

Political Report

During the writing of this report a small group of members announced their resignation from BACU. Their resignation comes as no surprise to us. For some time it has been obvious that they disagree with the majority of BACU members on not one or a few, but all of the developments in our line since the issuance of our pamphlet, Beginning Analysis... of February 1976. They accept none of our criticisms of that pamphlet and do not agree that it was one-sided. "Leftism", sectarianism and dogmatism are for them the overriding danger to our movement. While tendencies toward revisionism (i.e. political backsliding) are of little importance.

Party building, in their view, is dependent on a rise in the mass movement and its importance will come to the fore only after the masses are aroused and our ties with and leadership of the masses are complete. Until that time, efforts for Marxist-Leninist unity and the development of political line are of secondary importance. At one point they wrote, "A base in actual practical work is necessary before any real advances can be made in theory, work toward party building, etc." Their intent here was to refute the ultra "left" idealist thesis that "no advance in mass work can be made without a communist party", a party that was supposed to be the product of "theoretical" struggle alone. In fact, however, as has been borne out in their entire line of thinking, the comrades who left BACU have simply gone over to the opposite error which is to belittle and negate the role of theory. Theirs is a reflex reaction to the ultra "left" idealist thesis and not a sober and scientific analysis.

BACU's view is that party building consists of building communist organization, strengthening its presence, authority and leadership among the masses, and forging greater Marxist-Leninist unity. The key to this is the development and implementation of correct political lines on all issues of the day. This can be accomplished only by combining theoretical work with practical work among the people. Practice is the basis and purpose for our theoretical work, and theory leads our our practical work.

Practice, however, must never be viewed as direct experience only. Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought is also the summary of thousands of years of scientific and philosophical work in all fields. To base one's theories on one's own practice is pragmatism and not Marxism. For Marxists, practice is both direct and indirect, both our own and that of all others, past and present.

To advance the theoretical level of our movement requires not only direct practical experience, but the continued study of and struggle to correctly grasp the historical experiences of all social development as well as the experiences of those societies and parties which are today the path breakers of social development. For this, theoretical work is essential (i.e. the study of scientific theory, as well as theoretical debates). Without the theoretical struggle, knowledge cannot advance and most certainly a Marxist-Leninist Party cannot be built.

From the side of all theory, Marxism-Leninism and party building are attacked by the idealists. The comrades who just quit BACU attack it from the side of all practice. Neither thesis will lead to the development of a Marxist-Leninist vanguard party in the U.S. The development and implementation of a correct political line

depends on a thorough combination of theoretical and practical work at all times. To separate the one from the other, or to make one wholly dependent on the other will lead to serious mistakes. They are mutually interdependent and must go together.

The mistakes of these comrades on the issue of theory and practice is reflected in all of their positions. Essentially, they are abandoning their responsibility to lead the masses. The idealists abandon this responsibility by excusing themselves from mass work. These comrades abandon this responsibility by excusing themselves from theoretical work, (i.e. looking ahead and guiding today's work by a scientific view of the future).

In view of their positions on communist mass work today, this is quite evident. Developing the independent organization of communists, or of the more advanced political forces in each area of work, safeguarding our own initiative in mass activities, developing political and socialist propaganda notable in content and lively in style, and engaging in broad political campaigns, they maintain, is of secondary importance today. Most important is the development of the day to day struggle. While others in our movement belittle work among the masses on the day to day issues and the need to provide continued and good leadership in these struggles, these comrades make the opposite error of making everything dependent on the day to day struggle. Unless we are the leaders of the day to day struggle, they argue; we should de-emphasize the development of our independent presence and authority. Communist political propaganda should be minimized and only immediate issues should be discussed.

According to their thesis, the education of the masses is dependent on the raising of their

level of activity; raising their active level is the precondition for independent communist work.

BACU's view is that work to raise the active level of the masses must go hand in hand with independent communist work, (i.e. paying special attention to the building up of a communist organization and its all around activities). Again on this issue these comrades simply adopt the inverse thesis of the idealists who believe that the work of "winning the advanced to communism" by the issuance of propaganda, and the engagement of a few in study, is the precondition for paying attention to the day to day mass struggles. BACU believes that correct communist mass work depends on paying attention to both sides, (i.e. walking on two legs). The art of communist mass work is to combine independence with unity, work among the advanced with work among the broad masses, revolutionary activities with reform activities and political work with economic work.

