

# **FIGHT INDIVIDUALISM**

Speech by Milton Rosen Opening Second PLP Convention,  
May 1968

Three years ago, at our initial convention, we made the point that we had to become a serious party, a party of the working class. We had to begin to transform ourselves into genuine revolutionaries, people completely devoted to Marxism-Leninism, to the party and to the concept that the party serves the people.

As I am sure many of you who were at that first convention understood, or many of you who were members of the PLP at that time understood, there were a lot of shortcomings in our young party, and there were certainly a lot of shortcomings in us as individual members of the party. And, at that time, I think, if we would have gone around the room, (and that time we had a convention, I don't recall exactly how many people were there, perhaps 200), if we would have gone around that room, and asked those people who had some tangible relationship to the working class to raise their hands, I don't know if you could have gotten a baker's dozen to put up their hands. If you asked people at that convention, "Who among you works for a living and goes to work every day?" you might have gotten less. I don't know. You would not have gotten too many. [Walter Linder says: "Four."] Four you would have gotten. Well, Wally's a stickler, precise; so it's probably true. Let's rely on his preciseness.

And I think one of the main things that came out of our first convention, one of the most important things, was this idea that we would become a party of the working class, a revolutionary party. We would develop close ties with the

working class. And, of course, one of the first steps was to go to work.

I think that in the last three years, in taking the first toddling steps along this path, we've made progress. Just looking around the room today, I see a lot of people here who work in industry. There are a lot of people here who are carrying on much more serious activity where they live or in school than was the case at our first convention. I think that's an accomplishment. And I think that's something we should take a very positive view about. This was a serious step forward for our party.

#### We Must Go Further in Integrating With and Stimulating the Working Class

We have brought into the American scene way beyond our ranks the idea that if you want to make a revolution in this country, then you had better win the working class politically. And, we know that during the last few years, we have carried a political battle to win people to this idea, because this idea was generally alien, certainly in our student and intellectual movement. And the working class itself, because it had little or no political consciousness, doesn't necessarily conceive of itself as that class which will be the key, the instrumental class, in bringing about revolutionary socialism in our country. This is one of our biggest contributions in our country, and this is something we have to pursue with a lot more vigor and skill than we have. That is to say, to make the PLP a party of the working class and win other sectors of the population to understand that it is on the shoulders of the working class that socialism will triumph in the United States. We made a little start in this direction but we have to go much further.

Certainly anybody reading about the political situation in France can see this proposition a lot more clearly. That is to say, a lot of people can start the revolutionary

process. But it is only the workers, in the modern industrial countries, that are going to finish it. When we were kids we used to say "Before you start something, you better see who's going to finish it." If we want to start a revolutionary movement we'd better have a clear idea how it is going to get finished, upon whose shoulders it is going to be finished.

France certainly refutes the notion, which has been spread around by all sorts of forces (sincerely or otherwise) that the working class in capitalist countries is so hopelessly corrupt that it is not going to make the revolution, and revolution can only come in the more oppressed sections of the world, and therefore, our task is simply to somehow or other assist these colonial revolutionary movements. They say we should write off our own working class. This is, of course, one of the biggest victories the international bourgeoisie can accomplish. Nothing would make them happier. Well, I wouldn't say nothing; it would make them very happy if the workers in all the capitalist countries would just stay put, so they would only have to fight the colonial workers. Then they wouldn't have to fight on both fronts.

But if France were repeated in our own country, we might ask ourselves what we'd be doing; which is an interesting question. Certainly you can see the enormous value such an event would have for the revolutionary forces in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. If the American bourgeoisie was so hemmed in by its own working class here that it could not deal effectively with the oppressed outside its boundaries, and would be forced to weaken the struggle against them, or perhaps even let go, this for all intents and purposes would be the beginning of the end, or the end for imperialism. So when we talk about being a party of the working class and introducing Marxism-Leninism, the ideology of the dictatorship of the proletariat, into the ranks of the working class and into the people's movements generally, we are talking about big stakes. And it is not just an abstraction.

You know, some say "Would you believe that the Progressive Labor Party is going to lead the revolution? Would you believe that?" Everybody would say to himself, "That's pretty funny." Well, it's all right to have a sense of humor about things and to take things in stride but we better understand that that's what we are trying to do! We are trying to destroy the system and we are trying to bring revolutionary ideology into the working class and our outlook is that we can succeed. We can do this because the system that we are fighting cannot satisfy the working class and the people generally, and Marxism-Leninism can help workers achieve a new system. They come into sharp contradiction with the system. And we have to have the will, the balls, or whatever you want to call it, to bring our revolutionary ideas into all of these struggles. We should take this perspective very seriously, and we should think from the point of view that "We can do it; it can be done." Not from the point of view of pompousness, but from a point of view of being serious about what we are doing, of seeing that the opportunities are there, and that whether or not we succeed rests on us, not on the enemy, but on us. And it's no use in crying over spilled milk, like others have done: "We failed because they beat us." "We failed because they were too strong." "We failed because of whatever the enemy did." No! The enemy can do his thing. He does it all the time, to all revolutionaries. He tries to crush and defeat them.

But revolutionaries fail and revolutionaries don't succeed in carrying forward the revolutionary process mainly because of their own shortcomings, primarily because of their own limitations. If this weren't true there would be no point in starting. There would be no point in organizing to smash the system. Because superficially the system appears much stronger than the revolutionary forces; so, if you are taken in by appearances, you will give up the ghost. And, unfortunately, too many of us are still taken in by appearances, although going through the motions of playing revolutionary. After all, it's interesting. It keeps us off the streets. It gives us something to do. It gives some purpose to our

lives, it makes us feel noble and that sort of thing. But in our guts all of us question whether it can be done, or whether we can do it. As I said, we'd better take the approach that it can be done, that we are going to do it, and that the only one who can defeat us is ourselves. Nobody is to blame but ourselves.

#### Develop Revolutionary Leadership

Now one of our main tasks since our inception has been to bring about this transformation in the party and in ourselves, to become serious revolutionaries, and not through an abstraction, but actively to play a certain kind of role. Of course, one of our main perspectives, one of our key tasks, has been to develop a core of people who would be considered professional revolutionaries in the traditional sense. That is, to serve the revolution and the party and the people comes first, that is the primary thing in their life. Because no serious revolutionary party can exist, and be successful, without serious revolutionaries, without a cadre, without a leadership. And, during the last three years, I think small steps have been taken along this road. That is to say, there are a number of such people in a growing core in our party, represented broadly by the people at this convention. By and large, this growing core of cadres slowly but surely (with ups and downs, still trying to equivocate a little bit) is making this revolutionary outlook the primary thing in their lives, is trying to defeat the "I" mentality and develop the "We" mentality. This convention is a reflection of this process.

