

The Origins Of Revisionism In The CP - Pg. 12

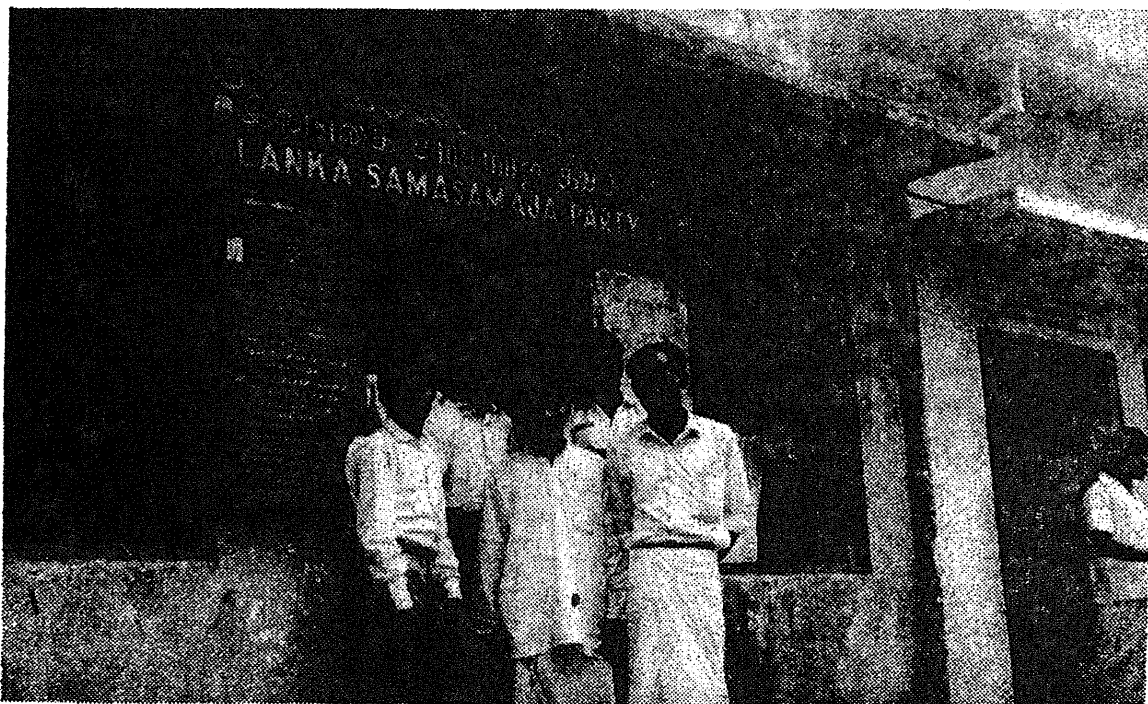
Bulletin

OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

Vol. 2, No. 3

Feb. 8, 1965

10 Cents



Leaders of the LSSP (Revolutionary Section) stand in front of party headquarters in the Colombo, Ceylon waterfront. The construction of such Marxist working class parties is the key to the victory of revolution throughout Asia.

What Next For Indonesia?

The resignation of Indonesia from the United Nations, in the wake of its continuing conflict with imperialism over Malaysia, has pushed it into the spotlight of world events. The reactions of various groupings in the world working class and socialist movement to the latest developments are of great importance. The Soviet bureaucracy and its followers in the workingclass movement have, of course, been dismayed by the Indonesia move. It does not fit in with their own version of peaceful coexistence and deepening collaboration with imperialism. On the other hand, the Chinese Communist leadership and various groupings which look towards it for leadership have uncritically

welcomed the Indonesian action. In so doing they have placed confidence in Indonesia's regime, headed by Sukarno, to carry out a principled struggle against imperialism. The centrists of the so-called Unified Secretariat of the Fourth International have also added their voice to the chorus of praise for Sukarno's move.

Those who are seriously interested in working class revolution must examine the situation closely, looking beneath the surface. It is important to see that imperialism is hostile to Indonesia, and that the United Nations is a tool of imperialism--but is this all that must be understood about the Indonesian situation? What is the real relationship between imperialism, Sukarno, and the Chinese leadership? What is the real role and interests of the Indonesian regime in relation to the working class? What is the role of the powerful Indonesian Communist Party (CPI) which has supported the Chinese in the Sino-Soviet rift? These are some of the more "complicated" questions deserving of a Marxist analysis which have been completely ignored by most socialists.

