

# A QUESTION SHARPLY POSED

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## NAT TURNER OR THOMAS JEFFERSON?

### **Slave rebellion or slavemaster?**

**Do you support the oppressed rising up against the oppressive system and seeking a radically different way, even with certain errors and excesses—or do you support the oppressors, and the leaders and guardians of an outmoded oppressive order, who may talk about “inalienable rights” but bring down wanton brutality and very real terror, on masses of people, to enforce and perpetuate their system of oppression?**

This speaks to a basic question of stand and orientation, and represents a fundamental dividing line. And, along with “setting the record straight” on the actual experience and role of communist revolution, and refuting the factual and methodological distortions involved in the attacks on communism, this basic question—as represented by Nat Turner or Thomas Jefferson?—also needs to be sharply posed in relation to the history of communism and the present-day struggle for communist revolution, in opposition to the capitalist-imperialist system which still dominates the world, with such terrible consequences for humanity and for the environment. Do you stand with this oppressive system, or with the struggle to overthrow and

uproot it, and bring into being a radically different, emancipating system and way of life?

Do we need to learn from not only the overwhelmingly positive experience of the communist movement so far, but also its shortcomings, including sometimes serious errors and even excesses? Yes, this is an important part of the new synthesis of communism, and it is crucial in order to be able to do even better in the new stage of communist revolution. But this can only be done, in the fullest way, by taking up and applying the scientific communist method and approach that leads, first of all, to standing firmly and consistently on the right side of this fundamental dividing line, between oppressors and oppressed—and, beyond that, makes it possible to correctly assess and learn from the rich experience of the struggle against oppression, throughout history and in all parts of the world, including the shortcomings involved in this experience, in order to carry forward the fight to the final goal of communism and the emancipation of the oppressed, and ultimately humanity as a whole, from all forms and relations of oppression and exploitation, domination and degradation, everywhere in the world.