

"WORKERS AND OPPRESSED PEOPLES OF THE WORLD, UNITE!!"

WORKERS' PRESS

THE POLITICAL ORGAN OF THE MARXIST-LENINIST COLLECTIVE

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PARTY BUILDING:

STRATEGY AND TACTICS

Genuine Marxist-Leninists in the U.S. all agree that the building of a genuine communist party is the central task of the present period. What remains to be clearly formulated is a definite plan to guide these organizations and individuals in fulfilling this central task. It is towards this end that our efforts, and the efforts of all communists, must be directed. We must determine the strategy and tactics of building the party.

Stalin said that the "strategy and tactics of Leninism constitute the science of leadership in the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat". He goes on to say that:

Strategy is the determination of the main blow of the proletariat at a given stage of the revolution, the elaboration of a corresponding plan for the disposition of the revolutionary forces (main and secondary reserves), the fight to carry out this plan throughout the given stage of the revolution. (Foundations of Leninism, Peking, p84)

The proletariat must have a revolutionary communist party to formulate its overall strategy. At the stage of the struggle when the proletariat has no revolutionary party to lead it, the strategy for proletariat revolution must become the strategy to build that party.

What, then, is our strategy? In order to build the party and formulate the programme, we must gain hegemony over the bourgeois ideologies of opportunism, revisionism and reformism; they must be exposed to, and isolated from, the working class. The main blow, then, must be directed principally at revisionism (the revision of the philosophical, economic and political foundations of revolutionary Marxism and substitution of bourgeois theories of reconciliation of class contradictions and of class collaboration) and at opportunism (the sacrificing of the long-term and vital interests of the proletariat to its momentary, passing, secondary interests) and reformism (the restriction of the aims and activities of the working class to the winning of reforms). The main agents of revisionism, opportunism and reformism within the working class, the main social props of the bourgeoisie, are the CPUSA and the trade union bureaucrats; others with less influence are the CLP, RCP, OL and Trotskyites. All serve the bourgeoisie, in the final analysis, by directing the genuine revolutionary aspirations of working people into reformism and preventing revolution. We must carry out the two-line struggle, primarily against the right opportunism errors plaguing the movement. This requires the following forces: conscious Marxist-Leninist forces uniting with those advanced workers who, in this immediate period, have been won over to communism, as the main reserve. These will form the initial cadre of the party or will quickly be drawn into work with the party, and will be essential in winning over and doing further work among the advanced and intermediate workers from among the most oppressed and exploited workers primarily in large-scale industry, particularly members of national minorities and oppressed nations within the U.S., who comprise the secondary reserves.

In carrying out our strategy, we must have a tactical line which will guide our specific work. Stalin said of tactics:

Tactics are the determination of the line of conduct of the proletariat in the comparatively short period of the flow or ebb of the movement, of the rise or decline of the

revolution, the fight to carry out the line by means of replacing old forms of struggle and organization by new ones, old slogans by new ones, by combining these forms, etc... (ibid, p 86)

Tactical leadership is a part of strategic leadership, subordinated to the tasks and the requirements of the latter. The task of tactical leadership is to master all forms of struggle and organization of the proletariat and to ensure that they are used properly so as to achieve with the given relation of forces, the maximum results necessary to prepare for strategic success. (ibid, p 93)

What, then, is our tactical line? It must be a line that carries forth our strategic line, it must direct struggle against the revisionist and opportunist forces, and, in so doing, lay the foundation for the new party. It must be a line of ideological struggle. The principal aspect of this line is theoretical development; specifically, the formulation of our political line. This will take place in the course of struggle against revisionism and opportunism, in (1) internal study and political preparation for the development of a party programme, and (2) joint theoretical work with other communist organizations, including comradely polemics.

Our theoretical tasks must determine the character of our practical tasks. Of course, when we talk about theory and practice we mean communist theory and communist practice. Further, we understand that theory and practice are united as opposites: without theory, our revolutionary practice is without direction; and theory, without practice and experience, is meaningless. We also know that one aspect must be principal and determines the character of the struggle. Presently, the principal and decisive aspect is theory. While theory is the principal aspect of our tactical line, it must take shape in practical revolutionary activity. In this sense, our practical activity must be developed so that it corresponds with and serves our theoretical task.

Our practical tasks must emphasize taking communism to the proletariat, winning over the advanced workers to communism, basing ourselves in the most oppressed and exploited sections of the proletariat. What does this mean in terms of specific practical work? First, we must conduct propaganda and agitation on a regular basis. Communist propaganda directed against the opportunists and revisionists is essential for carrying out the central task. Living propaganda (study groups, speeches, forums) and written propaganda (press, pamphlets, leaflets) should be used. The Workers' Press (all the communist press) should have as its main purpose winning the advanced elements to the ideas of communism and the need to build a communist party. It must conform to the Leninist model of the communist press giving emphasis to advancing communist ideas and explaining them in short; theoretical articles or in the analysis of important events and struggles from a clear communist standpoint. Its content should include explaining the causes of capitalist crises, the threat of a third world war, the split in the working class, the national question, the oppression of women, etc, and linking these analyses with the need for a communist party.