Now are we developing cadre as an abstraction so as to be able to say we have 60 or 100 or 120 or whatever the number is of people who are dedicated? That's nice of course. But what is the purpose? The essential purpose is to bring leadership into the party, to develop revolutionary leadership among the people. There is the tendency in America, and probably in all countries to one degree or another, "What do you have to be a leader for?" Somehow or another, movements can succeed without leaders. Now,

of course, the ability of movements to succeed is based on two things. It is based on the objective circumstances, but also on the subjective circumstances. And it's the interrelationship of these two that determines the outcome of the movement. For example, to refer back to France, there perhaps we could say a revolutionary situation existed objectively. But was there revolutionary leadership? There may be revolutionaries, but is there a leadership in the sense that it has that political relationship with the masses that they can take advantage of this objective situation, and consummate that revolution? I doubt it. I hope I'm wrong, but I doubt it.

What is the role of leadership in the Soviet Union? In Indonesia? What is the role of leadership in every area where the revolutionary movement is moving ahead or retrogressing? Very important. Decisive. Just as the objective situation is decisive. We could all go out into the street and cry "Rise up, fellow citizens. Let's seize City Hall." And unless that has some objective basis in reality, people will throw ash cans at us, or laugh at us. So I'm not putting forward a superman view of history. I'm simply putting forward what I believe is one of the most important elements of revolutionary ideology, of Marxism-Leninism: the need of the people to have a revolutionary leadership. And, therefore, if we think in terms of playing a role among the people and within the party, and in terms of leading the people in struggle, then we better not view that arrogantly, or conceitedly or pompously, but view it seriously. View it from the point of view that we are undertaking a tremendous responsibility.

We are involved with other people in fighting the system, and we better view this as a struggle of life and death. We are at war with the system: the class struggle is not some abstract concept. It is a struggle of life and death. It is a struggle of one class to defeat and to destroy the other one. That is what it is. And that is the struggle we're in. You get into a life and death struggle with your enemy, you better understand that. And you better think accordingly.

And you better try to get everyone else to think accordingly because the class forces who are involved besides ourselves are being constantly victimized by the other side and in the long run have to destroy the other side's ability to oppress and repress them. And this is a life and death fight. This is an all-out fight. It's not a partial fight. Because if it's a partial fight, then we're reformists. We can say revolution, we can say a lot of nice things, but sooner or later, we'll stop saying that. Sooner or later the part of us which is reformist will become primary because we really don't think we are in a life and death struggle. We really don't think we are in an all-out struggle with the enemy. We really just think we are doing some good things, and hoping it all works out for the best. We are really thinking that history has its ups and downs but history is on our side, so if we don't do it, some others will come along and they will do it.

Well, that's true. You might draw some comfort out of that, but that's what's known as opportunism. That's what's known as not taking into full account one's responsibilities to the revolutionary process, abdicating responsibility and working piecemeal. And when you do something piecemeal, sooner or later you retard, you hurt the revolutionary movement. In the long run, and maybe it doesn't take so long, the little good that might be done turns into its opposite and becomes counter-revolutionary. So our efforts have to be transformed and made complete.

What we are trying to do is to develop revolutionary leadership among the masses and win the majority of the working class and other sections of the population to political consciousness, to Marxism-Leninism. And this requires, of course, many attributes but it requires, above all, serious devotion, dedication and confidence in the working people. It requires the ability—politically, ideologically and tactically—the ability to develop ties with the working class and with the people which are tight, which cannot be broken by the enemy, so that the revolutionary process develops, and as the people become more conscious, we

are able to guide this revolution to its consummation, which is the dictatorship of the proletariat. Therefore, these years of patient, slow winning and training people and developing ties among the masses, no matter how protracted they may seem, no matter how slow they may seem, are vital. They are vital to developing a revolutionary party and a revolutionary leadership among the people.

### Obstacles Within the Party

Now within the party there are many obstacles to developing revolutionary leadership, within the party and outside the party, and we see this all the time. What we are dealing with to a great extent is a petty bourgeois ideology, the ideology of the enemy within our own ranks. And it manifests itself in many ways. And we know that if we are going to move ahead that we have to fight this ideology even more vigorously than we have till now. And some people say with a certain amount of justification, "Well, if we do that we'll lose people." That is to say, if you really make Joe work in that shop, and he wants to do something else, and you insist, he'll quit. He might. We see that in every stage of the game, as we develop.

Whenever the party felt it was ready for the next big step, there was always a certain amount of dropping away from the party. This happened even when we formed the party out of the Progressive Labor Movement which we felt was a serious step, because we felt there was enough unity of ideas to form the Progressive Labor Party. This was a serious step because now you are telling the enemy in a sharper way, and you're telling one another in a sharper way, "Look, we are intensifying the struggle." So, at our first conference, I don't recall exactly when it was, a number of people got up, and challenged this idea of a party, raised a lot of ideas to show why it was wrong. And when we went ahead and formed the party, they dropped away. On the face of it, there was no particular reason for them to drop away over our forming the party or not forming the party. They all said they agreed with us

on all the main points like dictatorship of the proletariat. They all said they were for defeating imperialism, or most of them did. They all said a lot of the right things. But when the party was formed, these people recognized that that was a step forward, a sharpening of the struggle and they fell away.

Now, sure, we don't say "That's wonderful, we're losing all our members!" We are trying to win these people. We try and make a fight for these people. But, nonetheless, this process does go on. When we came out with Road to Revolution there was a struggle in the movement. Because what was Road to Revolution? That was the opening, the public declaration of struggle against revisionism. A lot of people said, "You can't do that." When the arguments were raised none of these guys said they were against the dictatorship of the proletariat, none of those guys said they were for the war in Vietnam; they didn't say anything on the surface so terrible. They recognized that Road to Revolution was a sharpening of the struggle against revisionism and imperialism. Some of them dropped away.

When we came out with Road to Revolution II and we tackled revisionism even more sharply, other people dropped away. None of them were raising what appeared to be primary differences. Nobody said that the party was founded on the wrong premise, that we weren't based on the working class. Nobody argued that. They were all for that. But they dropped away. When we start the process within the party of "Look, we have to have more discipline based on collectivity, based on understanding, people have to become more accountable to the party, people have to work, people have to go to school, people have to accomplish something in the community," certain people fall away because the screw is getting turned a little more tightly.