The latest events must be seen against the background, the past from which they arose--that is the way any revolutionist must begin in seeking to understand current trends. The background in Indonesia is one of bourgeois nationalist rule by the Sukarno regime after the successful fight for independence from the Dutch over 15 years ago. It was the duty of revolutionary socialists to unconditionally support this colonial struggle, which they did. The bourgeois nationalist regime, however, has been unable to carry through the Indonesian revolution and solve the basic problems of poverty and the need for rapid industrial development. It has sought to contain the revolution within capitalist limits, and has maintained strict limits on mass action and expression in order to bolster the stability of an inherently unstable regime. When the workers seized factories and other imperialist interests several years ago, the government immediately disarmed the workers and removed the factories from their control.

The Need for Proletarian Power

The urgent need in Indonesia as throughout the colonial world, as it was the need in Russia and China, is for proletarian revolution, as part of the process of the permanent revolution which Trotsky expounded and explained. Sukarno and other nationalist leaders play a reactionary role in standing opposed to the permanent revolution. Their role is to try, at times through extreme centralization and government control over the economy, to strengthen and build up a native capitalist class. Sukarno plays a classic Bonapartist role between a capitalist class too weak to rule in its own name and a working class and peasant masses striving to lift themselves into the modern

world.

The power and influence of the Indonesian Communist Party is an important factor in the ability of Sukarno to maintain his precarious balance of power. At times he will strengthen the left, at times the right, depending on the particular stage of the crisis in Indonesia. Similar nationalist leaderships elsewhere, though they may have found it necessary to imprison CP leaders to more openly restrict the workingclass movement, do not qualitatively differ from the Indonesian regime. Though at times these leaders are pushed into conflict with imperialism, it is important to note that imperialism does not view them in the same way it views the workers' states. These colonial and semi-colonial countries (in the economic sense of the term) have not been removed from the capitalist orbit.

We should examine the latest conflict in this context. British imperialism does not view the Sukarno regime as a safe ally and safeguard of its interests interests in Southeast Asia. It fears another Suez type development. Thus it has sought to bolster its position by maneuvering to create a puppet state in Malaysia as a counterbalance to the untrustworthy Sukarno. Indonesia has quite correctly denounced Malaysia as a puppet of imperialism.

Thus the needs of imperialism, and the fact that they do not coincide with the needs of the Indonesian regime at this time, have led to a sharp conflict between Indonesia and the imperialists. When Malaysia was seated on the Security Council of the U.N., Indonesia carried out its threat to resign from that organization. This is just the last step in a "left turn" of the Sukarno government which has already been proceeding for some time.

Crisis Grows at Home

It is also important to note that Sukarno's turn towards militancy in foreign policy, and towards increased friendliness with the Chinese regime, coincides with a growing crisis at home in which the "left turn" has not been nearly so evident, to put it mildly. Since November of 1964, in only the last 2 months, an extremely rapid inflation has brought the prices of most necessities up 50 to 100 percent. This is just the last runaway stage of an inflation which has plagued the country for some time. While there have been some wage increases, these do not even begin to bring up the living standards to the meager point they were at before the runaway inflation began. Also, the Indonesian government has changed its currency laws, testifying both to the power of the native capitalist tendencies and to the desires of the regime to satisfy the needs of these elements and to draw their money back into Indonesia. The government has made it legal to have

unregistered foreign bank accounts, to hoard gold and to possess foreign currency. As the New York Times reports, the new rules are "aimed at encouraging individuals to use for 'development projects' what was once illegal foreign exchange."

It is not merely a coincidence that these moves of the regime domestically occur at the same time as its radical foreign policy moves. The seeming inconsistency between foreign and domestic policy can be explained by seeing the foreign policy as, in part, a way of diverting the attention of the masses from troubles at home to a foreign enemy. The foreign enemy is real, but so is the domestic crisis which the government is trying to hide. The real policy of the Indonesian regime is shown by the crisis it has produced and the way it seeks to handle this crisis.

Significantly Sukarno had turned down some meek suggestions of the Indonesian CP that he arm the workers and peasants. If his sole concern was to defend Indonesia from a foreign imperialist threat, then this action would be incomprehensible. The truth is that an armed working class would be in a strong position not only to defend the country against an external enemy but to push for its own interests internally. This Sukarno cannot tolerate. This, the CP does not initiate on its own, but only petitions the government for.