Second, we should participate in mass work, keeping in mind the need to emphasize taking communism to the proletariat, basing ourselves in the most oppressed and exploited sections, and winning over the advanced to communism. This mass work must center around a determined struggle to rid the working class of all forms of bourgeois ideology, in particular, exposing the social props of the bourgeoisie and providing communist leadership within the spontaneous working class movement. Joint practical work with other organizations is essential. The party is based in large-scale, basic industry, and it is here that we must begin to build what will be the basis of the party -- factory nuclei. The formation of factory nuclei with cadre of different organizations would greatly facilitate communist practice and the building of a communist party.

The strategy and tactics outlined above correspond to the period when the proletariat has no revolutionary party. After the party is formed, the main task becomes one of enlisting the advanced workers into the party, winning the vanguard of the prol-

etariat to the party. Following that, the main task becomes one of winning the broad masses of workers to the side of the vanguard.

SUMMARY

STRATEGY: formation of the party

MAIN BLOW: revisionism, opportunism and reformism

MAIN RESERVE: Marxist-Leninist forces uniting with those advanced workers who have been won over to communism

SECONDARY RESERVE: advanced and intermediate workers from large-scale industry, particularly of national minorities and oppressed nations within the U.S.

TACTICS: line of ideological struggle against revisionism, opportunism and reformism

THEORETICAL TASKS: formulation of political line

internal study and preparation for development of programme

joint theoretical work with communist organizations

PRACTICAL TASKS: communist propaganda, agitation, mass work

taking communism to the proletariat

winning the advanced workers to communism

basing ourselves in the most oppressed and exploited sections

of the proletariat, primarily unskilled and semi-skilled

joint practical work with communist organizations

testing, summarizing, consolidating political line

PROPOSAL FOR FORUMS

The central task of Marxist-Leninists in this present period is to build a new vanguard communist party. This task must be the focus of all our work. Since communist forums are one aspect of our work, they too must serve the central task. Specifically, forums must be used to help formulate political line and develop unity on the major questions by providing an opportunity for organizations to present their positions on various questions, to allow for open, comradely polemics, to encourage questions and clarify misunderstandings. Forums should be used to show the strength and discipline of Marxism-Leninism in contrast to revisionism and other bourgeois ideologies.

Over the past years, forums have been held by a number of communist organizations. The initiative and effort is commendable. It is a step in the direction of building the party. We think, however, that in the main, the structure and nature of many of the forums have not sufficiently served the central task. They have not succeeded in building genuine and lasting unity. They have not sufficiently clarified political questions. And they have not allowed for comradely criticism and honest questioning. Our purpose here is to offer some ideas on how forums can be improved to help build increased unity of Marxist-Leninists, to more effectively win over advanced elements, and push forward the task of building the vanguard party.

First we propose that each forum be centered around a single programmatic question (e.g. party building, national, international situation, woman, trade union) with several communist organizations participating. This would allow for a number of groups to present their positions and give all organizations a chance to conduct open, comradely polemics around the important issues facing the communist movement. As Lenin said:

...it is absolutely essential that the question of the programme be introduced into the polemic. The polemic will be of benefit

only if it makes clear in what the differences actually consist, how profound they are, whether they are differences of substance or differences on partial questions, whether or not these differences interfere with common work in the ranks of one and the same party. Only the introduction of the programme question into the polemic, only a definite statement by the two polemicising parties on their programmatic views, can provide an answer to all these questions... (Collected Works, Vol 4, p 231)

The forum would be open to any Marxist-Leninist organization that wishes to participate and unites with certain basic principles of unity which would guide the forums. Representatives of various organizations interested in participating would decide these principles of unity, draw lines of demarcation, suggest topics for discussion, and settle all other organizational matters concerning the forums.

Preparations for the forum would include the distribution, by each organization, of a bibliography including references to published statements on the particular questions to be discussed. Comrades attending the forum would then have had time to read material beforehand. In addition, it is suggested that each organization make available at the forum a reprint of their speech in Spanish and English.

The forum itself would include relatively short statements (15-20 minutes) by each participant on the particular question. At the conclusion of the speeches, an intermission would be held, during which time written questions would be submitted from the audience to the speakers. The panel would screen the questions for duplications and be certain they were related to the topic, and assign them to the appropriate speakers. After the break, these questions would be addressed; the questioner would have the opportunity to speak after the question is answered. An open question period would be reserved at the end to cover questions not discussed or to clarify others.

Concerning questions of security, forum procedures and other organizational questions, participating organizations would decide. We wish to stress the problem of security in light of past forums and the bourgeoisie's desire to smash the communist movement.

It is our hope that communists who agree that building the party is our central task will also agree that the plan for conducting forums will facilitate this task. Much of the current polemics amongst communist organizations do not serve our central task of uniting Marxist-Leninists into the party. In many instances, tactical differences appear to be the main focus rather than questions of principle. The unity of communists around the development of forums would provide an opportunity for principles ideological struggle, clarify differences that may exist, and facilitate the development of unity around political line. This will lay the basis for the formulation of a party programme. Organizations interested in participating should contact us.

Who We Are

Workers' Press is written and published by the Marxist-Leninist Collective. We are a communist organization based on Marxism-Leninism, the science of the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. We are part of the international struggle of the working class to end exploitation and oppression by overthrowing capitalism and establishing socialism. We aim to bring communist ideas and analyses to the working class. We strive to broaden the outlook of our fellow workers and to arm workers with proletarian class consciousness so that together we can lead the struggle against all forms of oppression and exploitation by imperialism. To do this the proletariat must organize a communist party, capable of leading the struggle for the overthrow of capitalism and establishment of a socialist society. Correspondence, criticisms, articles should be sent to:

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