

Monthly Supplement

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Part III

On Democratic Centralism

The first two articles of this series on democratic centralism dealt with five major points: the Marxist-Leninist party as the vanguard detachment of the working class; the party as a formal organization with its own structure, rules, and discipline; the party as universal leader of the united front; the party's need for a mass base in the working class; and centralism and voluntary discipline as the principal features of internal party organization. The third article will conclude our brief study of this important subject.

6) Regular collective criticism and self criticism are necessary for the party to evaluate its line and practice. Criticism-self-criticism is inseparable from fundamental scientific method.

Capitalist idealism and mysticism believe that subjectivity is primary over reality and that individual authorities or "geniuses" can know everything. Marxism-Leninism teaches us the opposite: that the real world is primary and that consciousness is the product of matter at a certain stage of its development. Therefore, human knowledge can never totally embrace reality. Science can come close to reality, but the world's development is always at least a step ahead of its reflection in men's minds.

For example, before Columbus sailed to the New World, men had believed the earth flat for thousands of years. The earth did not suddenly become round with the voyage of the Nina, the Pinta, and the Santa Maria. Columbus merely discovered something already materially true. When Copernicus proved the existence of the solar system, the earth and sun did not suddenly change their relation to each other. His scientific breakthrough served to transform human understanding of another reality. Marx did not create surplus value: he could not have discovered this hidden key of capitalist profit if it were not already part of the world in which he lived. Such is the universal nature of science and scientific experimentation.

Only practice is "perfect;" knowledge can never be. This is the profound scientific explanation for criticism-self-criticism as standard operating procedure in a democratic-centralist revolutionary working class party. We know we will make mistakes. They are unavoidable. We criticize ourselves and our comrades in order to learn from our errors, minimize them in the future, improve our practice, and become better fighters for socialism.

CRITICISM-SELF-CRITICISM MUST take place within the general guidelines of democratic-centralist theory. It should conform to the following principles:

a) Every member, leader, and collective of the party must constantly evaluate their practice. Criticism-self-criticism must always exist within the limits of formal party collectives.

b) The purpose of criticism is to build the party and strengthen the working class. Contradictions within the party must be viewed and handled non-antagonistically. Criticism should make us all better, not tear us down. We save destructive criticism for the class enemy. Criticism should be sharp but objective: it must be given dialectically, taking into account the strengths and weaknesses of

the comrade, leader, or collective criticized.

c) Criticism should distinguish between primary and secondary weaknesses. It should separate primary from secondary errors and concentrate on political questions rather than personal idiosyncrasies. Personal criticism, which is sometimes necessary, must always be related to the political work of the party. Leaders and collectives must take into account the law of uneven development in evaluating cadre and their practice.

d) Criticism should always be received objectively even when it is given subjectively. Leaders especially should strive to ferret out the kernels of truth in all criticisms, including those presented in a one-sided manner. The process of criticism-self-criticism should strengthen the party and mutual confidence among comrades and leaders.

e) **CRITICISM-SELF-CRITICISM IS NOT**

for the infant Soviet Union when it came under attack for the world bourgeoisie, the international brigades against fascist Franco, the great movement against nazi barbarism, and the widespread struggle in many countries against U.S. imperialism's genocidal war against the Vietnamese working class are a few.

THE BASIC PREMISE OF PROLETARIAN internationalism is that the interests of the worldwide working class outweigh the narrow immediate interests of any party or group. Internationalism is best summarized by the great Marxist slogan: "Workers of the World, Unite!"

To achieve this goal, formal organization is needed. Newly emerging parties must eventually be welded together into an international movement that functions with the discipline of a single party. The task will be long and difficult, but it is



a sterile exercise in a vacuum tube. It must conform to the laws of development. It must lead to positive change and growth for the party. The Progressive Labor Party could not have entered the stage of history if great mass struggles, revolutionary movements, and brilliant leaders had not preceded us. We seek to emulate their accomplishments, to preserve the positive features of Marxist-Leninist history, and to learn from errors, both our own and others'. Therefore, criticism-self-criticism and evaluation must be followed by consistent check-up to guarantee the material conditions of forward motion.

f) Just as the working class needs allies from other sections of the oppressed population, so do revolutionary movements require outside support. No party, even the most advanced, is an island. The final feature of democratic centralism, therefore, is proletarian internationalism. Internationalism is the highest expression of the theory that the minority must subordinate itself to the majority and the part to the whole.

History abounds with examples of international class solidarity; the massive outpouring of support

necessary and possible. The major aspect of carrying it out now is strengthening the struggle against revisionism, whose principal centers are in the Soviet Union and China. Revolutionaries must fight revisionism and its betrayal of the universals of Marxism-Leninism as long and as resolutely as necessary. The Progressive Labor Party, the Canadian Party of Labour, and other forces are attempting to play a role in this process.

