

Slipping & Sliding October League

The Most Dangerous Revisionist Trend in the Communist Movement and their Call for the Party

"WHEN WE SPEAK OF FIGHTING OPPORTUNISM, WE MUST NEVER FORGET A FEATURE THAT IS CHARACTERISTIC OF PRESENT-DAY OPPORTUNISM IN EVERY SPHERE, NAMELY, ITS VAGUENESS, DIFFUSENESS, ELUSIVENESS."
(One Step Forward, Two Steps Back, Lenin, 1940)

This opportunist vagueness is the hallmark of the OL's party building "call". The ideological and political indefiniteness of the "call" is not just sloppy writing or the slipping and sliding of individual "leaders" in our movement. This vagueness is a whole approach to party building, an entire methodology which reflects a stable opportunist trend in our young anti-revisionist communist movement.

What are the dangers of this approach? How does it show up in the OL's indefiniteness on party building and their view of ideological and political struggle? Where does it pop up in their principles of unity, and their view of organization and sectarianism? And what are the ideological roots of this approach and its social, class basis?

These are a few of the questions we have to deal with to really understand the class essence of the OL and what danger they represent in our movement.

OL'S INDEFINITENESS ON THE TASK OF PARTY BUILDING AND THE IMPORTANCE OF THEORY

In their newspaper, The Call, the OL brags:

"From its very beginnings to the present time, this movement has viewed party building as central among its many tasks. The October League, for one, has been consistent and clear in its stand on party building against those who tried (and still try) to liquidate this task from the 'left' and the right..." (The Call, 11/75, p.12).

"Consistent and clear"? Not the way we remember it. The OL has been squirming on party building for several years now, often running more than one line at a time! In the spring, 1973, they declared:

"At this period, it is the central task of U.S. communists to build a new communist party and all other work must be developed in accordance with this task."

And they continued:

"...while modern revisionism, or right opportunism, is the main ideological enemy which confronts the world revolutionary movement, within the newly emerging communist movement here the main danger is 'leftism' and sectarianism. Without a staunch struggle against sectarianism, dogmatism and ultra-'leftism' in general, all the cries for a new party won't mean a thing."

"...the main weakness of the movement is (and historically has been in this country) the lack of conscious leadership and a high theoretical level.

"Can we say that this kind of theoretical study has been done yet? No, it hasn't. And because it hasn't come the problems of sectarianism, of failing to build unity based on firm principles.

"For principled unity to be built among the various sectors of the communist movement, the theoretical level must be raised. ..." (Party Building in the U.S., OL, Spring 1973).

So according to the OL, party building was the central task, ultra-leftism was the main danger in the US communist movement, the low theoretical level was the main weakness and the cause of this leftism, and theoretical work was the way to fight both. But in a Guardian forum on party building at the same time, Mike Klonsky for the OL said:

"So the question for us is, how can we fight against this ultra-leftism...? Well, the main thing at this time is not to abandon the mass struggle to build the anti-imperialist united front and to develop those close ties with the masses, to integrate ourselves in mass struggle." (The Call, 6/73)

Suddenly, the way to fight ultra-leftism is to integrate ourselves in the mass struggle to build the anti-imperialist united front. Party building and theoretical work have disappeared! In fact, in this whole forum the OL never even mentioned that party building was the principal task! "Consistent and clear", isn't it?

Another article, "Party Building and the Mass Line", was written by Carl Davidson of the Guardian and reprinted as a centerfold in The Call, to show the OL's tight unity with Davidson on this issue. In it they open with this attack on the importance of Marxist theory in party building:

"An important achievement of the new communist movement in the past several years has been its transition from student-oriented propaganda circles to agitational work in the mass movements.

"The transition has been uneven and is far from complete. Yet every step taken toward integrating Marxism-Leninism with the struggles of the working class and oppressed nationalities is both a blow against the bourgeoisie and a concrete contribution to the building of a new communist party.

"This development is particularly important in view of the fact that many cadres of today's Marxist-Leninist organizations gained their initial political experience in the student movement of the 1960s".

Therefore, emphasis on studying Marxist theory is just "...another version of hippy radicalism -- 'first we got to get our own heads together...'" (The Call, 4/74, p.13).

**THE IDEOLOGICAL & POLITICAL INDEFINITE-
NESS OF THE "CALL" IS NOT JUST
SLOPPY WRITING OR SLIPPING AND SLIDING
OF INDIVIDUAL "LEADERS" IN OUR MOVE-
MENT.**

So according to the OL and the Guardian, practice to integrate with the masses, and not theoretical work, was the main way to build the new communist party. Second, according to them, the communist movement was in transition from propaganda circles to agitation to win over the broad masses.

Now first of all, we disagree that agitation among the masses should be our chief form of communist activity. Propaganda to the advanced elements, and especially to advanced workers, remains our chief form of activity. Our emphasis on propaganda to the advanced may even continue for awhile after the new communist party is built. (On the two general steps in the communist movement, see WV V.1, No.2, p.17.)

But even more important, the OL and Guardian completely wipe out the important role of theory in party building. Where is there a shred of difference between their view and the RU's pragmatic practice, practice, practice line that held back our movement for several years? As Lenin warned, "In our opinion, the absence of theory deprives a revolutionary trend of the right to existence and inevitably condemns it, sooner or later, to political bankruptcy." (China Reconstructs, 1/76).

WHERE IS THERE A SHRED OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEIR VIEW AND THE RU'S PRAGMATIC PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE LINE THAT HELD BACK OUR MOVEMENT FOR SEVERAL YEARS ?

The OL/Guardian article also shows an empiricist line that assumes that most Marxist-Leninists have come from student and petty bourgeois backgrounds. But this is not the case, and it leaves out the significant number of comrades from working class background and the movements of oppressed nationalities. Nowhere is there a real scientific analysis of the periods and real social basis of the whole communist movement.

In fact, it's this line that's the real "hippy radical" self-cultivational line that tries to get their heads together through psychotherapy among the workers! Blind to the real history and class basis of the communist movement, these real OL "hippies" advocated the sham solution of "going among the masses", and forgot that most of us had just come out of mass movements.

But we have heard this before. In fact, during Lenin's fight against liquidationism, Trotsky put forth this same line. He claimed that communism was then only an intellectual trend, trying to gain influence over the "politically bewildered" workers. So according to Trotsky, the way to over-

come deviations and develop communist work was to "broaden and deepen the work" among the masses, and not to engage in "factional fights" and "polemics" to draw clear lines of demarcation. But Lenin answered:

"The work must certainly at all times be broadened and deepened" But the question is, "...in what way is it possible to overcome deviations by means of broadening and deepening Social-Democratic (read: communist) work? In any broadening and deepening of our work the question of how it should be broadened and deepened inevitably rises; if liquidationism and otzovism are not accidents, but trends engendered by social conditions, then they can assert themselves in any broadening and deepening of the work. It is possible to broaden and deepen the work in the spirit of liquidationism... it is also possible to do so in the spirit of otzovism. On the other hand, the overcoming of deviations, 'overcoming' in the real sense of the word, inevitably deflects certain forces, time and energy from the immediate broadening and deepening of correct Social Democratic work.

"In reality this phrase" (about overcoming deviations by means of broadening the work) "expresses a vague longing, a pious, innocent wish that there should be less internal strife among Social-Democrats!"

Hence the conciliators "...are the abettors of the liquidators and otzovists, in actual fact, they do not deepen Social-Democratic work but strengthen deviations from it; they strengthen the evil by temporarily concealing it and thereby making the cure more difficult." (Notes of a Publicist, CW Vol. 16, Lenin. 1910)

Haven't we heard the same call from the OL and the RCP to overcome our deviations by broadening and deepening our mass work? Haven't we heard the same cries from the OL against "sectarian shootouts", also in the name of

"non-sectarianism"? And aren't we witnessing the OL's diluted and straight liberal "Fightback Conferences", where they "broaden" themselves to look fat and strong, as a substitute for really recruiting and training advanced workers. And aren't we witnessing the RCP's anarcho-syndicalist, "left-economist" broadening and deepening of their intermediate workers organizations? These are the ones who have held back the real broadening and deepening of communist work among the advanced elements and the masses!

THEY'VE ALWAYS KEPT ALL THESE RAGGEDY ENDS OF THEIR ECLECTIC LINE WITH THEM, WHENEVER THEY SENSE A NEW "POPULAR" MOOD IN THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT.

In their own practice, the OL has always focused on building the mass struggle and the united front, while downgrading party building and Marxist theory and slandering anyone else who seriously took up those tasks. They have always thrown around accusations of "all theory no practice" against the WVO and other organizations, shouting about "closet communists". They have evaded polemics and all open struggle with their "second strike" policy of answering only after someone else hits them first.

The OL has always tailed after the RU's practice, practice, practice approach to party building, and has been guided by the very same pragmatism as the RU's. Why? Because at that time, building the mass struggle was the "popular" line in the communist movement. All this was nothing but the OL's version of the RU's guiding pragmatic slogan, "Build the Struggle, Consciousness and Revolutionary Unity of the Working Class and Develop its Leadership in the Anti-Imperialist Struggle".

