

Since the fall of Jean-Claude ("Baby Doc") Duvalier in February 1986 the ruling classes of Haiti and their imperialist masters have been striving to bring about a stable regime and break the spirit and resistance of the masses which Duvalier had contained with Tonton Macoutes and naked terror.

Much of the efforts of the enemies had been focused on their election circuses. The months leading up to the November 29, 1987 elections were particularly intense. Over the summer a general strike and fierce uprisings had taken place in the capital city of Port-au-Prince against the military junta led by General Henri Namphy which had been ruling since Duvalier's fall. And the terrible massacre of 300 peasants fighting for land had taken place in the village of Jean-Rabel. In Autumn, two of the presidential candidates were murdered, recrudescing Macoute death squads flourished and vigilance committees emerged in the slums of the capital which had taken on the Macoutes and killed several.

On November 29 the reactionary offensive reached a furious peak as the military junta unleashed a wave of massacres and violence against the Haitian masses and cancelled the elections. Two months later the junta held its own elections (even many of the candidates refused to participate) and declared Leslie Manigat as president, a one-time Duvalierist (and later Duvalier oppositionist), who pledged to back the army and keep the lid on Haiti.

Since then, the United States, which initially opposed the army action, tried to clean up Mr. Manigat's blood-spattered image. Plans for a reform and a showy "democratisation" were cancelled as potentially destabilising in this nation of six million people. The army has continued its heavy-handed repression against the masses and the left, the Macoutes again roam with impunity, and Manigat announced his intention to target radicals and revolutionaries working outside the revisionist United Communist Party of Haiti (PUCH). The mass upsurge, which



## Revolution is the

By the Haitian Internationalist

had seriously threatened the junta during the general strike and urban uprisings of June-July 1987 and helped awaken millions to political life over the last two years, temporarily receded.

But the profound crisis facing Haiti's rulers which had been reflected in the election massacres was never resolved. On June 19 General Namphy deposed Manigat and sent him packing out of the country. Thus the ruling circles themselves continue to be deeply

divided and excellent possibilities remain for advancing the revolution.

We are publishing below excerpts from two documents concerning the development of the revolutionary movement in Haiti. The first, "Revolution is the Only Solution," was published as a pamphlet by GRIA in summer of 1987, several months before the November election massacre. The second document is a leaflet produced after the elections by support-



# Only Solution

## Revolutionary Group (GRIA)

ers of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement. For more on the revolutionary movement in Haiti see AWTW-6 "Haiti: The Déchouage has Only Just Begun!" — AWTW.

...Haiti has been a neocolony of U.S. imperialism since 1915, and before that it was dominated by the French, first as a colony then as a neocolony, beginning shortly after the Independence War. During the 19 years that the U.S. occupied Hai-

ti, they erected many institutions, including an army, and they built up the classes to rule Haiti in their interests. When they withdrew their forces from the country, it was with this structure and through their lackeys that they continued their domination over Haiti. Through this structure the imperialists have been able to dictate during the years the course of Haitian politics and economics, they have been able to choose who would rule the country and who would be deposed, they

have created, armed and trained the army to crush the masses whenever they rebelled against their subjugation....

It should be clear to all that the imperialists and the [reactionary] classes cannot and will not give the Haitian masses true political power, nor will they even carry through a thorough-going democratic revolution. In fact, they have vested interests in keeping the masses subjugated and they will never lay down their butcher knives until they are forcibly taken from them. Thus, the Haitian people will never gain liberation so long as Haiti is dominated by imperialism and these classes are in power. This is why we say that the Haitian revolution must dismantle the neocolonial structure and defeat and suppress those reactionary classes that maintain and profit from the present system. "Democratic reform" of that structure could only strengthen it, lull the masses to sleep and further exacerbate their misery and oppression.

Thus a new-democratic revolution is the only solution to the present crisis. Why a new-democratic revolution?...

As Mao clearly stated, the new-democratic revolution is part of the world proletarian revolution; within the country itself it is the first of a two-stage revolution leading to socialism as part of that world proletarian revolution whose final goal is a communist world. The first stage of this revolution must be based in the countryside where the proletariat and its party must lead the majority of the peasants as the main force in the struggle against imperialism, the comprador-bureaucratic bourgeoisie and feudalism. In this first stage the proletariat and its party must lead the Haitian peasants in war to defeat its enemy and to resolve the centuries-old contradiction in Haitian society that has been the main source of conflict and the main cause of all the wars, from Goman, to Acaau, to the war of the piquets and the cacos, i.e., the land question.

Thus the agrarian question, including the demand of land to the tiller, is key to this first stage.