It's not simply a subjective thing, it's not that we decided, "Let's turn the screw and see who we can get rid of this week." It's that our political estimate is that the class struggle is growing sharper, and that in order to just keep

abreast of the class struggle we have to do better. And I don't believe we are even keeping abreast of the class struggle. I think, to some extent, we're lagging behind. I don't think we can do everything we'd like to do or we ought to do. But nonetheless, there is this tightening of the screw.

Now, we make our estimate based on our understanding of the international situation of imperialism, based on its growing limitations, based on the growing sweep of revolutionary struggle. The class struggle in our own country will grow sharper. We said that several years ago. People laughed in our face. "Oh, those workers won't even go on strike." "They won't do this, they won't do that." "The students are all rotten." "Black people are all lumpen proletariat." So on and so forth. We didn't come to our estimate out of the blue. We came to it based on a somewhat scientific estimate of the objective situation of imperialism. And our estimate has been proven, by and large, correct. The class struggle has grown sharper, outside the country and within the country, and our estimate still holds. One of the recent articles in PL on imperialism tries to give a careful economic evaluation of the falling rate of profit as a barometer of the maneuverability of imperialism. If you say the rate of profit is falling, then you are also saying the imperialists' ability to maneuver is growing less and less, and this forces them more and more to attack and tighten up on their own workers, and oppress workers all over the world. And we think this is the situation we're in, and we think that the coming period will continue to see the sharpening of the class struggle, continue to see the sharpening struggles in our own country.

That is the sweep of it. We don't have a precise blueprint, but we see that pattern. And it will be protracted, the revolution will take time, and it will not succeed unless there's a serious revolutionary party in the field, a party that has a fundamental relationship with the key sections of the masses. No gimmick, no sleight of hand, no cute

trick is going to pull it off, although in America the gimmick and the sleight of hand is part of the culture. But we are not working with this culture. We are working with a Marxist-Leninist outlook. The revolutionary process is protracted. It's always been protracted, it always will be protracted, and it continues even after the seizure of power.

### Individualism

Lack of confidence in the working class, lack of confidence in the party, lack of confidence in Marxism-Leninism, is manifested, often in a very individualistic attitude toward what one does. A lot of people say (in one way or another) "I'm going to do what I want to do, when I want to do it, and how I want to do it, and I really don't give a damn what the rest of you people think." And that comes out in a million and one ways. If all of you who are here think about yourselves a little bit, and think about most of the people in the party a little bit, I think you will agree that that attitude is still fairly prevalent.

We had a fellow here in New York just recently who was committed to working in industry, committed to developing industrial concentration, who said he was at the disposal of the party. In other words, you wouldn't think it would matter to this guy whether he worked in shop A or shop B. His club said "Go to work in shop A, we think you should work there, not here." Naturally he got a job in shop B. They said he should work in shop A. You wouldn't think that's a primary question, inasmuch as this fellow is saying "I want to work." But he got into an all-out struggle. The club said, "Well, look, you're not raising any principled objections to working in A or B, so we want you to work in A. You're not saying 'I don't want to work anymore,' or 'I don't believe the line.'"

We got guys who went to work in industry a few years ago based on the line that grew out of the last convention. We tried to place people in industry with discrimination. We tried to take into account background, personality, so

on and so forth. Perhaps some people would be better off teaching, or as welfare workers, or succeeding in the academic world. After all, in every area in American life we have an important role to play. And some guys said, "Oh, never mind, I want to be on the front line. I'm going to be on the front line." Where's the front line? Steel! Auto! Coal mines! Sewers! Front line. So I'd say to these guys, "It's not so easy on the front line. We should evaluate ourselves, maybe you should not be on the front line. Maybe you should be a half step behind the front line." There's a qualitative difference being in the front line and being 300 or 400 yards away from the front line. There's a big difference. There's a big difference between living in Harlem or living on the West Side. Big difference. Front line is here, and you're a little bit away, you can still play a good role.

"No, no, front line." All right. "Look, if you change your mind, if you find it's too hard, let's talk it over; you can always change your perspective." After all, it's not a closed corporation here. We have not captured the market every place. Let's evaluate a guy's work. It gets hard on the front line. It gets hard. Working in one of these automobile plants is hard. You work 10 hours a day, six days a week during the busy season. It's hard. In Buffalo, Murray worked many years in an automobile plant. They used to have a saying in Buffalo among the workers. The guys used to say, "If you work for Ford for three years, Chevy won't hire you." The other guys said, "If you work for Chevy for three years, Ford won't hire you." Because workers used to get burnt out; nervous breakdowns, and all that kind of thing were very common, particularly in the highly automated, rapid assembly line places.

So now you work there six months or a year. Front line. Hard. Now, instead of coming to the club or collective and saying, "Look, this is very hard for me. Maybe I made a mistake. Maybe we made a mistake. Maybe I should be doing something else; look, I'm still devoted to Marxism-Leninism. I certainly can make a contribution." No, in-

stead of that honesty we've got our "front line theory." We've got to justify it. We can't be honest because that's not romantic anymore. That's not the "flowering of the individual." "I work in auto!" But actually you think this whole business of working in the factory is a load of shit. "Workers are no good. I agree with Marxism-Leninism. I agree with the Progressive Labor Party. But these workers ain't going to do nothing. And we're not going to do nothing."

A person has the right to change his mind. We certainly can't prevent people from changing their minds. We're a voluntary organization. But you see, it's very individualistic. It's not completely honest. It's basking in status symbols, preening for your friends. Instead of coming out and saying what it is, you try and cover it up with a theory.

People do this work for a year or two, young guys or even older people. It doesn't matter that much actually. I don't think age is any indication of patience, stability or understanding. It's hard. Things don't move the way you want. The revolution isn't around the corner. And you could be doing this for a long time. You don't think of it just that way, but somehow in the back of your mind is the idea "I can be a lawyer, I could be a doctor, or something; maybe my mother was right. I'll give this thing a whirl for another year, and I'll get a theory. I'll come up with some big theory, that will speed the whole thing up, and get it all over within a year or two. And I'll get a theory to go with it. I'll get some guru or somebody who'll come up with some new 'Marxist-Leninist' theory and a big plan." We've all heard this. It's just another way of creeping out. That is to say, when ideological differences arise within the party (which is not a bad thing, which is a good thing) we have to be very objective and determine what is the reason for the difference. Is it a serious attempt to influence the movement, or is it merely giving vent to a great deal of individualism?