And this is the way it's been with the OL for several years, at one time fighting "ultra-leftism" and "dogmatism", then pushing study and theory, at another time

building the mass struggle and the united front, and then pushing party building. They've always kept all these raggedy ends of their eclectic line with them, pulling out one end after another as they need them, whenever they sense a new "popular" mood in the communist movement.

There has also been another genuine and really consistent trend of party building that grasped this principal task and grasped it tightly, when it definitely was not "popular", when real study of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought literally had to be forced on the movement. This trend pushed the task with no help from the OL, against both the OL and the RU. This trend pushed the importance of Marxist theory against their pragmatic right deviations, and it also had to push the correct grasp of the stand, viewpoint and method of Marxist theory against dogmatic deviations in the movement. And we are still waging this fight on two fronts, against the main danger of pragmatic right deviations and their complementary dogmatic and pragmatic left deviations.

AND WE ARE STILL WAGING THIS FIGHT ON TWO FRONTS, AGAINST THE MAIN DANGER OF PRAGMATIC RIGHT DEVIATIONS AND THEIR COMPLEMENTARY DOGMATIC AND PRAGMATIC LEFT DEVIATIONS.

The OL accuses us of separating theory and practice. But we have correctly related the two in this period when the working class upsurge is beginning. We did not just jump into the mass movement without the direction and guidance of theory, as the OL and RU did. Nor did we ignore these mass struggles and the tasks they pose for us. We wrote in our article on the RU and American Pragmatism:

"true, ours is a period of rising mass movements, which we must prepare to lead. But given the present disunity in the communist movement, the surge of these mass

movements only sharpens the need for theoretical work.

"In this period of the consolidation of the vanguard, we must concentrate on taking propaganda to the advanced elements of the working class.

"Revolutionary practice in this period can serve as a basis for us to sharpen the focus of our theory, which will in turn serve our revolutionary practice. But theory in this period is the 'main link', that which we have to learn to grasp in order to help us to 'keep hold of the whole chain and to prepare for conditions for achieving strategic success'. Revolutionary practice is the basis for long term proletarian victory. But it would be nothing except eclecticism to confuse the long term need of the movement with the immediate need of the movement for direction and orientation. Revolutionary theory should not be counter-posed to the need for revolutionary practice -- as opportunists so often do." (WV, 9/74, V.1, No.2, p.25, 29)

And while still stressing the principal role of theory in this period, we wrote last year:

"Objectively the working class movement in the US is surging forward. Underneath the M-L movement and propelling it forward is the intense spontaneous struggle of the working class. In this period communists must participate in these struggles to provide Marxist-Leninist leadership, to win over the advanced elements, sharpen the focus of our theory and submit our line to the test of class struggle. ...it is of particular importance that communists should take part in the immediate struggle and transform the subjective world in the process of transforming the objective world." (WV, 5/75, V.2, No.1, p.34).

This is the correct relationship of theory and practice and of party building and the mass movement in this period, which the OL has opposed from jump. As we said earlier, that was when the practice, practice, practice line was

big in the communist movement. But today there have been big changes in our movement. Party building motions, both sham and genuine, have been on the rise. In 1973-74, many organizations such as the BWC, PRRWO, ATM and WVO openly broke from the RU and started real efforts towards party building. In that summer and fall, the "C"L pulled their Trotskyite "C"LP together. And under this pressure, even the RU was forced to announce that party building would be the central task, at least for the "brief period ahead". By that time, party building had even become "popular".

Meanwhile, the OL wasn't sleeping through all this. And by late 1974, seeing the various party building motions, both genuine and sham, the OL's line naturally started to swing again with the new "mood".

THE OL'S "LEFT" FEINT TO BUILD THEIR PARTY

In their 1975 New Year's Editorial statement, the OL announced their push for the "OLP" by saying "the next year will be a decisive one in the establishment of a new communist party". (The Call, 1/75).

And it's no surprise that in its campaign the OL has dug up many of its old pamphlets and is boasting that it has "always" upheld the principal task of party building. "From its very beginnings to the present time..." "Consistent and clear..." "In our May 1972 Unity Statement, the OL placed the task squarely before the movement..." (The Call, 11/75, p.12).

In addition, the importance of theory and party building is also making a comeback in the OL's recollections of the past. "The pre-party period was characterized by the restating of the basic tenets of Marxism-Leninism and fundamental study." (The Call, 11/75, p.12).

Even the main danger in the communist movement has gone through all kinds of changes. "While yesterday the 'left' danger might have appeared strongest within our ranks, today the rightist influences are re-emerging on the scene." (The Call, 11/75, p.12). And to start the new year, they finally announced that "The greater obstacle on the road of party building today is put up by right-opportunist forces, especially 'centrism'." (The Call, 1/76).

ALL THESE CHANGES, INCLUDING THE OL'S NEW MAIN DANGER IN THE MOVEMENT AND THEIR "REDISCOVERY" OF THE IMPORTANCE OF PARTY BUILDING AND THEORY, ARE ONLY PART OF A WHOLE "LEFT" FEINT THAT THEY'VE BEEN GOING THROUGH IN THE PAST YEAR.

All these changes, including the OL's new main danger in the movement and their "rediscovery" of the importance of party building and theory, are only part of a whole "left" feint that they've been going through in the past year. In the course of this flip, they've uncovered a whole series of right opportunist dangers in the movement that they hadn't noticed before. Just like the RU's proclamation of party building in the "brief period ahead", the OL has come up with a whole series of new justifications and sophistries to cover their latest maneuvers.

THE DANGER OF CENTRISM

In line with their new main danger of right opportunism and centrism, the OL has been scrambling to get away from the Guardian:

"Within certain sections of the movement we are hearing new appeals to legalism, electoral cretinism and narrow nationalism. A line of 'centrism' in relation to the Soviet Union and the split in the international movement is being openly promoted by the so-called

'independents' and circles especially around the Guardian newspaper. New theories of 'American exceptionalism' are searching for welcome ears as are new efforts at conciliation and 'united action' with the modern revisionists on the national and international scene." (The Call, 11/75, p.12)

There definitely is a dangerous, growing centrist trend in the international and US communist movements. The Guardian is one of the real bulwarks of centrism in the US, serving as a buffer for official "C" PUSA revisionism and Trotskyism. The Guardian believes that the Soviet Union is only restoring capitalism but not fully capitalist, it openly supports the MPLA in Angola while slandering the other liberation forces and opposing China, and it supports the revisionist "C" P in Portugal. The Guardian has thoroughly exposed itself in these complicated and burning issues. And the complex conditions of the two contending trends of revolution and war and fascism in the coming years are sure to put the whole communist movement to a more and more difficult test of centrism.

The OL and the Guardian have differences over the issue of Soviet social-imperialism. But is this enough to draw a solid ideological and political line of demarcation, with centrism?

We have to tell the OL that centrism is a whole lot more than a position on social-imperialism. "The theory of centrism is the theory of the 'golden mean', taking the average of two opposites, balancing out the two aspects of an antagonistic contradiction, staying neutral in the struggle between two lines. Centrism is an eclectic theory of 'on the one hand, and on the other...'; on the one hand, the revisionists are correct in a sense, and on the other hand, the Marxist-Leninists are correct in a sense, and in this patchwork of bits and pieces, it combines two into one and com-
135 promises between revisionism and Marxism-Leninism. So truth be-



THE LOWER EAST SIDE CONTINGENT OF THE UNION SQUARE IWD RALLY IN N.Y., 1975. SPEAKERS FROM ORGANIZATIONS IN THIS CONTINGENT EXPOSED SOVIET SOCIAL-IMPERIALISM AND THE "C" PUSA, WORKING WITH THE MISLEADERS TO HANG THEM.

comes all relative; one sees only the relative and not the absolute. Politically, this can only lead to collaboration with the revisionists and the bourgeoisie. But there is no third ideology, and there is no neutral ground in a two-line struggle." (WV, 5/75, V.2, No.1, p.29). Real centrism has to show itself in a whole pattern of ideological, political and organizational deviations. Any talk of a full-blown centrist trend therefore has to take into account the whole range of burning questions of the day, and not just one or two. And any real repudiation of centrism must do the same.

THE OL AND THE GUARDIAN'S ALMOST UNBROKEN UNITY OVER THE WHOLE RANGE OF BURNING QUESTIONS IN THE LAST FEW YEARS HAS SHOWN US THAT THEY ARE IDEOLOGICALLY IDENTICAL.

And what do we get if we size up the OL and the Guardian's differences along these lines? Why has the OL discovered the Guardian's centrism only recently, and only around the issue of social-imperialism? The Guardian has had a centrist position on that for a long time. And what explains the OL and the Guardian's identical positions on all other major questions and their skin-tight relations over the past few years? They had

total unity on their uncritical support for Arnold Miller, on Watergate, Boston busing, the ERA, the Palestinian mini-state, party building, and many other issues that have split the communist movement in two. Are we supposed to believe now that the two organizations are really different trends?

The OL and the Guardian's almost unbroken unity over the whole range of burning questions in the last few years has shown us that they are ideologically identical. That's why we'll continue to call them the "OL/Guardian" team. And that's why, to us, the OL's attacks on the Guardian's centrism are just a decoy and a part of their "left" feint to draw attention away from their own rightism!

