

OUR PRESENT TASKS

We can never reach a proper understanding of the relation of intellectuals to the revolutionary working class movement for socialism and the establishment of a workers' government- the Dictatorship of the Proletariat unless we have a general perspective of the movement of class forces in the world today. In order for us to find our way, we must be able to evaluate the international and national political situation and to proceed from there to determine how we should proceed to move in the class struggle. Every "Left" grouping is now scurrying to get some sort of position and line on these questions, generally without making any in depth political analysis and basing their positions on their subjective wishes and not objective reality. This paper is presented to clarify the Marxist-Leninist position, and point to the general direction our work should take.

"Revolution," as Mao Tse-Tung has pointed out, "is the main trend in the world today." To properly understand any motion we must realize that it moves in zigs and zags, that growth is the process of ebb and flow, a process of leaps that are followed by crisis-backsliding-and then another leap. The revolutionary movement today is in an ebb, in a lull, in a trying time. We say this not to dishearten anyone but to steadfastly prepare ourselves for the tasks ahead. To blind ourselves to this fact, as the Communist Party U.S.A. and the Revolutionary Union (RU) do, is to aid imperialism and to confuse and disarm the masses.

"Communism has been rolled back in Europe. It wasn't too long ago that the red banners were triumphant from Berlin to Shanghai. Can anyone deny that today in Eastern Europe the working class has been temporarily defeated; in Poland, in E. Germany, in Czechoslovakia, in Hungary, in Bulgaria and in Yugoslavia. A sharp battle is now being waged in Rumania. In Greece the revolution was drowned in blood with a full third of the Greek population slaughtered. Only glorious Albania has been able to withstand the ebb of the revolution in Europe. Only charlatans, revisionists, counter-revolutionaries and imbeciles can defend the USSR as a socialist state." ("Political Report on the International Situation," People's Tribune, Political Paper of the Communist League, vol. 4, no. 10, Oct. 1972)

The most important new development on the international front is the counter-revolutionary collusion between the U.S.N.A. (United States of North America) and Soviet Social-Imperialism (Socialism in words, imperialism in deeds). One of the primary purposes of this collusion is to attack the revolutionary wars of national liberation, which threaten both's profits, especially in the Middle East and in Indochina, to surround socialist China with a counter-revolutionary ring of fire. They have attempted to sabotage the glorious Viet Nameese revolution, the apex of world revolution, with the recent imposition of an imperialist peace on Vietnam, a peace the USNA imperialists will use to regroup and gather strength for a new offensive and/or attempt to obtain their objectives through it.

We must recognize imperialism and social imperialism as being strategically weak, but presently tactically strong. The financial crisis, the inevitable rise of national liberation revolutions and proletarian revolutions certainly means that imperialism will be overthrown, but imperialism yet remains in this era, relatively strong and capable of imposing its will on a good part of the world. Corporate profits have risen astronomically in the last couple years, the financial growth rate is well up, the number of USNA overseas banks has increased, a boom in grain sales to Russia, India, Vietnam, etc. has temporarily strengthened USNA imperialism. But as revolutionary experience has been that in the strength of imperialism lies its inevitable and fatal weaknesses. Capitalist booms are followed by periods of depressions, crisis, etc. The imperialists begin to produce too much, national liberation struggles as a result of the increased oppression, cut the markets out from under them, forcing the necessity to oppress and exploit the working class here at home. This inevitably gives rise to a real upsurge in the revolutionary movement.

Revisionism, led by Soviet Social Imperialism, denying the need and necessity of revolution (i.e., "peaceful co-existence") while covering itself in Marxist garb, is imperialism's best ally. Due to certain objective conditions in the USNA has found a foothold and virtually permeated very aspect of the revolutionary struggle in this country for decades. The imperialists use

revisionism to sabotage and create confusion within the working class movement, while benefitting from the payoffs, bribes, and privileges imperialism hands out. The main purveyor of revisionism in the USNA is the Communist Party of the USA (CPUSA). These traitors to the working class preach all kinds of falsehood designed solely to keep the revolutionary proletariat away from Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-Tung Thought and revolution. In fact they teach everything but revolution: that the victory of the proletariat can be secured in a bourgeois congress, that an "anti-monopoly coalition" rather than a true Communist Party and a revolutionary struggle against imperialism, and that it's "racism"--or a struggle of ideas in the minds of Anglo-American workers-- rather than a concrete revolutionary struggle for independence for the Negro Nation in the South that will secure the unity of the class.

