

Trots & Nukes

Fifth Estate Collective

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Apparently there is honor among thieves and the anti-nuclear power struggle has exposed the totally reactionary tendencies of several marxist groups as they line up behind the governments of totalitarian regimes and mouth the same pro-nuclear statements as its most strident capitalist proponents.

One of the more authoritarian of the small Trotskyist sects plaguing the terrain, the Spartacist League has unleashed a torrent of pro-nuclear, anti-demonstrator rhetoric ("eco-freaks" their paper calls them) that rivals New Hampshire Governor Meldrim Thompson.

As Marxists, sharing every assumption of capitalist development, they cite the very same arguments that rationalize the development of nuclear power as do the capitalists: that fossil fuel will be exhausted by the turn of the century, hence the need for other sources. Anyone who opposes nuclear power is an "ecological crackpot who in effect seeks a return to pre-industrial society." (*Workers' Vanguard*, 25, Feb. 1977)

Forgetting that these would-be rulers see themselves as the administrators of a "new" society and others as miners and oil workers, if a human-scale were to be brought into being with the imperialist war machines of both East and West brought to a halt, the absurd over-production of inefficient autos ceased and the mountains of useless plastic products stopped, fossil fuels would probably last at least a thousand years more, allowing adequate time to develop such alternatives as wind and solar power.

Plans for Rule Threatened

What really is at issue is that these dictators-in-the-wings see the anti-nuclear and ecology movements as "back to nature, anti-industrial ecology fads, which constitute an attack on the material foundations for proletarian revolution." (WV, 25 February 1977). Even if one accepts the marxist contention that a qualitative development in the means of production will lead to a revolution in social relationships, it is idiotic to think that this necessitates the development of nuclear power

What this group really fears is that part of the material base of what they plan to administer come the revolution will be missing, for like most "modern technology," nuclear power demands a highly centralized apparatus for its operation which is the marxist political party's stock-in-trade.

This desire to maintain the productive apparatus of capitalism intact can be seen in the Spartacist's discussion of atomic weapons in which they describe the obvious as the "greatest, most overwhelming nuclear danger confronting the world...the possession of nuclear weapons by the imperialist powers, first and foremost the U.S." (WV).

However, a mere two sentences later we realize that these Trotskyists do not see all nuclear weapons as equal dangers. They state, "We resolutely defend the necessity of nuclear weapons technology (including whatever testing programs may be necessary) for the Soviet Union, China..." In a sentence, any pretense of Trotskyists being

“critics” of Stalinism evaporates and exposes what the workers’ movement has already known: the followers of that 40-year dead Soviet Bureaucrat are nothing but the left cover for Stalinism; Stalinism out of power.

Only the most venal of politicians could distinguish between the nuclear weaponry which threatens all life on the planet as being “good” in the hands of one nation and “bad” in another. All nations on earth are capitalist and all of the major powers are imperialist, each with a reactionary foreign policy that could trigger the final conflagration. Nuclear testing in the atmosphere, such as China carries out, brings with each detonation, radiation pollution throughout the world and certain cancer deaths with each test. This is what our Trotskyist friends support.

In a letter to the *Workers’ Vanguard* last month, one of the faithful (supported by the editor), goes into a fit of rhetorical abuse of the anti-nuclear movement that even surpasses the florid prose of the newspaper’s regular staff. Saying he has no sympathy whatsoever for those arrested at the Seabrook nuclear facility, the writer states, “It is no accident that the same protesters shower their tender concern on whales, seals, dogs, worms and what have you. Theirs is an essentially animalian enterprise.

Marxism Against Nature

Although the author probably means time would be better spent pushing boring socialist newspapers down the throats of workers at factory gates, he really has hit on the nub of it all. Industrialism, and its major advocate in the modern epoch, Marxism, is a tendency that has confronted Nature like a thing external to humans and has attempted to conquer it.

The result of this, of course, is known to all: worldwide famine (never a permanent feature until the rise of capitalism), a despoliation of the earth, rivers and air of the planet, and human association so structured in cities that humans have come to lose many of the characteristics that once defined the species. This is the “material foundations” these leftist politicians crow about, and they would offer nothing more in the equation than the “revolutionary” police to support their rule.

Revolution demands a turning over of all of the old and evaluating at that time what is salvageable for a human community, not letting those most scarred by this society create programs in advance.

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