

OL BRINGS PARTY BUILDING BANDWAGON TO TOWN

On December 13 at the 1199 Union Hall the October League in the persons of Chairman Michael Klonsky and Central Committee member Harry Wells spoke to some 35 people on "Party Building and the Fight Back." The presentation and the answers to questions from the floor were a further illustration that the OL is taking the well-travelled road to infantile sectarianism and isolation and will soon be comfortably seated in the swamp with the various other "new Marxist-Leninist parties" like the Communist Labor Party and the Revolutionary Communist Party.

DOGMATIST PARTY BUILDING LINE

The central theme of Klonsky's windy and rhetorical speech was the urgency of the formation of a new Communist party and the OL's intention of carrying out that task in the immediate future. Klonsky ignored any serious treatment of whether or not the subjective conditions necessary for a vanguard party had sufficiently matured. He belittled the idea that the Marxist-Leninist forces had to demonstrate the viability of their political line through their practice in the working class movement. Wells went as far as to say that "forming the party doesn't have anything to do with how many workers are involved." The theme of the OL speakers was that the danger of World War and fascism made the immediate formation of the party a necessity.

Neither Klonsky nor Wells ever bothered to explain exactly what developments internationally or domestically made the twin threats of war and fascism greater now than, say, six months or a year ago when the OL regarded the immediate formation of the party as a mistake.

But this is not really the central point. The danger of war and fascism along with all the other barbaric features of capitalist society unquestionably underline the urgency of forming the party. But showing the need for the party, which is obvious to all Marxist-Leninists, in no way demonstrates the ability to actually form it.

If only it were that simple! Klonsky and Co. by ignoring the requisites for actually calling a party into being and by reducing the task of party building to simply uniting Marxist-Leninists, have fallen squarely in line with the other dogmatists. All that remains is for the OL to baptize its sect a "party."

OL SIDES WITH REACTION

The rest of Klonsky and Wells' remarks were given over to a polemic against "centrism" represented by the *Guardian* and the PWOC. The real essence of this "centrism" is the refusal to unite with the OL's sectarian line. The *Guardian* was accused of being "one of the main defenders of revisionism in the world today" by Chairman Klonsky. Klonsky is outraged because the *Guardian* and PWOC with it have attacked the ultra-left in Portugal for siding with the fascists against the Communist Party and the progressive elements in the Armed Forces Movement, because the *Guardian* and the PWOC support the MPLA in Angola against CIA and South African backed neo-colonialism and because the *Guardian* and the PWOC along with virtually the whole Puerto Rican Independence Movement backed the Havana Conference on Puerto Rican Independence.

The OL is very long on "proletarian internationalism" in words. But behind the smokescreen of revolutionary sounding phrases against the "two imperialist superpowers" the OL is siding with reaction.

In Portugal, OL backs the ultra-leftists who openly urge an alliance with the right to fight the PCP which they regard purely and simply (and wrongly) as a fifth column aimed at turning Portugal into a "Soviet colony."

In Angola, Klonsky made the outrageous analogy that Cuban troops and Soviet weaponry are playing the same role that Hitler's planes and Mussolini's troops did in Spain; that Angola is the Soviet Union's testing ground for a new war just as Spain was Hitler's.

And in regard to Puerto Rico, no amount of stirring slogans about support for Puerto Rican independence can conceal the fact that OL has by its opposition to the Havana conference and its slander of the independence movement pitted itself against the real struggle for independence.

DEBATE ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION

Another area of contention was the national question. Klonsky and Wells congratulated themselves for having a "revolutionary approach" to the Afro-American national question. This approach consists of parroting the line of the Communist International, developed in 1928 and 1930, that there is a Black nation in the Black Belt south and the struggle of that nation for self-determination is the heart of the struggle for Black Liberation.

Because of the profound social, economic and demographic changes that have occurred in the Black Belt since the late twenties, many Marxist-Leninists (including the PWOC) have on the basis of a concrete investigation of those changes come to the conclusion that the Black nation in the Black Belt has been assimilated.

Klonsky and his ilk refuse to seriously address these changes because for them the idea of a Black nation is a holy dogma. Klonsky said in his response to questions from the floor that we had to study concrete conditions with a "bias," that bias being "our desire to uphold the right of the Afro-American people to self-determination."

