

# 1. Summation of Circle Meeting June 9

The history of the circle has been primarily characterized by a struggle between (1) Marxism and Revisionism and (2) the failure to combat liberalism. The Sunday conference and the subsequent steering committee meeting on Wednesday took a big step toward recognizing this.

## (1) Marxism vs Revisionism in the Circle

The primary contradiction within the circle in this regard has been between the necessity for a unity of will and a unity of action. The principle aspect of this contradiction, in this period, is the struggle for unity of will. This was not grasped until the Sunday conference. The secondary aspect of this contradiction, the revisionist tendency to stress the importance of the unity of action, came out in a number of concrete ways: ? Complete misuse of unity of action.

### A) Raising the secondary aspect to defeat the principle aspect of the contradiction

1/ Raising dogmatism as the primary danger, rather than Right Opportunism. Only one comrade put this forward boldly, and he has since left the circle. Other comrades, however, advanced a watered down version of this line, that while revisionism may be the primary danger in the communist movement, dogmatism was the primary danger in the circle.

All the five great teachers have been absolutely clear, "Revisionism, or Right Opportunism, is a bourgeois trend of thought that is even more dangerous than dogmatism." (Mao, RB p21) ← Lenin himself was consistently accused of dogmatism, to which he replied, "What a handy little word 'dogma' is! One need only slightly twist an opposing theory, cover up this twist with the bogy of 'dogma'--and there you are!" (From Revolutionary Adventurism)

2/ Raising the importance of practice to defeat or belittle the importance of theory. Concretely it was put forward that we must balance both practice and theory, that both must be pursued. This is nothing other than the idealist line of equilibrium, which Mao defeats in On Contradiction, "Nothing in this world develops absolutely evenly, we must oppose the theory of even development or the theory of equilibrium."

3/ Raising CL as the primary danger, rather than the Right Opportunists. The result of this maneuver was described by Lenin, "Opportunism is the sacrificing of the long term and vital interests of the Party to its momentary, passing, secondary interests." The attention and focus of the entire circle on one single document of CL is a clear expression of this tendency. The effect of this tactic was to equate the Continuations Committee with CL, and thus equating the conscious element itself with CL. This is an attack on the conscious element, and therefore an attack on the proletariat and the Party itself.

4/ The vagueness, elusiveness, etc with which the opportunist lines were advanced. Such as "I agree that PB is the central task but I do not agree that it must determine the nature of all our work." Or "I agree that PB is the central task but I am not sure that the subjective forces have matured enough to form the Party in September." Or "the main danger is pragmatism, reformism or revisionism, what ever you want to call it."

Perfect example  
of  
dogmatism!

"When we speak of fighting opportunism, we must never forget that a feature that is characteristic of present day opportunism in every sphere namely its vagueness, diffusiveness, elusiveness. An opportunist by his very nature, will always evade formulating an issue clearly and decisively, he will always seek a middle course, he will always wriggle like a snake between two mutually exclusive points of view and try to "agree" with both and to reduce his differences of opinion to petty amendments, doubts, good and pious suggestions... (One Step Forward, Two Steps Back)

5/ American Exceptionalism took the form of advancing that the conditions in the US are not basically the same as those during the Bolshevik period, therefore the steps to form the Party and the nature of the Party itself will be different. Concretely, this came out as "I don't need to read volume 6 because the situation here is different." Lenin understood that since 1917 there has only been one era, the era of imperialism. "An era is called an era precisely because it encompasses the sum total of variegated phenomena and wars, typical and untypical, big and small, some peculiar to advanced countries, others backward countries." (Caricature of Marxism)

6/ Bowing to spontaneity takes many forms. Bernstein was fond of saying that 'the movement means everything, the end nothing.' We had similar statements, 'I believe in the process but the Congress is not important, whether or not the party is formed this Fall is not important...'

It is clear that revisionism takes many forms, and appears in many guises. Regardless of the intentions, "all belittling of the role of the "conscious element" means, quite independently of whether he who belittles that role desires it or not, a strengthening of influence of bourgeois ideology upon the workers." (What IS To BE Done?)

## (2) Liberalism

Mao Tse-Tung stated clearly that "liberalism stems from petty bourgeois selfishness." It is "corrosive, undermines cohesion, sows apathy and creates dissension." Liberalism set the stage for the various revisionist lines and tendencies outlined above to gain influence in the Circle. As Mao states, "Liberalism rejects ideological struggle and stands for unprincipled peace." Almost every of the eleven points in Combat Liberalism that Mao outlines could be applied to the circle:

"letting things slide for the sake of peace and friendship..  
 refrain from principled argument because he is an old acquaintance..  
 to indulge in irresponsible criticism in private..  
 to let things drift that do not affect one personally..  
 to hear incorrect views without rebutting them..  
 to work half heartedly without a definite plan..... etc etc.

By placing personal interests first, and the interests of the revolution second, liberalism takes various forms, ideological, political and organizational. This would include "I don't want to rush into anything after having left the RU." Or putting people in positions of leadership because they volunteered...

In short, the fight against revisionism, ideologically, is today the most important form of class struggle. Every true ML Party has grown strong in the fight against Revisionism, and so will our Party. The sharpness of tone in the Sunday conference reflects the fact that the struggle for clarity and unity on the correct ML line for the Party is a form of class struggle, XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Yes - And is  
 conducted in  
 a p/b  
 fashion!

To summarize, a number of lessons have emerged:

(1) The Importance of Theory and Ideological Struggle

Stalin, amongst others, sharply criticized the CPUSA for its disdain for theory, and we have inherited this bankrupt attitude. The "creative discussion" required for ideological development is as important to us communists as the air we breathe, and we must get on with it. Our theoretical backwardness is a primary reason for the difficulty in overcoming the opportunist waverings in practice. Our error is not that we have failed to study, but that we have failed to grasp the Marxist Leninist viewpoint, stand and method in carrying out study.

(2) To one degree or another, all comrades have "dragged at the tail of things" - precisely Lenin's description of the Mensheviks. Our failure to grasp firmly in the beginning the significance of ideological struggle and the meaning of Party Building stems from the belittling of theory, and the belittling of the conscious element. It is time to realize that we are approaching a period in which "one day could represent twenty years." This is the attitude with which we must approach the work ahead.

~~(3) Though we may have started out as a study group, our tasks require a unity of will and a unity of action. Our primary weakness in this regard has been emphasizing the secondary aspect to defeat the principle aspect, democracy to defeat centralism. We have now taken steps to correct this.~~ *Aug. 15 Ken*

Comrades, we must utilize the science of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse Tung Thought both as our microscope and telescope, separating the poisonous weeds from the fragrant flowers, the sheep from the goats. This process has already taken important steps forward, but these are only first steps. Lenin noted that the "ideological struggle waged by revolutionary marxism against revisionism at the end of the 19th century is but the prelude to the great revolutionary battles of the proletariat. The same must be said for the present period.

LET THE STRUGGLE UNFOLD

SOCIALISM, SINCE IT HAS BECOME A SCIENCE, DEMANDS THAT IT BE PURSUED AS A SCIENCE,  
IE, THAT IT MUST BE STUDIED

ON TO BUILD A MULTINATIONAL COMMUNIST PARTY OF A NEW TYPE  
MARXIST LENINISTS UNITE!