During his struggle against liquidationism, Lenin wrote this about Trotsky's centrism:

"If our attitude towards liquidationism is wrong in theory, in principle, then Trotsky should say so straightforwardly, and state definitely, without equivocation, why he thinks it is wrong. But Trotsky has been evading this extremely important point for years."

(Disruption of Unity under Cover of Outcries for Unity. CW. Vol. 20 Lenin. 1914. Emphasis in original).

If the OL wants to break with the Guardian in theory, in principle, then they should do it straightforwardly and definitely, and on the whole range of burning issues. They should show the consistent pattern of the Guardian's ideological and political deviations and explain their own past unity with the Guardian. But the OL can't do that, because they've been equivocating, and evading these extremely important points for years!

Now that's real centrism!

The OL's call for "no united action with revisionists", which came up around the 1975 International Women's Day demonstrations in New York City, amounts to the same kind of decoy and "left" feint to cover their own rightism. Speaking of the NY Union Square rally and coalition, the OL stated:

"...this assortment of revisionist-led forces received a shot in the arm when a number of groups calling themselves 'communists' sided with them. Among these were the Workers Viewpoint which under the cover of wanting to join the 'biggest demonstration' to give it 'anti-imperialist politics' tried to split and wreck the real anti-imperialist coalition." (The OL means the coalition that they set up, of course). "While sitting on the fence and refusing to endorse either march, the Guardian newspaper subsequently actually congratulated the CP for initiating and building the action as a break from the past years 'when it has held small observances of Women's Day pretty much on its own.'"

"The objective unity with revisionism displayed by Workers Viewpoint, the Guardian and others, reveals the danger of the growing tendency within the Marxist-Leninist ranks to conciliate with revisionism, and throw principles to the winds. This conciliation must be thoroughly rejected in the struggle to build a new party." (The Call, 4/75, p.12).

Lately, trying to support themselves, the OL has been misusing and distorting the meaning of a polemic written in 1965 by the Communist Party of China (CPC) against the revisionist "Communist" Party of the Soviet Union ("C"PSU), called "Refutation of the New Leaders of the CPSU on 'United Action'"

Under their slogan of "united action", the Soviet revisionists were trying to force the genuine Marxist-Leninist parties to accept their revisionist line and deprive these other parties of their independence. They were trying to "unite" the world communist movement, not on the basis of Marxist-

"NO UNITED ACTION WITH REVISIONISTS" ?

Leninist principles, but by subordinating all other parties to themselves and strangling all opposition. The revisionists used this "unity" slogan to bait the real Marxist-Leninists who opposed them, with charges of "factionalism" and "splittism". At the same time, the revisionists used their slogan to cover the fact that by revising Marxism-Leninism and capitulating to US imperialism, they were really splitting the world communist movement.

In this context, the CPC showed that absolutely no unity was possible between Marxists and revisionists on questions of principle and line, and the practice that follows from those principles. They wrote:

"Marx taught us that in the struggle to achieve international proletarian unity, there should be 'no haggling about principles'. When speaking on the need for principled struggle against the opportunists to achieve genuine unity, Engels said, 'Unity is quite a good thing so long as it is possible, but there are things which stand above unity', and 'the development of the proletariat proceeds everywhere amidst internal struggles'. He also said that 'people of limited intelligence...want to stir everything into one nondescript brew, which, the moment it is left to settle, throws up the differences again but in much sharper contrast because they will then be all in one pot'. Marx and Engels declared explicitly that 'it is... impossible for us to cooperate with people who wish to expunge this class struggle from the movement'." (Refutation of the New Leaders of the CPSU on "United Action". CPC. p.3).

WE SUM ALL THIS UP WITH THE SLOGAN:
UNITE TO EXPOSE... OR AS LENIN PUT IT,
WE "SUPPORT (THE MISLEADERS), AS THE
ROPE SUPPORTS A HANGED MAN".

We struggle to expose the revisionists, to smash their influence in the eyes of the working class and the masses, and drive them out of the trade unions and other mass organizations. The same goes for the petty bourgeois and labor aristocrat misleaders who have influence over the masses. And to have the independence and initiative to carry out these exposures, we must maintain our Marxist-Leninist line and principles. In this sense, no unity is possible with revisionists.

But does this mean that communists don't work in unions, mass organizations or mass movements where these revisionists and misleaders are? No! Communists must go wherever the masses are to be found. Why? To expose the revisionists and misleaders in front of the masses and win the people to our side. Since the OL is always howling about left errors, we'll show them what Lenin had to say about them:

"If you want to help 'the masses' and to win the sympathy and support of 'the masses', you must not fear difficulties, you must not fear the pinpricks, chicanery, insults and persecution on the part of the 'leaders' (who, being opportunists and social-chauvinists, are in most cases directly or indirectly connected with the bourgeois and the police), but must imperatively work wherever the masses are to be found. You must be capable of every sacrifice, of overcoming the greatest obstacles in order to carry on agitation and propaganda systematically, perseveringly, persistently and patiently, precisely in those institutions, societies and associations -- even the most ultra-reactionary -- in which proletarian or semiproletarian masses are to be found."

("Left-Wing" Communism, An Infantile Disorder. Lenin. 1920. Emphasis in original)

We sum all this up with the slogan: unite to expose. When the revisionists and others are misleading the masses, we work with the misleaders to expose them

in front of the masses and win the people to our side. Or as Lenin put it, we "support (the misleaders) as the rope supports a hanged man"! (Left-Wing Communism, An Infantile Disorder).

Exactly when we apply this "unite to expose", and how, and under what conditions, is a tactical question. We can't predict the concrete situations, but we're guided by the principle that if we have the independence and initiative to expose the misleaders in front of the masses, then we can use it. If we don't have that independence, then we can't.

Naturally, the CPC knows that communists have to work in mass organizations and mass movements, go wherever the masses are to be found, and whenever necessary, to support the misleaders to hang them. The CPC's own history is full of the most skillful use of this tactic against the KMT in the United Front Against Japanese Imperialism. The CPC fought against "unity" between Marxists and revisionists on questions of line and principle, but they never fought against the need to work in mass situations to expose them in front of the masses.

But this is exactly how the OL is trying to twist and distort the CPC's polemic! Hoping that comrades will not seriously study or understand the polemic, the OL is speculating on the theoretical confusion on this question. They are trying to cover their own tracks and distort the CPC's meaning to justify their own opportunist maneuvering in the NY IWD last year.

How did things turn out at that IWD? Were there honest elements, real masses, in that coalition, or just revisionists? Did WV and the other communists and anti-imperialists have the independence and initiative to expose the revisionists in the coalition? And did WV conciliate with revisionism, or did the OL?

With more than 40 organizations participating and 4000 people at the March 8 demonstration, the IWD coalition was definitely a mass



LOWER EAST SIDE IWD CONTINGENT, 1975

event. It had the full spectrum of left, center and right forces, many forces from the national and working class movements, anti-imperialist organizations and Marxist-Leninists, as well as the revisionist "C"P and their friends.

WV and many other communists and anti-imperialists went into that coalition and struggled against the revisionists in front of the whole coalition and rally. We exposed bourgeois feminism and reformism, and pointed straight to the real enemy, the monopoly capitalist class. We showed that only socialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat can end women's oppression and male chauvinism. We exposed the social-imperialist "detente" scheme in the coalition slogan for "equality, development and peace". We struggled through-

out the preparations for the demonstration, helped mobilize the independent Lower East Side contingent, and at the rally many speakers publicly attacked both US imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism. That was independence and initiative! And we successfully used it to win over honest elements from the revisionists.

And what did the OL do? They refused to work in this and instead set up their own "pure" "anti-imperialist" coalition, under their calls for a "break with revisionism". What was this but a total failure to expose the revisionists in front of the masses and win the masses to our side? As we've often said, they "broke" with revisionists by breaking with the masses. This is a left-in-form liquidation of the essential task of exposing the misleaders in front of the masses. So who really conciliated with revisionism? As usual, it was the OL.

THE CPC FOUGHT AGAINST "UNITY" BETWEEN MARXISTS AND REVISIONISTS ON QUESTIONS OF LINE AND PRINCIPLE, BUT THEY NEVER FOUGHT AGAINST THE NEED TO WORK IN MASS SITUATIONS TO EXPOSE THEM IN FRONT OF THE MASSES.

The OL's distortion of the Marxist principle of supporting misleaders to hang them would be bad enough— but there's lots more! In fact, the real meaning of the OL's "left" feint here had nothing to do with principle. The OL has worked in tens of coalitions, trade unions and other mass organizations where there were plenty of "C"P revisionists, trade union bureaucrats and other misleaders. They've never applied their lofty new principle anyplace else. In fact, we've found that the OL has the habit of uniting uncritically with revisionists and other opportunists, and even adopts their lines and slogans!

The real meaning of the OL's "left" feint here came from their party building campaign. As they

summed it all up after their separate IWD rally, "through events such as this, a new communist party is emerging, its forces gathering strength and its foundations being laid" (The Call, 4/75, p.12). Their "break" with revisionism to form their own coalition was nothing but a bourgeois maneuver to rally their "capital investments" together and prepare the grand opening of their "OLP, Inc. This is how far they are willing to go, subordinating everything, including the interests of the masses, to building the OL!

