

This forum was the first time ATM has come out publicly with their line in Northern California. It was scheduled to commemorate the Chicano Moratorium Against the War in Vietnam which took place on August 29th 1970. ATM invited BWC and PRRWO to speak at the event too.

The forum spoke to three main points 1. party-building 2. the struggle against revisionism and 3. the national liberation struggles. It was divided into three sections: 1. the first two speeches (ATM and PRRWO) which gave historical run-downs of the Chicano and Puerto Rican national liberation struggles and the role of revisionism in sabotaging them 2. Two speeches by ATM and the BWC on party-building and 3. the question and answer period.

The theme running throughout the first section was that the class is divided due to the split in socialism. The main way this is manifested (in this country at least) is the division of the class along national lines. Of course, this division exists objectively due to imperialism, but the revisionists perpetuated this split by failing to take up the national question. Without a Marxist-Leninist Party, without defeating revisionism, the class will be unarmed to handle this split. "...one can very well say that Europe, pregnant with revisionism, will be unable to get rid of the capitalist yoke unless it brings about complete defeat to modern revisionism, joins up with the antiimperialist liberation struggles of oppressed peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America and helps to bring about a decisive victory in this struggle." (The Party of Labor of Albania in Battle with Modern Revisionism page 370). Our central task is to build the party.

The ATM gave a brief historic rundown of how their organization evolved out of the Chicano liberation struggles of the late 60's and early 70's which brought forth the first Chicano Marxist-Leninist collectives in the southwest. Then the speaker gave a very good analysis of the development of the Chicano people. The speaker documented the resistance of both the Chicano workers and the Chicano people as a whole to U.S. Imperialism, but pointed out that communism was never brought to these struggles and the resistance did not lead to liberation. One example given was that in the period of 1910-20 there was a fierce struggle against U.S. Imperialism, but it was led by the Chicano petty bourgeoisie. The leading ideology was anarcho-syndicalism, and this resistance was smashed on the whole.

The speaker went into the role of the CPUSA. In the 30's there were huge strikes of Chicano workers and the CP did do work here organizing the unorganized. But they did not take up the question of Chicano liberation, in fact they never even bothered to do the research to find out if Chicanos constitute a nation or not. The excuse offered for this by the revisionist Browder was that the national liberation struggles had to take second place to building the united front against fascism.

The speaker made the point that while the Chicano liberation struggle had historically been led by the petty bourgeoisie, and recently, for a brief period, by the lumpen the Chicano working class, as has been shown by the farmworkers and confirmed by Farah has now taken the lead in the Chicano liberation struggle, and is playing a leading role in the working class struggle as a whole.

The next speaker, from PRRWO, gave a similar type of analysis of the Puerto Rican national liberation struggle. He raised several examples of the role revisionism has played in sabotaging the Puerto Rican struggle. Around 1898 the Socialist Party was founded in Puerto Rico which did organize in the coffee and sugar plantations. But they fell into reformism and failed to speak to either the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat or national liberation. This left a section of the bourgeoisie as the only champions of national liberation, and they took a line of peaceful opposition.

In the 1920's a nationalist party formed. The nationalist movement had tremendous influence throughout the Island. In 1934 a communist party was formed. The CPUSA never took up the question of the Puerto Rican national struggle, and the CP of Puerto Rico didn't either. No solidarity was built between the proletariat of the US and Puerto Rico, support wasn't built among the US proletariat for Puerto Rican national liberation, and there was no unity between the nationalists and the communists in Puerto Rico. As a result, the CP degenerated and the nationalists fell apart.

Today Puerto Rico is a capitalist colony. The subjective factor in the form of the PSP is revisionist. They have united with the ~~internationalists~~ revisionists internationally, and constantly sabotage the national liberation movement. We see that the independence movement and the working class movement must be combined

into a single stage revolution for the dictatorship of the proletariat, the productive forces are developed enough in Puerto Rico to move right away to socialist relations of production. The proletariat and its party must lead this struggle.

