

some representative of the working class in her capitalist cabinet in order to try to talk the working class into concessions necessary for the survival of capitalist rule on the island. So N.M. Perera and other LSSP leaders were invited to join the coalition government. This they did with the support of the bulk of the LSSP membership.

Faced with this outright betrayal the Pabloites together with the SWP refused to give full support to the left wing opposition within the LSSP made up primarily of militant trade unionists. Rather they supported a small center group led by Colvin DeSilva and Leslie Goonewardena. This group supported Perera's line but with typical centrist reservations. When the chips were down the left wing split away and formed the LSSP (Revolutionary Section) while DeSilva-Goonewardena stuck with Perera. More recently this center group has openly supported the bourgeois government in parliament. The "United" Secretariat was forced to expel the entire Perera group but so far has refrained from expelling their centrist supporters who are still members of the executive committee of the "United" Secretariat.

Thus the SWP and its international collaborators have been deeply implicated in a betrayal of revolutionary principle of the most classic sort. Their international formation is going through a deep process of disintegration. This disintegration is only at its beginning stages. Both within the SWP and within the "United" Secretariat there will inevitably be many more splits because it is impossible to build a serious movement on the basis of revisionist views which see no real role for the movement one is seeking to build.

THE NEW RADICALISM AND ITS PROBLEMS

Progressive Labor and the New Generation

While the Progressive Labor Movement is a very small organization its significance goes beyond its membership. This is because both its strengths and its weaknesses are generally shared by the new young revolutionaries of other political persuasions in the United States. The independent militants in CORE, the young sympathizers of the black nationalists, the dissidents in and around YPSL, the younger members of the SWP--all these forces share with PL a desire towards revolutionary action, a certain hostility towards the conservatism of the old radical formations, but also a general lack of concern with the development of Marxist theory in a serious way.

While Progressive Labor originated as a rebellion inside the CP against its conservatism, especially on the American scene, and a sympathy for the position of the Chinese, its present strength flows primarily from the newer young revolutionaries it has been able to attract. It attracts these young people because it views itself as an organization

of serious militant struggle in the mass movement. It not only advocates "doing something" for the Puerto Ricans--it reaches out and organizes them on a local basis in the Lower East Side of New York City. Rather than contenting itself, as the SWP does, with "sympathy" and "understanding" of the problems of the Negro in the ghetto, PL has entered the ghetto and carried on consistent work there for some time now. Such activity--and we can add also its more student oriented work in the defiance of the Cuban travel ban and its protests against American imperialist actions in Vietnam--not only has given PL at least the beginnings of a modest base of work among minority peoples in New York but also has attracted students and others who want to connect themselves in more than words with the struggles of the masses.

Pervading all its work is thus a greater connection with the most oppressed section of the working class. This concrete work is a reflection of a much clearer working class line on domestic questions than any of the older socialist groups. It opposes any kind of support for the Democratic Party. It refused to "rally to the flag" at the time of the Kennedy assassination. It opposes the slogan of sending Federal troops to the South, having a clear understanding of on whose side the bourgeois state really is.

However, Progressive Labor has not broken from the older radical formations in one important respect--the development of Marxist theory. PL proceeds in the old American tradition of empirical action first without giving serious consideration as to exactly where one is heading: how what one does today is related to the past development of the movement and how it will lead to the rebuilding of a movement tomorrow both here and internationally.

This theoretical weakness has serious implications for the present and future development of Progressive Labor. Already its domestic work is marred by a tendency to try to jump over necessary stages in the building of a vanguard in the United States by sheer audacity. Progressive Labor pays little attention to work within Negro organizations such as CORE or SNCC. But an important section of the future leadership of the Negro people can be fashioned through struggle within these organizations. One cannot simply stand aside from that struggle and pose oneself as an alternative to these organizations. One must participate with the young Negro militants in these groups as they seek to make these groups into effective instruments of struggle of the Negro masses.

Progressive Labor tends to view itself as already being the vanguard of the Negro, Puerto Rican and working class masses. But this is far, far from being the case. PL is a small group and only in New York City does it have any significant base. The process of creating a real vanguard movement in the United States is a difficult project and it cannot be solved by simply proclaiming as reality what one wishes reality to be. In the last analysis tendencies to

substitute one's small forces for the mass movement at its present level of development and to denigrate long term work in the mass movement are signs of a certain distance from the working class. This is understandable considering the social background of many of PL's young activists. But it must be consciously countered. It is a sign of a certain neglecting of theoretical development.

