

PALANTE

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MARXIST-LENINISTS UNITE AND WIN
THE ADVANCED TO COMMUNISM TO
BUILD A GENUINE COMMUNIST PARTY

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EDITORIAL: NO TEA PARTY IN BOSTON - THE STRUGGLE FOR THE PARTY INTENSIFIES

A forum sponsored by the Harriet Tubman-Nat Turner Collective was held in Boston on February 19th. The Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers Organization, Revolutionary Workers League (ML) and Workers Viewpoint Organization participated. The struggle in the forum was a reflection of the intensified class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat internationally and inside the U.S. This struggle conducted by the comrades in PRRWO and RWL (ML) is a direct continuation of the steel-to-steel struggle against all forms of opportunism, particularly on the question of party building. The Marxist-Leninist Bolshevik line on party building was defended in the struggle against the right opportunist, Menshevik line of the October League and Workers Viewpoint Organization. In the course of this struggle the unity of the revolutionary wing deepened. The revolutionary wing has purged itself of an opportunist line and its representatives, WVO, criticized revisionism, and is moving forward.

The opportunists try and spread their pessimism and bleak outlook by saying: "Everything is terrible. The wing has split. Party building has been set back." This is another example of their petty-bourgeois stand. Comrades, we have not been set back. The wing has not split--Marxism-Leninism grows stronger in the struggle against falsehood. Just as Stalin said:



"The proletarian parties develop and become strong by purging themselves of opportunists and reformists, social-imperialists and social-chauvinists, social-patriots and social-pacifists. The Party becomes strong by ridding itself of opportunist elements. (Leninism, p. 99)

We are tempered in the struggle against the right opportunist line of WVO and the OL.

The WVO line on party building is in its essence no different from the Menshevik line of the OL. The OL attempts to cover its hegemonist desires and "organization as key" line with their weak, incorrect "Principles of Unity"--while the WVO has developed a slicker sales package, "the Anti-Revisionist Theoretical Premises." The raggedy line of WVO has a special appeal for elements (many of whom are honest) that are--like the WVO--divorced from the class struggle waged by the industrial proletariat and national movements in the U.S. Under a seemingly profound cover, the WVO revises the lessons of our great teachers--Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, and Mao Tse-Tung.

The essence of the bankrupt, Menshevik, right opportunist line of the OL on party building is to build the party from below. They ignore Lenin's teachings on the role of the Program and substitute their "Principles of Unity." The OL is uniting forces at the lowest common denominator--seeking quantity instead of struggling for quality. Without a program, which focuses, concretizes, and clarifies the struggle, differences are covered up and the OL can build their party around their raggedy, bankrupt line. They are building a Menshevik party where every striker, school teacher, lawyer, social worker, and ex-Peace Corps volunteer is considered a "revolutionary" because they shout "Fight Back."

The WVO--coming from the same hegemonic view and desire we have seen before in the RU, OL, and CLP--maintains that their line is the overall correct line in the communist movement. Their line that the revolutionary wing has split and the struggle to build the party has been set back flows from this idealist view of themselves as the leading Iskra circle. They do not have an analysis of the emergence of the revolutionary wing, but instead think that the wing came into being when they did.

Both the OL and the WVO fail to "Practice Marxism." Neither scientifically sums up and analyzes the party building struggle in the communist movement. The both substitute their hegemonist and petty-bourgeois wishes and desires for Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse Tung Thought. Neither makes a scientific presentation on the questions of fusion, periods, two tactics of party building, or key link. Neither unites with the objective fact that political line is the key link. Comrades, grasping political line as key link is objective necessity.

The OL has come straight forward with organization as the key link:

"the present period calls for the actual organizational formation of the new party." (The Call, November, 1975, p. 12, emphasis in the original)

WVO covers their line with an idealist discussion of ideology--but once you scratch the surface, their line of build the WVO as the leading Iskra circle jumps out. Both lines are in essence the same. Both rely on idealism and metaphysics to justify their attempt to hold back the building of a genuine Bolshevik party.

TACTICS OF THE OPPORTUNISTS IN THE STRUGGLE

Typical of the maneuvering of all right opportunists, WVO constantly sought to deviate the two-line struggle on the crucial questions involved in party building. Their tactics could be seen in their whole approach as revealed

in their speech. After phrasemongering about party building, specifically the two tactics and the key link, the WVO speaker went on to say; "of course the key link is political line, but tonight we don't have the time to sufficiently discuss it. Instead we'd like to talk about the role of ideology." This showed again the consistent belittlement and opposition to what in fact is the key link--the political line. It is highly opportunist to give lip service to political line as key link and spend 95% of a speech on the role of ideology. WVO also showed its utter contempt for the communists and advanced elements, continuing in their firm belief that we don't know anything about ideology. Their abstract speech, in which they just put out the "Anti-Revisionist Theoretical Premises" in a synthesized form, did not raise consciousness around the ideology because there was no application to what it means in analyzing the party building motion and other related questions--periods, fusion, tactics, key link. WVO vulgarized and took the revolutionary spirit out of ideology by leaving their treatment of the question up in the clouds, devoid from application--and safe, they think, from criticism and struggle because it's supposed to be so profound.