Moreover, the CPUSA and other "Left" groupings such as RU peddle the notion that there is somehow a "third alternative to imperialism and socialism"--a third world. This "third world" idea is a design of the imperialists and social imperialists that had its genesis in the Bandung Conference in the 1950's to create groupings that would appear to be anti-imperialist and at the same time be non-communist, such as Nehru an arch accomplice of the imperialists. The thinking behind this to to give the masses of Africa and Asia a third choice, making it possible to be anti-imperialist and at the same time non-communist if not anti-communist. Krushchev gave the concept the added shot it needed by his campaign to the effect that imperialism was crumbling and that nation after nation had won its political independence, the so-called "emerging" nations. But it was and is clear that imperialism had not given up its colonies and semi-colonies, only that it had become expedient to rule in a new way by using agents and puppets to formally rule for them such as Thieu, Nehru, Salassie, etc, while retaining economic control of the countries, thus neo-colonialism rather than direct rule. A country cannot be independent if its economy is controlled by an imperialist power (such as the Phillipines which was granted formal independence). This is a simple fact of political life. The "third world" is nothing more or less than the political expression of neo-colonialism. (See People's Tribune, vol. 4, no. 8, p.2)

Lenin and Stalin have shown that in the era of imperialism and proletarian revolutions that there are only and can only be two worlds, imperialism and socialism. Imperialism exists by exploiting the colonies, and is a world wide system. The first world is the world of imperialism (imperialist countries and their colonies):

"The transformation of capitalism into a world system of financial enslavement and colonial oppression of the vast majority of the population of the world by a handful of 'advanced' countries--all this has, on the one hand, converted the separate national economies and national territories into links in a single chain called world economy, and on the other hand split the population of the globe into two camps: a handful of 'advanced' capitalist countries which exploit and oppression vast colonies and dependencies, and the huge majority consisting of colonial and dependent countries which are compelled to wage a struggle for liberation from the imperialist yoke." Stalin, The Foundations of Leninism, Foreign Languages Press, Peking, p. 27.

Thus, the first world--the world of imperialism and the colonies. Then in 1917 the socialist revolution in Russia ushered in the second world--the socialist world. The socialist world today has expanded, yet imperialism still remains. This is the situation today. Therefore, there can be no such entity as a "third world."

Revisionism acts as a front or buffer for imperialism by deflecting the revolutionary aspirations of the proletariat away from the imperialism. Therefore the destruction of revisionism in general and the CPUSA in particular is a necessary preliminary condition for any real revolutionary movement in this country. The demolition of the theoretical falsifications of the CPUSA is a preliminary condition for the creation of a truly revolutionary party. The CPUSA has left the spontaneous movement of the working class in a state of confusion without any leadership; as a result the mass movement can only lead to bourgeois ends--reformism, trade unionism, terrorism, defeatism, etc. "There is no conscious vanguard of the workers [a real Communist Party]. The only possible result is disorganized, unplanned, spontaneous struggles. The only road open to the masses is the road of heroic but unorganized mass uprisings and brave but individualistic armed resistance to the police and fascist gangs." "Build a Class Party, Build a Mass Struggle", People's Tribune, vol. 3, no. 3.

Therefore, it is clear that our primary task at this time is to build a new revolutionary Communist Party-- a Party based on the revolutionary science of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-Tung Thought that can give conscious leadership to the mass struggle of the proletariat. As J.V. Stalin has aptly stated:

"No army at war can dispense with an experienced General Staff if it does not want to be doomed to defeat. Is it not clear that the proletariat can still less dispense with such a General Staff if it does not want to allow itself to be devoured by its mortal enemies? But where is this general staff? Only the revolutionary party of the proletariat can serve as this General Staff. The working class without a revolutionary party is an army without a General Staff." Foundations of Leninism, p. 104.