Since as even the OL acknowledges, the right of self determination has no meaning except in relation to nations, he is saying in effect that we must study the Afro-American people's concrete conditions with the bias that they are a nation.

This is not Marxist-Leninist science but bourgeois metaphysics. It is also a raw capitulation to nationalism in that it puts forward the idea of nationhood as something Marxist-Leninists strive to build or preserve. It pits itself squarely against the progressive features of assimilation which have furthered the basis for class unity and laid a firmer foundation for Black Liberation.

Klonsky ended the evening by declaring that "some good struggle had gone on." This was perhaps the most serious misstatement in a night which had more than its share.

THE OL'S METHOD OF STRUGGLE

Klonsky's idea of good struggle is answering questions with evasions, distortions, slanders and lies. While Klonsky was short on principle and almost empty of an understanding of Marxism, he was long on gall.

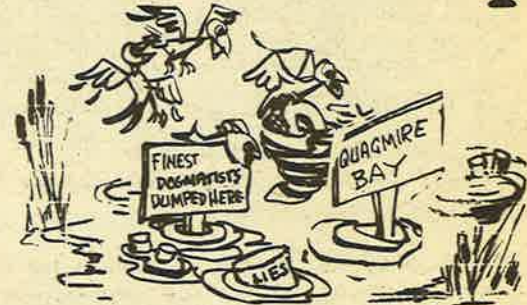
The discussion of the national question illustrates Klonsky's approach to struggle. He accused the PWOC of misquoting Stalin's definition of nationhood by leaving out the phrase "formed on the basis of" in a position paper -- a bald-faced lie.

When a PWOC cadre asserted that Klonsky was wrong in his assertion that the CPUSA opposes the right of self-determination for the Afro-American people, Klonsky replied with perfect self-assurance that the PWOC was lying through its hat.

Anyone interested can read page 61 of the New Program of the CPUSA to see who is lying.

These relatively minor points are indicative of the general misrepresentation of the PWOC's position at the hands of Klonsky and Co. The audience was told that we hold that the national question is peacefully

one stomp on the road to the swamp



solved by capitalist development, and that we refuse to make any special demands for oppressed national minorities.

The most superficial reading of our materials on the national question and any acquaintance with our practice in the working class movement shows otherwise.

After the meeting adjourned an OL member, replying to criticisms that Klonsky had dealt with disagreements in an unprincipled way, shrugged her shoulders and said, "Why should we worry about being principled in dealing with a bourgeois line?"

In reply we would quote from the January 11 edition of *Claridad*, the organ of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party, which in the closing sentences of an article on OL's sectarianism said, "... In a revolutionary movement, truth is important -- it supplies orientation, allows for evaluation, is essential for growth. The October League lies."

RACISM AND THE WORKERS' MOVEMENT

A PWOC Pamphlet

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ciudad continúa perdiendo gente a una tasa de alrededor de 30,000 personas al año. La pérdida de trabajos y población significa que el impuesto a los salarios proveerá de menos ingresos a la ciudad año tras año.

En el mes de Noviembre Philadelphia tuvo dificultades en encontrar financiamiento para un paquete de bonos por un valor de \$25 millones debido a su deterioro y estimado déficit presupuestario. Seguro que Moak, el creador de este déficit, usará la amenaza de una crisis para imponer impuestos adicionales a los trabajadores de la ciudad. Estos impuestos no significarán calles más limpias, mejores condiciones habitacionales o mejor educación para los que viven en Philadelphia. Se usarán para devolver la deuda -- \$157 millón en bonos municipales (préstamos) que están en circulación.

Moak también piensa usar esta misma amenaza para aplastar a la unión de profesores de Philadelphia cuando haya que renegociar los contratos el próximo otoño. Los trabajadores municipales, quienes beneficiaron del oportunismo de Frank Rizzo, en periodo de elecciones, al negociar su último contrato, también encontrarán una actitud diferente la próxima vez.

El tiempo nos contará la historia. A lo más en unos pocos años la economía artificial de Philadelphia de derrumbará. Tanto Rizzo como Moak están conscientes de esto, pero ambos esperan ya no estar en la ciudad para entonces. Rizzo quiere mantener la imagen de una economía sana hasta arreglárselas para ser elegido gobernador. Moak, seguramente, se retirará por "razones de salud" y aceptará un puesto seguro y suave en un banco.

Y nosotros nos quedaremos sosteniendo la deuda!