Of course revolutionary socialists do not plead with Indonesia to remain in the U.N., as the Governments of Ceylon, the U.A.R., and the U.S.S.R. have done. But we must see the U.N. resignation, the turn towards the Chinese, and the alternating hot and cold line on Malaysia as intended to divert attention from the crisis at home. This is proven by Sukarno's refusal to rely on either the Indonesian or Malaysian working class. The Malaysia conflict plays the same role as the Arab-Israeli conflict plays in Nasser's demagogic nationalism. The issue, again, is not whether socialists should support the colonial peoples against the maneuvers of imperialism. It is that socialists cannot really defend the colonial revolution unless they point up the inadequacy of its bourgeois and petty bourgeois leaderships in addition to defending these revolutions, even under their present leaderships, against imperialism. This is because only the deepening of the revolution, only the posing of the socialist revolution and workers' power, can prevent the revolution from being defeated, can accomplish even the tasks set by the bourgeois revolution in this period of the decay of the capitalist system.

CP Uncritically Supports Sukarno

The role of the Indonesian Communist Party, three million strong, and by far the predominant influence among the workers and peasants of the country, has been to

uncritically support Sukarno. The CPI follows the line developed by Stalin in the Chinese Revolution. They support the bourgeois leadership; they do not seek to mobilize the masses independently of this leadership; they do not pose the need for workers' power. In other words, they follow the line worked out by Stalin and Kamenev after the February 1917 Revolution in Russia, the line of support, in that case, to the Kerensky regime. Only after Lenin returned and castigated the so-called "old Bolsheviks" was this opportunist line corrected. But who will correct the opportunist line of the CPI?

PORTRAIT OF A PABLOITE

"There have been fears of a gradual erosion of freedoms since Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike joined forces with Trotskyites. Mrs. Bandaranaike, however, has assured the people that she had no intention of being a dictator. She added that the Trotskyites in her Government were of Buddhist parents and practiced Buddhism."
--N.Y. Times, January 31, 1965

The Indonesian events are a crucial test for all workingclass leaderships, including the Chinese Communist Party. The CCP and its Indonesian ally, the CPI, are not following a working class line. For all the talk of revisionism and even of "uninterrupted revolution" the CCP is following its own version of peaceful coexistence and class collaboration.

The CCP is doing exactly what the Kremlin did in relation to the Iraqi Revolution and the Iraqi Communist Party in 1958-59, when the Iraqi CP also grew very influential. The same outcome, the physical crushing of the CP itself when it has outlived its usefulness to the capitalist regime, is possible in Indonesia. It may come either as a sharp move on the part of Sukarno to the right or as a move separate from Sukarno to set up a right wing military dictatorship, if Sukarno himself can no longer maintain his expert balancing act. In any event, this kind of defeat for the Indonesian workingclass can be expected if its present leadership continues to refuse to organize and mobilize it independently, and a new leadership is not created.

The crucial difference, of course, between the CCP's diplomacy and that carried out by the Leninist regime in post-1917 Russia, is that the Chinese line is tied in with the adaptation of the CPI to Sukarno, instead of specifically separating the CPI from the needs of diplomacy in order to enable both the Chinese and Indonesian CPs to follow revolutionary lines independent of the needs of the Chinese workers' state itself. Since the coming to power of Stalin in the USSR, this distinction between diplomacy and revolution has not been recognized.



LABOR

SCOPE

JAIL FOR WELFARE: As we go to press the New York Welfare employees strike enters its twenty fourth day, with no settlement in sight. Nineteen leaders of the striking Social Service Employees Union (Ind.) and Local 371 of the State, County and Municipal Employees (AFL-CIO) have been jailed for contempt because of their refusal to end the strike. As one of the imprisoned officers of the S.S.E.U. put it, "Apparently the city has transferred its negotiating table from the Municipal Building to the City Jail." Mayor Wagner has stated that the jailing is necessary if we are to have government of law and order which he is sworn to uphold. At the same time he has said that the City cannot and will not budge from its position of no negotiation until the strikers go back to work.

While it is possible that Wagner will pursue his "hard line" to its "logical" end--lock the strikers out and try to hire a herd of new scab welfare investigators--this course is very unlikely. Such a course would pose the conflict too sharply within the New York labor movement and tend to force the various labor bureaucrats into a corner making it difficult for them to consider any compromise. They might even have to go through with their threat to organize a general strike of municipal employees! Such a move which would rapidly have brought the city to its knees should and could have been attempted long ago but would have required an entirely different kind of leadership--one which was really committed to the working class; the enemies of labor are not only in City Hall. Furthermore, since Wagner will probably run for Mayor again in the fall, such a move on his part would really make it difficult for the labor fakers and "socialists" of the Communist Party to support him as a "friend of labor."

