

PREFACE

The people's movements in the US increasingly confront the question of how to realize their political aims in a situation where both major political parties are at best unresponsive and more often hostile to these objectives. The masses of working people both organized and unorganized, the oppressed nationalities, women, youth, and senior citizens make up the overwhelming majority of the electorate. Yet we find that the two parties who monopolize the political process ignore the urgent demands that reflect the needs of the masses of people.

In the face of this general situation a variety of "solutions" contend for attention. A few take the position that "politics" are a waste of time and we should rely exclusively on direct action. Some argue we should focus our efforts on reforming the Democratic Party. Others say we should follow the advice of Samuel Gompers and "reward our friends and punish our enemies" among the two party politicians. A growing minority hold that we have no genuine friends in these capitalist dominated parties and that we must set out on an independent course aimed at organizing our own party.

The PWOC is part of this trend toward independent political action. This pamphlet puts forward our ideas as they have developed in relation to local and national events. Drawing from our coverage in the *Organizer*, we seek to expose the real character of the two-party system and the still potent illusion that the Democratic Party either has been or can be an instrument of the people's movements. Much of the pamphlet is devoted to developments here in Philadelphia. We think the struggle against the politics of Rizzioism and the fledgling independent movement that has emerged out of that struggle have more than a local significance and interest. This local struggle provides insight into how independent politics are developing and hopefully how they can develop elsewhere. Philadelphia is a typical urban area in most respects and the forces at work here can be observed in most other cities.

The pamphlet also contains a previously unpublished speech that argues the necessity of independent political action as part of the revolutionary process in the United States. As a Marxist-Leninist organization, the PWOC sees the organization of a revolutionary vanguard party, a communist party, as the overriding task of the moment. If a broader people's party is to emerge and serve to move the revolutionary process forward, the creation of a revolutionary vanguard is essential. Key to the building of a vanguard party is the consolidation of Marxist-Leninists around a theory, strategy, tactics and program capable of providing political leadership to the broad masses and winning over the most politically conscious activists to communism. The question of independent political action must be part of this agenda.

We hope this pamphlet will win many activists to the need for independent political action. We also hope that it will demonstrate the positive character and the need for Marxist-Leninist leadership in this struggle. Finally we hope that the pamphlet will stimulate discussion and debate among Marxist-Leninists over the question of independent political action. We encourage readers to send us their reactions and criticisms.

—August, 1979