

In organizational bulletins # I&2, I stated the following:

"The main problem comrades, is not "leftism" but the lagging of the organizational and practical work behind the requirements of the political line, as was stated by the comrades in the Nashville conference. It is a Rightist conservative problem, a problem that has plagued the BWC since its inception!" (Bulletin #1, page 3.)

And:

"I am more firmly convinced than ever before that the most dangerous form of opportunism in the Black Workers Congress today is open Right opportunism, manifested primarily in disease of liberalism, passivity, defeatism, bourgeois intellectualism and the theory of spontaneity." (Bulletin #2, page 1.)

I would like to discuss briefly how these views arose, developed and fundamentally changed.

When the ideological struggle developed around 3 or 4 months ago, I was of the opinion that the BWC was on a steady path of forward development, destined to become the leading core that would lead in the building of the new Communist Party. Though small, the organization was growing and gaining in influence, while the other more prominent groups--particularly the RU and OL--though fairly large, were declining in strength and influence. The factors that aided this view were the development of our national organ: "The Communist" (whose subscription list was growing all the time), the recruitment of some new people (especially on the west coast) and our development into a multi-national communist organization. Though the organization had made many mistakes, I felt, we had corrected most of them and any that remained were only a result of the growing pains that every group must suffer in its beginning stages of development. I felt that many of the weaknesses that we faced would be overcome in time, especially as we gained more experience in practical political work and organizational tasks. "The line is correct" I thought, the problem is the cadre and leadership do not know how it should be implemented due to the poor methods of work we inherited from the past (the lack of a newspaper, centralized leadership, funds, etc.). Hence the view--the lagging of the organizational and practical work behind the requirements of the political line. I felt this situation was aggravated by the passivity--and to be frank--outright laziness of certain secretariat members who were not living up to their responsibilities as leaders, and were therefore not setting the right example to the rest of the organization which ~~desperately~~ needed concrete direction and guidance.

Moreover, I felt that the political work of the BWC as well as the organization's conception of its political tasks was lagging far behind what was demanded by the objective situation. The strike wave of the proletariat in 1974, the economic crisis, the governmental and political crisis, etc., necessitated, in my opinion, much more political aggressiveness on our part than we had demonstrated. Hence the view--Right opportunist lagging and tailing.

Before I discuss why I feel these views are fundamentally wrong, I would like speak to how they developed through the process of the two-line struggle itself.

I first arrived in Detroit in April, 1974. At that time, and even prior to that time, I was aware of the deteriorating situation on the secretariat. This situation was characterized especially by the incessant feuds and personal attacks among the various members. At that time this struggle was not even considered to be over the line of the organization--which everyone agreed was fundamentally correct--but over the likes and dislikes that different people had of each other. But it gradually became clear that the deadlock on the secretariat had to do more with political differences than with the personal recriminations which seem to cover them up. At first the differences arose over seemingly minor points (how to raise funds, cadre training, the national center, etc.) and unsystematically at that; the crystallization process was slow. But then several things happen. First the split with the CL which forced us to take a closer look at this question of party building (as well as our own line) and secondly, the slow, protracted nature of our merger negotiations with PRRWO and to a lesser extent, ATM. The two lines which developed on these questions I will not go into since they are found in bulletins #I&2 and the other documents which have come forward since the struggle was unfolded.

The point is, that the present line struggle is connected by a thousand threads to the entire history of the BWC especially the period between 1972 and the present. The BWC can be divided into two basic periods: the first period is from December 1970 (when the organization was founded) to July 8th, 1972. Essentially this period can be characterized as the struggle to make the BWC a communist organization based on Marxism-Leninism Mao Tse Tung Thought as opposed to a petty bourgeois, nationalist group based on "revolutionary theory" in general. This was the period when we had to fight for even the right to call ourselves a communist organization, with a democratic centralist structure and a cadre membership. Coupled with this struggle was a fight against extreme voluntarism, anarcho-syndicalism (the "revolutionary union movements"), and "Third Worldism"--the tendency to write off white workers and promote "Third World" or "colonized" workers as the 'vanguard'.

The second period, between the July 8th conference and today is a period when we generally adhered to and attempted to apply the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism, albeit in an unsystematic and incomplete manner, and have been confronted with the never-ending struggle against Right and "left" opportunist errors both within our own ranks as well as the communist movement as a whole. The struggle against Right, and in my opinion, fundamentally "left" errors in theory, politics and organization, has primarily characterized the development of the BWC in the past two years. A look at the major line struggles in both these periods will help to illustrate this point.

1. The first line struggle in the BWC was over the Black Workers Congress "Manifesto". This took several forms. One was whether or not the manifesto could be used to organize workers as was envisaged by J. Forman, because of its abstract and general character and the fact that it was only a collection of demands and not a concrete program. Secondly, over the nature of the demands themselves, which like demand #1 contain semi-trotskyite slogans like "workers control of production" instead of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The statement on democratic centralism, which stated that the essence of this principle meant--"centralized administration and collective authority" also fell into the category of semi-trotskyism. (There was never a systematic critique of the whole manifesto, however)
2. The second major struggle in this same period had to do with the organizational form of the BWC. This also had several aspects. One was over the fact that it was incorrect for the BWC to consider itself an "international" organization (the original name of the BWC was "The International Black Workers Congress") which would unite black people throughout the Western Hemisphere--another trotskyite conception--trotskyites believe that political parties should be "international", rather than "national" in form. The members of the League in this case wage a correct and successful struggle to get the organization to change its name to the "Black Workers Congress" and confine its organizing activities to the continental United States. This was coupled with a struggle over whether or not the BWC could be both a "cadre" and a "mass" or a "cadre-mass" organization, with five or six levels of membership (supporter, sustainer, sustainer-supporter, active, and cadre--see the BWC "Constitution" for details, adopted in Gary 1971). This struggle was not resolved until the July 8th meeting. This struggle was conducted simultaneously along with a struggle against the insane organizational structure of the BWC which divided the organization into regions (with "1st secretaries"), divisions (auto, steel, etc.) and 18 different "commissions"--housing, workers, political education, security, etc. (There was also many other struggles on the same lines during this period, for example, over whether or not the BWC was a "Congress" or a Party, or neither, on the question of revolutionary nationalism vs. Marxism Leninism, on the question of parliamentary work, etc., etc.)
3. The third major line struggle (or set of struggles) had to do with the nature and character of the organization's political work during this period. More particularly around the questions of the multitude of "forums" the organization was holding around the country which cost a fortune and seem to accomplish nothing but political headlines for J. Forman, who was busy predicting that as a result of these forums we could count on "5,000 cadre by 1975". This struggle intensified as a result of the "United States Vietnam Summer Offensive" which was a comprehensive "plan" to mobilize support for the Vietnamese who were having an offensive of their own in the summer of 1972. This "plan" called for:

1) "support of the Indo-Chinese people; 2) End the Vietnam War; 3) Support the African and Latin American liberation fighters; 4) lift the wage-price freeze; 5) Stop production; 6) Defeat Nixon; 7) Black, Brown and Asian Solidarity Day; 8) Black Workers Freedom Convention; 9) Some big event that will unite blacks, brown, Asians and whites in a united anti-war demonstration this fall; 10) a Vietnam Summer Brigade, etc., etc., etc. It was this "program", which the BWC could not in a thousand years carry out, which turned the organization against Forman's line and policy and laid the basis for the July 8th conference, which was the first big step in putting the organization on a Marxist-Leninist course. Though not characterized as such at the time, this struggle was essentially a struggle against Forman's subjective idealism and voluntarism, a struggle against a crude form of petty bourgeois radicalism and "ultra-leftism".