Of course any settlement which in effect recognizes the Welfare Unions as legitimate bargaining agents would be a defeat for Wagner's plan to smash the SSEU and raise a threatening club against all municipal employees. But this would be going no further than the winning of a demand which was the major attainment of the labor struggles of the 1930's. More is needed: a contract that brings the Social Investigators and other Welfare Employees up to the level of other skilled and professional employees of the city and establishes working conditions more conducive to an alliance of the social investigators and the welfare recipients. With "Public Assistance" becoming a

major industry in our "Welfare State," this is an important task. It is part of the larger need to create alliances between the relief recipients, (in New York they are predominantly from minority groups but the number of "whites" on relief is growing) the unemployed in general, and the organized working class. Such an alliance which transcends ethnic, racial and other divisions is necessary for the development of the working class as a conscious force, as a real class capable of doing away once and for all with capitalism and its mounting "welfare" misery.

Despite widespread client distrust and hostility toward the social investigators (Wagner has tried to exploit this with a crude display of the most unabashed hypocrisy imaginable), there are indications that support for the strike by clients is growing. Unhappily for Wagner who is widely despised in New York's ghettos, demonstrations against the City by the clients are increasing. The New York Post, Jan. 26, reports that 350 "relief clients, said by the city to have been urged on by striking welfare workers jammed their way into a Brooklyn Welfare Center today. ...Bernard Lichtig, Assistant Director of the Center, said the welfare strikers had distributed leaflets to the relief clients urging them to 'descend on the centers en masse'." Such initiative by the strikers has been sporadic, unorganized and neither condemned nor supported by the official leadership, to the best of our knowledge. The union ranks have been militant, but they have unfortunately lacked the kind of leadership which could have mobilized the militancy of the workers to undertake a campaign of person to person discussion with the clients in an effort to win their support and begin to organize it. The leadership of such a campaign will have to come from the militants and revolutionists both within the ranks of the union and from the outside as well.

* * * *

COAL MINERS REVOLT: The revolt of rank and file coal miners against the UMW bureaucracy of President Tony Boyle has been going on for some time now. Last September at the UMW convention held (of all places) in Miami Beach, this rebellion exploded into open and bitter conflict when Boyle and Company sought to silence the dissidents. (see Bulletin, Vol. I #2, Sept. 28, 1964). The challenge to Boyle's regime took form after widespread wildcat strikes last spring. Afterwards, miner Steve Kochis, one of the leaders of the dissidents planned to run for President on an opposition slate which was defeated in the election of Dec. 8, 1965. This is the first time the UMW bureaucracy has been challenged in an election in many years. Aside from the important issue of union democracy, the fundamental demands of the rebels both in the wildcats and in the recent elections are for job security in the face of a mounting company drive of automation and layoff. The miners therefore stand on common ground with the dissident Auto workers, Steelworkers and Longshoremen

against the same kind of sell-out International leadership, which capitulates to the coal companies and strangles democracy in the process.

In the Dec. 8 election which was completely under control of the Boyle regime, (Kochis claimed the results were "wrong" and that there was no rebel observer present when the vote sheets were tallied by UMW-International tellers) it was announced that Boyle had gotten 83% of the votes. But there is a ray of hope for these miners who don't give up easily: the Wall Street Journal reported that Kochis had "called a meeting of rebel miners from Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia... 'to see what we'll do next'."

* * * *

ON THE DOCKS: If it is at all conceivable, the Gleason leadership of the ILA has even less concern for democracy and fighting the bosses than the Boyle leadership of the UMW. Using his control of the union administrative apparatus and vote-counting machinery, Gleason was able to ram through a vote approving the contract with the New York Shipowners Association that the dockworkers had rejected two weeks earlier. Rarely have we seen so craven a spectacle as Gleason's campaign to do the bidding of the Shipowners and anti-labor Johnson administration, which included a red-baiting attack of the outspoken opponents of the contract.

