

THESES ON A LINE OF DEMARCATION WITH "LEFT" OPPORTUNISM

- 1) The struggle for socialism in the US cannot be seen apart from its context in the world. On the contrary, our effort here is only a single part of a worldwide revolutionary process, which includes not only the proletariat's struggle for socialism in the advanced capitalist countries but also the struggle of the peoples where the working class holds power to build socialism and a whole series of national liberation, democratic and revolutionary movements. The US working class must see itself as a part of a single global united front against imperialism.
- 2) The working class must practice the principles of proletarian internationalism; it must take up every struggle against imperialism anywhere in the world and champion it as its own struggle. In the present context the practice of proletarian internationalism is impossible with correctly indentifying the main enemy of the world's people. By "main enemy" Marxist-Leninists understand the main obstacle to the consolidation of national liberation, democracy, peace and socialism. Today that main enemy is US imperialism.
- 3) In our movement, the formulation--"US imperialism is the main enemy of the peoples of the world"--separates the advocates of proletarian internationalism from the adherents of "left" internationalism. The "lefts" have universally failed to accept this formulation, have disputed its accuracy and have attacked it as "the very essence of revisionism." Instead of aiming the main blow internationally at US imperialism, the ultra-lefts have called for aiming the main blow at the "two superpowers." In practice their position amounts to aiming the main blow at the USSR.
- 4) The failure of the "lefts" to correctly aim their main blow at US imperialism has caused them to engage in collaborationism with the international aims of their "own" ruling class. This "left" collaborationism has been demonstrated in the positions of the dominant ultra-left organizations on Portugal, the Persian Gulf, Chile, Angola, Puerto Rico and recently on Sadat's "peace initiative." Not being content to just collaborate, the dominant organization among the "lefts," the CPML, has begun to engage in acts of social chauvanism by upbraiding US imperialism for being "soft" on the USSR and pursuing a "Munich policy of appeasement."
- 5) There can be no question of building a revolutionary vanguard party in the US with forces that make collaborationism with US imperialism a central component of their international line. Such a policy inevitably aligns its adherents with the most rightwing, aggressive, anti-democratic and counterrevolutionary sections of the ruling class and their "labor lieutenants" in the working class. Any viable party in the US must break with "left" collaborationism.
- 6) Our "left-wing" comrades have consistently made advocacy of "left" internationalism the centerpiece of their struggle for hegemony over the communist forces. No other aspect of their "leftism" has either such broad appeal or played such a primary role in buttressing their political credibility. And it is worth noting that the organization which has made the most of its "left" collaborationism has recently acheived the dominant position among the "lefts."
- 7) "Left" internationalism is one of the fundamental features of the ultra-left line in the communist movement. Along with the "left" approach to party-building, to the reform struggle and to the question of democracy, "left" internationalism makes up the four main components of the prevailing "left" opportunism. In the long run there can be no question of defeating "left-wing" communism without overcoming the "left" lines on each of these four questions. But at this historical point in the development of our movement the "left" line on the international situation is the most clearly formulated, the most sharply defined in opposition

to a correct line, and the most consistently exposed by the test of practice. It is therefore an appropriate point to begin our long struggle to rectify the prevailing "leftism" of our movement.

8) It is no accident that "left" internationalism is coupled with these other forms of ultra-leftism; ideologically they are bound together by their common "left-wing" approach to the struggle against opportunism. Just as on the national level, the "lefts" have continuously elevated the fight against reformism and revisionism over the struggle against their "own" ruling class, so internationally they elevate the fight against revisionism over the struggle against US imperialism.

9) In our struggle to rectify the "left" errors of our movement, we must keep firmly in mind that our movement is nothing if it is not anti-revisionist, not only in word but in deed. Among the failures of the "lefts," none is more damning than their inability to mount an effective struggle against revisionism. And nothing has done more to give credence to the revisionists than "left" internationalism. If a clear break with "left" internationalism is not made, not only will our anti-"leftism" be compromised, but our ability to offer a serious alternative to revisionism will be hopelessly crippled.

10) Historically, the widest reaction to the "left" line in the communist movement has taken the form of rejection of "left" internationalism. Prior to Angola, most communist forces felt that the "lefts" were capable of overcoming their errors and playing a generally positive role in the party-building process. But Angola demonstrated the true depth of ultra-leftism; it showed that the "lefts" were tied to opportunist conceptions to the extent that they were willing to slander the leading force in the Angolan people's liberation struggle, attack socialist Cuba, align themselves with racist South Africa and collaborate with US imperialism. It was the events surrounding Angola which served more than any other to generate the developing break with "left" opportunism. Thus, Angola served as the watershed of the ultra-left line.

11) It is not sufficient to divide the embryonic Marxist-Leninist trend from the prevailing ultra-leftism merely on the basis of its recognition that, at present, the main opportunist danger facing the communist movement comes from the "left." In the first place, given the hegemony of the ultra-left line, we must demand more of a break with "left-wing" communism than a simple statement of opposition to "left" opportunism. It is necessary to demand as well that those who participate in building the anti-"left" trend separate themselves from a key aspect of the "left" line as well. Secondly, recent development of the communist movement has shown that forces that oppose "left" opportunism but not "left" internationalism are unstable and subject to coming back under the influence of the ultra-left line. To allow such unstable elements to participate in the building of an anti-"left" trend is to allow committed exponents of a fundamental feature of the "left" line to determine the pace and character of a trend in opposition to "left" opportunism.

12) Marxist-Leninists must firmly reject the attempts that are being made to deflect the struggle against "leftism" away from opposing "left" internationalism and recognize the opportunism inherent in these attempts. We must reject the economism inherent in the argument "let's worry about 'our' struggle now, we can take up our international obligations later on." We must reject the empiricism of those who argue that we can pass judgement on "left" trade-unionism because we have seen it with our own eyes, but consider Angola, Chile, Portugal, etc. too remote to "know for sure." And finally, we must reject the hypocrisy of those who loudly proclaim that "national liberation is the cutting edge of the worldwide struggle" but are unwilling to embrace the lessons of the sharpest struggles waged by the working class and oppressed peoples for national liberation, peace and socialism.

13) Thus, it is correct to uphold the question of the main enemy of the peoples of the world as a correct line of demarcation for the development of a Marxist-Leninist trend. To fail to do so would be to sacrifice the fundamental interests of the working class in favor of momentary unity among all those who have declared themselves to be anti-"left."