The speaker also addressed the question of their differences with the RU. He said that they originally saw their opportunism mainly around the national question manifested in a Kautskyite line of not dealing with the question of oppressed nationalities. The RU has never concretely supported the Puerto Rican national liberation struggle. PRRWO left the liaison committee as a result of this line. Later, through study they found the root of all the opportunism to be bowing to spontaneity. Right opportunism in the form of RU, CL, PSP, and the Guardian constitute the main danger today. CL represents the left opportunists in our movement, but they are not the main danger.

The theme running through the second section which concentrated on party building was that the crisis of Imperialism is developing and we need a party to fill the leadership vacuum that has been left by the betrayal of the CPUSA. The main thing characterising our movement has been amateurishness which comes from a low level of theoretical understanding. We have to fight opportunism in order to build a party. The two speakers on this section were from the BWC and the ATM.

The BWC brought out that we are witnessing a strike wave in this country and the revolutionary wing of the proletariat has to unleash even more struggle against opportunism. The main danger we face is from the CPUSA, then the conciliators: the RU and CL. The speaker ended by saying that if we had had a marxist-leninist party in the 60's, the national liberation struggles could have been the spark setting off a struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat. Next time there is a big uprising on the part of the working class or the national liberation struggles, we must be prepared.

ATM talked about amateurishness and its roots, low theoretical development and petty bourgeois ideology. Everybody, the ATM pointed out in the communist movement agrees that we need a communist party, with the exception of the RU who doesn't seem to understand that the party must be led by marxism-leninism and the proletariat gains knowledge of marxism-leninism through studying, not through strikes. ATM reemphasised the need for a party by pointing out that historically the rise of fascism has

been preceded by a split in the working class. The speaker concluded by saying that we must seek out and smash the opportunist line in our own camp.

The main thing characterizing the third section, the question and answer period was a struggle between the RU and everybody else in the room over the relation of theory to practice. The RU demanded to know from the BWC what their concrete program for self-determination for the Black people is. This was answered by saying that at this time we are fighting for a correct marxist-leninist presentation of the question, taking as our starting point Lenin and Stalin's position on the question. We are not yet in the stage of developing a concrete program. The RU raised that they are all for ideological struggle, but this must be based on practice and all they had heard was a lot of phrasemongering ~~about~~. This opened a struggle over the relation of theory to practice in trade union work. The RU asked ATM to sum up their practice at Dasco.

ATM's summation was that all the communists had made economist errors at Dasco. All had failed to bring marxism-leninism to the workers and so they were not armed to sustain a wildcat strike. The only difference was that ATM and others were able to learn from this mistake, while the RU was not. The RU's position that the workers should have sustained the strike as unarmed as they were and turned it into another Farah was ridiculous. The problem at Dasco was not lack of practice, but lack of theory.

The other example raised was the phone company. The RU said that it had been having meetings with the workers for eight months before the strike and passing out leaflets talking about the crisis. This was answered by the BWC speaker who said that Woodcock passes out more

leaflets about the crisis than the RU. Also, a member of the audience stood up and said they worked at a phone Co. building with an RU cadre who completely failed to bring Marxism-Leninism to the workers.

The AYM pointed out that the right opportunists ignored the need for marxist-leninist propaganda, while the left opportunists ignored agitation.

Another struggle came up with OL who said they saw the RU as being left in form ~~right~~ right in essence. The BWC responded saying that the RU is right in form as well as essence, and to say that they are left in form only serves to cover the main danger. It was made clear, however, that the speakers didn't see OL as totally opportunist like the RU.

The last struggle came up with somebody from the Black Scholar Magazine who made a few comments on the Communist. He said the paper had a good analysis of the communist movement, but its two page criticism was inadequate, that it shouldn't have taken that much time to realize where CL is at. Also, he disagreed with the line on the national question, saying that Black people don't constitute a nation, but the right of self-determination shouldn't depend on whether a people constitute a nation or not. Any people with a common history and culture should have this right. The BWC answered by saying the Black Scholar position is an attack on Stalin, and BRRWO raised that it is a cultural nationalist position to raise as most important the one criterion of Stalin's five, common history and culture.

About 200 people attended the forum consisting of a large number of independents, representatives from the RU, IWK, BAIL, & Kenan Bookstore. Throughout the whole thing the audience had a great deal of unity with the speakers. It was also clear that there was a high level of unity between the three organisations.