These, then, are the outstanding characteristics of democratic centralism: the vanguard revolutionary party, the party as a formally organized entity, the party as leader of all united fronts, base-building for the party and socialism, centralism as the party's organizational basis, criticism-self-criticism, and proletarian internationalism in program, tactics, and organization.

DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM IS PRECISELY the contradiction that enables the working class to move forward as one army, with one flag, toward one aim: the seizure of power and the rebirth of society. The alternative is isolation, fragmentation, and the agony of capitalism's chamber of horrors.

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Apartheid: Root of Rebellion

RACISM AND CAPITALISM

The root of the rebellion lies in the racist Apartheid (or complete racial segregation) regime of South Africa. The extreme oppression suffered by Black, Asian, and other non-white people here produces huge profits to the bosses of South Africa and to the many multinational corporation with huge investment here.

WHEN HENRY KISSINGER MEETS WITH South African Prime Minister Vorster next week in Germany, he is going to warn him that the U.S. bosses are worried about the stability of Apartheid since the mass rebellions of Black workers might threaten their profits. Kissinger is also worried about the growing nationalist movement battling South Africa's buddy Zimbabwe (Rhodesia), as well as the growing of the influence of the Soviets in Southern Africa as marked by the victory of the MPLA in Angola. The U.S. bosses might force the substitution of Vorster for a liberal cover to try to cool down the rebellion.

The huge profits made by the bosses here come from the super-exploitation of 20 millions Black workers (the white population is less than 5-million). The black population is more than 75 percent urban and working class. Black workers are paid 20 percent that of white workers in the manufacturing industries. In the huge mines, their average wage is one-twentieth that of white workers. Black women are even more exploited than the men. The official government Wage Board's policy is to set wages for women 20-30 per cent lower for an equivalent man's job, particularly in the manual labor field. 46 per cent of African women of working age are employed (compared to 38 per cent for white women).

All strikes and protests are illegal. Black people are imprisoned for any minimum offense. It has been estimated that one in every four Black adults is jailed every year.

The South African regime is trying to divert criticism of their racism by developing so-called "separate development" for Black people (the Bantustan policy), under which Black workers will be classified by ethnic group and assigned to 10 different "homelands" and granted "independence" under the rule of South African lackeys. For example, Transkei will become an "independent" homeland on October 26—with a White South African minister of finance and a white minister of internal security. This will mean that Black workers can be exploited even more since they will be stripped of South African citizenship.



Centralism

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Our class constitutes the many; the bosses, the few. We are bound to win—once we weld ourselves together under the leadership of the party. As Lenin wrote:

"In its struggle for power, the proletariat has no weapon other than organization. Disunited by the rule of anarchic competition in the bourgeois world, ground down by forced labor for capital, constantly thrust back to the 'lower depths' by utter

Campaign To Free D. Vered

TORONTO, Canada—While Zionists have been clamouring for the release of Jewish mathematicians from Soviet prisons, Dan Vered, an Israeli Jewish mathematics teacher from Haifa has been imprisoned for three years in Ramle Gaol, Israel.