But at the same time, the resolution of the land question is part of

the overall revolutionary process. The new-democratic stage of the revolution is also a war for national liberation, a war to dismantle the neocolonial structure, to overthrow the imperialists and their lackeys.... In this first stage of the revolution it is essential that the proletariat lead it, for it is the only way for the revolution to be victorious and it is the only way that the revolution will move on to the second, socialist stage.

In order for the revolution to succeed in Haiti, what Mao called "The Three Magic Weapons" are necessary: the Party, the People's Army and the United Front....

Mao Tsetung stated that: "Without a people's army, the people have nothing." Recent events, including the massacres carried out by the army in the June-July general strike, clearly demonstrate the correctness of that statement. Many revolutionaries and many among the masses have begun to realise this. And events have also made clear that the army is preparing for war, a war of violence and brutality against the Haitian masses.

Their war is a reactionary war, a war to keep the majority of Haitian masses subjugated and oppressed and to maintain imperialist domination and class exploitation of Haiti. But what Haiti needs is a just war, a people's war, a war to overthrow imperialist domination and reactionary rule, a war based on the people....

There are those who criticise our position and say that our line on the people's army and people's war is a recipe for national suicide. They maintain that we and the masses should bury our heads in elections, or in endlessly organising for petty or limited reform. No, our line is not a recipe for national suicide, it is rather a line for national liberation — it is the only road toward revolution and a better and brighter future for the oppressed Haitian masses. And we also maintain that no group, no party and no single individual could call themselves revolutionary if they do not set as their highest task preparing the masses to wage such a war, the highest and main form of struggle....

This is not the time for revolutionaries to be afraid and to run into a hole and hibernate; rather this is the time to be active and fearless, the time to cast away illusions and prepare to wage decisive struggle to defeat imperialism and their lackeys in Haiti and around the world. For the past 70 years the oppressed masses of Haiti, yearning for freedom, have been trying to liberate themselves by peaceful political means, by voting for constitutions, by electing various compradors to the presidency... but these efforts have always been frustrated, because imperialism and the Haitian reactionaries always view the people's aspirations for genuine emancipation as a threat and obstacle. Thus, they always responded by violent means, i.e., by slaughtering people, by jailing, torturing and terrorising them into submission. In fact, the imperialists and the Haitian reactionaries have always waged politics by violent means, politics with bloodshed. Now in this key historical juncture where the masses are fighting for liberation and genuine emancipation, they should organise themselves to sweep away imperialism, comprador capitalism and feudalism, and the only way that they are going to be able to do that is through defeating the reactionary violence of the oppressor....

We can draw inspiration from the heroic people's war in Peru, led by the Communist Party of Peru (known in the media as Shining Path), which has grown from a spark to a raging fire without asking for a single bullet from any country ruled by imperialism, neither of the Western bloc or the Soviet bloc....

The united front is another of the three necessary components for a successful revolution in Haiti or any other country. The main purpose of the united front is not to wage a tactical struggle for the removal of a dictator, but to wage the revolutionary struggle to eliminate imperialism, demolish the neocolonial structure of dependency on imperialism and overthrow the comprador capitalists and feudalism....

Of all the classes in Haitian society who will be in the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal front, only the

proletariat can lead an uncompromising revolutionary struggle, for the proletariat is the only class with nothing to fortify or hold onto from the present order and hence the only class capable of liberating itself, all other oppressed classes and humanity. Thus the Haitian proletariat, even though it is a minority in Haitian society, must lead the Haitian revolution, the armed struggle and the united front.

Among the other classes in Haitian society who have interests opposed to the status quo, the most oppressed and numerous is the peasantry. Thus the peasantry is the strategic ally of the proletariat and the main force of the revolution in its new-democratic stage and should be led as such by the proletariat in that struggle. While the peasantry as a whole should be united with, there are sectors of the peasantry whose interests are closest to those of the proletariat. These are the landless, the poor and the middle peasants. The alliance between the workers and broad masses of peasants should be the backbone of the united front.

As stated above, each of the classes within the united front has different class interests and will try to pursue those interests. This dictates that the proletariat and its party maintain independence of line and initiative of action within and while leading the united front, because unless it does so it will not be able to lead the revolution to even complete its first, new-democratic stage let alone carry forward to socialism and along the socialist road toward the final goal of a communist world....

As stated in the *Declaration of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement*, what we need is a Marxist-Leninist party which "must arm the proletariat and the revolutionary masses not only with an understanding of the immediate task of carrying through the new-democratic revolution and the role and conflicting interests of different class forces, friend and foe alike, but also of the need to prepare the transition to the socialist revolution and of the ultimate goal of worldwide communism."