The 2nd period in the BWC's development, commenced by the July 8th plenum, begins with a struggle against Forman's political and organizational line. It rejected the "forum method" of building the BWC and took measures for restructuring the organization on a cadre basis, a political education program which substituted the study of the works of Fanon, Nkrumah, Che and Cornforth with the study of the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao, and attempted to place the organization on a factory basis. But many of the basically correct principles were never to be implemented, primarily due to almost a year of ideological and factional struggles mainly in the Detroit area--beginning with Ken Cockrel over the question of parliamentary politics and his mayoral campaign (even though this struggle started before July 8th) to the struggle against John Watson, to the ouster of James Forman, to the resignation of Harry Wells and the entire (except for one person) Detroit district, to Rick Reed, etc., etc. It is important to mention that the July 8th period was also influenced by the external motion of the BWC, PRRWO, RU, IWK and the BWC got together at PRRWO's founding congress and formed the NLC (National Liason Committee) which would be a transitional means to the party and a means to unite on RU's line. Much of the inspiration to the July 8th meeting came from some members of the BWC's leadership discussions and unities with the RU leadership. So the initial period of BWC's progression to Marxism-Leninism was at the same time a progression to RU's interpretation of Marxism-Leninism, a period lasting approximately from July 8th, 1972 to the fall of 1973. Forman's departure (which was far from being a principled ideological struggle, which we will talk some more of later) signaled the consolidation of RU's line--particularly in regards to the Black National Question and Party building--in the BWC (the nation of a "new type" line was consolidated in the summer of 73').

The next ideological struggle during this period commenced in the fall of 73' over the Black National Question, "economism" and party building. It was not so much a critique of 'Red Papers #5' which sparked this struggle but the publication of 'National Bulletin #13' by the RU which contained their position on revolutionary nationalism and the expulsion of D. Wright. In that document the RU put forward the thesis that "all nationalism is nationalism", as well as their position against the slogan "Black Workers Take The Lead" (put forward by BWC and PRRWO). Additionally the BWC was again influenced by the wide-spread criticisms that the 'nation of a new type' received from other quarters in the Communist movement, particularly from H. Haywood and the CL. Though the struggle with the RU was a genuine ideological one, involving basic tenets of Marxism-Leninism (e.g. what constitutes a nation, the primary need for a party when one does not exist, etc.) it seems especially in retrospect, that the forced split with them--at the time it occurred--was precipitous, and not call for especially given the fact that they (the RU leadership) expressed willingness to struggle over the issues, and for the fact that we were still in agreement with many aspects of their line on the black national question as demonstrated by the fact that our own position on the national question put forward in our first pamphlet (a full four months after the split) was in essence, the same as RU's except for the fact that we stated that the black nation could only be located in the black belt south. To be frank, the expulsion of D. Wright was a more immediate cause of the split than the ideological issues themselves--this was further demonstrated by the fact that D.W. himself did not agree with many of the criticisms that we held of RU's line. But the ideological struggle around the questions of party building and economism was much more indept and therefore much more fruitful. It was correct and still is to put the question of theory (not theory in the abstract, divorced from its concrete application to various concrete conditions) in the forefront, to place party building on a ideological plane, and to struggle against economism. It was correct and still is to say that to the RU party building meant "organizing communist collectives" and fighting for the "hegemony" of their own group--and this is proven by their party-building proposal to us before the break-up of the NLC (see "Critique of Natl Bulletin #13 by BWC and PRRWO").

But in correctly raising this aspect, its clear that we fail to understand the party building process as a whole, indeed the ideological struggle itself and we thereby belittled and pave the way for a "left" opportunist error of subjectivism, dogmatism and voluntarism. This is clearly revealed in the "Party building Outline", the original basis for our position:

"And finally, the time has come and gone when we can be afforded the luxury of belittling theory and conjuring up the spectre of becoming arm-chair revolutionaries. There is hardly the immediate likelihood that we will become arm chairs. THAT HAS NEVER BEEN TOO GREAT A DANGER FOR US (my emphasis)."

What should have been said is that while we fight against the main danger of belittling theory (at that time), we should also guard against the secondary tendency of becoming arm-chairs. What was J. Forman, J. Watson? In that same document as well, we limited "bow to spontaneity" and "tailism" to being exclusively Right opportunist errors--dispite the quote from Lenin to the contrary. The only mention of "left dogmatism" was in relation to explaining what the CL's line on party building stood for (on the last page). Of the CL we said:

"CL holds that Party building is the central task of communists, but has had a long history of left-dogmatism and acting as if you could phrase-monger upon the Party."

Two months later we united with these "left dogmatists" in the National Continuations Committee to form a party in September of 1974. So in the period when we adopted Party building as the central task, "left" opportunism (although of a different character in the Forman period) again became the principal danger. There were several reasons for this. First we didn't understand this tendency. As can be seen from the party building study guide and other documents "bowing to spontaneity" "tailism", etc., were seen as exclusively confined to Right errors rather than the basis for all opportunism. Another example of this failure to understand "left" errors, is our characterization of RU's thesis that "all nationalism is nationalism" as open Right opportunism. Actually, this is a classic "left" position on the national question which goes all the back to Lenin's criticisms of Rosa Luxemburg and the German "lefts". It is the same line that PL used when it began to liquidate the national question--"all nationalism is reactionary". Though right in essence (and all deviations (whether they take the form of absolutizing the objective or subjective factors) from Marxism-Leninism are Right in essence since proletarian revolution is liquidated in either respect) this line is "left" because its done under the guise of promoting the proletarian revolution whereas the open Rightist liquidate, openly both the national question and the proletarian revolution (Jay Lovestone's negation of the black national question was coupled with his liquidation of proletarian revolution as a whole--the "American Exceptionalist" line). J.V. Stalin offers us the most profound and systematic exposition of this question of right and "left" in his article: "Industrialization and the Right Deviation":

And that is easily understood; it cannot be otherwise, in view of the petty-bourgeois environment and the pressure of this environment on our Party, than that Trotskyist tendencies should exist in our Party. It is one thing to arrest and exile the Trotskyist cadres; it is another thing to put an end to the Trotskyist ideology. That will be more difficult. And we say that wherever there is a Right deviation, there must be a "Left" deviation. The "Left" deviation is the shadow of the Right deviation. Lenin said with regard to the *Otzovists*,\* that the "Lefts" are Mensheviks turned inside out. That is absolutely true. The same thing can be said of the present day "Lefts." Those who incline towards Trotskyism are in fact Rights turned inside out, they are Rights concealing themselves behind "Left" phrases.

Hence the fight on two fronts--against the Right deviation and against the "Left" deviation.

It may be asked: if the "Left" deviation is in essence the same as the Right opportunist deviation, then where is the difference

\* At the time of the black reaction that reigned after the suppression of the 1905 Revolution, a group of Bolsheviks demanded the "recall" of the Social-Democratic deputies from the Duma. The Russian word for "recall" is "otzvat," hence the word "Otzovists."—Ed.

between them and where do you get the fight on two fronts? And, indeed, if the victory of the Rights would mean increasing the chances of the restoration of capitalism, and the victory of the "Lefts" would lead to exactly the same result, what is the difference between them and why is one called Right and the other "Left"? And if there is a difference, what does it consist in? Is it not true that both deviations spring from the same social root and that both are petty-bourgeois deviations? Is it not true that the victory of either of these deviations would lead to the same results? Then what is the difference between them?

The difference consists in the fact that their platforms are different, their demands are different and their approach and methods are different. If, for instance, the Rights say: "*It is a mistake to build Dnieprostroy,*" while the "Lefts" on the contrary say: "*what is the good of one Dnieprostroy? Give us a Dnieprostroy every year*", (laughter) it must be admitted that there is some difference between them. If the Rights say "*do not interfere with the kulak, give him freedom to develop,*" while the "Lefts," on the contrary, say, "*Strike not only at the kulak, but also at the middle peasant, since he is just as much a private property owner as the kulak,*" it must be admitted that there is some difference between them. If the Rights say "*difficulties have set in, is it not time to quit?*" while the "Lefts," on the contrary, say, "*what are difficulties to us: a fig for difficulties, let us dash ahead*", (laughter) it must be admitted that there is some difference between them.