The history of every successful revolutionary movement proves beyond doubt that a revolutionary Communist party is an essential prerequisite for the successful struggle against imperialism and for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. As Mao Tse-Tung has stated:

"Why must there be a revolutionary party? There must be a revolutionary party because the world contains enemies who oppress the people and the people want to throw off enemy oppression. In the era of capitalism and imperialism, just such a revolutionary party as the Communist Party is needed. Without such a party it is simply impossible for the people to throw off enemy oppression." "Rectify the Party's Style of Work", Selected Readings From the Works of Mao Tse-Tung, p. 171.

Lenin, in replying to the revisionists and opportunists of his day who pushed the theory that the mass struggle should be allowed to take its course without the conscious socialist leadership of a party, stated:

"Both these tendencies, the opportunist and the 'revolutionary' (terrorist) bow to the prevailing primitiveness; neither believe that it can be eliminated, neither understand our primary and most imperative paractical task, namely to establish an organization of revolutionists capable of maintaining the energy, the stability and continuity of the political struggle." [emphasis added] "What is To Be Done?", Progress Pub. , p. 103.

It has become increasingly clear in recent years that in order for honest Marxist-Leninists to defeat the line of the CPUSA and build a multi-national Communist Party it is presently necessary to expose the "new left" revisionists such as the so-called "Revolutionary Union" (RU) and similar groupings. The RU and its cohorts are merely a pimple on the backside of revisionism, yet currently history has inflated their importance by placing them in the position of a buffer between the forces trying to build a party of a new type and the forces of revisionism. We have watched the degeneration of these organizations over the past three years. It was clear that these groupings, many of whom are led by the same leaders of the old student movement, could not and would not break with revisionism. Thus they are conciliators because they try to reconcile the politics of Marxism with those of revisionism. See People's Tribune, vol. 4, no. 9.

For instance, in their national newspaper, "Revolution(?)" the RU puts forth the following political projections which are directly contrary to the Leninist position of the primacy of building a revolutionary communist party:

"The main task of communists now is to build the struggle, conscious and revolutionary unity of the working class and develop its leadership in the anti-imperialist struggle." [emphasis added]. "Editorial: Advance the Struggle", RU, Revolution, p. 2, Feb. 1973.

If this isn't bad enough they also put forward the strategic call for a "united front against imperialism" not a party. They clearly develop the line that the party will be built from the struggle of the united front. "It is the primary revolutionary duty of the people of the US to build a militant united front against US imperialism." (A Selection from the Red Papers #1,2 and 3, Rev. Union, Chicago, Ill. p. 3) And further:

"Our organization does have such a strategy; the united front against imperialism, led by the proletariat. This means developing and linking up the mass struggle around five spearheads of oppo-

sition to US imperialism" (Red Papers, #4, p. 16)

Further the RU states that the proletariat Marxist-Leninist party will be built from the mass movement and the united front. (Red Papers #1,2, and 3, p. 56):

"While the building of a communist party at the earliest possible time is key to building the united front, work to begin building the united front should not wait for the formation of a communist party; in fact building the united front is dialectically related to building a real vanguard party of the prolet-ariat...."

"As the strength of the united front grows, so will the strength of the proletariat, as the more backward workers are drawn into motion by the gathering momentum of the movement. And, as the workers movement gains impetus and more and more workers are brought into active struggle the building of a vanguard party of the proletariat will be the order of the day."

In his work The United Front Against Fascism (p. 25) Dimitroff clearly states that one of the most important aspects of building a united front against fascism is the party of the proletariat "... it depends on the existence of a strong revolutionary party, correctly leading the struggle of the working people against fascism." Dimitroff makes it clear that there can be no united front against fascism without a party, not that the two can be built at the same time but that the party must be built first.

Lenin in his book, What the "Friends of the People" Are, outlined the main tasks of the Russian Marxists. "In his opinion[Lenin's], the first duty of the Russian Marxists was to weld the disunited Marxist circles into a united workers' party." History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolshevik) Short Course, Int'l Pub. 1939, p. 20. This strategic call of Lenin's is reflected in the USNA in the Introduction to the Constitution of the Communist League, It reads, in part:

"The Communist League was formed in 1968 by a group of Marxist Leninists. The purpose of the CL is to organize and participate in the struggle of the working class against the US capitalist class and in the struggle to establish the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

"The CL is fully aware that 'if there is to be a revolution, there must be a revolutionary party. Without a party built on the Marxist-Leninist style, it is impossible to lead the working class and the broad masses of the people in defeating imperialism and its running dogs.' At this point in US history there is no revolutionary party.

