panama invasion and spends most of the debunking the U.S. rationale for the invasion as bullshit. MRR even takes the MIM line on the lack of outcry: Amerikans are duped and bought off.

MIM's essential disagreement with MRR and much of punk rock stems around two conflicting assumptions. Either (1) music is capable of bringing about social change through building a new "scene" or (2) social change is impossible and who gives a fuck any-

way. MRR has a good analysis of many social problems and even the role of U.S. intervention in imperialism, but they don't know what to do about it or don't care to.

The bottom line is MRR does not believe in a political party as much as escapism. In the past the magazine also rejected MIM advertising as "too political." Typical Liberal/Anarchist drive!

So take it for what it is: good entertainment and information on cultural alternatives which will soon be forcing MRR to the left.

Anarchists!

Don't give up on ending oppression to maintain the purity of your ideals! Communist revolution is not perfect. But it's done more than anything else to defeat imperialism and end oppression.

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"The Anarchist Ideal &
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Anarchists!

The Maoist Internationalist Movement works for communist revolution — beginning with national liberation struggles — as the best course for a society free from the scourge of imperialist patriarchy.

What do you suggest?

Don't make up a lot of pretty ideas that don't work — and then hold real-world actions to your idealist standards.

Show us something that works better.

We want nothing more than to get out of this hell-hole. Where will anarchist strategies takes us? So far, they've gone nowhere.

**Find our more... Read
MIM Theory 8:
"The Anarchist Ideal &
Communist Revolution."**

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Review:

Panther Advances National Liberation

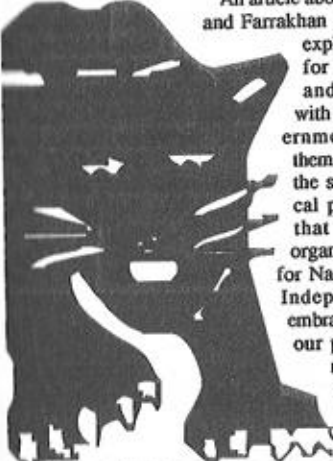
The Black Panther
Spring/Summer 1994
Vol. 4, No. 1
P.O. Box 519
Berkeley, California 94701-0519

by MC17 & MC234

Produced by the Black Community News Service, this newspaper is a good source of anti-imperialist and pro-national liberation news. While the Black Panther Newspaper Committee (BPNC) (which began publishing the Black Panther in 1991) is clearly not the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist organization that the Black Panther Party of the 1960s was, MIM has a lot of unity with the BPNC. Two important themes throughout the paper on which we unite are the need for national liberation of the Black nation and the call for reparations from Amerika for centuries of abuse.

This issue of The Black Panther focuses on crime, unemployment, homelessness and the state of the Black community. It features statistics about the relative condition of the Black nation compared to whites in Amerika and points out that the call for fighting crime and a crime bill will only lead to increased repression of the oppressed in this country.

The BPNC does a good job of criticizing reformism and integrationism. In an article about the NAACP it points out that this organization was founded by whites to keep Blacks in their place and that it has been used by the imperialists to sell out the people.



An article about the Nation of Islam and Farrakhan correctly asks for an explanation from the NOI for its "current medical and security contracts with the enemy U.S. government" and criticizes them for not committing to the struggle around political prisoners, concluding that "genuine efforts to organize the Black colony for National Liberation and Independence should be embraced and supported by our people. However, we must not allow our emotions to blind us to the history of those who profess to

lead us to that liberation."

The article "Youth, Crime & Punishment: Rx Genocide" comes the closest as any article in the paper to call for the creation of a Leninist vanguard Party that builds public opinion and independent institutions of the oppressed as it prepares for armed struggle. This article, like many others in The Black Panther is a strong call for national consciousness and national liberation, but it stops just a little short: "We must carry on the tradition of the Black Panther Party."

Nowhere in any issues of The Black Panther has MIM seen any sign of rebuilding the Party. A newspaper is a first step, but only a step. MIM was a pre-party with a newspaper for many years, but we were able to create a Party with hierarchy and democratic centralism and to expand even further. The failure of the Black Panther Party to practice democratic centralism, and to fully educate its members and develop new leaders made it easily susceptible to state destruction. The formation of a functioning Leninist Party on explicit Marxist-Leninist-Maoist principles would be the first step the BPNC could make to avoid repeating the fatal errors of the BPP. Even better than that — given the state of Maoist forces at this time — the Maoist elements within BPNC should join MIM.

INTERNATIONALISM

The BPNC demonstrates its internationalism with two articles in this issue about the Zapatista's fight for national liberation. MIM is also pleased to report that in two other issues MIM has seen (Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter 1993) the BPNC has printed statements in support of the Maoist People's War in Peru and in defense of Peruvian political prisoners and prisoners of war, including Chairperson Gonzalo. It was also encouraging to see Chiang Ching, one of the "Gang of Four" (the leaders of the Maoist pole in the late Cultural Revolution) celebrated among a list of creative and artistic revolutionaries.

In a review of the first issue of the BPNC's The Black Panther MIM criticized them for their false internationalism in hailing Cuba as a socialist state. BPNC continued this error at least until the Spring/Summer 1993 issue, calling Cuba an example of scientific socialism.