And so you get a picture of the specific platform and the specific methods of the "Lefts." And that explains why the "Lefts" sometimes succeed in winning over a part of the workers by their high-sounding "Left" phrases and by depicting themselves as the most determined opponents of the Rights, although all the world knows that the social roots of the "Lefts" are the same as those of the Rights, and that they not infrequently arrive at an understanding, and form a *bloc* with the Rights in order to fight the Leninist line.

That is why it is essential for us Leninists to conduct a fight on two fronts, against the Right deviations and against the "Left" deviation.

But if the Trotskyist deviation is a "Left" deviation, does that not mean that the "Lefts" are more Left than the Leninists? No,

it does not. Leninism is the most Left (without quotation marks) tendency in the world working class movement. In the Second International, we Leninists, up to the outbreak of the imperialist war, were the extreme Left faction among the Social Democrats. We left the Second International and advocated a split of that body because, as the extreme Left faction, we refused to live in one Party with the petty-bourgeois betrayers of Marxism, with the social-pacifists and the social-chauvinists. These tactics and this ideology subsequently became the basis for the Bolshevik Parties of the whole world. In our own Party we Leninists are the *only* Lefts (without quotation marks). Therefore, in our Party we Leninists are neither "Lefts" nor Rights. We are a Marxist-Leninist Party. And in our Party we fight not only those whom we call open opportunist deviationists, but also those who want to be more "Left" than Marxism, more "Left" than Leninism, and conceal their Right opportunist nature behind high-sounding "Left" phrases. Everybody understands that when people who have not yet rid themselves of Trotskyist tendencies are called "Left" it is meant ironically. Lenin referred to the "Left Communists" as Lefts, sometimes with and sometimes without quotation marks.

But everybody knows that Lenin referred to them as Lefts ironically and thereby emphasised that they were Left only in words, in appearance, but that in actual fact they represented petty-bourgeois Right tendencies. What can be the Leftism (without quotation marks) of the Trotskyist elements, when only yesterday they formed a united anti-Leninist *bloc* with the open opportunist elements and identified themselves directly and indirectly with the anti-Soviet sections of the population? Is it not a fact that only yesterday there was an open *bloc* between the "Lefts" and the Rights against the Leninist Party, and that the *bloc* had the undeniable support of the bourgeois elements? Does that not show that the "Lefts" and the Rights could not join together in a single *bloc* if they did not have common social roots and were not of a common opportunist nature? The Trotskyist *bloc* fell to pieces a year ago. A part of the Rights like Comrade Shatunovsky, left the *bloc*. Accordingly, the Right members of the *bloc* will henceforth appear as Rights, while the "Lefts" will conceal their Rightism behind Left phrases. But what guarantee is there that the "Lefts" and the Rights will not find each other again? (*Laughter*) Obviously, there is no such guarantee, and there cannot be.

But does not our slogan of war on two fronts mean that we are advocating the necessity for *centrism* within the Party? What does the fight on two fronts mean? Does it mean Centrism? You know that is exactly what the Trotskyists declare: there are the "Lefts," they say, namely, ourselves, the Trotskyists, the "genuine Leninists;" then there are the Rights, namely, the rest; and finally, there are the "Centrists," those who wobble between the "Lefts" and the Rights. Is such a view of the Party correct? Obviously not. Only those whose ideas are all muddled can talk like that, those who have long since broken with Marxism. Only those can talk like that who cannot see, and fail to understand the *difference in principle* between the Social-Democratic Party of pre-war days, which was a *bloc* made up of proletarian and petty-bourgeois interests, and the Communist Party, which is a *monolithic* party of the revolutionary proletariat. Centrism is not a concept of space: on the one side, for instance, sit the Rights, on the other the "Lefts" and in between sit the Centrists. Centrism is a political concept. Its ideology is one of adaptation, of subordination of the interests of the proletariat to the interests of the petty-bourgeoisie in the *same* party. This ideology is alien and contrary to Leninism. Centrism is a phenomenon natural to the Second International of the pre-war period. There, there were the Rights (the majority), the Lefts (without quotation marks), and there were the Centrists whose whole policy consisted in embellishing the opportunism of the Rights with Left phrases and subordinating the Lefts to the Rights. What was then the policy of the Lefts, of which the Bolsheviks were the core? Their policy was one of determined struggle against the Centrists, for a rupture with the Rights (particularly after the outbreak of the imperialist war), and for the organisation of a new revolutionary International out of the genuine Lefts and the genuine proletarian elements.

J.V. Stalin: ("Leninism" Vol. II pp. 94-97)

Ideologically speaking "left" opportunist trends are characterized the overestimation of objective situation and the consciousness of the masses, by absolutizing "subjective activity", by voluntarism and subjectivism. Politically it generally takes the form of isolation from the masses, in attempting to skip stages, in sloganeering and phrasemongering, by the belittling the role of protracted, day-to-day work and the struggle for immediate demands. Organizationally "leftism" generally takes the form of ultra-democracy, of inner-organizational sectarianism, by the policy of attacking comrades, by dogmatism and stereotype party work. Open right opportunism, on the other hand, ideologically ~~underestimates~~ <sup>underestimates</sup> the objective conditions; i.e., in vulgar materialism, evolutionism, etc. Politically open rightism is manifested in reformism, legalism, "parliamentary cretinism", economism and trade unionism. Organizationally in bureaucratic centralism, in overestimating the purely "administrative" aspect of party work, in putting organization above politics, etc. In each country at various stages of historical development, this two tendencies, or deviations from Marxism, takes different forms; i.e., in the U.S. for example, the "American pragmatist" form of Right opportunism, and the anarcho-syndicalist (IWW, etc.) and terrorist (Weathermen, etc.) form of "left" opportunism. In the U.S.--as well as most other advanced capitalist countries--the class basis of the Right tendency is the labor aristocracy, the upper sections of the proletariat and petty bourgeoisie. The material factors which aid the growth and development of this Right tendency is imperialism (which splits the working class movement into a revolutionary and reformist-opportunist in general-wing), long periods of capitalist "stabilization", bourgeois democracy, and a reformist-led trade union movement. The class basis for the "left" tendency is the lower and "ruined" sections of the petty bourgeois (both urban and rural), the semi-proletariat (part-time workers, etc.) and the declassed elements of all the classes; i.e., the lumpen proletariat, and revolutionary periods gives rise to this danger.

So the first cause of our second "left" line (Forman's was the first), was our failure to understand "leftism" in general--its class basis, its varying forms, the conditions which give rise to its growth and development. The second reason, which is a logical extension of the first, is our belittlement of this danger. Expressed in the two quotes on the previous page is a clear lack of vigilance on our part--'we are so Rightist we never have to worry about "leftism", and 'we belittle theory so much we have little to worry about becoming arm-chairs'. Another example more crucial perhaps, was our clear understanding of "CL's dogmatism and phrasemongering about the party" which we stated but conveniently ignored when we join with them only a few months later, after all the warning and forebodings we received from practically everyone else in the Communist movement who had any contact with the CL and the NCC. But we were infatuated with CL's "tremendous working class contacts in Detroit", and their "grasp" of theory, so we went ahead anyway, placing more emphasis on our own "learning from experience". But to really understand the nature of the "left" line during this period we must go deeper than "left" impetuosity which cause us to join the NCC.

CL's "party by september" program fitted in nicely with our overestimation of the level of consciousness reached by the communist movement. Our estimation was that "sharp lines of demarcation" had already been drawn and the communist movement already had been divided into a "revolutionary and opportunist camp", that ideological clarity had been achieved and that the time for organizational unity was at hand. The vanguard of the proletariat had been "won over" to Marxism-Leninism, and therefore the main task was to go "deep" into the class (some secretariat members were already speculating on "getting jobs at the point"). Of course, the question of political line was conveniently "not place in the forefront", because if it was, we would have not stated that lines had been sharply drawn. We knew that we didn't have unity with the CL on a number of key questions like the BNQ and the international situation, and we knew that regardless of what we had to say, the CL was going to go forward with their party as planned. It was only when CL came out openly (because they always held this position) with their position of the "International Situation" and May Day speech which created an uproar in the communist movement because it was diametrically opposed to the Marxist-Leninist line put forward by the Chinese, which caused us to "break" with these "modern-day trotskyites" and "hegelians". The purging of ATM and the other groups from the NCC were secondary factors in our break.