Take the National Committee as an example. I think I

mentioned once before that out of the original 20 National Committee members elected at the previous convention about a third dropped away from the party. Now sure, there were differences, but yet in none of these differences was there a basic challenge to the party's line, a challenge to the dictatorship of the proletariat and all the basic bed-rock principles. I don't think there was open challenge to that. In each case secondary differences were elevated to primary differences and these people left the party. When you delved into it a little more carefully you saw two or three things. When you examined the outlook, the attitudes, there was a complete difference on base-building, on how to build a base, and whom to build a base among. There was a lot of individualism and arrogance. "You don't agree with me, screw you, that's all. It's my way or no way." And, unfortunately, to a great extent, this is still a very prevalent attitude in the party.

Now, you want to give leadership to the party, and you want to give leadership to the masses (that's what we're talking about). How are you going to do it, when a good deal of your ideological thinking is based on individualism? "Me, me! My mother told me I was the smartest guy alive, and she was right! I am! Nobody could tell me I'm wrong, because I know everything. And no one else in the party knows anything. They don't understand." Now it may be that the party is wrong, and individuals are right. That has happened before. It's happened in this party. It's going to happen again. That is to say, the party will make mistakes, an individual or a couple of individuals in the party will say, "Look, the party's making an error" and you know, it won't be understood, it won't be accepted. You have to take a serious attitude to that kind of struggle. You have to take a protracted attitude to that kind of struggle unless you feel that the party renounced the fundamental ideas for which you joined it. If that's the case, then I would say, "Why wait, split, that's right." But if it's a tactical or even a strategic difference, you have to take a protracted attitude in dealing with that. There's always a possibility, God bless you, you may be wrong, and maybe the collec-

tive was right. And even if you are right, if you have any confidence in the collective, well, somehow or other they'll get enough wisdom to understand how smart you were, to see maybe you were right. People change.

We have made many changes in the party, and have had many changes in our line and in many of our strategies and tactics. And unfortunately, that's right, in many cases it's taken us too long to make changes. But, nonetheless, there have been changes. And we have to take a protracted attitude, to fight in a sharp, but principled way, from the point of view of really building the party. And if you really want to build the party when you have a difference with it, you have to think about that because it's not so simple. That's a very difficult contradiction. That's right, I don't say it's simple. But the way to solve it is not to break up the party, to try to make the party become the main enemy, and beat the party. Because that's a very bourgeois attitude.

Well, we have a lot of that in the party. That's bourgeois arrogance, individualism, thinking of yourself over the needs of the party and the people. Sooner or later this brings you into contradiction with the people. If you're working, as all of us are trying to, among the people, you can't be Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Your attitudes will appear in your work among the people. You can't be the bad guy in the party and the good guy among the masses. Maybe for a little while you will be on your best behavior among the masses; you will put on a little better show. And you will cover it up a little bit because you have a certain kind of political consciousness (political in the Democratic Party sense) and you can keep a poker face and cover it up a little bit. "Oh, he's a nice guy. But we won't bother to learn anything from the masses, we won't work collectively with the masses, because after all, we know everything. What do these dumb people know? All we have to do is tell them. And if they don't do what I want, they're stupid."

And that's now seemingly good people become enemies

of the working class. They don't sit down and will it, they don't sit down and say "I'm going to screw the workers, I'm going to screw the party, now I'm going to do it." They are usually seemingly good guys who want to do a good thing, who do what they think is right. But really they are not working collectively, they don't give a damn about anybody but themselves. They have an axe to grind, and they are going to grind it.

People come to the convention but they don't necessarily view this convention as a way of solidifying the party. How many of us sat down and thought, "Now what am I going to do at this convention to make the party a stronger party; what am I going to do at this convention to unify and build the party, to strengthen the party?" And how many people really view the convention as a forum to win people to their ideas? "I came here to win somebody to my idea. I wrote a leaflet and really, I wrote this paper to win people to my idea." Well, I think most of us are like this. Many of us view the convention as a forum to get our point across, rather than a process in which the party can emerge stronger than ever, renewed in its dedication to going out and building the party among the people in their own areas. So, therefore, I think that on this question of individualism, we have a long way to go, we have not licked it by a long shot.

We can't take a superficial view of the development of the party. It would be a big mistake. We must dig deeper. We can take nobody for granted. We must take everybody into consideration, and work with one another very closely and collectively to help one another overcome individualism, and progress in the work.

#### Criticism and Self-Criticism

Now, I think that one of the biggest weaknesses in the development of the international movement, and it certainly manifests itself in our own movement, is the failure to develop criticism and self-criticism. Because without the

process of criticism and self-criticism there is no self-critical way that the party can correct itself, no way at all. That's the only way. Without it we are robbed of the real ability to correct ourselves. And so, inevitably if criticism and self-criticism isn't elevated we will sink into the wrong ideology. We'll develop the wrong ideas, because there will be nothing in operation to fight the wrong ideas.

I think that we have to think about this a little more. For example, in almost all the papers written for the convention discussion, (and there weren't that many, 30, 40, however many there were) how many were self-critical? Who wrote any that said, "I have been trying this work, and I screwed up. And I am not doing what I could have." That at least would be an attempt, weak as it is, to set a self-critical tone. One comrade wrote a list of criticisms of the party. And this comrade, before he got into the criticism, wrote two sentences of self-criticism, but he crossed it out. Crossed it out! Could not bear that everybody in the party should read something of a self-critical character! And yet the whole paper was a critique of the party's line! All crossed out. And at first I thought I'd be nasty and just have it photographed, just like that. But fortunately (or maybe unfortunately) Wally saw it and, I don't know why, he thought I crossed it out, so when he pasted it up, he took it out.

Now, that's a little bit of a phenomenon, that not one member of the party, (I might be wrong, maybe there was one) but most members—almost nobody had anything self-critical to say. There was some criticism, which is good. But that's only one aspect of criticism and self-criticism. Self-criticism is very important, because if we don't evaluate ourselves it's very hard for others to get a handle on some of the real shortcomings that we may have. Of course it's easier to "self-criticize" somebody else than to be self-critical of oneself. And that's another way of showing that we still consider ourselves to be primary and the party and the people to be secondary.