Their opportunist nature was further revealed when the WVO attempted to do self-criticism for "certain aspects" of the "Anti-Revisionist Theoretical Premises." The hallmark of a genuine communist organization is the ability to disclose the essence of their error, trace its ideological and social basis, and outline a method of rectification. WVO did none of these. First, they said that they should not have "formulated" their line with "terms like Anti-Revisionist Premises," because "it could lead to substitution for Marxism-Leninism." They then said that it's true that separately the Anti-Revisionist Premises are not nationally specific, but "taken together" they are. They also said they did not mention narrow nationalism as a nationally specific form. To wrap it up, they went on to say "however, our errors were made in response to the dominant pragmatist trend" and that their errors "were a thousand times better" than the "dogmatists'" errors. They also revealed that they will not accept criticisms from, nor do self-criticism in front of the opportunist wing because it blunts the class struggle and that they reject the criticisms of PRRWO and RWL.

We ask all genuine communists and advanced elements--is this an example of Bolshevik self-criticism? We say, no! What it is is a further attempt to cover-up--blaming errors on external causality, rather than revealing the internal basis; laying the errors on formulation of terms, rather than the line from which your formulation flows; wiggling like a snake to avoid getting to the essence; openly professing the trotskyite line on self-criticism--that to be ruthlessly critical of our errors in front of all weakens us; using self-criticism to launch attacks, most particularly against the PRRWO. Practice is the criterion of truth--WVO's practice of doing self-criticism confirms the truth of their opportunist line.

The truth was even further verified in the two-line struggle that ensued. There were definitely objective problems--lack of time at the forum, no clear place in which to continue the struggle, reflections of anarchy in practice. However, the role of the subjective factor is to struggle to overcome these objective problems and look forward, in a Bolshevik manner, to continue this crucial struggle over our central task. There were many comrades willing to stay to continue the polemic and learn from it. Instead, WVO copped out, saying it was "too late" to continue the struggle. PRRWO and RWL struggled to sum-up the key points and prepare comrades for the struggle that was to continue the next day, regardless of the hour. Party building is too important a question to treat lightly. This should be compared to WVO's constant phrasemongering about not having fear of two-line struggle and their willingness to "go point by point, aspect by aspect, all night if necessary."

This cowardly, evasive attitude continued the next day. WVO was determined not to get into the main questions involved in the polemic. The essence of the struggle with the WVO line on party building, as expressed in their article "Party Building and the Anti-Revisionist Theoretical Premises," is that it is an ahistorical analysis of party building which shows no motion resulting from the fierce two-line struggle to build the party, contains a conciliatory line which distorts the true nature of the treacherous revisionists, belittles the struggle against opportunism, and substitutes these "Anti-Revisionist Theoretical Premises" for Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse Tung Thought, calling them "the ideological foundation of the party" and "the sole safeguard against degeneration." We feel WVO puts forward the line to put itself forward as the leading circle with the overall most correct line--a hegemonic and sectarian stance towards the genuine wing of the movement.

WVO refused to defend their line and in the process prove, on the basis of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse Tung Thought, that their analysis is correct. The genuine wing has been laying out clearly how we see the development of the party building motion and the main questions--periods, fusion, tactics, key link--that this involves. WVO tried to stay as far away from this as possible. They raised struggle over questions not to focus in on the main questions, but to deviate us from them.

Their attempt was to have us go through abstract debate over "what is ideology" and "conscious and unconscious revisionism," without interrelating it to a defense of their views on how revisionists are "muddled and confused" or why we should enter into unity of action with them. In fact, in their attempt to slip and slide, they had the nerve to say that the ideology of the proletariat was not dialectical and historical materialism and that the ideology of the bourgeoisie was not metaphysics and idealism--a clear revision of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse Tung Thought.

They struggled around the question of the advanced, not to interrelate it to the historical fusion of the communist and workers movements, giving rise to the different periods in party building, the two tactics flowing from the key link - Marxist-Leninist Unite and Win the Advanced to Communism on the basis of a correct political line. Instead, their focus was to struggle over the question of the intermediate and backward. Again, they give lip service to the advanced, but want to spend most of the time struggling over the intermediate and backward. They did not defend their views on how the advanced are just "open to socialism" and even went so far as to distort reality, saying, for example, that leaders such as Malcolm X and George Jackson were "unique" and not that they were examples of the historical truth that every working class brings forth advanced fighters who lead the masses and struggle to find ever-more scientific answers to the questions raised by the revolution, driving them to the study of Marxism-Leninism. These are examples of how the WVO attempted to sidetrack the struggle, keeping it off the crucial questions and instead attempted to take us off into abstract trips. Under this smokescreen of demagogy and sophistry, they tried to evade defending their bankrupt line on party building.

