

Letters ToThe Editor



Struggle Against Revisionism

The following letter was sent to both the Guardian and the Organizer.

In Silber's September 27th *Fan the Flames* he correctly points to the anniversary of the Chilean coup as an appropriate time for Marxist-Leninists to assess the errors of the Chilean left, and particularly the Chilean Communist Party's (ChCP) responsibility in that situation. It is an apt time for us to re-dedicate ourselves to the struggle against revisionism, deepening our general critique and reviewing the disaster of the Chilean working class movement.

Silber was also to the point in his criticism of dogmatist bankruptcy — blind and tacit support for the Pinochet dictatorship merely replaced one form of class collaboration for another. He also hit the mark by pointing out the errors of neo-revisionism, romanticism of the Unidad Popular and refusal to incorporate the bitter lessons of Chile into outlook and practice.

But I fail to see how all of this relates to the fusion strategy for party-building in the US. Silber makes no concrete argument for his equation between the ChCP and the groups involved in the OC, and particularly the PWOC, the main proponent of the fusion strategy. Instead, he makes use of innuendo and cries of opportunism, an unfortunately common but not particularly useful approach for clarifying matters of political line. If this type of struggle is an example of the *Guardian's* emphasis on general line — liquidate the concrete for vague formulations — the meaning of the phrase general line has been lost.

If Silber has real examples of the similarities he sees between consolidated hardline revisionists and members of a young party-building effort which espouses an anti-revisionist outlook, he should put them forward.

As a person involved for four years in building Non-Intervention in Chile (NICH), an organization which was born in the struggle against the opportunism of the CPUSA within the Chile solidarity movement, and today as a member of an OC organization, I am revolted at Silber's political irresponsibility in indicting the PWOC and others for the sins of the ChCP. If he were so serious about drawing out the lessons of Chilean revisionism for the North American reader, why doesn't he do so?

As the revisionist strategy played itself out in Chile, we had the chance to examine the twisting of a united front electoral strategy into the "peaceful road to socialism": we can look at Chile and see the disaster of liquidating the role of armed struggle, the full importance of correctly balancing working class unity on political and economic questions with the development of revolutionary organization — and these are only a few of the lessons to be learned.

Instead, Silber misses his opportunity to contribute to our 'general line' on the dangers of revisionism, and directs his energy toward distorting and misrepresenting the meaning of fusion as put forward by Marxists-Leninists today. To merely state that the important ideological tasks cannot be "dependent upon or defined by the measure of fusion which the communists have already achieved with the spontaneous working class movement" leads the reader to believe that this is the essence of the fusion strategy.

The PWOC has clearly stated in its publications, and the OC has stated in its Principles of Unity that the development of correct political line is integrally related to effecting the fusion of Marxism-Leninism with the struggle of the working class. In other words, that the science of

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M-L becomes the method for formulating the strategy and tactics of the class struggle by the advanced fighters themselves. This in no way means that the theoretical tasks are somehow left on the locker room floor, as Silber would have us believe. He is fully aware of the intent to centralize ideological struggle, study and research through the Ideological Center.

I think that it would be apt to look at the anti-revisionist, anti-dogmatist organization which struggled in Chile during the UP period, and which continues to struggle in Chile today, the MIR. MIR went through an intense self-criticism as well as advancing its critique of revisionism after the coup. It assessed its main strengths and cited its main advances in the area of developing greater fusion with the working class in order to win its advanced fighter away from a revisionist perspective, and against left-voluntarism and theoreticism. If they had failed to take up the question of fusion until they had formulated a correct general line, their ability to win over 8% of the trade union activists in three years from a revisionist perspective would have gone untested.

While the MIR suffered from ultra-left weaknesses, its ability to survive the blows of the coup and re-emerge in a position to both rectify its own errors and

continue the struggle within the working class hinged on its correct approach to developing fusion with the working class and refusing to claim itself vanguard or party status until it had demonstrated its ability to win the most advanced fighters into its ranks.

Chile is perhaps the most dramatic example of the fusion of revisionist ideology with the working class. The specifics of this relate both to the flunkyism of the ChCP to Moscow and also to the particular history of the Chilean trade union movement. It also relates to the US imperialist strategy of the sixties — which bore similarities to the Marshall Plan in Europe that contributed to the development. Silber neither does this nor does he give us a good enough reason to follow his approach rather than one which includes the advanced fighters of the working class in the struggle to defeat a revisionist perspective within the class itself.

The real question that we all face is how serious the difficulties of consolidating a revolutionary perspective are under the duress of the daily battles for survival of working people. It is between a correct idea and its application in the real world that political line has meaning, and it will be political line developed and seasoned by the class struggle that shows its vanguard character.

In struggle,
N.K.