"The CL cannot and does not consider itself a party. We believe that a revolutionary party will be built by the merging of true Marxist-Leninist groupings out of their common struggle in theory and practice against the revisionist ideology which is presently holding back the working class movement."

To be blunt, the last thing the RU wants is a real communist party and will go to any lengths to fight against it, i.e. wait until the mass movement takes its course or the recent physical assaults against various Marxist-Leninist cadre. They like the old party (the CPUSA) just fine. The CPUSA does not challenge them, it supports them in several ways. The RU and similar groupings know full well that the formation of a proletarian communist party and the destruction of the CPUSA eventually means that the petty bourgeois will follow the lead of the workers. Their entire lease on life is their attempt to lead and influence the petty bourgeois democrats. They do not want a real communist party within the USNA because its formation would immediately begin to polarize the left and eventually the entire class against the revisionists. These events would undoubtedly expose the sham revolution advocated by the "new left." For these reasons they do not attack the revisionists. They contend that "the revisionists are too weak" and "they aren't worth the trouble" and many other variations of the same line that preaches "ignore the revisionists." In turn the revisionists find them suitable bed partners.

Seeing that our strategy is to build a revolutionary communist party and to destroy the treacherous influences of revisionism in the working

class movement, our tasks as intellectuals must strictly and constantly be geared in this direction. This means at this time that plunging blindly into the spontaneous mass movement, "refining our legal skills", relating to this or that "struggle," kicking out corrupt union leadership, etc., etc., is not in tune with our present day tasks. From what has been said above it is clear that what is needed is not our stirring up the mass movement, because the workers are perfectly capable of doing that themselves, but building a political party to lead that mass movement. History has verified that the party has to be a party of the working class, based in the working class, but an advanced detachment of the class, because the working class is the class that has the least ties to capital, is therefore most consistently revolutionary, and concentrated at the centers of production. Therefore, one of our primary tasks in building that party must be to unite the most advanced workers (the most oppressed and exploited) around the science of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-Tung Thought and into the building of that party we so desperately need.

To do this the primary method is to raise the political (socialist) consciousness of the workers. Practice in the mass struggle of the workers will not and cannot do this all important task. Lenin, in his brilliant work "What Is To Be Done?" proved this irrefutably:

"We have said there could not have been Social Democratic [Communist] consciousness among the workers. It would have to be brought to them from without. The history of all countries shows that the working class, exclusively by its own effort, is able to develop only trade union consciousness, i.e., the conviction that it is necessary to combine in unions, fight the employers, and strive to compel the government to pass necessary labour legislation, etc." (p. 31, 32)

And further:

"But the spontaneous development of the working class movement leads to its subordination to bourgeois ideology . . . for the spontaneous working class movement is trade unionism l l l and trade unionism means the ideological enslavement of the workers by the bourgeoisie. Hence, our task, the task of Social-Democracy, is to combat spontaneity, to divert the working class movement from this spontaneous, trade-unionist striving to come under the wing of the bourgeoisie, and to bring it under the wing of revolutionary Social Democracy." (P. 41)

Why is this?

"For the simple reason that bourgeois ideology is far older in origin than socialist ideology, that it has more fully developed, and that it has at its disposal immeasurably more means of dissemination." (P. 42)

Confusion in this respect pervades the position paper "A Political Labor Law Practice: Experience of the Palo Alto Law Commune." No doubt a reflection, although good intentioned, of the confusion revisionism has created in the Left. Under the heading "What is the extent of the political analysis which the leadership among the workers has developed", comes the following:

"Do they see their struggle as long term or merely centered on their immediate problems. Do they see the issues primarily the traditional economic ones or do they see the possibility of struggle over broader issues at the plant and in their community. Do they see the connection between their plant and struggles elsewhere, both in terms of other workers' struggles and struggles by other oppressed elements such as the G.I.'s." Guild Notes, vol II, no. 1, p. 11