However, presently the subjective

## Which Road for Haiti?

### By Supporters of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement

forces seriously lag behind the objective situation. The masses' struggle has thus far developed without the leadership of the proletariat and its party. This situation must soon be remedied, for if it is not it could have a disastrous effect on the present revolutionary prospects in Haiti. Thus all revolutionaries must strive to bring about a great change in the present situation.

Obviously we are not a lone voice in the wilderness; there are many revolutionaries both in Haiti and outside of it and there are also the majority of the Haitian masses who truly want a revolution in Haiti. Events in Haiti in the past two years and especially in recent months show clearly that the Haitian proletariat, the peasantry, the petite bourgeoisie, the youth, the unemployed and other sectors from the oppressed masses want a radical change in Haiti. They have proven that they are ready to sacrifice, even to sacrifice their lives for change. It is true that many people are not clear on how exactly to attain their objective and that they have some illusions that the constitution, the election, petty democratic reform and peaceful democratic struggle is going to attain this goal. However, the action of the ruling class is quickly shattering many illusions, despite the efforts of the bourgeois compradors and bureaucrats, the opportunists and the revisionists who are trying to lead the masses down their dead-end electoral and reformist path. Many people among the masses are realising these reactionary schemes and breaking out of this framework, many others are realising that, constitution or not, election or no election, open dictatorship or representative "democracy," the power of the ruling class rests on violence, on bullets and bayonets, and if the people want political power, if they want liberation, they must and will get it through the barrel of the gun. It is for these masses and the great majority of the people who desperately need a genuine revolution that we elaborate the line and the alternative in this text. □

November 1987: the rulers of Haitian society lash out at each other; the impoverished masses organise self-defence against the army and Macoutes; and then, finally, on 29 November, the army responds with its vicious election massacre.

For almost two years the representatives of the U.S. and the other imperialist powers told the Haitian people that, "General Namphy is the best hope." For months the bourgeois candidates in Haiti told people to place their faith in the constitution and the elections. They told people that liberation could come from reform — reform managed and overseen by Haiti's imperialist oppressors. And they still lie. The candidates tell people to look to the U.S. The U.S. tries to wash the blood of 29 November from its hands, even while it supports the farcical new elections called by the army for 17 January 1988. But the crisis in Haitian society is too deep, and the people's desire for change too profound, for the oppressor to solve it so easily and crudely.

Has it ever been clearer that the masters and oppressors of Haiti cannot be reasoned with? Has it ever been clearer that they must be defeated, and them and their system totally uprooted — for good?

The great revolutionary Mao Tsetung once said that, "Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun." Did not November 1987 bear this out? And as Mao also said:

"The seizure of power by armed struggle, the settlement of the issue by war, is the central task and the highest form of revolution. This Marxist-Leninist principle holds good universally...."

The last two years in Haiti have proven this to many. And in the flames of today it will not do to talk about such a prospect as something for a vague and far-off future. People want to know: what must be done *right now* to launch such a struggle? How should it be waged? What is the road that can lead to victory, and not to just a brave but hopeless stand? How can people

prepare... now? These are the questions of the hour. In confronting such heavy questions, the history of the international revolutionary movement and of Haiti itself contain many crucial lessons.

#### Different Roads Appear

The debate over these questions is raging. Some people agree that Haiti needs a revolution, but they hasten to point out that such a revolution can only be made with mass support and participation. This much is certainly true. But such people often go on to say that in order to gain this support the revolutionaries must first mobilise the masses around economic and human rights issues, and only later bring up the question of revolution, and in particular revolutionary war. Here they are very wrong, and run the risk of postponing the tasks of revolution indefinitely. Does not the massacre of Jean-Rabel show what happens when the masses do not have their own army to wage revolutionary war? Bloody experience in Haiti and elsewhere shows that any approach that does not have the armed struggle and the revolutionary seizure of power at its centre won't get anywhere.

But events such as Jean-Rabel and the great bravery shown by the masses who defended themselves against the Army/Macoute massacre of 29 November also show that there are many who burn with the desire to organise themselves and to strike back. This kind of fighting spirit is inspiring and absolutely necessary for a revolution. But those who say that this upsurge on its own will automatically or organically lead to a revolution are also mistaken; something more, something different than this kind of organisation and self-defence will be needed.