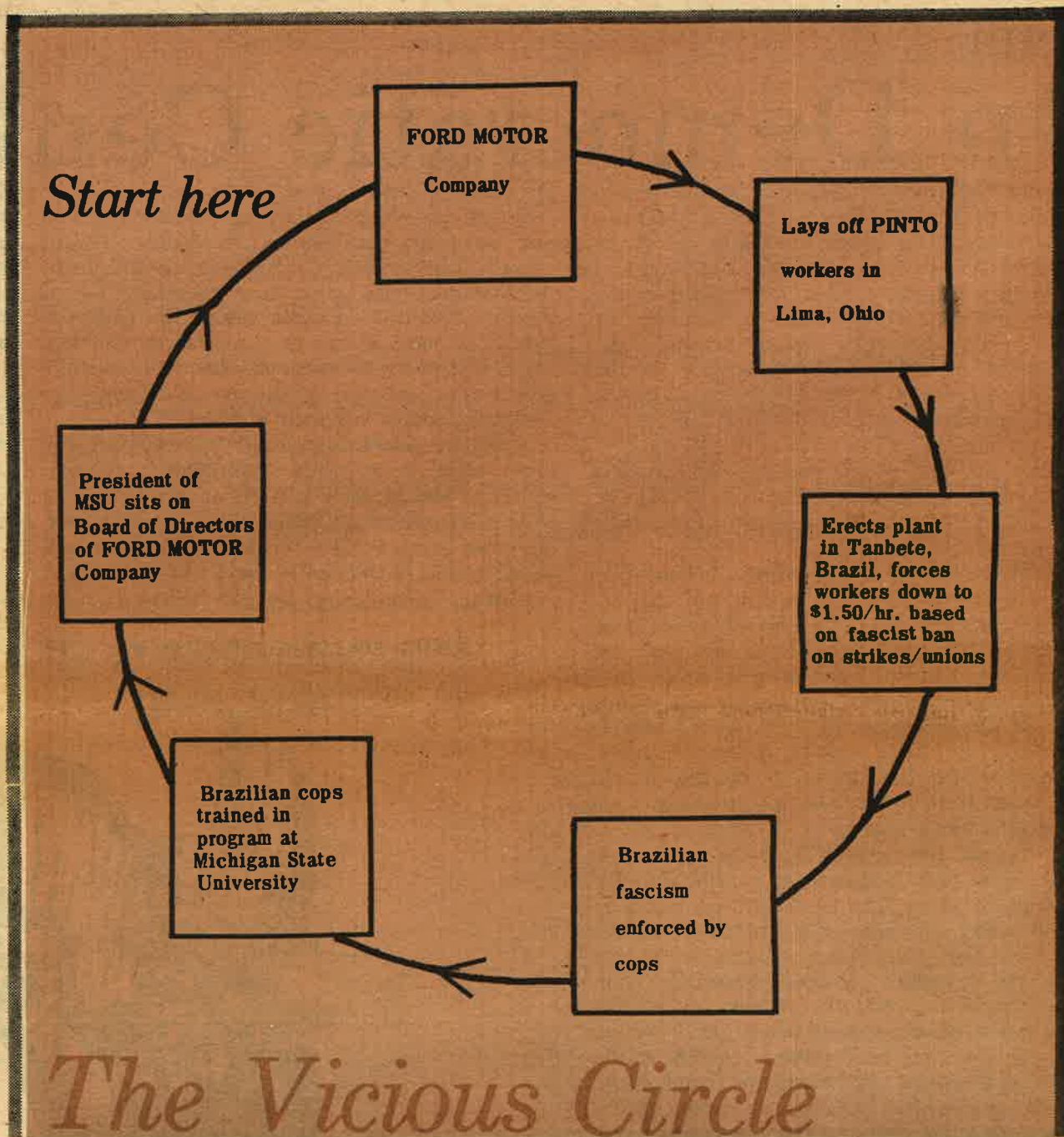
HIS CRIME: LEADING THE FIGHT against Israeli racism, the Zionist master race theory that attacks Arabs and dark-skinned (oriental) Jews; and organizing to end the slaughter of Arab and Jewish workers in the mid-east.

Dan Vered is a revolutionary communist. He was organizing and building a party to unite Israeli workers in the fight for socialism. Dan Vered and

his comrades were leading the struggle for a revolutionary solution to the great powers' use of Arab and Jewish workers as cannon-fodder in their fight for the oil resources of the mid-east.

In 1972, Vered and his whole group were arrested. The Israeli state framed them as a "spy ring" for the capitalist Syrian government. In the midst of a hysterical scare-campaign led by the government and the press in Israel, all the members of the group were convicted—without the slightest shred of evidence of spying being produced by the state prosecutor.

Dan Vered was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment.



While U.S. bosses blame "foreign" workers for job losses here, outfits like Ford are the real cause of mass unemployment. For instance:

Once fascism was established in Brazil, it destroyed all unions and outlawed strikes. Workers who attempt to organize for higher wages and better conditions are executed. Taking advantage of these fascist conditions, Ford set up a plant at Taubete, Brazil to manufacture engines for its Pinto assembly plant in St. Thomas, Ontario. Meanwhile, Ford workers in Lima, Ohio (who used to make these engines) were laid off. Why was Ford able to pull this off? Because under fascism in Brazil, auto workers are forced to submit to a wage of less than \$1.50 an hour or be shot.

Where does Michigan State come in? The

Brazilian police who enforce fascism have been trained at a program organized at Michigan State. And the final link in this chain of unemployment, exploitation and fascism is the fact that the president of Michigan State sits on the Board of Directors of Ford! That's precisely the role of the university under capitalism: to help enforce the bosses' power at home and abroad.

When PLP calls for international working-class unity to defeat fascism and imperialism, the target is not 10,000 miles away. They're right here in the auto company headquarters and on the campuses. So when we fight the racist cutbacks and tuition hikes, when we fight mass layoffs with strikes, we're fighting the same enemy that is using fascism abroad—and will use it here—to exploit us all.

destitution, savagery, and degeneration, the proletariat can become, and inevitably will become, an invincible force only when its ideological unification by the principles of Marxism is consolidated by the material unity of an organization which will weld millions of toilers into an army of the working class."

Lenin's words were prophetic when he wrote them. They are true today. Democratic centralism and a revolutionary socialist outlook enables a small party to grow until it can lead the fight to smash an apparently omnipotent enemy; it tran-

sforms the weak into the strong, the ruled into the rulers of society, and, eventually, society itself. No force in the world can withstand the power of a united working class, operating as one organism, with the single-minded purpose of establishing its own dictatorship. Rockefeller's millions, the terror tactics of the bosses' state, and the desperate war-course of international capital, all appear as wretched creatures on the shore of history, waiting to be drowned and washed away forever by a giant tidal wave. Our class will become that tidal wave. Join the Progressive Labor Party!