But our "radical rupture" from the "left" opportunist of the CL was not a radical enough rupture. In fact, our pamphlet: "Against Opportunism and Revisionism" should a conciliatory and compromising attitude towards "left" opportunism, and to some extent a deepening of "left" line.

The "Self-criticism of the BWC" found on page II<sup>4</sup> of our pamphlet, we limited our errors to "the failure to consistently PLACE POLITICS IN COMMAND...", not even characterizing the form that this "not placing politics in command" took, which again leaves the door wide open for more "left" errors. This was the same error we made in "repudiating" Forman's line. While generally stating that the struggle against him (and this struggle focused more on the individual, Forman, than the line he represented) was a struggle against "petty bourgeois ideology", which of course, is true, but which tells us nothing of how this petty bourgeois was manifested, in what particular forms, etc. Though the pamphlet does a good job of exposing Cl's trotskite, ultra-left appraisal of the international situation, and discovering some of the philosophical roots of this line (Hegelianism, and dualism), and thus making somewhat of a contribution to the struggle against "leftist" idealism, we nevertheless failed to uncover, failed to bring out a complete ideological understanding of the roots of these errors, especially as they apply to the BWC. A conciliatory attitude towards opportunism, or a half-hearted struggle against it, is bound to strengthen opportunism in one's own ranks, and proves the saying by Stalin that: 'the main danger is the one we have ceased to struggle against'.

Another example of even the deepening of "leftism" under the guise of struggling against it is the statement in the "Conclusion" of our pamphlet where we state: "At present, the great disorder in the ranks of the U.S. communist movement is a reflection of the great disorder in the world; a good, not a bad thing, for the people inside this movement." (p. II 7). Now maybe at first glance this seems trite, because some may say that what we meant here was that out of disorder will come order on a higher level. But I believe (and I wrote that statement) that what we meant is what was said. To raise dis-unity to a principle and glorify it is sectarian to the extreme. And further proof of this is found in the C.C. report which followed the publication of the pamphlet where we again stated that the Communist movement is rigidly divided into a revolutionary and opportunist wing which must be kept "divided and driven together" in order to prevent their further consolidation. (see "minutes of the C.C. meeting June 29-July 3, 1974). Of course, genuine Leninists do not want to see opportunists form a bloc against them, but when 75% of the entire is part of the "opportunist camp" we have to ask ourselves--"who are the genuine Leninists"? What distinguishes them from the so-called opportunist camp? In regards to the struggle against "left" opportunism, the struggle we waged against the CL has to be seen as one step forward, two steps back, a deepening of "leftism" under the guise of struggling against it. On this account as well it should be noted that the same political report to the C.C. was redone for the 1st issue of the "Communist" but what is absent from the article reprinted for the Communist, is the statement on "keeping the opportunist camp divided". Why, if this line is a genuine Leninist one, would we want to delete this key statement, keep it from the rest of the communist movement? For "tactical reasons"? If isolating the opportunist camp was what we should be doing then why not try to convince all the revolutionary cadre of the movement to do the same? But there is more.

In that same report, we stated our estimation of the objective situation as the following: ". . . the numbers of strikes is increasing--developing from purely economic to political demands in which the multi-national proletariat is participating on an ever increasing scale. . ." Is this statement true? If so then we are very close to a revolutionary situation in the U.S. But I believe this statement is only a reflection of what we would like to be the case and not the actual situation. Besides the isolated, and extremely limited examples we give to support this view (Rhodesian Crome, Hawaiian pineapple struggles, etc.) there is clearly no broad tendency in the struggles of the proletariat which shows a transition from economic to political struggles on a broad scale, and hence, no rapid acceleration of the revolutionary consciousness of the U.S. proletariat. We cannot equate a growth of militancy in general (which is what is actually taking place) with the growth of revolutionary militancy. In fact, this is just another example of our "leftist" idealism, substituting a concrete analysis of the objective situation with our own desires. Even the very phrase--"a transition from economic struggles to struggles of an increasing political character", was taken from a speech by O. Kuusinen of the Comintern delivered at the E.C.C.I XII Plenum. I use this phrase, not in order to deliberately deceive, but because I thought it described what was happening today as well. I thus committed the error which Stalin calls "history by parallels", or the tendency to ascribe to one's own situation that which took place somewhere else, in another historical period, in different conditions. It was clearly a "left" dogmatist error on my part, and a "left" estimation of the objective situation as a whole on the part of the BWC; and a further deepening of the "leftist", or petty bourgeois method, viewpoint and outlook in the organization.



The ideological and philosophical basis for "left" dogmatist errors of this type is subjectivism. Subjectivism is the substitution of wishes for reality. It is the same type of outlook that motivated J. Forman to carry out all the wild schemes, forums and conferences, that didn't accomplish anything. Obviously, since there has been a certain development on our part since that time, the present forms of subjectivism in the BWC are less crude in form from the first period. Whereas Forman completely ignored the basic tenets and principles of Marxism-Leninism, and relied on his own "enthusiasm" to carry out programs, today, under the guise of adhering to the principles of Marxism-Leninism, we too substitute concrete analysis of concrete things for quotes and parallels from the classics. This is especially expressed in our impetuosity in party building, thinking that a genuine party can be built quickly and speedily and in our overestimation of the tempo of the radicalization of the masses in the U.S. The point is, WE FAIL TO INVESTIGATE! For example, for all our polemics on the national question, there is little if any investigation of the actual, present-day conditions in the Black Belt. And this holds true for most other aspects of our political line. This is not to say, as some do, that therefore everything is wrong, or that there is no point in struggling to defend the universal principles of Marxism-Leninism. But we have belittled the task of combining what is universal in Marxism to the concrete peculiarities of our own situation. There are specific features to the revolutionary movement in the U.S. that not even Lenin or Mao wrote about, things that only genuine communists in the U.S. can sum-up in the course of making the revolution itself. Let us take another example.

We have often compared our situation to that of the "Iskra" period of Russia. To a certain extent, and within certain limits the parallel is correct, insofar as we are in a period of party building and insofar as our movement is characterized by vacillation, economism, ideological and political differences, "amateurishness", etc. But there are some different and particular features to our movement and our situation which didn't exist in Russia in the years 1900-1903.

The fundamental thesis of the Russian variety of opportunism, "economism" was: "the economic struggle for the workers, the political struggle for the bourgeoisie". Essentially economism sought to oppose the revolutionary character of the workers movement, to proceed along the lines of least resistance and opposes giving the spontaneous movement a "politically conscious, planned character." Economism was, and is (in this particular form) open Right opportunism and revisionism. But another problem affecting the Russian workers movement at the time was terrorism (bombings, assassinations, etc.) Lenin shows that the connection between both these tendencies, economism and terrorism, as different as they seem in appearance was that they both advocated spontaneity in the workers movement and belittled theory. Lenin thus proved that the ideological basis of all opportunism was "bow to spontaneity" and belittling the role of the conscious element. He said: "without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement"

Though the RSDLP was formally formed in 1895, with more or less a correct general line, several factors were responsible for the growth of the economist trend. First the ideological basis of the party was weak. This was because the most developed and representative leaders of the movement -- including Lenin himself -- were withdrawn from the struggle due to the persecutions and arrests of the Tsarist regime. This coupled with the growth of the spontaneous movement, especially the strike struggle of the working class between the years 1897-1900, created the favorable conditions for the growth of the economist trend amongst the "new" or younger elements within the party. This growth was further encouraged by the movement of international revisionism represented by the German Bernstein who said "the movement is everything the aim is nothing"

The Russian CP was built under conditions of fascist-like Tsarist oppression. So was the Chinese and Albanian parties. Another important objective factor in the development of these parties was that due to the fact that the working class was relatively small and young, and to the fact of feudal oppression (with no bourgeois democracy) the communist grew up and developed along side of the workers movement. These objective conditions, along with the fact that there were genuine revolutionary Marxist like Lenin, Mao and Enver Hoxha to sum them up and point the way forward, facilitated firstly, winning the vanguard to Communism and then, linking socialism with the working class movement, and finally, the consolidation of the proletarian dictatorship itself

The U.S. on the other hand is the country where bourgeois democracy was developed to its highest level (due to the strength of capitalism and other historical factors, like the two WW) The economic, political and social exploitation of the masses is more veiled because of factors such as "freedom" of the press, speech, the vote, trial by jury, etc. Consequently, illusions about the true nature of bourgeois dictatorship will be much harder to overcome due to the strength of bourgeois ideology. Additionally, the workers movement developed long before Marxism as a political tendency, and thus was led by reformist and social democrats. Though the militancy of the U.S. working class was second to none, it lacked the class and political consciousness that only Marxism-Leninism propagated by a revolutionary Communist Party can bring.

