

# Lenin fights for unified vanguard party



Beginning with this issue of *The Call*, we will carry a series of articles on the study of V.I. Lenin's classic work, *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*. This study is crucial for gaining an understanding of the Marxist-Leninist approach to party building, the central task of all communists in the U.S. today.

Presently, the Organizing Committee for a New Marxist-Leninist Party (OC) has mobilized all of its participating organizations in studying *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back* to prepare for the formation of the new party and the first congress. Combined with a study of the concrete conditions of our own movement, Lenin's work is a brilliant guiding light in forging the party and in fighting revisionism and all forms of opportunism.

Like all classic works of Marxism-Leninism, *One Step Forward* was written as a weapon in the struggle against opportunism. In the period leading up to and following the Second Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party (RSDLP) in 1903, Lenin led the struggle to reconstitute the party along revolutionary lines and opposed the opportunism of the Mensheviks, especially on matters of organization. The congress revealed that the Mensheviks were the main opponents of Marxism within the ranks of the working-class movement.

Lenin devoted months of effort to the writing of this rich work, making a thorough study of the minutes and resolutions of the Second Congress and of all of the speeches and inner-party documents. With this accurate documentation, he was able to draw a clear line of demarcation between the Menshevik opportunists and the genuine communist trend which had been organized earlier around the newspaper *Iskra*.

It was in this book that Lenin successfully defended the principle of a single, unified party against the line of maintaining

the small, local circles with their primitiveness and disorganization. In opposition to the Mensheviks, who called for a diffuse party without firm discipline, Lenin fought for a tightly organized party, built solidly on the clearest and firmest of communist principles. Lenin showed that program and political line had to be concretized into the organizational form of the vanguard party.

The Mensheviks opposed democratic-centralism and advocated many centers and autonomy of different factions in the party. Lenin, however, fought to establish the party as a single center with firm centralism as well as inner-party democracy and for a party with unity of action and unity of will.

*One Step Forward, Two Steps Back* brings the inner-party struggle to life and clarifies questions that are of vital importance to our movement today. At a time when the unity trend represented by the OC is leading the struggle to build a single, unified communist party on the basis of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought, the opponents of the party have come forward with various anti-party attacks and formed themselves into anti-party blocs.

Nowhere is their opportunism more outstanding than on matters of organization. Like the Mensheviks, these anti-party opportunists demand that the local circles, which today are a hindrance on our movement, be maintained. They fear supervision from the masses and refuse to give up their autonomy.

The study of *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back* is a mighty sword against the anti-party opportunists of our day and against the line of modern revisionism on party building. We call on all of our readers to take up the study of this immortal work of Lenin's with us and to organize study circles around this book. We urge readers to write in comments and applications of the study to today's conditions.