

Amerikan Minds and Bodies Rotting on Imperialist Parasitism



A Public Service Announcement by the Maoist Internationalist Movement

The Journal of the American Medical Association reported that the Amerikan obesity rate for age 18 and up jumped 60% in the 1990s. It was up 6% between 1998 and 1999 alone, defining approximately 19% of the u.S. population obese.

Obesity is more prevalent in affluent, imperialist countries like Amerika than it is in the Third World where malnutrition is the reality, killing 60,000,000 every year. Obesity in Third World countries is generally less than 3%. In the field of food production and distribution, overthrowing imperialism means first and foremost allowing Third World peoples to produce the crops they need to feed themselves. The elimination of cash-cropping and the elimination of the exploitation of the peasants and farm workers will likely drive up prices for luxury foods in the imperialist countries for a time. Inefficient meat production and consumption may also be curtailed in the imperialist countries under the dictatorship of the proletariat, to meet food needs of the rest of the world.

So Amerikans will lose some of their accustomed privileges after the revolution. But at the same time, middle-class Amerikans will also see some health benefits under the dictatorship of the proletariat, which will place humyns' rights to a healthy and vital life above the right to property.

Two of the most important risk factors for obesity are sedentary lifestyle and high-fat, energy dense diet. These may seem like individual "choices," but as always, societal context determines choice. Just telling people to exercise more isn't enough when fast-food places now sell 32-ounce Cokes as their normal size and more than 5,000 U.S. schools now have agreements with fast food franchises to provide school meals. While not the only factor influencing individual choice, advertising does play an important propagandistic role. Amerikans see thousands of advertisements for high-fat and high sugar foods while they sit and watch television.

Capitalist agribusiness is not about producing food, it's about producing and selling commodities for profit. (Even if they are essential for healthy humyn life). All the forces which affect capitalist industries — the tendency of the rate of

profit to fall, the increase in the organic composition of capital — force agribusiness to concentrate more and more on "value-adding" processes which in practice detract from the nutritional value of its food. Agriculture in the imperialist countries is actually inefficient when it comes to supplying people with nutrients.

Reforms like banning fast-food restaurants in schools, will be easier to implement under the dictatorship of the proletariat, because then there will be no need to balance against capitalists' need for profits. Former junk-food-industry employees can join their colleagues from the tobacco-industry at new, socially productive jobs. The dictatorship

People in the Third World consumed about 506 pounds of grain annually, Amerikans consumed about 1760 pounds, nine tenths of it in the form of meat, poultry or dairy products. (from 1969 to 1971, average per persyn)

U\$ farming uses more than a calorie of energy for every calorie of food it produces. This inefficiency is partially due to excessive packaging and marketing.

of the proletariat will benefit the Amerikan middle classes by emphasizing preventive health care, facilitating regular exercise, and educating the masses about superior diets — for example, scientifically explaining the health benefits of vegetarian or vegan diets.

However, even though socialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat might be medically beneficial to the Amerikan middle classes, they are not flocking to MIM's side.

First the middle classes are politically flabby. Not only do such reforms require energetic struggle, but they require giving up some privileges. Amerikans choice of "foods" will be narrowed — no more subsidizing the meat industry, no more cheap fruits out of season, etc. etc.

Second, weak social-democratic reforms could be implemented inside u.S. borders, while

leaving imperialism intact. A recent example of this is the Amerikan government's decision to investigate and possibly punish the managers responsible for defective Firestone tires. In this situation, imperialists could still sell their old, deadly products to the oppressed nations, where restrictions are more lax. The imperialist country middle classes might be able to live with these reforms, but they are unacceptable to internationalists like MIM.

Amerikans' "parasitic consumption levels" contribute to obesity in the united \$tates. Some comrades moralistically misinterpret this statement — which is about groups and a social system — as if Amerikans are fat because as individuals they are "gluttons." Conversely, they take fatness to be evidence of parasitism. Aside from dropping scientific analysis in favor of Puritanism, this approach is wrong because it lets so much parasitism — which need not be sedentary or gluttonous — off the hook.

Prevalence of obesity and level of parasitism are inversely related in the imperialist countries. Adult wimmin who are poor or have less education tend to be heavier than those who are richer and better educated. Amerika's internal semi-colonies also tend to have more obesity than the dominant white nation. 27% of Blacks are obese, compared to 18% of whites. The prevalence of obesity goes as high as 60% among some first nations. The decline in obesity in Amerikans with high socio-economic status is partly due to the fact that they have more time to exercise, better knowledge of and access to healthy foods, and better health care.

Individual life-style choices will not change the system of inefficient, unhealthy and environmentally unsound food production. Veganism, sports fanaticism, or any other such individual reaction results in a basic ignorance of the systematic realities of imperialism. Obesity, as shown above, is not an individual choice alone, it is about access to power and resources. All peoples must have equal access to power and resources in order to effectively end such oppressive realities as obesity and starvation.

**The Maoist Internationalist Movement (MIM) and
Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist League
rail@mim.org - www.etext.org/Politics/MIM**

For this full article, and sitations check out MIM Notes #24, Dec 1, 2000.