These comrades have failed to distinguish between basic errors of political line on the one hand, and errors arising from "mechanical" and "superficial" understanding. In reference to the various political tendencies within the communist movement, they insist that the "mechanical" and sometimes "dogmatic" applications of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought by the politically more advanced forces are worse than the clear deviations from this basic theory on the part of others. One's approach to mass work, and by this they mean narrow mass work on day to day issues alone, is of over-riding significance. That the Guardian and PWOC attack a most fundamental thesis of Mao Tsetung Thought, "the continuation of the class struggle under the dictatorship of the proletariat", is not as important to them as the fact that OL, IWK and others display "left" sectarianism in their mass work.

BACU does not endorse "left" sectarianism in any form, has struggled and will continue to struggle against it, but errors of such a nature are not as serious as errors of basic political line. Once our guard is lowered to political deviations, we will not be able to avoid the fall into revisionism.

These comrades object to our referring to the OL, IWK and the ATM as among the more politically advanced forces in the communist movement, while the Guardian and the PWOC are among the more backward and the RCP is in the middle. This characterization of our movement is based on BACU's belief that one's politics is essential and nothing is more important than a strict adherence to Marxist-Leninist principle.

BACU believes that a firm grasp of principle is shown primarily in the ability to creatively apply it to the concrete situation at hand, and that failure to do so indicates only a shallow grasp. But, whether based on a shallow or firm grasp, upholding Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought is essential to the advance of our movement. When this theory is being challenged and distorted by forces in our midst, this is extremely critical. In such instances, particularly when these challengers and distorters represent no small sector but a large sector of our movement, the defense of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought must come to the fore above all other issues. That is why despite our criticisms of and differences with the OL, IWK and ATM, we must uphold them as the advanced. Though their grasp of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought and of objective conditions in the U.S. may not be as great as we would hope (nor is our own grasp of these things) still they uphold Marxism more fully and consistently than do others. Our unity is much greater with these forces than with others because we share a basic political foundation.

Our main criterion must be politics.

The comrades who quit BACU disagree with this. To them the main thing to criticize is the ultra "left" style of the more politically advanced forces. But isn't the style of the CPUSA and the CLP, as well as that of many liberal reformers, in many ways today superior to that of our young movement? Does this make them better than the terrible ultra "leftists"? Of course not. Both style and content are important for Marxist-Leninists. Principles must always find flexible and realistic application. However, flexibility and realism can be mastered by the enemy as well. For Marxists, the main consideration is principles. Once we lower our guard to deviations in principle, it will be quite difficult to avoid the fall into revisionism altogether.

The comrades who left BACU have lowered their guard to political deviations on a number of important issues. One example is their failure to take a consistent stand in support of revolutionary Black nationalism. Though they claim to uphold the "independent revolutionary significance of the Black people's struggle for equality and liberation", this recognition is raised in conjunction with their general argument against Black nationalism. Although they "uphold" the right of the Black people to self-determination, they feel that any real struggle for this right would be a divergence from the socialist road. Much in the same way as the RCP "upholds" the right to self-determination as a "negative" right (i.e. the right to take a step backwards) these comrades insist that the right to self-determination is not a slogan for today. It is a reserve slogan to be brought out of the closet and dusted off, if, in the future, "so great a racial disunity continues so that such a demand is actually raised" by the Black people. In such an event, they say, "how could or why would

communists want to rule a discussion of separation out of the question?" The main thing is that now is not the time for communists to raise or agitate around the demand for the right to self-determination. To do so, they feel, caters to bourgeois nationalism. We shouldn't rule it out for future discussion, but, according to them, it has no positive practical application today.