The obvious answer is that no matter how "broad" they see the issues, the workers will not of themselves, as a result of their struggles see the issues as broad as socialist content demands, that is they will not see, as Lenin says, the "irreconcilable antagonism of their interests to the whole of the modern political and social system" (p. 31). Furthermore, they will not see that the only way that they can end their oppression is through a revolutionary struggle to overthrow the imperialists as a class (and not just individualized struggles against the bosses, employees, the army, the courts, the grand juries, etc, prisons, etc.) and the state that supports it, nor will they see that they cannot do this without actively and concretely supporting the national liberation struggles against imperialism around the world, much less will they see the immediate imperative necessity of the building of a multi-national communist party to lead the struggle for the

Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

In fact, the author of the position paper himself points out how often they (lawyers) have "learned the hard way" that the workers who come to them do not have a "broad" analysis, "even if third world, young, female, etc.". Then, the author, concretely (although accidentally) exposes why these workers do not have this broad analysis and in so doing justifies the workers being kept in the dark about politics by writing:

"We have also learned the hard way that we cannot supply the missing consciousness. Analysis can't be grafted on from the outside, especially by persons who live under different objective circumstances."

After pointing out "that there could not have been Social-Democratic consciousness among the workers . . . it would have to be brought to them from without", Lenin goes on to say:

"The theory of socialism, however, grew out of the philosophical, historical, and economic theories elaborated by the educated representatives of the propertied classes, by intellectuals. By their social status, Marx and Engels, themselves belonged to the bourgeois intelligencia. In the very same way, in Russia, the theoretical doctrines of Social-Democracy arose altogether independently of the spontaneous growth of the working class movement; it arose as a natural and inevitable outcome of the development of thought among the revolutionary socialist intelligencia."

"What is to Be Done?", p. 32.

And further,

"Modern socialist consciousness can arise only on the basis of profound scientific knowledge. Indeed, modern economic science is as much a condition for social production as, say, modern technology, and the proletariat can create neither the one nor the other, no matter how much it may desire to do so; both arise out of modern social process. The vehicle of science is not the proletariat, but the bourgeois intelligencia: it was in the minds of individual members of this stratum that modern socialism originated, and it was in the y who communicated it to the more intellectually developed proletarians who, in their turn, introduce it into the proletarian class struggle where conditions allow that to be done." (p. 40) [emphasis added]

Therefore, the vehicle of linking the theories of scientific socialism with the class struggle of the proletariat (as intellectuals such as Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, and Mao Tse-Tung have done) is the intellectuals -but intellectuals of a new breed-proletarian intellectuals. To say that "analysis can't be grafted on from the outside" is a flat denial of Marxism-Leninism and a denial of proletarian revolution.

The Leninist method again is relatively simple: proletarianized intellectuals transmit to the intellectually advanced proletarians from the objective spontaneous mass struggle, which is basically a reform struggle, the theories of scientific socialism. This means concretely that we don't at this time try to take over a union, win a strike, or succeed in "relating" to this or that struggle. What it does mean is that from the spontaneous mass struggle we unite with the most intellectually advanced workers to form communist core groups to study the theories of scientific socialism, to build a party and unite the class. From these cores the most advanced workers will spread the line among the class, unite the class and push the work to a higher level and the ultimate victory and the establishment of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

With these concepts in mind our tasks become more clearly defined. We, as intellectuals, have to get an education, we have to get proletarianized, give up our petty bourgeois class stand, in order to be able to spread Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-Tung Thought among the most advanced workers. This struggle has to be waged on two fronts. First, and foremost, we have to acquire an understanding of the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism-mao Tse-Tung Thought and how they are applied concretely to the specific conditions of the USNA. This takes profound and hard study of the classics of Marxism as well as a careful study of the People's Tribune. Secondly, we will not be able to understand the working class unless we remould our individualistic petty bourgeois world outlook by actually integrating ourselves with the working class. In this way our understanding of Marxism-Leninism will be deepened as well as our ability to understand the aspirations of the working class. The author of the position paper on Labor Law justifies this aspect

of not being integrated with the workers by first rationalizing it: "analysis can't be grafted on from the outside, especially by persons who live under different objective circumstances" (as if we always have to live in the old way in perpetuity), and then by justifying it:

"On the other hand, we feel that our role is to remain a legal resource, which means our time should be spent on the legal aspects of a struggle, rather than for example taking jobs in plants ourselves which would more quickly advance our own political consciousness but which would leave our time for legal work and our development of legal skills at a minimum level."