The ideological and political differences in the U.S. communist movement today have been further exacerbated by the structure of the movement as well. There are several "national organizations"--RU,CL,OL,BWC,Asian Study Group,Communist Organization of U.S. Marxist-Leninists,etc. Additionally,there are organizations which could be classified as regional in scope--PRRWO,ATM,IWK,etc.And then there are a host of circles and groups of the purely local type,th-ew so-called: "independents",as well as literary trends such as the Guardian,etc.Many of these organizations have,or are trying to implement fully developed party structures--i.e.,democratic centralism, factory nuclei,central organs,trade union and mass organizational fractions,etc.etc. In other words,instead of the circle type groups which predominated during the Iskra period in Russia,in essence,we have several "mini-parties" in existence today(especially if we include groups such as CL,PSP,CAP,YOBU as part of the "new"communist movement).None of these groups(some who are weak and others very weak,not to speak of their political line)can be considered the real vanguard,though each would like to think of itself as such.In this kind of situation. "left" sectarianism and small "groupism" have and seems to be developing even more deep roots. This situation is further maintained by the opportunist leadership of more than a few of these groups who like to think of themselves as permanent leaders of the proletariat and therefore deserving of being on the "Central Committee" of the new party when it is built.In fact our recent history has shown that the first question raised whenever negotiations on a possible merger take place,is "who will be on the new central committee?"

The growth of small-groupism can be traced directly to the lack of a unified understanding in the movement of the party building process in its ideological,political and organizational aspects.Is party building primarily an ideological or organizational question? Is it primarily a propaganda or agitational task? Is it primarily winning over the vanguard to Communism or linking socialism with the working class movement? These are the three major points on the question of party building which all the disputes and differences in the movement,and more recently the two-line struggle in the BWC can be reduced.

"The question of building the Communist Party is in the first place an ideological question. Unless the Party upholds Marxist-Leninist ideology,imbues itself and its members with Marxism-Leninism and propagates it among the workers and working people,it is doomed to be ineffective in its work.INCLUDED IN IDEOLOGY IS THE ACTION AND WILL OF MEN.The concept of ideology as the Party saw it at that time was too much dominated by some study of Marxist-Leninist classics divorced from the actual struggle.There was insufficient analysis and investigation of Australia's own conditions so that those conditions could elucidate and at the same time be elucidated by the general principles of Marxism-Leninism."(Australia's Revolution:On The Struggle for a Marxist-Leninist Communist Party,E.F.Hill,p.70)

In contrast to the Marxist-Leninist understanding of the question of party building quoted above from our Australian comrades,our movement thus far can be divided into those who absolutize one aspect of party building or the other.On the one hand the Right opportunists who say that party building is not primarily an ideological question but one of "linking one self with the mass movement"(the same would be true of others who give lip-service to the ideological aspect of party building(OL)while in practice go about "linking themselves to the mass movement").And with these people as well,"linking" one self with the mass movement does not mean taking Marxism-Leninism to this movement(even if this was the task),but rather,blindly following this movement in a reformist manner.

But the "lefts",though they raise that party building is primarily ideological,they understand this to mean only the most abstract form of theorizing or reading of the "classics",some --like the CL--even falling into the trotskyite "theory of cadres" which says that in the period of party building the most advanced show withdraw from the struggle and engage in "education".These people are fine when it comes to quoting this or that from Marxist texts,but they are totally unable to analyze U.S. conditions without falling into the error which Stalin describes as:"history by parallels"(the tendency to explain ones own history solely by finding similar examples in some previous historical situation).

Characteristically then,both the rights and the "lefts",and those who vacillate to both extremes lack perspective and a clear revolutionary program which can unite the various groups and circles into one party,both bring about confusion

and disillusion inot the revolutionary movement;the former by advocating a "program" such as the "united front from above",which is identical with the reformist line of the modern revisionists in the CPUSA,and the latter,the "lefts" by pharesmongering and sloganeering about what is to be done,refusing to unite with anyone unless there is unity on all questions of line,strategy and tactics,and isolating themselves from participation in the key struggles of the proletariat.

Why do we say that party building is essentially an ideological question, and what do we mean by this?

Because the revolutionary movement in our time has been betrayed by the ideological opponents of Marxism-Leninism,principally the modern revisionists of the Soviet Union and the modern-day trotskyites and the struggle against these dangers,which has beenme one of the principal task and burning problems of the ideological struggle,must be made the foundation of the unity upon whihh the genuine Marxist-Leninists must nnite.Comrade Enver Hoxasays:

"The ideological opponents of Marxism-Leninism,beginning with the bourgeois and revisionist,radical and petty-bourgeois ones,in words and deeds,are striving to negate the world historic mission of the working class,its role and hegemony in the revolution.All together,in this or that way,they seek to prove that the ideas of Marxism-Leninism about this question have become obsolete."(Speech to the 6th Party Congress)

And comrade Foto Cami continues:

"Under these conditions,the exposure of these attempts and the defence of the techings of Marxism-Leninism about the revolutionary character role and hegemony of the working class,in close connection with reality and the revolutionary practice,is todayas much an important and of urgent duty in order to carry onward the cause of the revolution and of socialism.' (The Working Class and its World Historic Mission:Albania Today#2 1972)

Too often party building has been seen(and is today seen)as an narrow organizational question,i.e.as a question of recruiting and meger.This is the error of both the rights and the "lefts".The rights do this in order to belittle the ideological tasks of the party all together(RU&OL)and the "lefts" want to skip stages by thinking that the lines of demarcation have already been drawn and the task now is to prepare the party program,merge where possible and stregnten tmemselves organizationally. Again both underestimate and even don't believe in the working class's ability to grasp Marxsim-Leninism through the course of its struggle(as well as through study and education). And both fail to understnad the protractedness of the party building process, its various stages,and its particular forms in a country like the U.S.

This is even more clear when we see how both tendencies treat the question of the relation between propaganda and agitation during this period and their attitude on the present stage of the party building process in the U.S. and the tasks arising from this situation.

In regards to propoganda and agitation we see this same dualist, subjective and one-sided approach in the line and practice of the various communist groups.

On the one hand the right tendency of reducing the task of communists to that of merely registering the spontaneous inclinations of the masses (not even the key sectors of the masses, i.e., the advance workers, but the "masses" in general) This tendency has been often described as "economism" by the BWC and others but it has a peculiar American form. For example, no<sup>r</sup> today is saying (at least openly) "economic struggle for the workers, political struggle for the bourgeoisie" as the classical economists of Tsarist Russia proclaimed. Additionally, in the objective sense, the main thing that gave rise to the economist tendency in Russia was the tremendous strike wave of the Russia proletariat between the years 1898-1902, which the social democrats played a significant role, but went to the extreme of becoming "enfatuated" with this aspect of the proletariat's struggle, and raising it to the principle aspect, thus belittling the political tasks and political role of communists and advanced workers.