Now many times people say, "Well, I'm for all that. That's all true. What can we do to change? What can be done to change?" Well, there's no panacea. I think in the first place one has to be aware of this problem. Self-criticism is still the primary thing. One has to have some evaluation of oneself and the people one is working with, and deal with shortcomings self-critically and critically. But after having said that, then of course there are certain procedural things that have political content which can help people change. Now one of them is check-up. When someone is asked to do something, and he agrees to do it, there should be careful examination to find out whether it is being done. How well is it being done? Examine it. Evaluate it. What was done? What was the person's perspective? Does he have a perspective? What did this thing have to do with the person's perspective? In this way we have some way of evaluating a person's political role. It isn't a mystical, psychological procedure with somebody beating himself saying, "Well, I'm this and I'm that, I'm a bad fellow" and everybody answering, "That's true." No! There is a process by which we help the individual member to make positive changes.

And this has to be a constant thing. So that when we are engaged in activity, even in the heat of a battle so to speak, we have to find the time to examine what it is we are doing. Somebody says, "Ugh, we'll do it later, when it's all over." Yeah—when we're all dead, we'll examine it. When it's all over, then we'll do it. "I have no time. I have a million meetings. I got to meet this one. I've got to see that one. I'm all tied up." All tied up! Can't stop for a minute to think about what it is we are doing. Can't stop for a minute. Got minutes for everything else, got minutes to write criticism, got minutes for this, got minutes for that, ain't got five minutes to sit down and ask "What are we doing?"

I have seen it happen in strikes; we had it here in New York in a welfare strike, where our club in the Welfare Department (I don't know why I'm picking on them, it's one that comes to mind) was in the middle of a strike. The

club hadn't met. The left-wing caucus that they were working with hadn't met. Too busy. I asked why hadn't the club met. "We're too busy." Well what the hell do we need a party for? What do we need a party for? What is the collective process of the party? The left-wing caucus that they were working with hadn't met.

The students at Columbia are tearing up the pea patch. SDS is the organization leading it. The SDS has not met, we haven't gotten it to meet yet. Our people are active members in it. What is the collective? "I went up to Columbia. I went up to the front lines. I showed my face." Yeah, that will help a lot at Columbia! You know, individualism. How does one distinguish himself in struggle? He's a hero. That's America. That's how you distinguish yourself in the struggle. You're a hero. Somebody gives you a medal, and when you come back, "Boy, were you brave. The cops hit you 18 times. Were you brave!" Big bravery. I think we should be brave. I'm not denigrating bravery. But by balls alone you won't do it. You won't do it. You have got to have brains, you've got to think. You've got to work together. You've got to evaluate, and in the middle of a struggle you've got to do it. In the middle of a struggle.

I once read a book about the Chinese Army written by a bourgeois general, and he described how in the middle of a battle they managed to hold meetings. Now they won. So you can't knock that. That's very interesting. How do you hold meetings in the middle of a battle? They figured it out. They worked it out. Guys were having meetings in foxholes. "What should we do now? Let's think it over." Almost ludicrous when I read it. I said to myself, "What a jerk you are Milt. These guys know what they are doing. They are thinking. Try it." I think that this is part of how we overcome this individualism, by working together collectively within the party and with the people we're working with politically outside the party.

Of course, if you've got nobody to work with politically outside the party, you're in trouble. You've got no relationship to the masses, there's no process. The main door

is closed. You don't know anybody, that's a problem. And there's still many of us who, by and large, really don't have relationships with the masses that are meaningful. We say hello to somebody, and get up in the morning and say hello to the neighbors, but we don't really know them. And I think to a great extent that is the case with many people yet. Relationships are too superficial. We don't know people well. They don't really tell us too much. You know what I think we should do? We should ask people, "What do you think of me? How do you think I am working? What do you think of the role of my party in this situation now?"

It doesn't mean that everything that somebody says, whether he is in the party or outside the party, is correct. But it's interesting to hear what people have to say. You might learn something. And that process might help toughen one's skin and make one stop and think. We have to think about this question of criticism and self-criticism, and not do it abstractly, but do it in the process of work. Do it in relationship to what it is we're supposed to be doing, what we voluntarily agreed to do, and what everybody else expects us to do. Otherwise, where's the responsibility to one another? None!

So we had a meeting, we agreed, and now everybody goes out and does what he wants anyway. Of course, the masses spot that. They will pick it up. They will see that you guys aren't serious. Guys from the party in various mass struggles, two lines: one guy says one thing, another guy says another thing. People there, 50 people, know they're in PL. "Say, that's a funny party, that's a funny party. Gee, they're not 'Stalinists.' They're jerks." Try to get away with it in the union. See how long you will last.

#### Right Opportunism

Now in our party these deviations appear in very specific political ways. One could sum it up by saying there's a lot of right opportunism in the work and in the thinking,

and on the other side of the coin, there's a great deal of sectarianism which we have been attacking by paying attention to developing our individual relationships with other people. And in our opinion these are two sides of the same revisionist coin. This manifests itself in the unions and in Black liberation work, and among students.

We had a fellow working in a good shop in the Baltimore area and he came up with the absurd of the absurdities. You know, everyone reacted: "Would you believe that!" He said the blasphemy that Walter Reuther was better than George Meany. And you'd think, "Well, oh boy, after six years in PL, how could some guy say something so foolish? The year before that guy would have said 'Line them both up.'" That same guy would have said "Put them to the wall." He went to work in a shop, and within six months he "discovered" that Walter Reuther was better than George Meany. How did that happen?

And you know Wally went down to see him. "Oh no, you know that George Meany is just as bad as Walther Reuther," and we give him the line. This guy says, "No, there's a difference, there's a difference." So what's the difference? "He's better." Why's he better? Well, he lists the usual little things, he's against the war, or something, whatever it is, he likes Kennedy better than Johnson. You know those things, whatever people are saying. He's better. So Wally says, "Well, that's not our line."

So why did this change come over this fellow? Why? Six months ago he would say shoot Walter Reuther, and now Reuther became "better." Why? Because among the workers with whom he's working, everyday he goes and lives with these guys, and maybe he got among a group of guys who had a little different type of consciousness, who maybe concerned themselves (because in that particular plant and around that area there are guys who are "more sophisticated" in this sort of thing) and they started butchering him with "Walter Reuther is better." And he would have to go in every day, and he would have to argue for our

position. So after a while, you see, instead of him winning them, or at least him saying, "Well I can't win them now, but maybe in time I could win them," figuring how that process could be done, (or maybe these guys are unwinnable, maybe I'm working with the wrong ones," or whatever the situation is) instead they won him. Why? Because it was very hard for him to work this out himself because these guys have logical arguments. There's nothing totally illogical about what these workers were saying. George Meany, what could be worse than George Meany? But we say that Walter Reuther is a reflection of liberal imperialism within the labor movement and it is neither here nor there whether he is a crook or not. The point is he reflects a certain class ideology. And in a certain sense that ideology is more pernicious than Meany's. But nonetheless in six months our guy was spouting the Communist Party's line.