The theoretical weakness of Progressive Labor is posed in another fashion by its international outlook. While it has never made its position too clear generally the organization is in close sympathy with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). There is, of course, a solid empirical basis for this sympathy. The CCP, because of the world situation it faces, projects a line as against Khrushchev with far greater emphasis on the class struggle and revolutionary action. This international line of the CCP at the moment generally coincides with PL's militancy on the American scene.

However, in the long run the lines of the CCP and PL are bound to conflict with each other forcing either PL to bend its class line here or repudiate the Chinese. This can be understood if one looks beneath the surface appearance of the CCP line to what motivates it. The Chinese party does not simply represent the workers and peasants of China. Rather it represents a bureaucracy of the same essential character as Khrushchev's bureaucracy and this stratum has interests which put it into fundamental conflict with the interests of the working class. At present, however, the Chinese Communists find themselves isolated and under tremendous pressure from the imperialists. Khrushchev, in order to come to terms with the imperialists, has sacrificed the interests of the Chinese revolution. Peaceful coexistence is not at present open to China. The bureaucracy is thus empirically forced to take a more intransigent stand for purely nationalistic reasons.

This empirical stand is tailored to fit the interests of the bureaucracy rather than those of the world working class. Thus the Chinese uncritically support the CPs in Japan and Indonesia even though these particular CPs completely subordinate themselves to their national capitalist class. However, these parties are friendly to the Chinese party and furthermore the national bourgeoisies in these countries are willing to do business with China. France, which because of its rivalry with the U.S. also plays with the idea of deals with Mao as well as Khrushchev, is generally spared the attacks China piles on the United States and its satellites.

Even its call for "revolution" is not at all clearly a call for working class revolution. At the time of the recent Brazilian coup d'etat the Chinese advocated nothing more than a broad opposition front including the national bourgeoisie. At least Castro called for a peasant uprising. Neither Castro nor Mao expressed any interest in proletarian struggle.

The real nature of the Chinese regime can be seen in its glorification of the Stalin era and its support for the suppression of the Hungarian Revolution. The Hungarian Revolution is the real touchstone of the political struggle in the Soviet Bloc countries. There the workers of Hungary were in the vanguard of a revolutionary struggle to topple the bureaucratic regime. There China to this day sides with the bureaucratic counterrevolution. China's sympathy for the Stalin era is not a matter of a hangover from the past. It has a much more solid basis than that. The Chinese bureaucracy genuinely feels a kinship for Stalin in a period when Stalin also was quite isolated and surrounded by the imperialists and not at all opposed to an adventurist action here or there to harass an enemy not yet ready to deal with him.

Unless Progressive Labor makes some headway in clearing up its understanding of China this international confusion can have a serious impact on its domestic struggles. Much as the international revisionism of the SWP led to a further erosion of its class struggle outlook on the American scene, so it can be with Progressive Labor. But one cannot really begin to understand China today unless one has a deeper understanding of the origins of Stalinism in the 1920s and 1930s and the principled struggle led against the Stalinization of the USSR by Trotsky. The Progressive Labor Movement was born in a rebellion against the manifestations of Stalinism in the United States--the bankrupt policies of the American CP. It must go back to the origins of that manifestation if it wishes to prevent the disorientation of its own movement. This will require Progressive Labor members to study the works of Trotsky--in particular his Third International After Lenin and The Revolution Betrayed.

The American Committee for the Fourth International

The American Committee had its birth in a struggle inside the Socialist Workers Party for the principled class line of the Socialist Labour League and its supporters in the International Committee of the Fourth International. While at every moment actively working to build the SWP, we took every opportunity open to us to warn the SWP membership of the dangers to the future of the SWP as a revolutionary formation posed by its going over to revisionism internationally and its turning its back on the concrete struggles of the masses in this country.

At the 1963 Convention of the SWP, we put forward two major resolutions. One resolution condemned the proposal to reunify politically with the Pabloites internationally on the basis of the Pabloite line. Our group was the only one in the SWP to vote against this "reunification". Our position has been fully vindicated by the current disintegration of the "United" Secretariat and the betrayal of the working class in Ceylon. We also put forward a resolution urging that the SWP make work in the mass movement--in the trade unions, the Negro movement and the Puerto Rican community--its major