Still, the dockworkers have not returned to work yet since contracts have not been signed in other eastern and gulf ports. By tradition, agreement on a contract is required at all ports under ILA jurisdiction before work is resumed at any of them. As a result of a one million dollar per day loss for the New York Shipowners, they are desperately trying to get Gleason to flaunt this traditional requirement. There is little doubt that Gleason would like to get the men to go back to work tomorrow. But dissatisfaction with the contract and with Gleason's rule is widespread in the Port of New York and an attempt to get the men to return before the other settlements are concluded might trigger wildcat strikes. The New York dockworkers have gotten a raw deal (see Bulletin, Vol. II #2) but we think that many of them will start following the example of the rebel coal miners and organize to dump Gleason.

As of this writing, the latest report on the strike is that dockworkers in Baltimore turned down the proposed contract by a vote of 1,381 to 969 thereby throwing the Shipowners and Assistant Sec'y. of Labor Reynolds into an even more acute state of desperation. That the bureaucratic leaders of the ILA fear they cannot control the ranks, as we indicated earlier, is even more clearly revealed when they were forced to turn down the shipowners demand that the New York dockers return to work. This decision was

announced by slick talking Anthony Scotto, Harvard-educated top bureaucrat of the Brooklyn docks who termed the ship-owners demand "unsound and unrealistic." "Longshoremen belong to but one union, and they refuse to undermine one another," said hypocrite Scotto who did more than anyone to get the men to accept the fink contract in New York.

In a related development, government "mediator" Reynolds took up Gleason's charge of "subversion" and "communism" on the New York docks stating that "Communist forces brought about a gross misunderstanding of the dock situation." Reynolds is asking the FBI to "look into" the waterfront situation in New York and Baltimore and any other port where there is "subversive" activity. While Reynolds refused to "name names", the Times says, "One widely circulated opposition voice was the newspaper Challenge published by the Progressive Labor Movement."

In classic style, all the forces of big capital led by the government, press and their lackey "labor leaders" have shouted "red" when faced with a crisis of difficulty in controlling a section of the working class. Challenge of Jan. 26 reports the response of one dockworker in answer to Gleason's charge that the rank and file Dockers News is "Communist-inspired" and has been trying to "sway" the longshoremen: "...the issue is not who could be 'swayed' but how the union leadership is selling out men's jobs 'without answering a single criticism by the rank and file.'" Challenge which has given the most honest and extensive coverage of the Longshore situation of any newspaper, reports that "the paper was widely distributed and well received on the waterfront." Despite all their wealth and "power," the bosses and their lackeys sure get upset when Marxists tell the truth and the workers demonstrate their militancy and independence.

REPORT FROM CANADA

BIG BUSINESS LAUNCHES OFFENSIVE AGAINST WORKERS

Vancouver, B.C.--Big business spokesmen for the capitalist class are making it abundantly clear in recent statements that they are determined to destroy the effectiveness of the labor movement as an instrument of the Canadian working class to raise living standards, wages and conditions. Big business prefers a labor movement that is controlled, tame, ineffective, and of course, "responsible." To this end they are campaigning vigorously for both Federal and Provincial legislation which would make it even more difficult than at present for workers to take strike action without threats of compulsory arbitration and direct government intervention.

A Mr. Emerson, President of the Canadian Pacific Railway, speaking recently in Toronto, said he was opposed to any Federal legislation requiring a minimum wage of \$1.25 an hour, a 40 hour week, seven statutory paid

holidays. Emerson also felt that the collective bargaining strength of unions is "unduly great." In 1964, many sections of the Canadian working class have demonstrated their determination to pursue a course of aggressive, militant action to win increased wages and improved conditions and a shorter work week. The present trade union leaders betray and mislead the workers by their craven attitude toward any struggle and oftentimes they aid and abet big business by using their control to hold back the workers and avoid any class dispute. Only a revolutionary Marxist leadership can assist the workers in the struggle to emancipate themselves from wage slavery and this oppressive system of capitalist exploitation.

Government Attacks Seamen

In 1964 the Canadian Liberal government with the support of all parties and all New Democratic Party MP's (The NDP was formed by a fusion of the Canadian unions with the reformist Cooperative Commonwealth Federation) passed legislation which imposed government trusteeship over all Seamen's unions. This dictatorial move was to "cleanse the Great Lakes of gangsterism" and to remove Hal Banks from the leadership of the SIU. The capitalist government set out to do a job on the unions and they got the wholehearted support of the New Democratic Party MP's -- the so-called "friends of labor." (With friends like this who needs enemies?) When hundreds of seamen lobbied Parliament against the legislation, NDP house leader Douglas told them they had "long ago given up any right to elect their leaders." These betrayals are of the classical Social Democratic brand and should be expected, but when so-called Marxist groups like the Pabloite League for Socialist Action ask the workers to put their faith in the NDP then you have an example of the degeneration of the "left."