In the U.S. today on the other hand, the economist tendency, to the extent that it can be described as such, takes the form of refusing to take Marxism-Leninism to the "mass movement" in general and not simply the economic struggles of the proletariat. This is because in spite of the fact that the economic struggle of the workers (strikes, etc.) has sharply intensified, communists have played little or no role in them and definitely have not been in the leadership of any. So the tendency to "bow to spontaneity" has been manifested primarily in the struggles of the non-proletarian strata--the student struggles, anti-war movement, struggles of the oppressed nationalities, of women, veterans, etc. The "new" anti-revisionist communists are not even close enough to the workers' movement to lead it in one way or the other. Now if we are talking about the CPUSA or the Trots (like SWP, etc.) then that's another story. They most definitely "lead" the workers movement (to the extent that they do, their influence in the unions, etc.) in an open economist direction, there is a much better position to do this since they are connected with the workers movement--especially the trade unions--in a hundred and one ways.

So when we speak of the right opportunist distortion in regards to propoganda, we have to understand the peculiar forms that it takes in present-day U.S. conditions. And that distortion--in so much as the anti-revisionists are concerned--has not such been a question of leading (or even being involved) in the economic struggles of the workers while refusing to raise their political class consciousness, but primarily a question of refusing to take part in the workers movement period and refusing to take Marxist-Leninist propoganda especially to the advanced workers, it has been primarily a tendency of worshipping the spontaneity of the non-proletarian (or mixed) strata. In the U.S. today, among the anti-revisionists both the Rights and the "lefts" are isolated from both the political and economic struggles of the proletariat.

While the Rights openly belittle the task of taking (and by "taking" we have in mind the principle of combing the universal tenets of M-L with the concrete revolutionary practice of the U.S.) revolutionary, Marxist-Leninist propoganda to the key struggles of the workers and fail to understand that party building is essentially an ideological question, the "lefts" fail particularly in the sense that they have only the most abstract and dogmatist understanding of this question, and they fail generally in the same way the Rightist do--abstention and isolation from the key struggles of the proletariat, but under the guise for "struggling for the lines of demarcation" and "not bowing to spontaneity" "and studying the classics", etc.

The most systematic expression of this "left" line on party building and propoganda is to be found in Charles Loren's book: "The Struggle For The Party" Loren, while correctly pointing out that the task of communists is to take "socialist ideas to the workers" he clearly goes to the other extreme of advocating a "hands-off" policy to any kind of practical work, especially work within the "labor movement" as he calls it:

"In fact, to send out a disorganized communist movement into current labor struggle is a good recipe for increasing the confusion and bewilderment of communists. How are communists going to point out to the labor movement its ultimate aims and political tasks when these are not clearly understood and sharply distinguished from reformism within the movement? How is the communist movement going to protect the political and ideological independence of the labor movement when it has not even achieved this independence itself? Attempt such folly and the results will be twofold: 1) many communists will find themselves even more disoriented, confused, and demoralized, and 2) bourgeois ideology and the opportunist line will take over the communist movement, instead of the communist leading the labor movement onto the socialist path....

"...The problems faced by the communist movement cannot be solved by going out to the labor movement. How to found a communist party, how to organize it, the meaning of democratic centralism, the question of material prerequisites, all the issues of line and program--these things cannot be settled by supporting strikes, learning an easy manner blue-collar workers, and conducting polemics with George Meany (while dickering with local piecards)." (page 11)

Here Loren clearly counterposes the task of struggling for ideological unity among communists (who are also workers too, my dear Loren) with the task of winning over the vanguard to Marxism-Leninism. Philosophically, it is even a greater distortion of the unity of theory and practice because Loren leaves no room whatsoever for scientifically testing what line should be taken to the workers or what line should the communists unite on. How is correct line determined, and what makes it correct or incorrect? Only when it relies on the general principles of Marxism-Leninism to integrate these with the concrete revolutionary experience of one's own country. Of course, in the party-building period this linking is primarily aimed at the advanced masses in order that they can in turn grasp the science, organized themselves into a party, and then strive to unite the whole of the class around its revolutionary program. In essence Loren's line is just as "economist" as the open Right tendency and the classical economists because basically he advocates: "ideological struggle for the communists (who are mainly intellectuals at this stage, he admits) and the mass movement and labor movement for the workers". Isn't that what he is saying when he says that any involvement with practical work before there is ideological unity can only demoralize people? Isn't that what he is saying when he says and counterposes the communist movement--which he admits is primarily composed of students and intellectuals--to the labor movement, and advocates a rigid separation between them? If the rank-in-file cadres of the Albanian communist groups took this same attitude towards mass work when their movement was going through some of the same growing pains as ours, when there was no ideological unity, and the small circle mentality permeated most of the weak organizations, they would have never risen in struggle against the Nazi invaders even before the party was built. By the time the PLA was formed in 1941 the communists had acquired considerable experience in the revolutionary struggle as well as in the ideological struggle, and it was in fact the unity of these two experiences, along with the revolutionary upsurge of the Albanian proletariat and masses that in fact enabled the communists to rise above the factionalism and petty squabbles of the tiny groups and proceed along the road of carrying out their historical tasks. In fact there was a group in Albania who had a line similar to the one put forward by Loren--the "theory of cadres line" which advocated isolation and "education" of cadres apart from the class struggle. This group eventually degenerated into trotskism like another group here so closely associated with Loren's ideas a few years ago--the CL.

On the question of the central task, of party building, and on the question of the relation between the theoretical and practical tasks of communists during this period, we can clearly see how the anti-revisionist movement has been dominated by two seemingly divergent but similar tendencies on the right and on the "left"--both products of the dominance of petty bourgeois ideology (and petty bourgeois people) in this movement. Irrespective of their different platforms, both

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have failed to provide us with an scientific, all-sided understanding of our tasks in the ideological, political and organizational aspects and both have perpetuated and even increased our isolation from the advanced workers and the key struggles of the masses generally. Both of these tendencies, which still hold considerable influence even today are simply two sides of a single entity-- the subjectivist, one-sided and vacillating outlook of the petty bourgeoisie. On the Right side we have the narrow empiricists and on the "left" side the dogmatists both whom incribe idealism on their banners. Again the Rights are characterized by their refusal to use Marxist-Leninist theory as the guiding compass for their actions, and the "lefts" who fail to understand that questions of theory are not abstract and found solely in books--even the classics-- and that it is not even enough to "know" this theory in the sense of being able to quote some of its general principles, but more importantly how to apply it how to integrate it with the revolutionary practice of the masses in a creative non-mechanical way, to the actual period in which we live and struggle, to the particularities of our country and situation, to the pressing problems which confront us in each and every stage of our development, clearly our fight is on two fronts, and we should always keep the following words from Mao in mind:

"Idealism and mechanical materialism, opportunism and adventurism, are all characterized by the breach between the subjective and the objective, by the separation of knowledge from practice. The Marxist-Leninist theory of knowledge, characterized as it is by scientific social practice, cannot but resolutely oppose these wrong tendencies."

Some say that we can only determine a Right or "left" deviation only in relation to what is happening in the objective situation. In other words, if the spontaneous movement is proceeding at such a pace that it is far outstripping the ability of communists to give it leadership, then you have a problem of Right opportunism. If the spontaneous movement is at a low ebb, and the communists are calling for the masses to take up arms (e.g., the Black Panthers), then you have a "left" deviation. But this is deceiving. It depends on the concrete situation. In a pre-party situation when the communist movement is characterized by a number of weak and very weak groups with political and ideological differences, the principal task is to unite the movement, build the party on the basis of line, train cadres, etc. This also involves taking part in and trying to give leadership to the key struggles of the masses. But our ability to lead the spontaneous movement is limited by the internal situation of the movement itself. It is the internal situation within the movement, the line differences, the factional struggles and sectarianism which is preventing the communists from leading and even playing a significant role in the mass movement, and certainly not an open Right line. "Leftist" close-doorism, and sectarianism can and does isolate one from the struggles of the masses as much as an open Right line will do (see: "Our Study and the Current Situation", by Mao Tse Tung). Thus the main thing which determines a Right and "left" deviation is what are the requirements of the central task. And the central task requires not that each and every weak group try to lead the spontaneous struggle with their own line, and very often little ability to put it into practice, but that we continue to wage the ideological

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struggle so that the whole communist movement will unite and the general staff of the proletariat can be forged.