And how else does the OL defend their maneuver? Naturally, they can't openly deny the Leninist principle of going wherever the masses are to be found. So what do they say about the main IWD coalition? There were no masses! They were all revisionists! They wrote:

"This coalition" (the OL means the "C"P's "anti-monopoly coalition") "was well represented on International Women's Day as the CP united with the Gay Task Force, Bella Abzug and the Democratic Party, as well as Workers Viewpoint to attract a miserable crowd. But the genuine Marxist-Leninists and anti-imperialists would have nothing to do with this opportunist coalition." (Class Struggle, Summer 1975, #2, p.94).

So you see, there were the revisionists, homosexuals, the Democratic Party and WV, but no Marxist-Leninists or anti-imperialists! Trying to justify their opportunist line, the OL has finally come to slandering the several thousand honest revolutionary and working class people who participated in the coalition and rally. Dialectics are ruthless. With each step the OL takes to defend their errors, the opportunism and slime get deeper and thicker.

THEIR "BREAK" WITH REVISIONISM TO FORM THEIR OWN COALITION WAS NOTHING BUT A BOURGEOIS MANEUVER TO RALLY THEIR "CAPITAL INVESTMENTS" TOGETHER AND PREPARE THE GRAND OPENING OF THEIR "OLP, INC."



Let's just look at one more example of the OL's "principles". We're talking about the Puerto Rican Solidarity Day (PRSD) Rally held on October 27, 1974 in Madison Square Garden in NY. This was initiated by the revisionist Puerto Rican Socialist Party (PSP) and backed by the "C"PUA. But like the IWD rally, this was a real mass event. 17,000 people attended the PRSD rally, which was also broadcast on many radio and TV stations around the country. Many organizations took part in it, including WV.

Did we maintain our independence and initiative in this? Both before and after the rally, we helped sponsor forums where we and other Marxist-Leninists criticized the PSP's line, especially their slogan for "Bicentennial Without Colonies". This slogan was especially dangerous, as it raises the illusion that all colonies can be freed without smashing imperialism, and appeals to US patriotism to boot.

At the rally, a member of Workers Viewpoint gave a short solidarity statement. Besides expressing our solidarity with the Puerto Rican struggle for independence from U.S. imperialism, he also raised the fight for socialism and went on to give a warning of the danger of Soviet social-imperialism in Puerto Rico and the rest of the Third World.

For this, we were attacked by the East European revisionist delegates at the rally, the "C"PUA, Irwin Silber and Renee Blakkan, and by the OL. The OL viewed any criticism of the PSP's slogan as "sectarian." They opposed WV's public attack on Soviet social-imperialism as "splittist." Here again the OL stood solidly with the centrists and even the official revisionists.

Did the OL refuse to work in that coalition in order to "break" with revisionism? Not a chance. Did they publicly expose the PSP and the "C"PUA? Absolutely not. Now that was real unity with revisionism! But of course that was a long time ago, long before the OL had discovered their "principle" of "no united action with revisionists."

Exposure of the role of the Soviet Union in the Third World is an essential part of our internationalist support for national liberation struggles. In the 1960's, the Third World hotspot was Vietnam, where there was one main imperialist enemy, the US. Today the heat has shifted to places like Angola and the Middle East, where the two superpowers are contending heavily and the Soviet Union is the more vicious enemy. These examples show the rising danger of social-imperialism in the Third World, and the need for exposure of the Soviet Union in all our support work. This holds true for Latin America too. As these countries liberate themselves from US imperialism, the danger of the Soviet Union sneaking in is very



great, as in Cuba. As the CPC says, the whole Third World has to guard against "letting the tiger in through the back door while repulsing the wolf at the front gate". The communist vanguard must take up these exposures of social-imperialism, especially now when many people do not understand the issue and when the exposures are not "popular". This is when we need most the vanguard role of "going against the tide". But in the PSRD rally, the OL again showed their failure to warn the Puerto Rican people of these dangers and showed their fear of stepping one inch beyond the bounds of "popularity" and their comfortable unity with revisionism and centrism.

THE OL'S OPPORTUNIST FLIP-FLOPS

In flip-flopping from building the mass struggle to studying theory and back again, from fighting against ultra-leftism to fighting right opportunism and centrism, from uncritical unity with revisionists to no unity with revisionists, the OL pretends they are waging a Marxist "fight on two fronts". They think they're being very "all-sided" and "dialectical", and are keeping up with changing conditions and the demands of new situations.

But we must never confuse the OL's opportunist mutations, flip-flops and eclectics, with real dialectics. Stalin once wrote about Plekhanov:

"This is not the first time he is contradicting himself. He may even be proud of it and regard himself as the living embodiment of the 'dialectical process'. It goes without saying that inconsistency is a blotch on the political physiognomy of a 'leader'...." ("A Letter from Kutais, From the Same Comrade". Stalin, Collected Works, Vol.1, 1904).

And Lenin wrote the same thing about this kind of opportunist mutations and eclectics:

"But the great Hegelian dialectics which Marxism made its own, having first turned it right side up, must never be confused with the vulgar trick of justifying the zigzags of politicians who swing over from the revolutionary to the opportunist wing of the Party, with the vulgar habit of lumping together particular statements, and particular developmental factors, belonging to different stages of a single process. Genuine dialectics does not justify the errors of individuals, but studies the inevitable turns, proving that they were inevitable by a detailed study of the process of development in all its concreteness.

One of the basic principles of dialectics is that there is no such thing as abstract truth, the truth is always concrete.... And, one thing more, the great Hegelian dialectics should never be confused with that vulgar worldly wisdom so well expressed by the Italian saying: mettere la coda dove non va il capo (sticking in the tail where the head will not go through)." ("One Step Forward, Two Steps Back", Lenin, Collected Works, Vol.7. 1904)

The October League's Principles of Unity

1. THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT AS OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE "

"This objective is based upon the leading role of the working class within the anti-imperialist struggle, expressing its own ideology and organizational leadership through its party."

Wrong. This formulation blurs over the fundamental difference between the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat and the "anti-imperialist struggle". By "anti-imperialist struggle" the OL seems to mean the democratic rights struggle waged around the minimum program. The OL's statement poses the socialist objective as the outcome and culmination of the "anti-imperialist struggle", when the two are different in principle. In fact, through its whole "call", the OL uses the word "socialism" only twice. In essence, "anti-imperialism" has replaced socialist revolution. The OL shows this confusion repeatedly, especially in their section on the United Front Against Imperialism.

IN ESSENCE, "ANTI-IMPERIALISM" HAS REPLACED SOCIALIST REVOLUTION.

This blurring of the socialist and democratic struggles is especially dangerous under bourgeois democratic conditions. In these conditions, we must fight around immediate issues for consistent **democracy** to expose the hypocrisy and inconsistency of bourgeois democracy, and to show the need for socialist revolution and prepare the proletariat for it. We have to fight in a revolutionary way, raising the aim of socialism during these immediate struggles.

The OL's confusion of the socialist and democratic struggles is a bourgeois democratic deviation, which is the ideological basis for the revisionist "C"P's conceptions of "advanced democracy", "anti-monopoly coalition", "radical reform", etc. This deviation always leads to a fight to preserve, "extend" and depend on bourgeois democracy, rather than to expose and smash it. This deviation comes from deep illusions in bourgeois democracy and always strengthens those same illusions.

The OL has given us plenty of examples of this deviation in their practice. They showed us in Watergate, where they fought to pressure the "paralyzed" Congress to act against Nixon. This was the same kind of appeal to Congress against "executive ascendancy" that revisionists everywhere are always chanting. They showed us again in the Boston busing issue, when they called on the federal troops to "fight" the fascist goons in the Afro-American community while "forgetting" that the troops were there to keep the community down. They showed us again at Carson Beach, when they helped the NAACP lead the Afro-American people into a police trap. They didn't organize armed self-defense of the people, or even warn them to expect the attack. And worst of all, they had no positive program of action to replace and expose the NAACP's bourgeois program, which came straight off the drawing boards of the Ford Foundation. So they swallowed the NAACP program hook, line and sinker. (see WV, V.2, No.1, 5/75, articles on the OL and Boston Busing).

THE FASCIST SHAH OF IRAN, U.S. PUPPET IN THE PERSIAN GULF REGION. THE OL HAS REFUSED TO EXPOSE THIS REACTIONARY, THINKING HE IS AN "INDEPENDENCE FIGHTER".



The OL's confused formulation of the socialist and democratic struggle in their principles of unity is no accident. It is the continuation of the opportunist trend that the OL has shown in practice for several years. Knowing the OL's out and out reformist practice, their full reliance and faith in the bourgeois state and even the National Guard, we can see how empty their statement is that "The workers' dictatorship can only come about through the revolutionary armed struggle of the masses and the smashing of the bourgeois state machinery and not through the strategy advanced by the modern revisionists of electoral or other forms of legal struggle." ("Marxist - Leninists Unite to Build the New Party", The Call, 11/75, p.13)

2. PARTY ORGANIZATION

The party "must practice democratic centralism, with one center and full democracy for all members." ("Marxist - Leninists Unite to Build the New Party", The Call, 11/75, p.13)

"Full democracy"? The OL seems to be thinking of the idea which the CPC puts like this: "It is absolutely impermissible to suppress criticism

and to retaliate. It is essential to create a political situation in which there are both centralism and democracy, both discipline and freedom, both unity of will and personal ease of mind and liveliness." (Constitution of the Communist Party of China). The CPC has shown that promotion of criticism and self-criticism and democratic discussion and struggle in the party is definitely an essential part of democratic centralism.