Despite the betrayals, the workers have occasionally shown their tremendous vitality and strength, pushing aside the reformist leaders and taking action to win some concessions from big business. Carpenters, electricians, longshoremen, and construction workers have all won significant wage increases by threatening to strike. Fords, Chrysler and Massey Ferguson still have to face contract settlements. The Steel Workers Union has just been sued for 2½ million dollars by the Gasp Copper Co. because of alleged damages during a violent strike in 1957 in Quebec. Scabs were used to break the strike and three people were killed.

Class Solidarity in Action

The pundits who talk about the apathy of the working class were answered very forcefully by a tremendous demonstration of solidarity amongst workers at the Macmillan Bloedell Company's Pulp and Paper complex in British Columbia. During the Spring of '64 some 49 office workers were

refused a contract for the union shop, enjoyed by all Macmillan Bloedell production workers. The office workers struck. Their picket lines were honored by 4000 mill workers and for eight weeks not one worker crossed that picket line! Of course, the union leadership sought some compromise and government intervention throughout. Finally, the workers were talked into going back with promises of an agreement by an arbitration board to be binding on both sides. Thus a precedent is established for binding arbitration and government intervention and this is called a "victory" by the right wing trade union leaders, the Communist Party and the League for Socialist Action. Well, another "victory" like that and we are in trouble.

Some six months has gone by since the printers went on strike over the introduction of automation and new techniques at three Toronto newspapers. The ITU claims jurisdiction over multi-purpose computer work in the face of the companies' determination to introduce newer and more efficient (for them) techniques. The companies sign separate agreements with the different printers' unions to continue craft and sectional prejudices and hope to avoid the united strength of all printing trades in any clash. The papers are continuing to print because unions who have contracts are crossing the picket lines because "we have to honor our agreement."

Douglas Fisher, a leading NDP M.P., showed his contempt for the strikers when he crossed the picket line to write his column for one of the struck papers. Needless to say he was never even reprimanded by the NDP caucus for this scandalous act of scabbing on workers.

Canadian workers must build a strong revolutionary Marxist party in unity with the working class of the U.S.A. and affiliated to the International Committee of the Fourth International. This Marxist party must expose the fake Trotskyists of the Pabloite variety who only act as a cover for the opportunist Social Democratic (NDP) and Labor leaders. Then and only then can we prepare for workers rule in the most powerful imperialist nation, the U.S.A., and in North America.

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ON THE ROAD TO REVOLUTION IN THE UNITED STATES

Progressive Labor and the Origins of Revisionism

In the American Communist Movement

The building of a new revolutionary movement in the United States requires, first of all, an understanding of the causes of the failure of the old revolutionary movements. Without such an understanding a new movement must of necessity repeat the mistakes which led to the downfall of the old movements, and we will be not one whit closer to ending capitalism here and throughout the world.

The supporters of the American Committee for the Fourth International learned this lesson the hard way in the course of a long struggle against the degeneration of the Socialist Workers Party and major portions of the world Trotskyist movement. We were forced in the course of struggling against the revisionism which grew inside the Trotskyist movement to study the whole history of the movement back to its origins. Soon we will be publishing this study of ours.

Progressive Labor has taken a similar course following its own struggle against the revisionism of the American Communist Party. Its recently published pamphlet "Road to Revolution" is in large part an exploration of the origins of revisionism within the American Communist Party. The fact that the PLM has undertaken such a task distinguishes it from a number of other left breakaways from the Communist Party which in one fashion or another continue in their own way aspects of the revisionism of the organization from which they broke organizationally.

For example, the POC group (Provisional Organizing Committee for a Marxist-Leninist Party) broke away from the CP a few years ago with a large number of workers. This group however has degenerated into an ultra-Stalinist sect deeply removed from the masses and but a small fraction of its original size. The Labor-Negro Vanguard group broke away from the CP more recently and has made a number of telling criticisms of the lack of militancy in the CP. But not getting at the roots of the revisionism which has destroyed the CP, they continue the CP's rotten policy of working within the capitalist Democratic Party.

Progressive Labor, having looked deeper into the past of the American Communist Party, is thus better qualified today to build a movement and has actually had better

success in doing so. To say that PL has started on this important task does not mean that it has really carried out this task to completion. It must dig deeper and deeper into the origins of revisionism until it has a completely rounded and non-contradictory understanding. Until it has completed this historical task, it cannot help but continue to be plagued today and in the future with problems of revisionism. Those who turn their backs on this work, saying we should "forget the past", will themselves constantly bring up the past by repeating the errors of the past.