Lenin, in castigating intellectuals who refuse to bring the science to the working class struggle makes the following point:

"you intellectuals can acquire the knowledge, and it is your duty to bring it to us in a hundred-and thousand-fold greater measure than you have up to now; and you must bring it to us, not only in the form of discussions, pamphlets, and articles (which very often-pardon our frankness-are rather dull), but precisely in the form of vivid exposures of what our government and our governing classes are doing at this very moment in all spheres of life." "What is to be Done?"

p. 74.

Thus, when we do use our legal skills, when the necessity arises for them, we must not concentrate on winning a case, or weakening the capitalist class thru a big lawsuit, but to expose the bourgeois legal system for what it is--an apparatus of the capitalist class to maintain their rule over the proletariat--a system that appears to be a mediator of conflicts between classes--but in actuality a product of class **strife** for the maintenance of the rule of one class over another.

From what has been said above it is clear that the role of lawyers, as lawyers, or even as exposers of the judicial system, is limited, and that we need to become proletarianized intellectuals in the full broad sense of the term. It follows from this that our role as intellectuals must be to make comprehensive political exposures of the nature of the imperialist system as well as spread the whole of the Marxist-Leninist theory. The idea again runs through the Position Paper on Labor Law that our main exposures of the system of the system are economic or plant oriented--i.e. of the poor working conditions, unsafe factory conditions, poor wages, throwing out corrupt union officials. This is the line of the CPUSA and the RU which denies the leading role of the proletariat in the political struggle, the necessity of a communist party to lead the struggle, and is a put down on the workers saying they can only be interested in their own economic ends. Just take a look at the RU newspaper and one will see all kinds of talk about this or that strike, this or that struggle within a union, or the demand for more jobs, better economic legislation, etc. etc. The great Lenin had to deal with these people many years ago. These people are essentially saying that it's ok for the workers to wage the economic struggle for higher wages, etc. but that the political struggle should be left up to the liberal bourgeoisie, in this case the RU, etc. That therefore the workers should follow the lead of the liberal bourgeoisie politically and remain forever under the yoke of the capitalist system. This will never do.

While propaganda and agitation around economic issues is important especially insofar as they expose the capitalist system and the better system under socialism, economic agitation is not the principal task:

"Social Democracy leads the struggle of the working class, not only for better terms for the sale of labor power, but for the abolition of the social system that compels the propertyless to sell themselves to the rich. Social-Democracy represents the working class, not in its relation to a given group of employers alone, but in its relation to all classes of modern society and to the state as an organized political force."

"Hence, it follows that not only must Social-Democracy not confine itself exclusively to the economic struggle, but that they must not allow the organization of economic exposures to become the predominant part of its activities. We must take up actively the political education of the working class and the development of its political consciousness."

And further:

"Is it true that, in general, the economic struggle is the most

widely applicable means of drawing the masses into the political struggle? It is entirely untrue. Any and every manifestation of police tyranny and autocratic outrage, not only in connection with the economic struggle, is not one whit less widely applicable as a means of drawing in the masses." "What is to Be Done?", p. 56-58.

Therefore, our propaganda and agitational tasks centered around the strategic aim of building a new communist party must be varied and broad. The workers already know about their economic conditions, what they want to know and need to know is a political analysis of the national and international situation, and the historical and scientific basis of socialism, and its application to the concrete conditions of this country. All this RU hoopla around strikes is trade-unionism, not communism. In order for us to accomplish our historic tasks we must get an education, become proletarianized intellectuals and abandon our privileged class position for "history has now confronted us with an immediate task which is the most revolutionary of all immediate tasks confronting the proletariat of any country." (Lenin).

LAWYERS FOR PARTY BUILDING -

SAN FRANCISCO