

# READERS CRITICIZE NICOLAUS ON AGITATION AND PROPAGANDA WORK

Since the exposure of Martin Nicolaus' revisionist line and his expulsion from the October League, *The Call* has received many letters and commentaries from readers further criticizing his line. Following are excerpts from two of these:

Dear *Call*:

The Chicago *Call/El Clarin* Committee has just finished studying the paper's exposures of Nicolaus' revisionist political line. We have learned a number of lessons from this struggle between Marxism-Leninism and revisionism.

Nicolaus' anti-party view, that it is too early to form the party because there "aren't enough advanced workers," reflects a bourgeois intellectual's total disdain for the masses. Rather than winning the advanced workers to Marxism-Leninism and the party and placing special emphasis on propaganda work in educating the workers, Nicolaus wants to keep them at a low level by focusing primarily on agitation.

Nicolaus argues that propaganda should be reserved for the intellectuals. Like the RCP with their separate "worker" papers, Nicolaus cuts workers off from communist propaganda, trying to force them to rely on "geniuses" like himself for leadership. With his bourgeois view that "great heroes" make history rather than the masses, it's no wonder that he sees the liberal bourgeoisie as our main ally!

As we studied Nicolaus' line, our committee realized that we have been making a rightist error in our approach to writing propaganda articles. We have been hesitant to write propaganda, thinking that only highly developed intellectuals should do it and the rest of us should focus on writing agitation for *The Call/El Clarin*.

We now see that in *The Call/El Clarin*

committees, we have to train ourselves to be skilled writers of both agitation and propaganda. The committees must be places where communists are trained so that we can write in-depth propaganda as well as agitation articles on local, national and international events and questions.

Chicago Call Committee

Dear Comrades,

The present criticism against the revisionist line of Martin Nicolaus is greatly deepening Marxist-Leninists' understanding of communist tasks in the present period. In studying Lenin's *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*, we have seen the parallels between the struggle in Lenin's day against the anti-party forces and bourgeois intellectuals like Martov and our own struggle today against Nicolaus.

## 1. THE PARTY AND THE MASSES

Neither Martov nor Nicolaus viewed it as decisive to win the advanced workers to communism and the Party. In Paragraph 1 of the proposed Party Rules, Martov called for bringing into the Party "every striker" or any person who "associates themselves" with the Party. Lenin exposed Martov's line as "serving bourgeois intellectuals" and their desire to control the Party.

Martov's formulation merges with Nicolaus' view that "few advanced workers exist in the U.S." and "political agitation should be chief during the party's whole first period of development." Both Martov and Nicolaus sought to lower the level of the party and deny workers and na-

tional minorities their crucial weapon for liberation, Marxism-Leninism.

In *One Step Forward*, Lenin wrote: "To forget the distinction between the vanguard and the whole of the masses gravitating towards it, to forget the vanguard's constant duty of raising ever wider sections to its own advanced level, means simply to deceive oneself, to shut one's eyes to the immensity of our tasks, and to narrow down these tasks."

## 2. PARTY ORGANIZATION

After the defeat of Martov's opportunist line on Party organization, Martov refused to work on Iskra, attempted to wreck the Party, and finally retreated from the struggle with the words, "we are not serfs!"

Similarly, Nicolaus' revisionist line ended in defeat. His continuous refusal to accept criticism, "even if 10,000 people shout in unison that I am wrong," and his factionalizing reflected his opposition to democratic centralism and his disdain for the masses.

A quotation from Lenin describes Nicolaus to a tee: "The mentality of the bourgeois intellectual, who counts himself among the 'elect minds' standing above mass organization and mass discipline. . ."

The defeat of Nicolaus' revisionist line is a great step forward in the building of a new communist party. Like Lenin's successful struggle against Martov, our rejection of Nicolaus' revisionism will push ahead the day when the working class under the leadership of its vanguard party will end the rule of imperialism and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Friends of *The Call*, Boston