

13 October 1975

Mike Namlin

Comrade,

This is to inform the Secretariat about the work of our District in the last few weeks, and to ask for specific guidance on a number of tasks we are undertaking.

(1) Under separate cover we have sent a five page letter outlining our criticisms of the September issue of The Communist, as well as the plan we have adopted to intensify our propaganda work within the District around the paper, this was sent to the propaganda committee.

(2) Concerning the paper on Puerto Rico

We have not yet had an opportunity to discuss the paper, but were glad to see the center take initiative on this matter. PSP has a full time person here in the Bay Area organizing for the demonstration, though the work has been very isolated from what we can tell. We will write more about the paper later. However, one issue was striking about the paper, and that was that PRMO was not mentioned. Frankly we were quite surprised about this and have some questions:

- Is PRMO working on this event. If so, what is their work, if not, why?
- Does the fact that they were not mentioned in the paper say anything about our discussions with them?

These questions raise other issues for us, which relate to the process of how unity is built with organizations. Comrades are eager to learn more about PRMO, and feel that the center should give some guidance on this question. The Communist and other publications blow the line that we are real tight with PRMO, etc, and yet our own cadre are practically ignorant - are ignorant, of PRMO and its line. Many cadre have been put in difficult positions because of this, and we would appreciate some material from the Center about PRMO. Following through on this is important, so that unity can be fought for and built throughout the organization with PRMO, and not sprung on comrades. Perhaps this is more a problem in the west than in the east, because there is no contact with PRMO out here. Anything available both about PRMO and our relationship with them would be appreciated.

(3) On relations with ATM

As we have indicated in previous letters, we feel that our hands are sort of tied in regard to ATM out here, in the absence of more concrete leadership from the Center about our strategy with ATM. On the one hand, we have a number of criticisms of ATM's line in the pamphlet, particularly in trade union work, combined with the numerous problems conducting relations with them out here. On the other hand we do not want to rush ahead raising criticism of them without some idea as to the plan for working with them, what the Center has in mind, etc.

In line with this, we noticed that ATM will make a presentation to their TU

line, to prepare for the TU Conference. Do you have any ideas about how we should proceed in this regard? What are national plans? Our action here is motivated by the desire to build real unity with ATM, but that unity has to be based objectively, on struggle. For while on the surface it may seem that there is a very high level of unity, digging deeper that may not be the case, and the point here is to gain clarity on this. We should have a draft of the paper by the end of the month, then we plan to revise it and will send it along as soon as possible. We would like to know if we should present it to ATM before the TU conference. Should we make copies of it for comrades at the TU conference.

(4) As the comrade visiting there will probably explain, we plan to ~~sum~~ improve and publish the talk we gave on China, "China's Two Line Struggle, The Chinese Struggle Against Revisionism." We are obtaining criticisms of it from forces around and hope to have it published as a pamphlet around the first of the year. How should we proceed on this score. Our investigation indicates that it will be useful in friendship work, help comrades grasp the central task of party building better, and also sell well.

(5) on security

We are now reworking an early draft ~~draft~~ on security in the organization we prepared for the District, which is based on a political discussion of security, the state and fascism. We plan to print this along with three articles from the CI; The Question of Proletarian Defense by L Alfred, On The Question of Illegal Work (1933), and Revolutionary Work Underground Work - How Not To Prepare for Underground Conditions of Revolutionary Work by O. Weber (1932). We thought that such a document would be a good internal document on security, and might be of use to comrades around the country. As soon as a final draft is finished we will send it to you for comments, with the plan that if it is OK, it could be printed and distributed at the TU conference possibly.

(6) In the last weeks we have come across a great deal of very valuable material from the CI, particularly on the question of factory nuclei/trade union work and fascism. The cost of xerox is really prohibitive, so we have tentative plans to prepare two readers. We may have a printer and free use of a web press, which means we would only have to buy newsprint.

One reader would be on trade union work, collecting about 10 articles from the CI which mostly focus on factory nuclei, together with some kind of introduction. We think that this should be ready for the TU conference.

Second, the reader on fascism would be along the same lines, to be ready after the first of the year some time.

are

In both cases, we are certain that such readers would have a tremendous impact politically on the communist movement, particularly now the one on TU work. In addition, they would certainly be fund raising efforts, and would sell very well.

We would like an IMMEDIATE RESPONSE on this, since if the TU reader is to be completed

3-3-3

completed in time for the TV conference, we have to get going.