But the OL's "simplified" version is revisionist. No proletarian party has ever promised its members "full democracy" in contradistinction to centralism and leadership. As Chairman Mao said, "The Communist Party not only needs democracy but needs centralization even more." ("Rectify the Party's Style of Work," Mao Tse-tung, Selected Works, Vol. III, 1942). The Party needs democracy to serve and strengthen centralism, and centralism always comes first:

"The whole Party must observe unified discipline: The individual is subordinate to the organization, the minority is subordinate to the majority, the lower level is subordinate to the higher level, and the entire Party is subordinate to the Central Committee." (Constitution of the CPC)

And as Lenin put it, revolutionary communism "strives to proceed from the top downward, and upholds an extension of the rights and powers of the centre in relation to the parts." ("One Step Forward, Two Steps Back", Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 7, 1904) And that's why the Party cannot make any promises of "full democracy" in its internal life. Though it should never practice coercion or suppression of comrades in internal struggle this promise of "full democracy" is even more dangerous.

The OL's "full democracy" appeals to intellectual looseness in organization, to resistance to centralism and to fear of being a "cog and wheel" in the "Party bureaucracy". This is aimed to attract the worst marsh force in the communist movement today, the petty bourgeois radicals who long for "freedom" and "individual expression" Lenin analyzed this mentality, which he called "aristocratic anarchism":

"...the intelligentsia, as a spe-

cial stratum of modern capitalist society, is characterized, by and large, precisely by individualism and incapacity for discipline and organization.... This, incidentally is a feature which unfavourably distinguishes this social stratum from the proletariat; it is one of the reasons for the flabbiness and instability of the intellectual, which the proletariat so often feels; and this trait of the intelligentsia is intimately bound up with its customary mode of life, its mode of earning a livelihood, which in a great many respects approximates to the petty-bourgeois mode of existence (working in isolation or in very small groups, etc.)." ("One Step Forward, Two Steps Back", Lenin, Collected Works, Vol.7, 1904)

In another revealing disclosure, Mike Klonsky recently wrote:

"But we don't have a state apparatus to enforce our views on any other group. Our movement is a movement based upon voluntary unity. No group can impose its will upon any other group. Democratic-centralism, which we call for, means that no individual can impose his will upon the majority. It presupposes a faith in the judgement of the masses of the people, that they have greater wisdom than individuals. Unity is reached through discussion and debate. It is tested through practice." (Class Struggle, Winter 1976, #3).

Klonsky gives us the obvious truisms that we are based on "voluntary unity", that we have "faith in the judgement of the masses" and that we reach unity through "discussion and debate". He says that "no group can impose its will on any other group" and that "no individual can impose his will upon the majority", as if there were no uneven development in the communist movement and everybody is abreast of each other. It's no accident that he stresses all this but does not mention the democratic centralist principles of subordinating the individual to the organization, the lower levels to the higher levels and the whole Party to the Central Committee. This is nothing but that same appeal to the worst instincts of the petty bourgeois marsh forces.

"THE OL'S 'FULL DEMOCRACY' APPEALS TO INTELLECTUAL LOOSENESS IN ORGANIZATION, TO RESISTANCE TO CENTRALISM AND TO FEAR OF BEING A "COG AND WHEEL" IN THE "PARTY BUREAUCRACY".

Democratic centralism is not simply a set of rules. It's an integral part of the proletarian world outlook. Communists recognize the uneven development of the masses, and that the masses are divided into classes, which are led by political parties and the most influential, authoritative and respected leaders. The more centralized is the ideological, political and organizational leadership of the most advanced elements of the communist organization, the more democracy and broad initiative there can be "from below". This is the dialectical relationship between centralism and democracy, where centralism is generally the leading factor. This goes directly against the petty bourgeois view that subordination is "humiliating", which Klonsky appeals to. The proletariat sees the organization and discipline of democratic centralism as a positive quality. The proletariat holds on to organization by class instinct and understands the need for the greatest centralism in the fierce class struggle against the capitalist state.

3. INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

"We must also render full support to the peoples, nations and countries of the world who are rising up in opposition to imperialism. This is especially true of the Third World countries who today are the main motive force pushing world history forward." ("Marxist-Leninists Unite to Build the New Party", The Call, 11/75, p.13)

We've seen the OL give "full support" to the fascist Shah of Iran, and even refuse to fight the sale of U.S. arms to him (see WV, 5/75, Vol. 2, No. 1. Article on Palestinian Mini-

state). In doing that, the OL is directly helping the Shah's violent suppression of the Iranian and Dhofar peoples' struggle, which is how the Shah uses his arms.

THE OL'S OUT AND OUT SUPPORT FOR THE SHAH AMOUNTS TO SUPPORT FOR AN AGENT OF "OUR OWN" US IMPERIALISTS AGAINST THE IRANIAN PEOPLE, AND THAT IS SOCIAL CHAUVINISM AND SOCIAL-IMPERIALISM.

The Shah is an agent of US imperialism, a local reactionary in the Persian Gulf region. But unlike other puppets like Lon Nol of Cambodia or Thieu of Vietnam, the Shah is not a 100% puppet, and he sometimes can be forced by the revolutionary peoples' struggles to join certain forms of the united front, just as he was forced into the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). But even when the Shah has joined one of the forms of the united front, he will continue to try to sabotage and weaken it from within, just as he is always the first to try to lower oil prices in OPEC. It's possible to unite with the Shah around specific issues and in specific forms of the united front, but communists and all progressives around the world must combat all his attempts to weaken and split the front.

OPEC is an organization of Third World states like Kuwait, Venezuela, Saudi Arabia, Iran and other governments that fight to protect the natural resources and state sovereignty of those countries. Communists in the US must support all forms of the Third World struggle against imperialism and social-imperialism, including organizations on the state-to-state front like OPEC. That's our internationalist duty. But the question is, how do we carry out our support to the Third World people, especially to the proletariat and other oppressed classes of those countries? Isn't criticism of the Shah a necessary part of that support? The OL calls WV "chauvinist"

for our exposures of the Shah and other reactionaries in the Third World, and accuses us of "attacking the liberation struggles in the Third World". (Class Struggle, Summer 1975, #2).

It's the duty of communists all over the world to criticize and expose the vacillating and reactionary elements in the Third World struggles. When the Shah of Iran tries to force oil prices down and wreck OPEC, it's our duty to expose him and educate the US proletariat about his reactionary class nature. Our exposure of the Shah is no attack on the Third World struggle. In fact, this is the only way to really support the consistent anti-imperialist Third World countries and the Iranian people's struggle, especially the Iranian proletariat and other oppressed classes.

The OL's refusal to criticize the Shah completely-abandons the task of helping the Iranian people to fight both "imperialism and domestic reaction" and "isolate the reactionaries" (A Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement, CPC. p.18, emphasis added). It raises the struggle for state sovereignty, where the Shah can play a role, above the Iranian people's revolutionary struggle for liberation and eventually socialism. It drops the people's revolutionary struggle for the fascist Shah.

The OL's out and out support for the Shah amounts to support for an agent of "our own" US imperialists against the Iranian people, and that is social-chauvinism and social-imperialism. And that's how the OL's "well-intentioned" but completely tailist "support" for the Third World turns into its opposite, into social-imperialism.

We've already seen how the OL refused to expose the Soviet superpower in the PRSD rally, and instead sided with the revisionists and centrists. This is a good measure of the OL's "full support" to the Puerto Rican and other Third World people against social-imperialism.

We should always use this practice of the OL's around concrete issues like the Shah and Puerto Rico to size up their promise of "full

support to the peoples, nations and countries of the world who are rising up in opposition to imperialism".

4. THE NATIONAL QUESTION

"This includes support for the right of self-determination of all oppressed nations who suffer under the yoke of imperialism and in particular the right to political secession for the Afro-American people in their historic homeland." ("Marxist-Leninists Unite to Build the New Party", The Call, 11/75, p. 13)

WV has a partial position on the Afro-American national question. We believe that Afro-Americans are an oppressed nationality in the US, and we accept the standpoint of the 1928 and 1930 Comintern resolutions as our starting point for analyzing the present-day situation. We uphold the right of the Afro-American people to self-determination in the Black belt south.

The OL's practice however has shown us that they are liberal "friends of the Afro-American people". In the community control and busing issues, they breed reformist illusions among the oppressed nationalities and unite with the liberal politicians against the masses of minorities and whites. Then they use the revolutionary slogan of the right of self-determination to cover their reformism. Their deviations here come straight from their more general bourgeois democratic deviations.

THE OL'S PRACTICE HOWEVER HAS SHOWN US THAT THEY ARE LIBERAL "FRIENDS OF THE AFRO-AMERICAN PEOPLE".

A good example of the OL's reformism is their support for regional autonomy for minorities in northern urban ghettos. "In areas like Harlem, South Side of Chicago, Watts, etc., Afro-Americans must have some form of regional, district or community autonomy. This also applies to other nationalities facing similar conditions of oppression, for example, Native Americans." (Class Struggle, #1, p. 24) The OL tries to com-

pare their demand to the regional autonomy of minority nationalities in the Peoples' Republic of China: Regional autonomy is correct in China where the minority nationalities' livelihoods are based on the land and rich natural resources. In many cases, modern industrial cities are purposely attached to the autonomous regions. Before liberation in 1949, most of these regions had not developed capitalist economies, and in many cases there were semi-feudal or semi-slave economies and social relationships.