Other forces bank their hopes on a small, well-armed group taking up arms in the countryside and through their heroic action sparking an uprising. The oppressed masses of the world can only be liberated by

armed struggle, and it must not be delayed a day longer than necessary. This much too is certainly true. But such people then often go on to take a purely military line, a kind of "roving rebel band approach," and they dismiss the heart, soul and lifeblood of real people's war — the need for a vanguard party and for mobilising the masses to wage the war and establish their own power. Guerrilla war without this will not succeed. And the recent practice in other countries, where this strategy has often led to using the armed struggle as a mere bargaining chip with the enemy, must be firmly rejected.

In sum, the masses are the makers of history and history has taught that in the oppressed nations, the correct and only way to unleash and involve the masses is by initiating the armed struggle on a correct basis.

### Protracted People's War

The *Declaration* of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement states that, "the point of reference for elaborating revolutionary strategy and tactics in the colonial, semi (or neo) colonial countries remains the theory developed by Mao Tsetung in the long years of revolutionary warfare in China." What are the main points of this theory?

First, revolutionary war in almost all oppressed nations must base itself in the rural areas. In the countryside of the Third World, the roads and communications are generally much worse, and the army is weaker than in the city. Not only that, the majority of people, and especially the majority of those who need and desire revolutionary change most urgently, live there. Because of these and other factors, a revolutionary force can start off small in one or several rural areas that are especially ripe, and then build up strength through guerrilla warfare, gradually spreading its power through the whole country, and eventually seizing the cities (and nationwide power). Certainly the rich experience of 1804, of the piquet rebellions of the 1800s, and of the resistance to the U.S. invasion of 1915 show the ability of the

peasantry of the oppressed nations to wage revolutionary war. And the experience of China from 1921 to 1949, of many other Third World nations after World War 2 and of Peru today demonstrates that a struggle along these lines, when correctly led, can win victory.

Of course, more than just the peasantry must be mobilised. Indeed, the revolutionary vanguard must develop and wield a united front, composed of all the classes with an interest in destroying the rule of the imperialists, the feudalists and those big capitalists in league with them. The proletariat must lead this front, as it is the only class with absolutely nothing to defend or lose in the current order, the only class capable of leading the building of a new society free from imperialist oppression, and from exploitation of all kinds. Certainly, then, important revolutionary political work must go on in the cities. Nevertheless, the *main* way in which the proletariat leads the revolutionary united front is through leading the peasantry to wage people's war, which is, again, rooted mainly in the countryside. "The united front," as Mao said, "is a united front for carrying on armed struggle."

Second, as Mao has said, "the revolutionary war is a war of the masses; it can be waged only by mobilising the masses and relying on them." A small band of heroes acting alone can at best open the door to the master's house, and even sit at the head of his table, as happened in Cuba; but who wants *that*? Instead, the potential bulldozer energy of the *masses* in arms must be unleashed to smash the rotten old mansions of imperialism and feudalism, and lay the foundations for a truly just and new society.

How can such a bulldozer be put in gear? Experience shows that only people's war, beginning with guerrilla warfare, awakes, unites and organises the peasants who have been crushed for centuries. Only their participation in armed struggle gives the peasantry revolutionary consciousness and self-confidence. Of course, such an undertaking cannot be done helter-skelter; it requires thorough deliberation as well as boldness, and most of all it requires

leadership. However, once a basic minimum of preparations are completed in one or several parts of a country, in conditions of crisis, a people's war can be commenced relatively quickly.

To again cite Mao, "if there is to be a revolution, there must be a revolutionary party." In fact, this is the key link. A *genuine* communist party *must* be built — one diametrically opposed to the traitors like PUCH [the pro-Soviet revisionist Unified Haitian Communist Party — *AWTW*]. It must reject the false flags of the Soviet Union, China, Cuba, Albania, etc. and base itself on Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. Such a party must develop a basic and correct programme and strategy, and a basic foundation among the revolutionary masses of workers, peasants, students and other oppressed classes. Without such a party, the masses will fight heroically, but they will lack a clear vision, the independent interests of the proletariat will not be advanced and victory will either be lost or usurped. A party may start out small and inexperienced, but history shows that if it forges a correct line and if it dares to wage and persevere in people's war, it can become big and experienced. Such a party does not yet exist in Haiti, but as supporters of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, we welcome the urgent efforts now being made by Haitian revolutionaries to develop such a leading force.

Throughout its brief history, Haiti has often played a special role. In the 18th century, it was Europe's greatest source of riches; the backs and blood of its slaves built the wealth of France. At the dawn of the 19th century, those very same slaves rose up and through fifteen years of war defeated the most powerful armies of Europe in the only successful slave revolt in history. Now, as the 20th century draws to a twilight, it may be time for Haiti to emerge from its decades of imperialist-dictated desolation and again march to the front. Surely all who support the cause of revolution and liberation can hope, and urgently work for, nothing less. □