Back to the Earliest Days

It is Progressive Labor's position that the roots of revisionism in the CP go far back. It states: "From the earliest days of the communist movement in the United States to the present, revisionism and its political manifestation, class collaboration, has been the chronic weakness." This revisionism PL finds expressed in the notion of American Exceptionalism -- that the United States is different from other countries and free from the kind of class contradictions and capitalist crises that plague other capitalist countries. It identifies revisionism with Lovestone, Browder, Gates, and to a lesser extent William Z. Foster. The latter is seen as partially resisting revisionism but going along with it nonetheless for a whole period of the party's development.

The problem is that Progressive Labor makes no attempt to relate the development of revisionism within the American party to the evolution of the Communist International and the Russian leadership. It is precisely PL's failure to relate developments inside the CPUSA with the evolution of the International which not only weakens PL's analysis of the evolution of the CPUSA, but leads it into some extremely deep contradictions. Thus chapter ten, "The Development of Revisionism in the International Movement" and chapter five, "The Origins and Results of Class Collaboration in the United States", bear no real relationship to each other.

Was Stalin a 'Militant Revolutionary'?

This is particularly clear when we get to the question of the role of Stalin: "While one can point to errors of Stalin and the Soviet leadership in this period it is generally recognized that there existed a militant revolutionary line." PL is here discussing the period of the 1930s and early 40s -- precisely the period when the CPUSA was putting forward its deeply class collaborationist line under the leadership of Earl Browder! Of course, PL is not uncritical of Stalin. It sees Stalin's lack of democratic rule and bureaucratism. However, this is to PL on the minus side, to be balanced by Stalin's supposed greater militancy and revolutionary line internationally.

This is how PL characterizes the CPUSA during these years when Stalin is seen as a militant revolutionist:

After the expulsion of Lovestone, the Party developed a militant pragmatic approach which appealed to workers during the Depression and produced a mass base for the CP. But even at that time there was no longer range revolutionary strategy developed which could sustain the Party when objective conditions of the depression changed. ... On balance, despite thousands of devoted revolutionary-minded members, the CP was a party of reform, not revolution. ... On the course of winning concessions, and with the advent of World War II, the CP developed an uncritical, non-class attitude to the Roosevelt administration ... Browder's famous Bridgeport speech on the agreements reached at Teheran put the CPUSA in complete unity with the U.S. ruling class.

The question literally jumps at one: How is it that the CPUSA evolved as a revisionist, reformist, class collaborationist party for over twenty years while it was collaborating on the closest terms with Stalin, whom PL sees as a militant revolutionary, without Stalin and the other leaders of the Comintern taking some action to rectify this revisionism? The truth is that the line of the CPUSA was Stalin's like, created by Stalin and imposed by him upon the CP first through Lovestone, then Browder, and then Foster. There is no other rational explanation for the facts.

A Look at the History

Let us briefly recapitulate the history of the CPUSA as it related to Stalin and the Comintern. The American Communist Party of the early 1920s was a very weak formation with many contradictory elements within it and without a developed and experienced leadership trained in Marxist theory. Its major constituents were the foreign born language federations who had little contact with the mainstream of American life and who in many ways played a conservative and inward oriented role within the CP, and the native born workers and revolutionists like William Z. Foster and James P. Cannon who had a good feel for the working class but were highly empirical and had almost a hostility to Marxist theory. In the early days with the help and advice of Lenin, Trotsky and others, the American CP began to develop a serious relationship to the working class in this country and at least begin to grapple with the problems it faced.

After 1925 a new element entered into the development of the CPUSA -- the factional struggles within the Russian party and their consequences. In 1925, the Foster-

Cannon forces within the CP had a clear majority of the party behind them. However the Comintern intervened in such a way as to prevent Foster and Cannon from assuming leadership. Leadership instead went, in time, to Lovestone. It was in fact Stalin, then in a bloc with Bukharin, who put Lovestone into power inside the American CP and who supported Lovestone's line of American exceptionalism. In 1927-29 Stalin started to break with Bukharin and as a result of this Lovestone was dumped in the American party.