The situation of Afro-Americans in the U.S. urban communities is vastly different! The majority of Afro-Americans are members of the working class. That means Afro-Americans produce large amounts of surplus value, mostly outside of their urban communities since most people work outside. This surplus is taken by the monopoly capitalists through taxes and thousands of other ways. Here the wealth is in the surplus, not in the "land" or "natural resources" under the ghetto pavement!

In these conditions, we should fight for democratic rights and against all forms of national oppression. We should fight against police repression, and for various social services, education, health care, etc., to get back parts of our surplus taken as taxes.

To equate these concrete conditions with the feudal or semi-feudal economies and social relations of China or Tsarist Russia is ridiculous.

Another example. "It is impossible to build unity with Black workers without holding up the struggle for Black people to own businesses and to contend as equals with white capitalists." (1973 Resolution on the Afro-American Question). This demand distorts the real proletarian content of the national question when over 90% of Black people are workers. It blurs over the class contradictions within the national movement. It belittles the class consciousness of the advanced workers in the national movement, subordinating their class consciousness to national consciousness. This is



NAACP MISLEADS AFRO-AMERICAN PEOPLE UNARMED INTO POLICE TRAP AT CARSON BEACH LAST AUGUST. THE OL FELL RIGHT INTO LINE, AND EVEN AFTER THE POLICE BEATING PRINTED THIS PHOTO UNDER THE HEADLINE: "FREEDOM STRUGGLE ERUPTS IN BOSTON" (THE CALL, 9/75). AS THEIR CATION SHOWS, THEY THINK IT WAS A GENUINE INTEGRATION STRUGGLE.

a liberal policy on the national question which reduces the demand for equality from a weapon in the fight against capitalism to the demand to compete within capitalism.

5. UNITED FRONT AGAINST IMPERIALISM

"We must build the united front as our vehicle for defeating imperialism and establishing the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

"In the U.S. the united front includes all those that can be united under the leadership of the proletariat and its party to oppose the rule and the reactionary policies of the giant monopolies." ("Marxist - Leninists Unite to Build the New Party", The Call, 11/75, p. 13)

WV believes that all united fronts, whether the International United Front Against Imperialism, the United Front Against Fascism, etc., are all tactics and not strategies. A big line struggle has gone on in the communist movement over this question, and we can't go into all that right now. (We will be printing an article on strategy and tactics in our next WV Journal.) The OL has always treated their UFAI as a strategy. They have even raised it higher, calling it their "general line towards the revolution today" (The Call, 9/74, p. 12) But here they evade both "strategy" and "tactic" with the word "vehicle". The OL is playing it safe, and this is another good example of their opportunist indefiniteness.

The OL first says the united front is a "vehicle for defeating imperialism and establishing the Dictatorship of the Proletariat". And then they say it will unite all those who can be united under proletarian leadership "to oppose the rule and the reactionary policies of the giant monopolies." So which one is it? Is the united front for establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat, or only for opposing the giant mono-

BUT HERE THEY EVADE BOTH "STRATEGY" AND "TACTIC" WITH THE WORD "VEHICLE". THE OL IS PLAYING IT SAFE, AND THIS IS ANOTHER GOOD EXAMPLE OF THEIR OPPORTUNIST INDEFINITENESS.

polies? Here again the OL completely muddles the maximum and minimum programs, the struggle for socialism and the struggle to oppose monopoly capitalism. As we said before, in the OL's vulgar, radical petty bourgeois outlook, "anti-imperialism" is just as good as socialist revolution.

Even worse, the OL did not say the united front is to "oppose monopoly capital." That would have been correct. We believe that the major fronts of the minimum program in the US socialist revolution are "to oppose monopoly capital, to defend democratic rights to oppose the menace of fascism, to improve living conditions, to oppose imperialist arms expansion and war preparations to defend world peace and actively to support the revolutionary struggles of the oppressed nations.

(The General Line, CPC. p. 18)

The OL said the united front is to "oppose the rule and the reactionary policies of the giant monopolies." This is an even lower vulgarization of Marxism-Leninism! So the united front opposes the "giant monopolies." What about the "lesser monopolies?" Aren't we going to fight them? And what is this "rule and reactionary policies" bit? Does monopoly capitalism have revolutionary or progressive policies? Lenin said that "the specific political features of imperialism are reaction all along the line," and that this reaction is built into the very nature of imperialism. Imperialism cannot be reformed. Talk about the "reactionary policies" of monopoly capitalism is nothing but the petty bourgeois wish that imperialism can be reformed. And as a matter of fact, it was the revisionist Kautsky who talked about imperialism as a "policy" which could be "improved" and somehow made less reactionary!

6. THE WOMAN QUESTION

"Party unity must be based on the proletarian approach to the struggle for the emancipation of women. The woman question is in essence a question of class struggle for the overthrow of imperialism which will create the conditions for the

complete liberation of women "
(The Call, 11/75, p. 13)

The OL starts by calling for "the proletarian approach" to the woman question, which "is in essence a question of class struggle for the overthrow of imperialism." But then they end up calling to "the broad masses of men and women."

From the communist standpoint, women's oppression and women's struggle do not involve "all women" or the "women of all classes." This is the bourgeois feminist view of the question, which sees men generally and not the monopoly capitalist class as the cause of women's oppression.

Communists must draw a clear line of demarcation with this bourgeois viewpoint. We have to aim our efforts at the women of the working and oppressed classes, and of the oppressed nationalities.

Nowhere does the OL draw this line with bourgeois feminism. They talk about "the broad masses of men and women" and "women and youth" in general. They never focus on the women of the working and oppressed classes, and of the oppressed nationalities. This liberal feminist viewpoint also comes out sharp and clear in their support for "compensative seniority," where they pin their hopes on the bourgeois court system and help the bourgeoisie to split the working class with women's and national oppression.

NOWHERE DOES THE OL DRAW THIS LINE WITH BOURGEOIS FEMINISM. THEY TALK ABOUT "THE BROAD MASSES OF MEN AND WOMEN" AND "WOMEN AND YOUTH" IN GENERAL.

7. THE LABOR MOVEMENT

"Our main enemy within the labor movement is the labor aristocracy and revisionists who are in the leadership of nearly all the big unions. Our work is based upon a consistent struggle to isolate and expel these opportunists from leadership and replace them with revolutionary leadership."
(The Call, 11/75, p. 13)

Compare this with the OL's trade union policy last year: "To unite with the progressive section of the labor leadership against the reactionaries has always been the Marxist-Leninist approach and this is exactly the course we have taken in the past in such struggles as the defense of the United Farm Workers in their struggle against the scabs of the Teamsters' leadership, and in the struggle of the United Mine Workers Union leadership, where the more progressive and democratic sections headed by Arnold Miller waged a struggle for leadership against the reactionary Boyle leadership." (The Call, 9/74, p. 12)

THE OL SHOWED US ITS THOROUGHLY REFORMIST PRACTICE OF "UNCRITICAL SUPPORT" FOR ARNOLD MILLER, CESAR CHAVEZ AND ED SADLOWSKI.

This was OL's policy of "pushing the trade unions to the left," seeing the "more progressive and democratic" union bureaucrats as direct reserves rather than as misleaders who communists must expose. In the long run, these reformist misleaders are more dangerous to the proletariat than the outright reactionaries. But the OL's policy completely liquidated the strategic direction of the main blow, the task of exposing the reformist social props of monopoly capitalism.

The OL showed us its thoroughly reformist practice of "uncritical support" for Arnold Miller, Cesar Chavez, and Ed Sadlowski. And now they still dare to boast that "our work is based upon a consistent struggle to isolate and expel these opportunists from leadership..." We haven't seen this latest policy in practice yet. But in any case, this change is another good example of the OL's "silent" mutations of past wrong policies with no self-criticism, their left feint in words to cover their reformist practice.

MAO TSE-TUNG THOUGHT IS THE HIGHEST DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE AND THE GREATEST WEAPON IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST REVISIONISM... AND NOW THE OL, WHICH CLAIMS TO BE BUILDING THE ANTI-REVISIONIST COMMUNIST PARTY IN THE US, HAS LEFT THIS WEAPON OUT OF ITS PARTY BUILDING "CALL".

Lastly, nowhere in the Principles of Unity or anyplace else in the "call" does the OL mention the need for Mao Tse-tung Thought!! It's incredible, but it's true. Mao Tse-tung Thought is the highest development of human knowledge and the greatest weapon in the struggle against revisionism. The world communist movement is split precisely around accepting Mao Tse-tung Thought as the theoretical basis of the party or accepting modern revisionism. The CPC sums it up: "The Communist Party of China takes Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought as the theoretical basis guiding its thinking." (Constitution of the CPC) And now the OL, which claims to be building the anti-revisionist communist party in the US, has left this weapon out of its party building "call"! This is the height of the OL's opportunist indefiniteness and their endless concessions to revisionism!

ORGANIZATION IS KEY?