The essence of their mistake, as is also the case with the RCP, is the inability, or unwillingness, to firmly appreciate the "profoundly popular and profoundly revolutionary" potential of nationalism among the Black people. Because of this, they seek only to discourage all Black nationalism and cannot genuinely encourage, let alone lay the basis for Marxist-Leninists to lead a revolutionary Black nationalist movement. BACU maintains that it is essential for Marxist-Leninists to distinguish between revolutionary and reactionary nationalism, to support the former and to oppose the latter. Our interest, and the interest of the U.S. working class of all nationalities, lies not in simply identifying the phenomenon and potential of Black nationalism. We must find the forms to encourage the unleashing of that potential in a revolutionary anti-imperialist direction. Marxist-Leninists must assist the revolutionary nationalist movements that can develop from more than 20 million Black people in the United States. Black Marxist-Leninists and the Black working class must lead the Black nationalist movement and direct it along the lines of a common anti-imperialist struggle in connection with revolutionary labor struggles.

Contrary to this Marxist-Leninist approach to the question of Black nationalism, the comrades who quit BACU, like the RCP, are prone to counterpose nationalism of any kind to socialism and revolutionary multi-national working class unity.

Their vision of the merger of the Black people's movement and the revolutionary labor movement in a common anti-imperialist struggle implies the abandonment of nationalism on the part of Blacks in favor of socialism. Therefore, when they speak of the "independent revolutionary significance of the Black people's struggle for equality and liberation", they are not speaking of the revolutionary potential of Black nationalism, but the revolutionary potential of the Blacks once they abandon their nationalism. They are not interested in supporting revolutionary Black nationalism, but rather discouraging it. The RCP has gone even further than the discouraging of revolutionary Black nationalism under the watchword that "all nationalism is nationalism and in the final analysis bourgeois." The RCP has even come out in opposition to other basic democratic struggles of the Black people under the banner of opposing bourgeois nationalism.

Proletarian internationalism, contrary to the views of these comrades, is not opposed to revolutionary nationalism. In the struggle against imperialism, they are on the same side; they aid and support each other. In the last analysis, internationalism is meaningless and a hoax, unless it includes support for revolutionary Black nationalism. For Black Marxist-Leninists, in the practical struggle, revolutionary nationalism is applied internationalism.

Counterposing all nationalism to internationalism became the trademark of the Progressive Labor Party in the mid-60's, when it rapidly degenerated into a trotskyist sect. It was precisely upon the basis of the theory that "all nationalism is reactionary" that PLP opposed and attacked the revolutionary Black upsurges and movements of that period. The possibility that this recent counterposing of all nationalism to internationalism is but the prelude to a repeat

of PLP's revisionism makes the issue very critical at this point. The position of the comrades who quit BACU can never lead to Marxist-Leninist leadership in the Black liberation movement and will, at best, cause the communist movement to once again tail bourgeois nationalism. Their position contains the potential that in the event of future upsurges of revolutionary Black nationalism, they may place themselves in opposition to the nationalist movement as did PLP in the 60's.

The failure of these comrades to adopt a firm position in support of revolutionary Black nationalism is indicative of their general political stagnation. Recognition and support for revolutionary Black nationalism was a key component of the positive contribution of the Revolutionary Union in its early days. It was precisely over this issue that many of the current BACU members, and most of the comrades that just quit BACU, decided to leave the RU. When the RU came out in opposition to revolutionary nationalism, just prior to its transformation into the RCP, we condemned them for slipping away from Marxism on this vital question. Vacillation on this question on the part of the comrades who just quit BACU has been apparent for some time. However, when compared to positions previously upheld by these comrades, their current position represents a significant step backwards.

Similarly, they have lost their bearings in analyzing the international situation. At first they borrowed arguments from the Guardian and then fell back on something akin to the RCP view. As we have stated in our party building resolution, a common thread runs through the RCP mistakes on the national question and on the international situation. It is a failure to fully appreciate the revolutionary significance of democratic and nationalist issues in general. In a crude, mech-

anical manner, they seek to reduce everything to the fundamental economic contradiction in each country. This makes them unable to firmly support and creatively utilize the varied and multi-formed anti-imperialist movements arising from all quarters throughout the world. On every issue, they fear that support for revolutionary and progressive, democratic, anti-imperialist movements, is nothing but a disguised abandonment of the class struggle, the struggle for socialism. This position reeks of a strong affliction with economism, and a general failure to appreciate the revolutionary potential of democratic issues in the world today. In this tendency toward narrow economism, the comrades who quit BACU share a common malady with the RCP.