In this Spring/Summer 1994 we see more of the same. An article by Dhoruba bin Wahad about the 7th Pan-African Conference, states "[t]here is no longer a 'socialist camp' to

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oppose the blatant aggressions of capitalism." Without specifying exactly what he means, MIM has to assume that bin Wahad is using the more common (but wrong) view that the Soviet Union was socialist from Khrushchev to Gorbachev.

Wahad also makes a sharp criticism of Mandela for staying with New York City's mayor David Dinkins on a recent visit to the U.S. — comparing this to a Black revolutionary staying with Buthelezi in South Africa.

Wahad advocates pan-Africanism and in doing so focuses on the need to fight racism in this country. This is one of the major failings of this issue of the Black Panther: the failure to distinguish between racism and national oppression. While on the one hand, many of the articles call for national liberation of the Black nation, they fail to distinguish between the superstructural nature of racism and the substructural national oppression.

IMPERIALIST NATION LABOR ARISTOCRACY?

Another problem with this issue of The Black Panther is its failure to treat the question of the working class in this country in scientific terms. One article about unemployment and homelessness by Safiya Bukhari-Alston does a good job of pointing out the discrepancy between Black and white employment rates. But this article criticizes NAFTA and GATT as measures that will hurt Black laborers. MIM does not tail the anti-NAFTA and anti-GATT movements in this country because to do so would objectively reinforce imperialist nation chauvinism. As J. Sakai points out in *Settlers: The Mythology of the White Proletariat* the export of industrial jobs overseas has allowed white industrial workers as a group to move up to white collar jobs.⁽¹⁾ MIM has not yet studied the exact effects of capital export on oppressed nation workers although we can make two points at the outset:

- Opposing individual trade agreements without opposing imperialism is like opposing just the Republicans. It ignores the reality that industry will continue to move to the Third World with or without any specific trade agreement.⁽²⁾

- Marx wrote: "The Communists are distinguished from the other working-class parties by this only: 1. In the national struggles of the proletarians of the different countries, they point out and bring to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat, independently of all nationality. 2. In the various stages of development that the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie has to pass through, they always and everywhere represent the interests of the movement as a whole."⁽³⁾

Instead of organizing the proletariat in the United States against the proletariat in the Third World (or worse, organizing the labor aristocracy against the proletariat), MIM works to organize the proletariat against the bourgeoisie and the proletariat's principal enemy: imperialism.

The BPNC's incorrect analysis of the working class is furthered in the Trotskyist article "Class and Race: A Dialectical View" which discusses how racism had led to the superex-

ploitation of Black workers in this country. The author says "white labor must be made to see that it has a material class interest in the elimination of racial oppression."

MIM refers readers to MIM Theory 1 and J. Sakai's *Settlers* for explanations that the white working class is not exploited (surplus value is not extracted from them) and is in fact bought off with the superprofits of imperialism to support America, including American national oppression.

"Class and Race" is followed by a confusing editor's note. Rather than clarifying this incorrect stand it further confuses the issue by calling China during the 1980s "a socialist economic perspective" and goes on to say that "[a]t best a mixed economy (one with socialist and capitalist features) removes some of the exploitative features of capitalism." This editor's note does conclude with the correct statement that "Black people want/need self-determination to defend themselves against racist behavior, regardless of the economic system."

Some of the articles seem to be advocating Black capitalism as a means for liberation ("Fight-Back on 1-2-5" on page 2, e.g.). The defense of the national bourgeoisie and petit-bourgeoisie in the oppressed nations is indeed a progressive struggle as these two classes are real, potential allies to the proletariat in national liberation struggles. But revolutionaries should not fool the people into believing that "the economic liberation of Harlem" is possible without communist-led national liberation; nor should revolutionaries equate the liberation of the national bourgeoisie and petit-bourgeoisie with liberation for the exploited classes.

The Black Panther embraces focoism with its printing of a short statement calling to all unemployed warriors: "Every time a policeman kills a Black person, find the motherfuckers that did it and execute them." Even the gun carrying Black Panther Party of the 1960s knew better than this. They knew that focoist actions (armed actions taken by a few people without the support of an educated and organized revolutionary base) would lead to further repression and ultimate failure.

The best article in this issue is entitled "Black Lumpen on the Cutting Edge." The author calls for "Black Maoist Revolution" and discusses the importance of Marxism and particularly Maoism in analyzing the revolutionary potential of the lumpen proletariat. This author is clear to say that Maoism is the most advanced revolutionary ideology today. MIM may agree with his analysis, however, the people he appears to be labeling lumpen, we call proletarian.

Notes:

1. J. Sakai, *Settlers: The Mythology of the White Proletariat*. Morningstar Press, 1983, p. 136. Available from MIM for \$10.
2. See MIM Notes 96, Jan 1995 for an article on GATT. (\$1) For more on NAFTA, see "NAFTA stand clarifies

RCP's differences with MIM" in MIM Theory 7 (\$4.95) or "NAFTA opponents protect American privilege" in MIM Notes 79, August 1993. (\$1).

3. Marx & Engels, "The Communist Manifesto," New York: Washington Square Press, 1964, p. 80.