Now, you can take more sophisticated twists on this. When Martin Luther King was assassinated our party came out with a line, be it as it may, and some guys working in a union among a lot of Black workers came out with a different line about Martin Luther King. Why? Well because it was a very sensitive situation. A lot of Black people were grieved by King's assassination. And to take it on in the way the party took it on publicly was too hard, so they came out with something that was "less hard." Well, maybe tactically they should not have come out with anything. I think, you know, you're better off coming out with nothing than coming out with the wrong line. The ruling class' ideas are prevalent among the masses. If you're working with, or you're talking to, a number of people who are sympathetic to LeRoi Jones (who is another manifestation of reactionary nationalism among the Black people, but somebody whom we worked, or attempted to work with, so we're not talking abstractly, and I don't want to personally vilify him, I won't bother) they would say LeRoi Jones was a wonderful man. "Look, he was arrested. He went to jail. How can you attack or criticize somebody when he is a 'victim' of the ruling class?" Why can't we say that about Martin Luther King? He went to jail plenty of

times. Why can't we say that about Walter Reuther? They blew off his arm.

Somebody said recently "Well, look at Dr. Spock. How can PL criticize Dr. Spock? They tried to put him in jail." And so on. We said Dr. Spock may be an honest man, he may help babies, it's very useful, but nonetheless, he's either consciously or unconsciously being used by the ruling class within the antiwar movement to mislead us. "But he's gone to jail, he's on trial." Well somebody picked this out of the paper last night: "Dr. Spock involved in Whitehall Street demonstration, was indicted by the government, charged with engaging in a conspiracy to help young men resist the draft and to disrupt induction centers throughout the country. Today, during opening statements of five defense lawyers, Leonard Boudin counsel to Dr. Spock, said the 65-year old pediatrician had testified that his arrest for disorderly conduct was staged with the foreknowledge of the New York City officials. The object of the peaceful tableau, in which the police would let Dr. Spock stage a symbolic disruption of the Selective Service machinery by sitting briefly on the steps of the Induction Center before being arrested, was to encourage youth to avoid violence in their antiwar, anti-draft demonstrations, Mr. Boudin said. The demonstration was conceived, he said, by David McReynolds, Executive Secretary of the War Resisters League, who told Mayor Lindsay, and Chief Inspector Garelik that the arrest of Dr. Spock and others would have a pacifying effect on young people because it would show them that the adults were going forward and getting arrested. Mr. Boudin said that before the announced demonstration Dr. Spock and Mr. McReynolds met with the Mayor to discuss the episode."

Now you see, here's a guy who's either too stupid, or whatever you want to call it, who's consciously being used by the ruling class to mislead the movement. We should support him! And yet, when we attacked those Resistance demonstrations, and made these very observations, that

for the first time in history there were planned encounters, that the two so-called antagonists planned the whole thing out and said, "You hit me here, you arrest me there, I'll be symbolic here," you know, and when we attacked that, a lot of people in our party said "Oh, you guys are rotten to attack Resistance. Resistance is helping the struggle." Yeah, you see how they helped the struggle! Sure! There are a lot of good people in the Resistance. Most of the young people in the Resistance Movement are good. But how are you going to point out to them what is bad unless you say it? We aren't attacking them, we're attacking the leaders of this thing. We're attacking the relationship between these leaders and the ruling class. We're attacking the class character of the demonstrations. Were these demonstrations going to hurt the anti-war movement? Or were they going to help the anti-war movement?

But people said, "Well, when I showed that article to people I'm working with they said, 'That's terrible. PL is criticizing these people! We can't use it. It's a bad thing. Very bad.'" But yet we know that the Resistance Movement has been harmful. We're not opposed to resistance. We're not opposed to what happened at Brooklyn College. We're not opposed to what happened at Columbia. We're for making it bigger and better. But we say those are good because they are related to a base-building effort. That has a great deal of significance. It's not an isolated action off someplace where they can beat your god-damned brains out and use it to cause a lot of mistrust and demoralization in the movement, and isolate us from the sections of the people with whom we're trying to work. But we know that in the party some people backed away from that line. In Boston they wrote something else. "We agree with the line. But we'll put out something different because that's the hard line. I'll tell you why we're putting our thing out. It's the words. The language. It's a very funny language, so we'll put out something different." So when they came out with their own different thing it didn't help them. It didn't help them at all. Even opportunistically it didn't help.

Yes, present it as well as you can, present it and improve it as much as you can, but the basic thing is whether your line is right or wrong. What is the right line?

#### Fighting For Correct Line is Key to Leadership

We have the responsibility to bring forth the right line in every area. That's leadership. You bring forth the right line no matter how difficult it may be in the short run. That's leadership. Whoever said it was easy to fight for the right line? Who said it is easy? Do you think it's easy? No. That work is hard. It's not easy. It's hard. That's what it is all about. The name of the game is "hard." Not easy. And that's right, most people at this point are not going to agree with us. If they would we'd have to have Madison Square Garden to hold the convention. And that was always true with every revolutionary movement. You have to start small and then slowly but surely, with a very sharp uphill struggle, get among the people and fight for your ideas.

But the way to win acceptance for your ideas is not by abandoning them. The way to win for your ideas is not by creating illusions among the masses, and helping the ruling class make phony leaders among the masses. Unfortunately, enough phony leaders are already imposed on the masses. Why do we have to make new ones, Doctor Spock or LeRoi Jones, or Mr. Carmichael? What do we need it for? What's it gonna help? Bad enough we got Walter Reuther and George Meany and a host of others who already have leadership in the labor movement. We don't have to help them make new ones.

So part of our job is to struggle against these things. And very often it's unpopular. Very often it's very hard to struggle against these things. Very often the people we like the most, the very person we want to win, doesn't like us and will attack us, and will say "I don't want anything to do with you because you're attacking Dr. Spock. And you're a son of a bitch for doing it. You got a

lot of nerve for saying that." A lot of people got very angry with me because we took a critical position on King when he was assassinated. "How can you say that? He was such a nice man." Well, I'm not saying we should not take into account people's sensibilities or sensitivities but you can't square it by changing the line. You can't square it by retreating from a class position, from a politically conscious position. You can't do it.