The point is, that these comrades disagree with BACU on not one or two, but many issues and that they are backtracking politically in the face of a major challenge to Marxism-Leninism within our movement. We have struggled with them patiently and persistently for a long time. They have been allowed full rights to put forward their views, have never for a moment been repressed or held back and have in fact, occupied the most responsible positions of leadership in our organization. Yet they have not been able to win others to their views and have, in fact, caused persons who originally agreed with them to see through their line and turn away from it. Faced with a very democratic debate, the backsliding nature of their position came to light and was rejected by the organization. On certain of their basic views, they eventually found themselves completely isolated. Still they never abandoned any of their mistakes nor accepted any substantial criticism. Instead, they adopted the view that they are right and we are wrong on all issues. As such, they more and more set the basis for their departure.

Now that they have resigned, our attitude towards them has not changed. We have always considered them comrades, and despite their serious errors, we continue to do so. As is our approach towards all communists and revolutionaries, where we can find areas of agreement, we should work together. We should continue to struggle, but must also look for areas to unite. We believe that in the course of time and greater experience, the correct line will be borne out. What is not understood now, will be clearer tomorrow. Therefore, while firmly differentiating our views from theirs, we do not consider them enemies. We consider them mistaken comrades with whom we want to continue contact and work.

They have not been asked to leave but have decided to do so on their own. BACU has never considered the holding of political differences alone to be a basis for expelling comrades. On the contrary, political differences are inevitable within a communist organization, and, as we have learned from Chairman Mao and the Chinese Communist Party, they play a necessary and positive role in the development of correct political line. Within BACU, differences continue to exist, and we take the view that continued discussion to resolve them will be important in further developing our political line.

During our recent discussions, a specific unclarity has continued to circulate that requires some more attention. We now believe revisionism and political backsliding to be the main danger to our movement. Does this mean that rightism, and not "leftism", is the main danger? No, it does not.

Revisionism, and even "economism" for that matter, have generally been considered as right deviations from an essential point of view. This is correct. In the final analysis all revision-

ism is rightism. This is the meaning of Mao's statement "left in form, right in essence". However, the fact that Mao had to point this out demonstrates that revisionism can take either a right or "left" form. This is why it is wrong to unconditionally equate revisionism with rightism. Similarly, "economism", as we have found out in our studies, can take "left" or right forms. Neither revisionism or "economism" should be unconditionally equated with rightism. Only while referring to the essence of these things is it proper to equate them to rightism.

When BACU says revisionism is the main danger, we mean revisionism in both its right and "left" forms.

To underscore this point, we have pointed to the "left revisionism" of the CL, before it became the CLP, and the "left-economism" of the RCP. Not discussed, however, in our resolutions is a rather new development in the general left movement in the U.S. that displays most vividly the dangers of "left" revisionism. Here we are referring to such new formations as the League for Proletarian Socialism.*

We do not consider the League to be a communist organization or part of the communist movement. Its views, however, merit attention, because they represent a more crystallized version of the mistaken views currently being toyed with by such groups as the Guardian and PWOC. The views of the League are thoroughly reactionary.

The League is a new outfit that has declared itself "anti-revisionist" and for the creation of a new "Marxist-Leninist Party". Though it makes much of its so-called criticism of the revision-

**Affiliated with the Workers' Party for Proletarian Socialism.*

ist CPUSA, its main opposition is to the revolutionary Marxist organizations which uphold Marxism-Leninism Mao Tsetung Thought. According to the League, such groups are all "petty bourgeois socialists".

Where do these great "proletarian socialists" come from? First of all, as with the vast majority of today's Marxist-Leninists, they come from the revolutionary student and anti-imperialist movements of the 60's. Their class origin is not unlike 90% of the rest of the revolutionary movement, which is student intellectual and petty bourgeois. Such an origin is no crime, and is a natural result of U.S. conditions as well as conditions of most countries. The vanguard usually springs forth from the intelligentsia, who must then establish their connection and merge with the advanced elements of the working class.