In summary we can say that the anti-revisionist communist movement emerged on the heels of the spontaneous upsurge of the late sixties. As a result of the anti-war movement, the oppressed minority movements, the student and women's movement, as well as the affects of the great proletarian cultural revolution in China (the little red book, etc.), many people move genuinely toward the left. Marxism-Leninism began to be popular. There was a sincere though spontaneous and unsystematic rejection of revisionism and the CPUSA. Anarchism, adventurism, passivism, and petty bourgeois nationalism as well as accompined this move towards Marxism due to the overwhelming petty bourgeois character and class composition of the movement. As a result, simultaneously with the popularization of many of terms and concepts found in the classics, there was a definite tendency to smuggle various forms of petty bourgeois theories (Debrayism, Fanonism, Nkrumahism, etc.) into Marxism-Leninism thereby producing an eclectic hodgepodge of general "revolutionary theory" which various groups (the Black Panthers, the League, YLP, SDS, etc.) passed off as Marxsim\*leninism. The major ideological struggle during this period (1967-1970) was between Marxism-Leninism and these various petty bourgeois theories, manifested primarily in the struggle "who shall lead whom?", what class is the vanguard--the proletariat, lumpens, students, blacks, third world people, etc.)

but as the mass movement subsided (1970-1974), those forces who were won over to Marxism, were faced with an entirely new situation. The last few years has been characterized by a "lull" in the mass upsurge (relative to the sixties) and the emergence of sharp ideological differences among the anti-revisionist themselves. Fundamentally, these differences can be reduced to the following-- What are the requirements of the objective and subjective situation? Is the objective situation one of a revolutionary upsurge where the task of communists is to place themselves at the leadership of it? Or is the objective situation one of preparation and the gradual development of the conditions (economic crises, governmental crises, etc.) necessary for the revolutionary battles yet to come, in which case the task of communists is to unite themselves ideologically, politically and organizationally; i.e., unite on the basis of ideological and political line, engage in persistent, protracted work among the key, advance sector of the masses, train cadres, build the party, etc.? In other words, over whether or not a Marxist Leninist party is needed to advance the cause of proletariat, how to go about building such a party, and what sort of party should it be. But the present situation has another aspect.

Again owing to the petty bourgeois make-up of the communist movement, the protracted, zig-zag nature of the political radicalization of the U.S., proletariat, the lack of staunch, veteran communists with wide political experience, the ever present danger of spies, opportunists and agent-provocatuers, etc., principled ideological struggle is being undermined by factionalism (between groups as well as within groups), sectarianism and splitism. In other words, ideological struggle between the groups is being replaced (or already has) by factional struggle between the groups, each "struggling for hegemony" under the guise of "setting sharp lines of demarcation". Everyone else is a "careerist and opportunist" and hardly no two groups can carry on joint practical work unless there is absolute unity on "all question of strategy and tactics". Each group tries to annilate the other with "rutless criticism and merciless blows". This situation is further exacerbated by the national divisions within the movement; i.e., because of the existence of all white, all black, all latin and all asian groups, the factional struggle many times assumes the character of a racial or national conflict--the "Third World" communists against the white (this is despite the fact that there is obviously a genuine need to wage a struggle against white chauvinism as well as petty bourgeois nationalism). This line is carried forward in the internal relations of the groups. Under the guise of "democratic centralism" cadres are not allowed to participate in the ideological struggle nor have say in the formulation of the political line, some not even being allowed to even speak to members of other organizations under the fear of breaking discipline or being suspected or spying for another group. When there is two or more of the groups working in the same plant or mass organization, more time is spent "exposing" this or that group then winning over the masses.

This is the kind of atmosphere police agents dream of working in. Needless to say it only serves to help the bourgeoisie and further discredit the communists in the eyes of the workers, deepens our isolation from the key struggles of the masses, and unnecessarily prolongs the development of the party. To the extent the ideological struggle has been conducted in a principle manner, owing to the ideological and political weakness of the movement, and the fact that many of us are only just beginning to grasp Marxism-Leninism, there is a tendency to exaggerate every detail of difference, to fail to distinguish what is primary from secondary and to fight over minor points in an inflexible and dogmatic manner. It is this kind of rigid, sectarian attitude that has led to all the splits and secondary splits during this period. It is this kind of attitude which is leading all the groups to "go it alone", and be concerned primarily with the development of their ~~own~~ group interests and their own members.

That revisionism and open Right opportunism is the main strategic danger there can be no doubt, characterized by liberalism, unprincipled peace, conciliation and the complete, systematic rejection of the revolutionary principles of Marxism-Leninism. It is the never-ending duty of us, the genuine Marxist-Leninists, to take up the great task of fighting in defence of Marxism-Leninism against the traitors to the working class and proletarian revolution. But in order to wage this struggle correctly and victoriously, we have to recognize another, more immediate danger--petty bourgeois radicalism; i.e., "left" opportunism and sectarianism. Right now "leftism" is the more immediate danger, it is the obstacle which is preventing us from really striking a serious blow at revisionism. Most our time is spent not on exposing the rottenness of revisionism and the CPUSA and Trots to the advanced workers and on the basis of this explaining why a new party of the proletariat is needed, but on factional struggle between ourselves under the guise of "drawing sharp lines of demarcation", which assumes more often than not, a struggle over who can produce the fitting quotations from the classics. This is not to say that an ideological struggle is not necessary, in fact it is the primary thing, or that lines of demarcation are not necessary or that there are no revisionist influences among us as well. No, what we are saying is that ideological struggle has to be a scientific thing and not a matter of publishing quotations from Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao. Ideological struggle is also a question of analyzing events and our own practical activity so that our work and tasks is guided and raised to higher levels and that Marxist-Leninist theory is enriched by the experience of the U.S. revolutionary movement as well.

Again this is no attempt to belittle the importance of the ideological struggle but an attempt to expose what has been passing for ideological struggle. Many of the key questions which distinguish the genuine Marxist-Leninists from both the revisionists and the "left" opportunists we have yet to even discuss. For example, over whether or not to use parliament as a platform for Communist propaganda, on how to carry out work in the trade unions during this period, on whether or not the worker-farmer alliance is still the main alliance for the success of the proletarian revolution, on the question of class structure of the U.S. (who are the enemy (besides the monopoly capitalists) classes and who are the allies of the proletariat, on the role that armed struggle plays in making revolution in a country like ours, on the questions of terrorism and anarcho-syndicalism, on modern-day trotskyism, etc. Our "drawing of sharp lines of demarcation" has been limited fundamentally and also exclusively to different formulations of the black national question and "economism", insisting that unless there is absolute unity of these questions there can be no party. Yet it took the Comintern 7 years after the CPUSA (1921-1928) had been formed to come with a position on the "Negro Question". Of course, some may say that we are not starting all over again and we must rely on what has already been done. True, but relying on principles does not mean that this can substitute for concrete analysis of present day conditions, and it is the analysis of present-day conditions which is in ridicule in the name of "upholding the classics". We should not make the error of negating what is universal in Marxism nor the error of no concrete analysis of concrete situations, but rather should use Marxism-Leninism, i.e., the method of Marxism to sum-up present day conditions.



So the present situation within the anti-revisionist movement has two aspects. One aspect, presently the predominate one, is full of dangerous consequences. The other, within the horizon but not yet within our grasp, is pregnant with opportunities. If most of the groups continue on their present course of mutual antagonism and sectarianism, of "going it alone" and seeking hegemony, of denigrating ideological struggle to the level of personal attacks and narrow group interest, if they refuse to put Marxism-Leninism in command of everything they do and subordinate their narrow, selfish interests to the needs of the proletariat and the revolution, if they do not uphold the absolute necessity of putting the ideological struggle in the first place and continue to worship their own limited experience, if they continue their isolation from the key struggles of the masses, if they continue to mechanically copy the experience of other countries and treat Marxism-Leninism as something which they both change at will or treat as a dogma, if they do not seriously raise the ideological and political level of the cadres while perpetuating the reign of a few "theoreticians"; if they do not repudiate all these things, then the formation of a genuine Communist party is indeed a long way off, or worst yet, completely out of the realm of possibility for this generation of revolutionaries, who will inevitably degenerate into so many different sects, or worst, into counter-revolutionaries.