And you can't resolve the problem of errors in the work by making a bigger error. That's to say, in our work in industry, of course there's a danger of economism. Of course there's a danger of right opportunism. You work in this atmosphere, under the nose of the company, under the nose of the state, under the nose of the trade union bureaucracy, with the illusions that the workers have, you're more likely than not to make opportunistic errors. How do you cure it? By making a correct political fight. Not by coming out with bigger and better economism. That's not going to solve the problem. Economism is going to be resolved by bringing political consciousness into the labor movement and into the people's movements.

That's right, the question of state power. That's not an abstraction. It only becomes an abstraction to us because it is hard. So it seems that it's not relevant to what we're doing. But in the course of struggle the question of state power always becomes relevant. Do you know of one struggle in the country today where the question of state power and the dictatorship of the proletariat didn't come to be essential? At Columbia, on a strike, in the rebellions in the ghetto? Why? Because in every struggle in this country the state moves with all its force, either round about or directly, to bring state power to bear. That is the main lesson in every struggle. That is the main lesson. What struggle has there been in this country where this isn't a main lesson? That is the lesson we have to pound home and home and home again.

Let's say, for the sake of argument, that all these de-

mands in France that we read in the New York Times today are the true limit of demands. (Because we don't know all the demands. We're not that informed.) Who in France today is raising the question of state power, from what we can see? Nobody. That's probably true. Some students and anarchists have taken over the factories. So, that's nothing new. That's syndicalism. That's the IWW. Get the factories. The workers, under the revisionists' leadership, want a bigger raise. There's nothing wrong with a bigger raise. They want the taxes reduced. Nothing wrong with the taxes reduced. They want all these things. That's fine. How are you going to get them? How are you going to resolve the problems of the French workers? By seizing state power! Who's going to seize state power? The workers and the students. Who's for seizing it? Probably nobody. Or probably a group, maybe like ourselves, which is so small, and so divorced (because of objective or subjective circumstances) from the class struggle, that even if it raises it, it carries little weight. So even there where it almost appears like "here is state power right under your nose," where it looks like "all you have to do is reach out and take it,"—they are reaching for the wrong thing. They are trying to reach out and take the wrong thing. And yet, there it is.

#### Without Ties to Workers Line is Irrelevant

Now I hope I'm wrong. I hope that what we read is wrong. Let's hope that there is a group in France, a political sect in France that has state power as its outlook, and can win the workers to snatch it. Fine. That's great. We'd love it. But in my opinion it's not likely, not at all. Here's the struggle in France. And now it comes down to what are your ties. It doesn't just happen, it's a process. Nobody in France has been advocating seizing state power. The revisionist party in France for the last 30 years has been saying popular front, this front, that front, Mitterand, Mendes-France front, every front but the right thing. And they educated the workers away from the idea of state power.

So if you said to somebody in France 20 years ago, why don't you raise state power? "Oh, I'm for state power, but what does state power have to do with the price of tea in India? 'State power.' Let's be practical. Let's reduce the taxes, get higher wages, let's get parliamentary representatives elected." Well, you see, this is the background from which the rebellion in France broke out. After 20-30 years there's nobody for state power. And now because ten guys are getting up and saying state power, who's going to listen? What relationship do they have to the masses?

You don't win people just because you make an announcement. If we could then we could close shop now, wait til it happens here and when it happens I'll call you all up on the phone and say, "Here it is." It will take 10 years or 15 years or 20 or tomorrow. Whatever. I'll call you up and we will all go out. But of course people will all laugh in your face and say "Who's this nut? Where do you live? Where did they let you loose from?"

Sure, fighting for the right line seems like an abstraction. Yes, it's "irrelevant," because we don't see that we're in a life and death struggle, and we don't see that our essential political task among workers is, yes, to get involved, to win them, to engage in a day-to-day struggle, and to introduce political ideas. Now, when we talk about political ideas we're mainly talking about winning state power.

How do we move the struggle from one level to another? Very often people can't see how to move. It's hard. People don't see what they can do to move the struggle from one level to another. Sell magazines and our other literature, that may be the best thing you can do. You can't get the Columbia students to go and take over City Hall; the workers won't shut down the factories now. Maybe at Columbia or any place one of the biggest things you could do is to recruit people into the party. Why? Because you will politicize guys and you will have more forces to go among the masses to politicize them, and try to improve them. The

revolutionary movement doesn't come out of the air. You have to raise political ideas among a lot of people. That is the most important thing you can do. It gives the revolutionary Left, our party, much more strength and footing, and when there's a bigger change in the objective circumstances, we'll be in a position to do a lot more and really raise the struggle to a higher level, going further and if possible, all the way. The essence of our political role among the working people is to advocate class consciousness, unity of the people in struggle, to clear out misleaders, and bring political consciousness into the movement.

#### Clear the Enemy's Ideas Out of the People's Movements

Now, a lot of people say, "But we're not hitting the main enemy, we're hitting too many other people." All right, you show me where Lenin polemicized against the Czar!

To look at it from another aspect, in this country people have more illusions in the ruling class than the Russian people had in the Czar. The problem of exposing the ruling class was less necessary for Lenin. In our country, it's true, we have spent a lot of energy, exposing the ruling class, explaining what it is and how it operates, showing all the ins and outs of the Kennedys. That's one of the peculiarities of our situation. We have to do a lot of that.

But we also have to expose and show the class relationships of the forces that exist within the people's movement. If you have not done that, you have not done anything. The old Communist Party sat around and said, "Attack the enemy, the worst one, the main enemy." They always had the "main enemy." The ultra-right, the main enemy. "Don't attack Johnson, only the main enemy. Certainly don't attack Walter Reuther. Don't attack King, don't even attack George Meany. Who's the enemy? The ruling class. Who's the worst of the ruling class? The ultra-right. Let's attack them." See?

How does any movement overcome its obstacles? It has

to clear away those within its ranks who have the enemy's ideas. You have to clear away those obstacles in order to move ahead. Now it's true you can make a lot of mistakes. That's right. You can't act indiscriminately. And we have to be careful not to attack our friends, and to know who our friends are. But we are trying to make a differentiation between the people and the false leaders, the misleaders, because the people are our friends and it's often the leadership who are bad. Because just to say that the system is bad is not enough. It's good to say this, it's decisive to say this, but it's not sufficient. It's only the first step. We have to fight the class struggle within the movement and within our party. Not because we're trying to narrow down our base, not because we're trying to dance on the head of a pin, but because we're trying to make the movement and the party stronger, and defeat those obstacles that prevent us from moving ahead. That's why we try to carry on struggle from within.