What then is their "proletarianism" and our "petty bourgeoisism"? It must be a matter of political line. What is their "political" line? It is trotskyism.

The League has a trotskyite line on so many questions that it is impossible to take them all into account. In the trade unions it advocates a super-left abandonment of trade unions in favor of revolutionary workers' movements. On all issues it refers only to workers and never to the people or to the united front. It attacks movements that aren't entirely working class.

On international questions, it has resurrected, in a new form, the trotskyite notion of a "degenerate" or "bureaucratic workers' state". In its recent articles in the Guardian it maintains that the revisionists and the "revolutionary Marxists" share power in Cuba, and imply that the revisionists either hold or share power in the

Soviet Union. It still refers to these countries as socialist. It has the audacity to "agree" with Mao's analysis of the "continuation of the class struggle under the dictatorship of the proletariat", yet it so distorts the meaning that it in reality opposes it. Mao says that "the rise to power of the revisionists means the rise to power of the bourgeoisie". So how is it possible for the revisionists (i.e. the bourgeoisie) to hold state power (or to share state power) and for the dictatorship of the proletariat to remain? Such an analysis is entirely fraudulent and revisionist. It is no different from the trotskyite lumping together of socialist and revisionist countries, calling them all "degenerate" or "bureaucratic workers' states". Yet the League maintains that it is "anti-revisionist". What crude deception.

In its article on Cuba, it pushes the reactionary imperialist theory of "dependency", maintaining that Cuba, or any other country, cannot fundamentally break from the capitalist world market. In this way it justifies the national betrayal of the Castro regime.

This imperialist theory of dependency dovetails entirely with the trotskyite theory of the "impossibility of achieving socialism in one country". Trotsky was an imperialist theoretician disguised as a Marxist, just as are the theoreticians of the Soviet Union today. The League's theories are no different, and despite its pseudo-left demagogy, it is revisionist just the same.

The revisionism of the League is not at all surprising, considering the background of a great many of its leading members. These people, in the past, were open opponents of Marxism-Leninism. They were leading spokesmen and elaborators of

numerous "new working class" theories and the vanguard of the backward elements of the "new left", who tried with all intensity to prove the "outdatedness" of Marxism. Many were the most degenerate bourgeois feminists, who advocated such absurd theories as the physical separation of the sexes as the precondition for socialist revolution in the U.S.

Back then, when these theories found wide currency amongst a young and naive movement, when Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought was not yet very popular among the left, it was possible for these people to openly attack Marxism. Today, because M-L-MTTT has been grasped by a great many and the prestige of M-L is growing rapidly, they can no longer be so bold. They must, more and more, conceal their opposition to Marxism in the cloak of "Marxism". Thus, from out and out bourgeois propagandists, they have matured into more deceptive and dangerous opponents of Marxism, i.e. "left" revisionists. This explains their donning the label of "proletarian socialism".

Many, possibly the majority of the League's membership and that of other such new formations, are well-intentioned and are simply misled. This is true of the vast majority of members in all revisionist movements. Nonetheless, the League is revisionist, and has nothing in common with the communist movement today. It is an opponent and enemy of communism.

Today a real threat exists that a good part of our movement will fall all the way into revisionism. The League is actively encouraging such a thing. The revisionism of the League is a "left" form of revisionism. The Communist League also displayed for some time another variety of "left revisionism". These "left" forms are as dangerous to our movement, if not more so, than are the various "right" forms. This is particu-

larly so since our movement has grown up in opposition to reformism and rightism, and in general is not vigilant against "leftism". The revisionists have donned "left" garments to attack us from the rear. The fight against revisionism must be directed against both "right" and "left" forms.

It is within the context of the overall need to fight revisionism, that the struggle against the "left", sectarian and dogmatic errors of the communist movement must be viewed. The first and most important question is whether one upholds Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. Then and only then is it important to struggle to rectify left or right errors, of which in BACU's view "left" errors are predominate, the least understood, and the most damaging.