Normally it would have^{been} assumed that Foster would take his place, especially since Cannon had supported Trotsky and had been expelled from the party. But this did not take place. In the earlier period Foster, even more than Cannon, had resisted the Comintern and Stalin when their policies conflicted with his own understanding of the American working class. Because of this Foster was not considered reliable by Stalin. Instead Foster's assistant Browder was put in charge and so remained until the end of the war.

Browderism Was Not an American Exception

Browder's role in the CP is aptly described by PL. For our purposes here it is only enough to stress that at every point Browder was faithfully carrying out Stalin's policy and in no essential way was his work different from that of the CPs of other countries. Thus while PL noted that the American CP supported Roosevelt and rallied the working class around this representative of the capitalist class, aiding him in preventing the working class from striking out on its own, it does not note that the European parties acted in the same way in their own countries. The French Communist Party entered a Popular Front Government not only with the Socialist Party but also with the bourgeois Radical party. This coalition with the bourgeoisie failed to offer any aid to the Spanish Republic at the time of Nazi and Italian support for Franco.

During the war when Browder reached out his hand to J. Pierpont Morgan and followed up this gesture by dissolving the CP as a formal party, he was only doing in the U.S. what others in the Comintern were doing in their respective countries. The Italian Communists went so far as to favor the continuation of the monarchy in Italy, only having to reverse themselves when the overwhelming sentiments of the masses made such a deal impossible. It was Stalin directly who acted to dissolve the Comintern itself as a formal organization in the war period as a gesture of friendliness to Churchill, FDR and the capitalist interests they represented.

When the war was over, the imperialists again turned on the Soviet Union and as a result certain tactical changes were necessarily imposed upon Stalin. But Stalin in no sense reverted to any class struggle or "militant

revolutionary" line. While the American CP under Foster set about to run the capitalist, Henry Wallace, on a capitalist program, in France the CP was in the same government with DeGaulle, in Italy the CP was in a common bourgeois government with the Christian Democrats, in Greece the Communist-led partisans allowed the British to reconquer the country and turn it over to the reactionaries, in Indochina the Vietminh did the same with the French.

Clearly the degeneration of the CPUSA was closely related to a similar process affecting all Communist parties in the world. This process itself was obviously a reflection of internal developments within the USSR itself. The first step to achieving an understanding of the degeneration of American communism is to see it as part of an international process. To do otherwise is in itself a certain sign of giving in to "American exceptionalism."

In our next article we will seek to dig to the roots of this revisionism in the internal evolution of the USSR and also to study the reasons for the relatively feeble resistance within the American party to this revisionism, in particular as this relates to the healthiest strain within the early CP represented by Cannon and Foster.

THE MILITANT AND THE SENATOR FROM OREGON

It has become increasingly the practice of the Socialist Workers Party to fill out the pages of its organ the Militant with the speeches of "heroes" of the moment. First it was Fidel Castro, then Ben Bella, then Malcolm X, and now--the Honorable Senator from Oregon, Wayne Morse.

Of course, it is also the tradition of the Militant to express its criticisms from time to time of those whose speeches it prints. This being such an occasion (as the Militant is not yet used to printing the speeches of members of the ruling capitalist party in the U.S.), the Militant takes the liberal senator to task for--not understanding the nature of the United Nations!

But it is far more than the Honorable Senator's views of the UN that are at fault. It is his entire approach. The Senator views Vietnam from the perspective of a member of the ruling party of the ruling class of the ruling imperialist power in the world. His differences with fellow party member Johnson are over how best to maintain imperialist rule in Vietnam and elsewhere. The Senator wisely feels this can be done through some sort of neutralization of Vietnam rather than continuing an unsuccessful military campaign. (Would he feel the same way if it were successful? We would!)

Perhaps next week's edition of the Militant will print the Honorable Senator's recent fulminations on how the U.S. should not send surplus food to Egypt?

THE THEORY OF STRUCTURAL ASSIMILATION

A Marxist analysis of the social overturns in Eastern Europe, Yugoslavia and China.

by Tim Wohlforth

Following World War II international events took a highly complex and contradictory turn. Potentially revolutionary situations in Europe and elsewhere did not lead to social overturns because of the traitorous role of the leadership of the working class. Capitalism restabilized itself over a large section of the earth's surface. But Stalinism extended itself into Eastern Europe and Asia leading to a complex form of social overturn. The theoretical problems emanating from these developments have never been fully understood by revolutionaries, leading to great confusion and the inevitable growth of revisionism from that confusion. "The Theory of Structural Assimilation" is an attempt to get at the roots of this confusion by developing the basic theories of Trotsky to encompass these post-war events.

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