The OL openly declares that they think organization is key to party building today. Their Third Congress decided "that 1) party-building has become a 'question of immediacy'; 2) that the OL should begin to accelerate its efforts towards the 'organizational formation' of a new party, and 3) that the present period calls for a shift in our party building work to emphasis on the organizational forging of the party itself." (The Call 8/75,p.11).

"It is the position of the OL that Marxist-Leninists should unite around these principles, not as a final statement or full program of the party but as a minimal basis for unity at the present time. We offer them in the spirit of unity and while firm in our commitment to Marxism-Leninism and all its principles, we are also flexible in tactics and determined to achieve principled unity through discussion and debate.

"After this discussion we propose that the new party be established around a temporary leading body which can survey the organizational forces represented in the party, establish democratic centralism and prepare us for our first Party Congress, to be held within a year of our founding. A newspaper of the Leninist type should be established under the central leadership which would appoint the editorial board."

(The Call, 11/75. p.13)

The first thing that sticks out is that the OL doesn't understand that a Marxist-Leninist party needs a program! They think that "as a minimal basis for unity at the present time", all they need are their seven principles of unity. They'll pull together their party, their "temporary leading body" and their newspaper, and work out the program later! But Lenin said:

"Without a programme, it is impossible for the party to be a more or less integral political organism, able always to hold to a line through each and every turn of events." ("On the Election Campaign and the Election Platform", Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 17, 1911).

THEY'LL PULL TOGETHER THEIR PARTY, THEIR "TEMPORARY LEADING BODY" AND THEIR NEWSPAPER, AND WORK OUT THE PROGRAM LATER.

"The programme must formulate our basic views, exactly establish our immediate political tasks, point out those immediate demands which must

mark out the range of agitational activity and give it unity, broaden and deepen it, raising agitation from the particular, from fragmentary agitation for small separate demands to agitation for the whole body of Social-Democratic demands. Now, when Social-Democratic activity has already aroused a considerably wide circle of socialist-intellectuals and conscious workers, it is urgently necessary to consolidate the links between them with a programme and thus give them all a firm basis for further, wider activity." ("Draft Programme of Our Party", Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 4, 1899).

This is the depth of the OL's opportunism. They don't even try to write a draft. In fact, we don't think the OL is able to write one.

They have to hide themselves from struggle so badly that to write a program would be risking too much.

So what we're left with is their seven principles of unity. They say, "while firm in our commitment to Marxism-Leninism and all its principles, we are also flexible in tactics...." Now what does "flexible in tactics" mean in party building, where the clearest lines of demarcation are needed? When you don't have any program or any clear lines, what could "flexible in tactics" possibly mean? It means opportunism. Take the program away, take principles away, and all you have left is "flexibility".

The OL's broad, vague "call", their lack of a program and their "flexible" approach are closely linked to their opportunist view that organization is key in party building today. For "Opportunism in programme is naturally connected with opportunism in tactics and opportunism in organization." ("One Step Forward, Two Steps Back," Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 7, 1904)

THE OL'S APPROACH TO PARTY BUILDING IS LIKE A CAPITALIST TAKING INVENTORY.

For the OL, then, politics is definitely not in command. Without a program or lines, there's nothing to put in command but organization.

The OL's extreme pragmatism comes out again in their attitude towards ideological struggle and their growth:

"No organization has been immune to this struggle and while some organizations have been weakened and split, others have moved ahead rapidly and grown stronger. This is the main feature of the struggle within our movement, a test of its line, its unity and its democratic-centralism. Our progress has demonstrated that we have passed this test." (The Call, 11/75, p.13).

In saying that because they have grown, they have therefore passed the test and proven their correctness, the OL reveals their outright Wall Street business pragmatism. The "C" PUSA has grown in size, and so has the PSP. Does that mean they are correct and ideologically healthy? This is downright revisionist quantitative thinking, and a sure sign of pragmatism which will wreck the very foundations of the party before it even gets built.

The OL's approach to party building is like a capitalist taking inventory: Count up the "available stock", and then pack it all into a big, "flexible" box. The box has to be loose enough to hold everything, all sizes, shapes and colors. Lenin had a description for this approach:

"One view on unity may place in the forefront the 'reconciliation' of 'given persons, groups and institutions'. The identity of their views on Party work, on the policy of that work, is a secondary matter. One should try to keep silent about differences of opinion and not elucidate their causes, their significance, their objective conditions. The chief thing is to 'reconcile' persons and groups. If they do not

agree on carrying out a common policy, that policy must be interpreted in such a way as to be acceptable to all. Live and let live. This is philistine 'conciliation', which inevitably leads to sectarian diplomacy. To 'stop up' the sources of disagreement, to keep silent about them, to 'adjust' 'conflicts' at all costs, to neutralize the conflicting trends -- it is to this that the main attention of such 'conciliation' is directed." ("Notes of a Publicist," Lenin, Collected Works, Vol.16,1910)

THE OL'S "NON-SECTARIAN STYLE OF WORK"

"We must move towards unity with great speed and oppose the view of those academic revolutionaries who wish to endlessly redefine our differences and eternally draw even further lines of demarcation outside the organizational structure of the party.

"...our style of work flies in the face of the sectarianism, wrecking and splitting of these so-called 'parties'." (They mean the "C"LP and the RCP) (The Call, 11/75, p.13)

The OL's bankrupt methodology of slandering the Workers Viewpoint Organization as a "group of ideological agents of the ruling circles", as all-theory-no-practice "dogmatism", their personality assassination of WV leadership and their downright lies about the IWD events (Class Struggle, Summer 1975, #2) show their opportunist approach to "polemics". Their "second strike" policy on polemics is aimed only to protect the OL and not to push the communist movement forward through struggle and principled resolution. Their "non-sectarian style of work", in light of the indefiniteness of their line, is nothing but an opportunist "friendship" style, designed to deceive theoretically weak comrades who are not yet able to differentiate ideological and political shades. Their ruthless slander and fabrication are just the flip-side of their so-called "good style of work". Both of them try to put a heavy lid on real struggle for there is no principled struggle in either. This kind of rotten methodology must lead to revisionism.

When the OL tries to build its party without a clear ideological and political line, without sharp lines of demarcation with other trends, there is nothing holding that party together but circle mentality. And that kind of unprincipled "unity" is the worst kind of factionalism and sectarianism.

THEIR "NON-SECTARIAN STYLE OF WORK", IN LIGHT OF THE INDEFINITENESS OF THEIR LINE, IS NOTHING BUT AN OPPORTUNIST "FRIENDSHIP" STYLE, DESIGNED TO DECEIVE THEORETICALLY WEAK COMRADES WHO ARE NOT YET ABLE TO DIFFERENTIATE IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL SHADES.

In the Russian Communist movement, Trotsky once tried to build this kind of "unity" among the Russian opportunists, also under the slogan of "non-factionalism". Lenin wrote:

"Trotsky...possesses no ideological and political definiteness, for his patent for 'non-factionalism'... is merely a patent to flit freely to and fro, from one group to another.

"...when attempts are made to form a separate organization which is to have no ideological and political physiognomy, it is the worst form of factionalism." ("Disruption of Unity Under Cover of Outcries for Unity," Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 20, 1914).

This is real sectarianism. And it's no accident that the OL now uses this quote from "What is to be Done" which shows what they're really thinking.

"...let go of our hands, don't clutch at us and don't besmirch the grand word freedom, for we too are 'free' to go where we please, free to fight not only against the marsh, but also against those who are turning towards the marsh!" ("What is to be Done?" Lenin, Collected Works, Vol.5, 1901-02)

And it's also no accident that the RU used this very same quote right before "Brief Period Ahead" when they broke off to build their RCP!

"...the ideological leap over the last three years is one of the main reasons we can confidently call for the formation of the party against these pessimists who generalize their own political confusion and claim that our movement is 'too backward' for such a step." (The Call, 11/75, p.13)

When we size up things in politics Lenin teaches us to ask: Who stands to gain? And this is the question we have to ask when summing up the content and danger of the OL's party building "call".

We struggled against the OL on Boston busing, community control and on Watergate, and showed that they pinned their hopes on "liberal" bourgeois plans, on Congress, the courts and even the police, on bourgeois democracy vs. fascism. We struggled with them on the Palestinian mini-state and the Shah of Iran and showed their complete faith in the imperialists' plans and their modernized puppets. We struggled with them on trade union work and found their reliance on the "militant" and "progressive" reformists and their liquidation of the direction of the main blow. Through all these and other struggles, we showed how the consistency and "system" of their deviations came from their whole outlook of illusions in bourgeois democracy. (See W.V., 5/75, V.2, No.1, articles on the OL, Boston Busing, Tasks of Communists in the Economic Crisis, and The Palestinian Mini-State)

We struggled against the OL's downgrading of theory in party building and their pragmatic flip-flopping from fighting ultra-leftism to fighting right opportunism, from building the mass movement to building the party, and their vagueness and constant mutations on all other important questions. And we struggled against their pragmatic tailing and adaptation to every new, popular mood in the movement.

THE ROTTEN METHODOLOGY OF SILENT MUTATIONS, PRAGMATIC FLIP-FLOPPING, SLANDER, FABRICATION AND VAGUENESS SHOWS THE ROTTEN BOURGEOIS WORLD OUTLOOK.