WVO's tactics of struggle unmask their real views on party building, because they promote this style wherever they go, a style opposed to getting to the nitty-gritty questions of party building, but instead trying to impress the movement with pretty words. For example, we found out that WVO has not really done its job in carrying out the two tactics as concretely applied to the Harriet Tubman-Nat Turner Collective. The comrades told us that they had indeed been guilty of seeing things "through WVO's eyes," that their scope had not been broadened to understand the intensity of the two-line struggle. WVO had devoted very little time to raising and struggling over the key questions involved in party building, instead flooding them with documents covering a host of other questions which are important, but must be interrelated to our central task. As a result, the comrades were unarmed for the struggle that took place. This is highly irresponsible, especially for an organization having "the overall most correct line," the leading circle in the movement. It is highly opportunist because it provides external conditions which, when linked to an internal social and ideological base, can lead to conciliation and centrism in the struggle against opportunism.

WVO, by this practice, shows further proof of their degeneration and clearly shows why they have slipped into the marsh of opportunism.

SUMMARY AND LESSONS LEARNED

In the course of any struggle, the attitude of communists towards our own errors is one of disclosing them in order that we may learn from them, correct them and move forward.

Speaking for comrades of the RWL and PRRWO, we analyzed that one of our weaknesses in the struggle was to bow to the obstacles that were thrown in our way. WVO's consistent maneuvers to dodge the struggle, raising abstract generalities as has been shown above, is nothing new; we have struggled against these double-dealing snakes before internally in our own ranks, as well as when we struggled against the revisionist "CP"USA, "RCP", the Trotskyite CL, and the opportunist wing of the movement headed by the OL Menshevik Liberals. (In reference to the Boston forum, the cowardly OL consciously scheduled another activity that night to avoid having to defend their opportunist line.) In not having a complete and correct appraisal of the situation, we worshipped spontaneity. Rather than taking the lead, we at

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times, lost our initiative--not making the best use of valuable time to thoroughly expose the opportunist line, the anti-theoretical, anti-Marxist-Leninist line elaborated in the "Anti-Revisionist Theoretical Premises," WVO journal, vol. 2, #1.

This error on our part led to a relaxing of our vigilance, therefore resulting in a failure on our part to consistently and systematically bring the struggle back to the crucial question for discussion and debate, party building--fusion, periods of party building, key link, tactics, and the main danger. We cannot tolerate any laxity in our work.

We unite with the efforts of the comrades of the Harriet Tubman-Nat Turner Collective who initiated and sponsored the forum. On the other hand, we criticize the comrades for not preparing the conditions for struggle, e.g., three hours for four presentations, no time for polemics from the floor--no time or preparation for unfolding the two-line struggle. This we believe was reflected throughout the course of the forum in a failure on the part of the comrades of the Harriet Tubman-Nat Turner Collective to take a clear stand on the two-line struggle, as well as expressing a pessimistic view regarding the struggle within the wing to purge itself of an opportunist line. Comrades, we must firmly grasp that struggle, class struggle, the struggle between the two lines is no tea party, no banquet. If we can't deal with it today, how are we going to prepare for the armed overthrow of the bourgeoisie?

We believe comrades were given a subjectivist analysis by WVO, and that rather than investigate the situation, take a stand based on Marxism-Leninism, the comrades of the Harriet Tubman-Nat Turner

Collective became overwhelmed, vacillating and thus assisted WVO in taking the struggle off the burning question, party building. We believe the comrades of Harriet Tubman-Nat Turner Collective are honest and have drawn some lessons from this experience that will aid them in resolving some internal contradictions.

The study and application of Marxism-Leninism, the fight for the strictest adherence to Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse Tung Thought must be insisted upon even more so today. Since direct experience alone is partial and incomplete, we must learn from all our experiences, direct and indirect. For us, we conclude that the forum was over-all positive, steeling the revolutionary wing in the struggle against opportunism. We draw this lesson--we must raise our vigilance against the opportunist line on party building, struggle tit-for-tat against all attempts to deviate us from our tasks, which is an ongoing, day-in and day-out struggle.

Following is the full text of the speeches delivered by comrades of the Revolutionary Workers League and the Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers Organization.

The Puerto Rican Revolutionary
Workers Organization

The Revolutionary Workers League
(Marxist-Leninist)

MARXIST-LENINISTS UNITE AND WIN THE
ADVANCED TO COMMUNISM!

BUILD THE U.S. BOLSHEVIK PARTY!

In the coming issues of Palante we will be reproducing translations in Spanish of the full text of the presentations on Party Building by the RWL and PRRWO in Boston.