On the other hand if we can grasp and take hold of the situation and not let it take hold of us, if we can understand the true nature of the present situation and our tasks and not be afraid to look at reality in the face, if we are bold enough to make sincere, proletarian-like criticism and self criticism, seize the opportunities to integrate our Marxism-Leninist theory with the key struggles of the class which the objective (as well as subjective) situation is creating, if we wage a principled ideological struggle starting from a desire for unity, struggle and reaching unity on a higher level, engage in joint practical work whenever possible, open up the ideological struggle to every member of every single organization, individual or group so that each can formulate his or her own independent position, if we do not become demoralized after each setback and do not count on quick successes, if we maintain an uncompromising stand against all forms of revisionism and opportunism and carry out a relentless struggle on two fronts, if we do all these things and maintain a patient attitude then I am fully confident we can fulfill our historic tasks and raise the entire movement to a new stage.

In summarizing the situation in the BWC I think that we can clearly see that the "left" danger is indeed the main one. And I tried to show that the present "left" line--and I believe that there is a "left" ideological line and not simply a deviation--is only an extension of the first which originated with the formation of the organization and further developed by J. Forman and the old leadership. The misunderstood and half-hearted criticism of this first line is what paved the way for the development of the second, which was more "theoretical", systematic, and deeply rooted. The second thing which paved the way for this line was the belittlement of it and the danger of ultra "leftism" in general, which was manifested in the covering and conciliatory attitude towards our own opportunist errors as well as a misunderstanding of the two-line struggle within the communist movement as a whole. The struggle against open Right opportunism and modern revisionism, which is our strategic and historical task during this period, in no way implies that a struggle against "left" opportunism is no less a task, and that indeed the main struggle in a number of "anti-revisionist" groups and the "new" communist movement as a whole.

Many of things I've said here have already been said by comrades other than myself. I take no credit to having uncovered the root and essence of the present situation. In fact, I am indebted to many of my comrades who struggled with me to see the light, especially the comrades on the I.C.

I consider myself one of the principle adherents (formerly, that is) of this "left" tendency in the BWC, and indeed one of the formulators of it. I participated and at times even encouraged the factional policy of the secretariat, maintaining an elitist view of leadership and disdaining the participation of others, particularly the cadre in the overall direction of the organization. I deliberately glossed over the mistakes of myself and others in the leadership under the unstated rotten, liberalist policy of "you scratch my back and I 'll scratch yours". And though at times I clearly knew that mistakes were being made, and though at times I struggled against them, this struggle at best <sup>was</sup> unsystematic and at worst vacillatory. In regards to myself, these errors were not due primarily to ignorance, but to a petty bourgeois, intellectualist form of opportunism, characteristic of many who are just entering the working class movement and just beginning to adopt a proletarian world outlook. Because I was able to "grasp" certain abstract formulations of Marxist-Leninist principles, I thought I had superior knowledge and therefore did not heed or pay attention to the opinions of others. Even more so, I did not seek the advice of the masses of people other than communists, thereby living in a close circle of what the Australian comrades call: "left blocism". Like others holding this line, I pursued the policy of attacking comrades, and trying to belittle them, rather than struggling with a desire for unity in mind. This vulgarization of criticism turned into its opposite of glossing over errors when they were mine or of a particular person I may have been getting along with at the time.

Another factor which aided in the development in the "left" and Right views which I held was an incorrect understanding of the role of leadership and how line gets developed in a communist organization. From day one, but especially since the July 8th period the BWC operated under an elitist view of leadership. Because there were two distinct "left" lines, this elitism took two distinct forms. Under Forman's line, our view of the ideal leadership was one who could "organize" the most people, one could get more people around himself. Consequently, the best leaders were the ones who had the biggest "bases" (R. Reed, etc.), and what one did with these people once they came around was a question which was hardly dealt with. Under the second, or present "left" line the ideal leader became the exact opposite, it is now one who is "highly developed theoretically", a good writer and talker. Again the rank-in-file were seen as passive observers who only existed to "implement" the line that leadership would develop out of their own heads. In either case leadership failed to combine the unity of theory and practice, the combination of being a good practical worker who goes into the bases, lives with the cadre, participates in the day-to-day work of the organization, learns from the cadre and the masses, etc., with a good theoretician--one who knows and is able to apply the universal principles of Marxism-Leninism to the solving of concrete problems. At times these elitist views went to the extreme of speculating what cadre would split or "be on the side" of different individual leaders if they decided to split. In fact, the "cadres" and the bases became important only when a crisis situation prevailed in the organization. We thus totally abandoned the Marxist-Leninist principle of "from the masses, to the masses", negated the fundamental principle that a communist organization by its very nature is an organization of leaders with a division of labor, and spent our time in trying to develop a few "highly developed theoreticians". The slogan "everything for the cadres" was in reality a mere phrase.

Because of these kinds of views, the BWC has never really been able to conduct principled ideological struggle or correct criticism and self-criticism. Rotten liberalism quickly turns into rotten sectarianism and personal animosities in times of sharp differences. A person who is all good quickly turns into a person who is all bad. In good, "peaceful" times, the leadership often one-sidedly emphasize only the good qualities of other leaders, in times of conflict, only the negative sides of the person. Rumors about people's personal life, habits, weaknesses, etc., replace scientific criticism of erroneous political views. The actions of people are not examined from the class point of view, but from people's subjective "Joneses". Two-line struggle between different comrades is seen as life and death struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. These are all manifestations of "ultra-leftism" within our ranks, and many times they come forward under the guise of "struggling" against "ultra leftism", and the "opportunists, etc." But we have to also realize that many of these "leftist" tendencies arise because of the existence of rotten liberalism within our ranks. People who have genuine criticisms of other because of liberalism and because they are afraid to be criticized themselves, usually hold them in for a long time, or raise them only behind peoples' backs, and this attitude usually develops a feeling of antagonism, fear and resentment after a period of time. Thus, the present situation in the BWC and the communist movement as a whole. Only open, principled ideological struggle can resolve differences between us and only if we start from a desire for unity in the first place.

Also in the past, as well as today, criticism and self-criticism have been divorced from politics. We have and do not pursue criticism in order to reveal the strengths and weakness of our line and policies but have often focused in on the personal weaknesses of different individuals. This was certainly the case with J. Forman. While some people taunted and persecuted Forman, day and night, other led him to believe that he was their friend and had no differences with him. And then he was just kicked<sup>him</sup> out, thinking this would solve the petty bourgeois tendencies in the organization. At other times, self-criticism is seen as some form of psycho-analysis and personal introspection usually manifested by the phrase "I criticize myself", "I repudiate my errors", again thinking this also does away with the problem. This is an aspect of the same bourgeois line put forward by Lin Piao--"fight bourgeois self". This attitude produces the twin errors of keeping quiet when things are going good as well as the attitude of "negating everything" when things are going bad. The point is, that it is only possible to transform oneself as we transform the world through revolutionary practice, and criticism and self-criticism is the weapon we use to correct the inevitable mistakes that are made along the revolutionary road.

I am certainly not saying this in order to avoid the principle that individuals should be accountable for their actions. In fact, it is due to the relative lack of consequences for errors that are made which cause the same errors to be repeated. I believe the leadership especially should be accountable, and once the ideological line is corrected, individuals have to be individually assessed as to their particular responsibilities, and if necessary, organizational penalties should be carried out. We only have to keep in mind that primarily it is the ideological and political line that we need to correct, and only by correcting the line, discovering what was incorrect about it while upholding what is correct and developing it further, can we, in the final analysis, decide the kind of remoulding that different comrades who have temporarily gone astray should undergo.