Today, errors of all kinds are being made. This is quite natural, because our movement is still young and inexperienced. Without making mistakes, development is impossible. Most commonly, communists make the mistakes of "leftism", sectarianism, and dogmatism. They exaggerate conditions and the revolutionary mood of the masses, neglect or simplify our united front responsibility, and are satisfied with simple and abstract knowledge and do not develop creative and concrete analysis of concrete conditions. This leads to subjective idealist schemes for mass work and does not allow for a real break with our isolation from the masses.

It was because of this widespread and general malady within our movement that we published our pamphlet "Beginning Analysis" in February of 1976. That pamphlet contains valuable analyses of U.S. conditions and an important critique of leftism, sectarianism and dogmatism. As a result of the recent struggle within BACU, however, we have come to realize that the "Beginning Analysis" was

simplistic and mistakenly one-sided. The pamphlet's error was to minimize the significance of the already existing political differences within the communist movement. The differences were quite important at that time, even though they existed often in bare embryonic forms and were made difficult to recognize because of the wild, largely unprincipled and sectarian manner in which the debates unfolded. Our error was essentially to raise the form of the debate over its content.

Events since the publication of that pamphlet have caused us to reconsider our views. It is no small matter that the struggle against "leftism", sectarianism and dogmatism has become the battle cry of many revisionist forces outside our movement and of those who insist on backsliding in our movement. Under this banner they are making an attack on Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. Under the banner of opposing "dogmatism" and "slavishness" they are attacking China's revolutionary foreign policy and supporting the international aggression of Soviet social-imperialism. Under the banner of opposing "dogmatism", they oppose revolutionary nationalism among the Blacks in the U.S. Under the banner of opposing "dogmatism", they are attacking genuine communists as "class collaborationists", etc.

Many of these forces responded to the publication of our pamphlet "Beginning Analysis" and tried to persuade us to abandon our clear Marxist-Leninist stance on major issues. The comrades who just quit BACU fell for these persuasive arguments, declared for some time our greater unity with these backsliders than with other Marxist-Leninists, and did not become incensed at the Guardian and PWOC's attack on Marxism-Leninism. To them, "leftism", sectarianism and dogmatism, are the only important dangers. Revisionism is not so important. Our disagreements

run very deep.

BACU is very concerned with the infestation of "leftism", sectarianism and dogmatism among the majority of the more politically advanced M-L groups. Their errors are contributing to the rise of revisionism and to the revisionists' ability to prey upon a great many well-intentioned revolutionaries. The errors of these more advanced groups turn many away from Marxism-Leninism MTTT. Therefore, BACU cannot abandon its principled struggle against "leftism".

At the same time, we must be frank. Despite their many "leftist", sectarian and dogmatic errors, in the main these groups uphold Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought, whereas others do not, or are backsliding from it. This is of overriding importance. Revisionism, in both "left" and right form is the main danger today, not the "left", sectarian and dogmatic errors of the more politically advanced forces. Nothing is more important or timely than a firm defense of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. By identifying these groups as the more politically advanced forces in our movement, however, we do not intend for a moment to support or adopt their "leftism", sectarianism or dogmatism. We will continue to struggle against these errors.

BACU seeks to develop as a principled organization based on Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought that maintains a non-sectarian and non-"leftist" style of work. This combination is reflected in our various resolutions and can be seen in the positions we take on all issues and in all areas of work. It is most vividly seen in our attitude toward the various forces in the communist and "left" movements. Though we will never cease to express our criticisms and views, we do not consider everyone an enemy just because we have disagreements. We will work with all

forces if unity is achievable on practical tasks. Still, we will safeguard and maintain an independent view. Our general theme for development is to build a principled, but non-sectarian organization and fight for a principled, but non-sectarian organization and fight for a principled, but non-sectarian Communist Party.

In this regard, we stand ready to unite with all others who agree with us on major issues and do not believe that unity on every issue is necessary. As soon as possible we wish to liquidate our independence and unite with others to form a larger and more diverse communist organization.

At the same time, we recognize that our desire alone is insufficient. Others must have this desire and must understand our views. Therefore, in the interim, we are committed to the all-sided development of our own organization.