Now we have to expose their "left" feint. We exposed how the OL "breaks" with revisionism by abandoning the mass movement to the revisionists, and also showed how often they have united fully with revisionists. We exposed their "fight" against the Guardian's centrism on social-imperialism by showing the identity of their positions on all other major questions. We exposed their silent mutation, without explanation or self-criticism, of their line on trade union bureaucrats. And we exposed their bankrupt methodology of slanders and fabrications as well as their "non-sectarianism".

"Marxism holds that world outlook and methodology are identical. One must have a correct world outlook in order to master a scientific methodology" ("Great Benefits Derive from a Good Analysis", Peking Review, 12/14/73 reprinted in WV, Vol.1, No.2) The rotten methodology of silent mutations, pragmatic flip-flopping, slander, fabrication and vagueness shows the rotten bourgeois world outlook.

This is also the essence of the OL's "left" feint. It is no "improvement" or "correction" of past errors, but just the opposite: the deepening of the very same methodology of mutations and flip-flopping. It is designed to cash in on the communist movement's primitiveness and low theoretical level, as well as the genuine struggle against right opportunism. And above all, this "left" feint is meant to cover OL's own rightist tracks.

THIS IS THE IDEOLOGICAL "PROFILE" OF THE OL. AND IT IS THE DISTINCTIVE PROFILE OF THE PETTY BOURGEOISIE, WITH ITS IDEOLOGY OF BOURGEOIS DEMOCRACY AND PRGAMATISM, ITS POLITICS OF REFORMISM AND LIBERALISM AND ITS "DEMOCRATIC" LOOSENESS IN ORGANIZATION.



wrong or so broad that they prevent the drawing of any clear lines of demarcation? What class has total faith in bourgeois democracy and tries to build its line and party on a pragmatic lack of any definite line and organizational principles?

This is the ideological "profile" of the OL. And it is the distinctive profile of the petty bourgeoisie, with its ideology of bourgeois democracy and pragmatism, its politics of reformism and liberalism and its "democratic" looseness in organization. And the OL's party building call is the concentrated "summing up" of all this opportunism. It's a concentrated expression of this petty bourgeois retrograde trend in the communist movement. So there has been no 'ideological leap'! The only 'leap' has been OL's qualitatively improved skill in feinting left and right - to look ML.

The "call" is nothing but a dinner bell for all the worst retrograde trends in the communist movement today. And there's plenty of fertile ground for it to grow on. This is the danger of its broad appeal to petty bourgeois indefiniteness. There are plenty of downright revisionists in our movement who will not accept Mao Tsetung Thought but who claim to accept Marxism-Leninism, intellectuals who will never accept democratic centralism but who will go for "full democracy", petty bourgeois radicals who do not know the difference between the socialist and democratic struggles, and liberals and nationalists who will not accept real proletarian internationalism but who will support "black businesses" and the Shah of Iran. This is the

Who gains by leaving Mao Tse-tung Thought out of a party building "call"? What kind of party promises its members "full democracy"? Who gains from principles of unity that are either so

The overwhelming majority of the OL's cadres are honest Marxists. But if they accept these party "foundations", they're sure to sink into this mud.

The bulk of our anti-revisionist communist movement came out of the "fire at the treetops" in the 1960's, the movements of the most conscious sectors of society, of the minorities students, women, anti-war movement, etc. A weakness we still carry is that even with the many excellent fighters who came out of these struggles and our beginning roots in the working class, the movement still doesn't have the solidity of deep ties with advanced workers or the working masses. The heavy proportion of intellectuals and other petty bourgeois elements from the 60's movements is the social basis for opportunism in our movement.

In building the party, communists must forge an all-round opposition to this opportunism. But how can the OL fight this with its soupy "call"? Just the opposite, the OL is trying to build on these retrograde trends. The OL objectively represents the left wing of this petty bourgeois layer in the communist movement. They are the left wing of social democracy.

This is the deep social basis of the OL. This is why the errors in the "call" are not just accidents or sloppy writing. The "call" is a definite product of the entire superstructure of the petty bourgeois 60's movements, a superstructure that is inseparable from its class basis. This "call" is the culmination of almost four years of work by the OL and the stable opportunist trend that they represent in the communist movement. This trend must find and promote its representatives. If the OL wasn't here to do it, somebody else would come along to take their place.

This opportunist trend will inevitably come up again and again from its deep class base for one "trial of strength" after another, trying to break the Marxist-Leninist movement. And if we don't take up the ruthless struggle against this trend, it will break us.

THE "CALL" IS NOTHING BUT A DINNER BELL FOR ALL THE WORST RETROGRADE TRENDS IN THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT TODAY, AND THERE'S PLENTY OF FERTILE GROUND FOR IT TO GROW ON.

The OL shows exactly what we mean when we say that it's not enough to just point at the official "C" PUSA revisionists and shout. If that's all there was to party building, it would be easy. The OL does plenty of shouting about the "C" P but that hasn't saved them from the very same ideological and political deviations.

The OL swore that they would always uphold the dictatorship of the proletariat, but then they constantly mixed it up with their "anti-imperialist struggle". They claimed that they understood the need for armed struggle to smash the bourgeois state, but then they helped lead the Afro-American community into Carson Beach. They said they would never build a revisionist mass party, but then they promised their party members "full democracy". And they claimed to understand the importance of Marxist theory, but then they left Mao Tse-tung Thought out of the Party building "call".

Despite all the shouting and the exposure of the official revisionists, the very same revisionist deviations come back up in the form of conscious or unconscious force of habit, modes of thinking, prejudices and even moods and emotions. And each time they are more subtle and devious and it gets harder to "vaccinate" ourselves against them. As we once wrote:

"...only successful struggle against illusions, these elements of the old ideological superstructure of monopoly capitalism, can prepare the successful conditions for making proletarian revolution. For this country, reformist influences, whether they take the form of outright reformism, (that's the less dangerous kind, for it is overt and detectable), Social-Democracy, revisionism, or even "ML", (be they based on the

Cont'd on p.21

and consider the appeal. The Bolsheviks marched with the people towards the Winter Palace anyway. The Czarist troops opened fire and killed over two thousand of them. The workers, and even some of the most backward elements learned through bitter experience the true nature of the Czar. The Bolsheviks, who warned the workers beforehand not to go, who marched side by side with the workers, even when the masses wouldn't listen, who died side by side with the workers, gained tremendous respect and prestige. They were later able to play an influential role in the 1905 upsurge.

The deviation of the OL is that they don't tell people beforehand the role of the troops, the role of the state and the state apparatus and negate the experiences of the militant black liberation movement of the 60's. In so doing, they foster illusions amongst the people. Not only did they abandon the role of communists in accelerating the already learnt experience of the masses, they in actuality played a rearguard role and dragged the movement backward. This is a case in point where Black people are far more "experienced" than the "communists".

So what their "people have to learn from their own experience" comes

Cont'd from p.155

labor movement or based on the petty bourgeoisie, their force of habit and intrinsic faith in "democracy", their emotions and predilections, or their overt and covert prejudices) all act like a shackle upon the proletariat and prevent them from gaining political independence from the bourgeoisie." (WV, 5/75, V.1, No.2, p.23).

The OL shows us exactly why we have to build the party on the ideological plane and grasp the key link of political line. We have to analyze all deviations to get to their ideological roots and find their class and historical origins. Without doing that, we cannot raise our vigilance to systematically fight all the infinite varieties and mutations of these deviations. "...the bourgeois influence over the proletariat... is not an accident, nor evil design, stupidity or error on the part of some individual, but the inevitable result of the action of these objective causes, and the superstructure of the entire labour movement in present-day Russia, which is inseparable from the 'basis'." (Lenin,

down to is nothing except the OL/Guardian's leadership's uncertainty as to the role of the state, their lasting faith in the "democratic" and "impartial" character of the state and the state apparatus, a typically revisionist mentality. It is they who have to confirm their belief that the state and the state apparatus does have a class character - that of the bourgeoisie.

Lenin concluded in "The Collapse of the Second International" the reason for the revisionists having revisionist illusions: the relative good lives of the petty bourgeois intellectuals and labour aristocrats have "isolated them from the suffering, miseries and revolutionary sentiments of the ruined and impoverished masses." And indeed, due to OL leadership and Guardian's Davidson's lack of "experience", and lack of faith in the powerful working class movement, they maneuver and speculate at the expense of the bloody history of the working class, particularly the oppressed national minorities. The petty bourgeois intellectuals have to fuss about the people's experience, in order to impose their petty bourgeois liberal mode of thinking, emotions and world outlook onto the working class - only to smother the working class struggle.

Collected Works, "Notes of a Publicist," Vol. 16, 1910, p. 214) Without understanding that the OL's deviations are inevitable, and that they come from their illusions in bourgeois democracy, which have their class basis in the petty bourgeois elements from the 60's movements and their deep historical basis in the two hundred years of bourgeois democracy in the US -- without understanding this we can't successfully spot the danger in the communist movement and wage an all-round struggle against it.

Communists must forge the clearest ideological, political and organizational lines to ice this opportunism out of our movement and the future anti-revisionist party. To put party building on the ideological plane is a constant and long-term task.

So the OL wants to talk about its "ideological leap"? The task we think the OL still has to take up is to make the "leap" out of the mud they've been building on. ■