Now maybe, here and there, maybe on any specific points the party is wrong. Maybe Dr. Spock is our friend. Maybe Walter Reuther is our friend. Maybe LeRoi Jones is our friend. Maybe we're wrong. How will that be proven, that the party is wrong? How will we prove that the party's wrong and made a wrong estimate of these people? Life, struggle, will show if we're wrong. And if we have a self-critical ability then the party will reverse itself. Then the party will say, "Look, we made a mistake." I'm not saying we must consciously go out and make errors. I'm just saying that there's got to be a delineation, a method of establishing who are friends and who are enemies and some method of resolving problems, some method of moving ahead, and some method of self-correction.

#### Ideological Struggle in the Party

We have to see that this ideological struggle, within the party, and outside the party, is basic to giving leadership to the party and to the masses. It is an essential aspect of struggle. It means breaking down lazy thinking, getting

off our asses and it means taking initiative to do things we don't like. That's right. Very often we don't do the best thing in these struggles. And we have to learn to fight in the best possible way and respond to these struggles in the best possible way. Even if at this particular moment you're not expert at giving and taking criticism the answer is not to avoid doing it. You will learn how to do it by doing it and that's just as hard as any other work. It's just as difficult. As we said many times, we must begin to curb liberalism in the party. We must intensify the class struggle in the party in a way which reduces antagonisms and contradictions among our friends and sharpens them with our enemy.

That's right. This is the class struggle in the party. All these differences of opinion reflect the various trends among the people. These differences don't fall out of the sky. It's got everything to do with working with people. Of course we can't not work with people. That's why you need the collective: to throw all these ideas into the hopper. The collective sorts it out and puts it together, and tries to make a scientific plan based on the various experiences that we all have had.

I think that if we don't develop this collective approach in the party, and if we don't see what the essence of our political role is among the masses then we're going to lose the perspective of state power and we're going to become a reformist party. We're going to become like the others. That's a big responsibility that we have, to try and prevent this from happening, to try and see that our party plays its revolutionary role. Because, as we said before, U.S. imperialism is the oppressor, the main enemy of the peoples of the world and those of us who are communists have the responsibility of helping to destroy this system.

And up until this point I think we have made some progress. But, speaking for myself, I feel that we have been very weak in conducting political and ideological struggles within the party and outside of the party. I feel

we have been very lax in allowing a lot of shortcomings to exist, to sort of look the other way. It's hard to struggle within the party. You know, we grow cozy with one another. We're all pals. We all know one another. And when you work with people in the mass movement, that same thing happens sometimes, you know, and it becomes a touchy thing to criticize this one and that one. And I have certainly been one of the main culprits in the party in allowing a lot of things to go by the board, even many times repressing or diverting political struggle and trying to soft-pedal it.

Naturally you try to use common sense. You don't want to turn the party into a football field where you can have anarchism and everybody just vents his spleen. There's a scientific way of developing political struggle so that it helps the party, so it helps the masses and helps our people to become political leaders. We have an understanding, we have some guidelines, democratic centralism, some sense of communist discipline, some hatred of the enemy. Therefore, I hope that one of the uses this convention might serve, besides developing our program in various areas, is to sharpen these political and ideological struggles in the party so that we can get all our party members to work more seriously, more acceptably and consequently, serving the masses.

Because when we are talking about serving the masses, this is what we're talking about. We're not talking about bringing them coffee and cake. We're talking about bringing communist political ideas into their ranks so they can conduct the struggle against the enemy in a better way, so they can achieve their aspirations. A lot of shortcomings that exist in the party can be overcome because most of the people in the party, perhaps almost everyone in the party has the desire to do this work. But that desire won't be fulfilled unless a collective effort is made.

Very often people hang back and don't overcome their problems precisely because they are not fought with. If

you take the easy way with them, they will take the easy way with themselves, and nothing changes. If you don't criticize somebody and raise things with him it retards his ability to develop self-criticism. Because we are working under the assumption that most people are trying to do a political job and if things are pointed out to them in a constructive political way it will help them reflect on it and make a self-critical evaluation of this criticism. And I think that very important, and not an academic question.

Become a leader to people, a people's tribune, but not a boss. Become someone whom people will rely on and respect and who will recognize your respect and admiration and loyalty and devotion to them. Become someone whom they recognize as a serious, committed person, not somebody who is frivolous, not someone who is like the trade union bureaucrats or the rest of the fakers that exist in the people's movements, somebody that's in it just for themselves. Because you know how people talk about these types. "Ah, he's in it for himself. He's out to get what he can." That's how they think about most leaders, and unfortunately, there's a lot of truth about that.

People say that's the way it is in our country. "Yeah, everybody is out for himself." So, they accept it. But when you come before somebody and you say, "Look, buddy, I'm a communist, I'm not out for myself. I'm out to serve the people," and list all the good things they'll say, "Ah, it sounds good." But they're going to watch you and see if it's true. And the minute you start acting for yourself, they'll say, "Ah, just like the others. Out for himself."

You see that's what people all over the world are saying about the Soviet revisionists. That's what they are saying. "Just like the other capitalists, out for themselves, get what they can." Of course that may be the simple man's way of summing up history. But I want to tell you, that's a very essential point because that's the way most of the people's leaders in this country act. They are out for themselves. "What's in it for me?" That's what the guys said

about Hoffa. "Ah, I know he's out for himself. But at least he's trying to get me something." That's the way people refer to Hoffa. "Well, at least he's not like Meany. Meany doesn't even bother. Hoffa will try to get us a dime or something. So let him have his million dollars, or whatever it is."

But that can't be good enough for us! "Well, Murray is so-so, but at least he's better than I am." That's a pretty crummy way for people to evaluate us. That would be a real criticism. If people think of us like that then we'd better either change or pack it in.

I think we have the goods to transform ourselves, to really serve the people, to really be responsible to one another, and to really go all the way. Our responsibility is to our party, and our loyalty is to the people and to Marxism-Leninism. It is up to us. Do we really believe that, do we really act in that way, and do everything necessary to make that so? And that really means becoming persons of integrity. All of us. I'm talking about myself, because I don't think I am developed to that point. I have a long way to go. And I hope that after this convention we interact with one another and with the masses to bring everyone of us as quickly as possible up to that level. If you do that, if we act in that way, then these three days that we spend together will be of some use.