

# THE WORKER

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## A Conscious Expression of an Objective Movement

The line of the Workers Party is that social development - life itself - is demanding the transition from capitalism to socialism.

But this social revolution can only be achieved as a new social force arises - a force capable of defeating the political power of the capitalists and re-organizing society on the new, socialist basis. That force is the working class. The task which the Workers Party has set itself is creating the subjective conditions for proletarian revolution - the consciousness, organization and independent political initiative of the workers themselves.

The working class - the productive class whose labor creates all the material wealth of society - makes up the vast majority of our society. The continuous socialization of economic life further increases the size and role of the working class. What is most important is that the very conditions of the working class give rise to the aspiration and drive to create the new socialist and communist society. The workers, deprived of all private property in the means of production and indissolubly bound together by the very character of socialized production, cannot emancipate themselves except by abolishing all assurances of private property in the means of production.

The proletarianization of the vast majority of the population brings ever more to the fore the demand of the people for solutions to the great democratic issues which the bourgeoisie are incapable of resolving. The proletarianization of women brings them to the center of economic and social life and makes their struggle for emancipation an immediate problem taken up for solution. So too, the proletarianization of the oppressed minorities accentuates and intensifies their struggle for liberation. In the conditions and lives of the workers all the problems and contradictions of contemporary so-

ciety are concentrated. At the same time, this proletarianization of women, of the oppressed minority and other sectors of the population continually brings new sources of enlightenment and progress into the working class. The working class cannot emancipate itself without eliminating the exploitation and oppression of all human beings. Throughout this century, the workers have placed themselves in the forefront of every great social movement - in the forefront of the struggles for national liberation, in the forefront of the great Anti-Fascist War, in the forefront of the movement for the emancipation of women, the movement for peace, etc., etc.

The fact that the workers make up the vast majority of the population - the ever-sharpening polarization of society into rich and poor, into exploiters and exploited - has also brought to a head the fundamental issue of politi-

cal power. Democracy means rule of the majority. Yet everyone knows that in our country the political power has been created precisely in order to protect the system of capitalist exploitation and that the capitalists have rigged the process in order to completely exclude the workers from decision-making and governance. Modern democracy can only be realized through the creation of a new political power which arises from the workers themselves and brings the people to the fore as the creators and shapers of their own human and social environment.

Above all else, the capitalist state and capitalist ideology aim at suppressing and negating the revolutionary role and mission of the working class as the grave digger of capitalism and the builder of socialism. Bourgeois ideology sees the work-

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## The Productive Forces and the Relations of Production

*The following article is the third in a series of reference articles which began with the Volume 35 # 6 issue of The Worker.*

In producing material values, people act not only upon nature, but also enter into definite relations with each other. Consequently, social production has two sides. The first is man's relations to nature and is known as the productive forces. The second expresses the relations among people in the process of production and is known as the relations of production. At each historical stage of development, man acts upon nature in the process of production only within the framework of definite relations of production.

### The Productive Forces

The productive forces include both the means of production used to produce material values and the people who use these means of production to produce material values on the strength

of their experience and knowledge.

People with their productive experience are the crucial element of the productive forces, the chief productive force of the society. Without people, even the most sophisticated machinery is lifeless.

So too, people invent and build new machines and use them in production. Progressive changes in material production, which ultimately determine all the other changes in the life of the society, start with the instruments of labor. The productive forces are in a state of continual growth and improvement.

The development level of the productive forces shows how well man has mastered the forces of nature. In ancient times, the discovery and use of fire marked a great stride forward along the way. And in our age man is penetrating even deeper into the mysteries of matter, gaining

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ers as, at most, a laboring class capable only of serving as beasts of burden destined to enrich the capitalist exploiters. The non-stop propaganda of the capitalists hurls every epithet at the workers condemning them as reactionary, apathetic, immoral, etc. and especially insists that the workers can never consciously organize themselves as a class and create a new society. The bourgeoisie, who have systematically denied the workers any voice or role in society, cynically blame the workers for every problem created by the capitalist system itself. Thus even as the bourgeoisie impose a system of racial discrimination and national oppression on society they curse the workers as "racist." While capitalism's insatiable drive for profit is destroying the natural environment, the capitalists blame pollution on the "life-styles" of the workers. While the capitalists have rigged up a political

system in which elections are reduced to a contest between Lucifer and the Devil, the workers are cursed as "apathetic and apolitical" for refusing to vote for one or the other capitalist exploiter.

The Workers Party starts from and carries forward the revolutionary mission of the working class. We have defeated and are defeating bourgeois ideology not only by contesting it on the plane of theory but most importantly, by developing revolutionary politics in the midst of the people. Revolutionary politics brings to the fore the profound socialist aspirations of the workers, illuminates their thinking and empowers them. The experience of our Party, everyday and in a thousand ways, is that nothing can obliterate the aspirations and drive of the working class for emancipation and that what is required is to assist the con-

scious expression of these aspirations and this drive.

Part and parcel of the bourgeois ideological offensive against the working class is its blockade of silence and its campaign of disinformation against the history of the working class and communist movement. But just as the history of human beings is the history of the oppressed and exploited classes - of their struggles for progress and emancipation - so the history of the last 150 years and more revolves around the working class.

The objective content of the present era is the transition from capitalism to socialism on a world scale, and the motive force - the decisive human factor - is the emergence of the working class as a class-for-itself and the drive of the workers to assume center stage as the leading force in social development.

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command of nuclear energy, and reaching out into space.

### The Relations of Production

People do not produce material values on their own, by analogy with Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe, the lone castaway who survived on a desert island. People have always lived in groups, in communities. Production by isolated individuals is an absurdity, just as the existence and development of language without people living together and communicating among themselves.

Aristotle, a great thinker of Greek antiquity, already realized that man is a social animal. Production, whatever its conditions, is always social. The economic ties and relations into which people enter objectively (independently of their will and consciousness) in the process of material production are known as production (or economic) relations. And it is only within the framework of these relations, often intangible and invisible, that people enter into relations with nature and social production takes place.

Economic relations play the decisive role in the system of social relations, being their basis, their foundation. All political, legal and other

social relations among people ultimately depend on the character of the economic relations.

Production relations are a system of economic relations among people arising in the process of the production, distribution, exchange, and consumption of material values.

Production relations can be relations of cooperation and mutual assistance among people free from exploitation, as under communism; they can be relations of domination and subjugation as under chattel slavery, feudalism or capitalism; or else they can be relations of transition from one form of production relations to another.

The form of property in the means of production determines the character of the relations of production. Bourgeois researchers usually

reduce property relations to man's relations to things. But that is a very superficial view, for when an individual owns a thing or an aggregate of things (like a factory), he invariably enters into definite relations with other people (like the workers of the factory.) Behind the relations to things and between things, the political economy of the working class recognizes relations between people in the production of material values, with the decisive role in these belonging to the relations of property in the means of production. Among other things, property relations show who owns the means of production and, consequently, who appropriates the products of labor -- individual classes which own the means of production or the people as a whole.

Property in the means of production determines not only the relations concerning the distribution of the products, but also the social status of the various classes and social groups. Under capitalism, where the means of production are held privately, the workers are proletarians deprived of any means of production. The products they turn out belong to the capitalists. The bourgeois form of private property is based on man's exploitation of man.

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