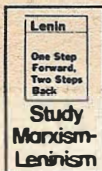


STUDY CONCLUSION



LENIN WAGED CLASS STRUGGLE INSIDE PARTY

This is the last in a series of Call articles summing up the main lessons of One Step Forward, Two Steps Back, written by V.I. Lenin in 1904. The Progress Publishers edition of this work is still available from The Call for \$1.50 each, or it can be found in Vol. 7 of Lenin's Collected Works.

The study of *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back* is significant for our movement for several reasons. In the first place, this study enabled all the member groups of the Organizing Committee for a New Marxist-Leninist Party (OC), as well as our readers, to learn the lessons of Lenin's struggle against opportunism during and after the Second Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party in 1903.

Taking place as a new communist party in the U.S. is about to be formed, the collective study of Lenin's classic work has provided valuable insights on how opportunism on questions of organization is inseparably linked to opportunism in political line, program and tactics. From this study, the OC organizations have been able to further draw lines of demarcation between Marxism and revisionism, between the genuine Marxist-Leninist forces building the new communist party and the various anti-party opportunists in our movement.

Secondly, the study of *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back* shows the correct orientation that communists take to political struggle within the party. While always seeking to build unity, communists recognize that inner-party struggle—whether on organizational or programmatic questions—is a reflection of the class struggle in society at large. As such, it is both inevitable and necessary if the party is to grow strong, to purge itself of non-proletarian elements, and be able to lead the masses of people in achieving the final aim—the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In *One Step Forward*, Lenin firmly defends the principle of one, unified and tightly-organized communist party against the line of maintaining the many disorganized and primitive local circles that existed in Russia at that time. He sums up the fundamental communist principles of organization which were instrumental in enabling the Russian Bolsheviks to become the first party to successfully lead the masses in overthrowing capitalism.

Lenin documents how the opportunist Mensheviks, led by Martov, built an unprincipled coalition at the Second Congress which put forward an opportunist line on every major question of organization.

As Lenin pointed out, "In its struggle for power, the proletariat has no other

weapon but organization." However, the Mensheviks disregarded this truth and succeeded in inflicting some setbacks on the party through their splittist tactics and opportunist maneuvering. This was the reason Lenin titled his book *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*.

In the face of the principled struggle that the Bolsheviks waged against this opportunist line, the Mensheviks cried that they were "injured" from "false accusations." The real objections of Martov and his opportunist bloc were that Lenin dragged their bourgeois line into the light of day where it could be exposed and ultimately defeated.

SHADES OF DIFFERENCES

What initially appeared as "shades of difference" between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks later assumed crucial importance for the revolution. The Mensheviks, first opposing one or two particular points, degenerated after the Second Congress into a reactionary wing of the party. In the end, they openly opposed the revolution and took their stand with the bourgeoisie.

The differences within the communist movement in the U.S. today are also very sharp, assuming the shape of a struggle between the unity trend of genuine Marxist-Leninists and an anti-party bloc, which everyday sinks deeper into the swamp of opportunism and degeneration. The Mensheviks of yesterday, the anti-party opportunists of today and the modern revisionists, who have betrayed communism and sided with imperialism, share a fierce hatred for a communist party of the Bolshevik-type to lead the struggle of the working class.

The struggle between two lines, between Marxism and revisionism, will continue even after our party is formed. But this struggle will be carried out within the party structure, where incorrect lines can be defeated through debate and discussion and the party unified around the correct Marxist-Leninist line. Our party must be vigilant against those who would try to destroy it from within as the Mensheviks tried to do. We must grasp the lesson pointed out by Chairman Mao: "The bourgeoisie exists right inside the Communist Party."

The need to carry out class struggle within the party and to always seek unity while drawing sharp lines of demarcation on questions of principle are clearly explained in Lenin's *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*. These lessons are especially relevant today as we stand on the verge of the actual founding of our party.