An introduction would have to be written, and the question is whether or not we should do this, or the center. There is also the question of who would distribute it, the center or us. Probably better if the center did.

Lastly, do you have any prospects for some buck for either of these to buy paper?

If the plan to print them with a web press fails, we will do an offset job here for the District, unless we can get some money from other Districts who might want copies.

(7) This last point we feel very strongly about. A couple of days ago comrade Earl had a phone conversation with the sister from these parts who is now in Detroit.

The discussion first developed about the Atlanta article. When we raised what she thought about it, she replied that it was much better than when the center got it. Then we asked about why the question of self determination was not taken up, and she had not even thought about it. First, as she had heard nothing of the previous criticism we had raised, and more important, she had not even thought about this.

Then the discussion developed a little bit to the point where she stated on the phone that "it will be along time before your District will be able to give any contribution to the Center."

Comrade, we feel that there are number of important issues here which should be taken up right away. The most important point as far as we are concerned is that if this comrade has that attitude toward us, it must also rub off toward her attitude with other cadre. The result obviously ~~will be to~~ would be to destroy the ~~functioning~~ functioning of democratic centralism, breed contempt for the center, discourage cadre from trying to build the organization, etc. The incident with this sister raises ~~another~~ a deeper struggle really, and that is the struggle by the organization to get the cadre to take up the paper as their own, not just in distributing it, but in writing it, criticizing articles... in taking real initiative to make it a paper of cadre.

With both the paper and the TV conference, from where we stand out here, not enough effort has been made to rely on cadre, to encourage their participation in building the paper and the conference. We have heard no reply to any of the suggestions we have made either about the Communist or the TV conference. We are not in any way cynical about this, and realize that there are many struggles to be waged to improve our work, many obstacles

to overcome to Bolshevize the BWC. It is in the spirit of everything for the party that we will continue to do all we can to build the organization - to build the party, continue to forward crit and suggestions for work.

But more needs to be done from the Center to rely on cadre, to pay attention to cadre, to know the cadre. What this particular incident with the sister represents in terms of these larger problems is the key thing here as far as we are concerned.

This kind of arrogance is poison to the organization, and <sup>can</sup> ~~will~~ come out in the paper as well. It must be resolutely fought.

(8) Another thought around Puerto Rico occurred which I'll spell out. One weakness of the paper which is significant is that it does not talk about the role of the conscious element in the PRBWC - that is the real reason why it is important to discuss PRBWC. The danger in uniting in such coalitions is from the right, giving up the initiative to the bourgeoisie, not seeing that we should enter into such alliances on the basis of unity and struggle. That means to unite with the CPUSA in the PRBWC means that we must at the same time wage a struggle against all forms of opportunism, particularly that of the CPUSA. Unless that struggle is waged in the coalition, there is no way to both unite and struggle. For that struggle to be waged we must be clear on the conscious element, which means on the role of PRBWC and other ML forces. While the importance of struggle against the CPUSA is raised - it must be raised concretely, in terms of how this struggle will be waged, with what forces, under what lines... Obviously this article raises a lot of important questions we will be facing and we look forward to getting into the fray around these issues. This clearly is the content in which to take up and deepen our grasp of the united front against imperialism and the role of the communists in the present period - without a communist party to lead the proletariat.

(9) A quick thought about the TU conference. Look forward to the presentation on the CPUSA, which we feel is very important. We would also suggest some presentation on the role of the Trots in trade union work, as they are moving into the class more and more. As the CPUSA, could the presentation take up a history of the factory nuclei in the CPUSA, under what conditions it was ~~adopted~~ advanced by the GI (1927..) why the CPUSA took it up and how it worked, how and why it was abolished in the late thirties... 1937 I think...

To re-iterate a few items:

please let us know about the readers on TU work and fascism  
what about the publication of the china talk  
what about the security paper...

We have raised a lot of things in the letter and realize that there are many areas of work of the NG that we are not familiar with and which obviously limits our view on questions. So our attitude is that if something is incorrect, off the wall or out to lunch, let us know. But the key thing is to let us know. It is easy for us to fall back, be timid in regard to criticism, and let things slide, but we do not want that to happen. Our organization grows strong in the struggle against amateurism, which is opportunism, pure and simple. A lot of what we have said here can be expanded on by comrade B who is out here now, and we are having good talks.

**UNITY CRITICISM UNITY**

**STRENGTHEN DEMOCRATIC GENERALISM**

**BUILD THE PARTY**

**Earl and Barry**