

# Labor Reform or Revolution?

The Communist League, as well as the working class, has reached a higher understanding of the labor movement than even a year ago. On April 18 and 19 the C.L. held its first major labor conference. This conference dealt with all aspects of the workers' struggle at their place of work and in the unemployment and welfare lines. The conference placed as primary the role of the unorganized and unemployed, and did not limit the discussion just to trade unions. We approached the question of the trade unions from the point of view of the millions of revolutionary but unorganized workers in this country.

In order to understand the role of the trade unions and the question of the growing revolutionary struggle, we must see the real role of these unions, their leaders, and the position of the so-called "lefts" on trade unions. The conference presented to the comrades and friends four major reports, and a number of secondary but important reports. They were: Reform vs. Revolutionary Struggle In

the Labor Movement; National Minorities in the Labor Movement; Splits in the Working Class Movement; and United Front-United Action. In addition there were reports on Women in the Labor Movement; The Lumpenproletariat; Fascist Labor Fronts; Unemployment Councils; Auto Workers Report; as well as a number of other reports.

These reports exposed the position of labor misleaders, phoney left groupings, and proposed a more correct line for struggle in the labor movement. These reports were based on the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, and Mao Tse-tung. One of the first questions we had to answer was why do communists work in reactionary trade unions? This question was answered in the report Reform vs. Revolutionary Struggle.

## WHY COMMUNISTS WORK IN REACTIONARY TRADE UNIONS

Lenin in What Is To Be Done? makes it very clear that we must be wherever the working class is, whether that be in the church, streets

or in the unions. It is the job of a communist to go to the working class; therefore we go into the unions.

Anyone who goes into the unions today must realize from the beginning that he is in hostile waters. The unions are controlled and ruled by fascist labor misleaders. Unions today are not the unions of 30 years ago. Today they and large sections of their membership are pro-capitalist rather than anti-capitalist. Large sections of the more skilled workers support these union misleaders and the capitalist system because they get high wages, and a prime position in the working class. In addition, many unions and some of their members actually support white chauvinism and the imperialist war.

The Communist League realizes that the unions do not represent the most revolutionary section of the class, and that is why we have always gone to the most exploited and oppressed workers to build a base for a communist party. In line with this, we have also gone into the unions

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because we can't leave them to the capitalists. We must develop an understanding of how to work in them. We know the reactionary nature of the unions and are tempted to withdraw from that struggle, but Lenin and Stalin keep us on the right line. Lenin says:

"To refuse to work in the reactionary trade unions means leaving the underdeveloped or backward masses of workers under the influence of the reactionary leaders, the agents of the bourgeoisie, the labor aristocrats, or the workers who have become completely bourgeois."

Stalin furthers this position in answering Trotsky's position that communists should withdraw from the reaction, reformist trade unions:

"Is this a correct policy? It is incorrect in its very essence. It is basically incorrect because it is in conflict with the Leninist conception of leadership of the masses. It is incorrect because the trade unions of the West, despite their reactionary character are the most elementary, the most comprehensive organizations of the most backward workers, hence they are the widest mass organizations of the proletariat. We cannot go to the masses, we cannot win over the masses if we bypass the unions. To accept Trotsky's viewpoint would mean to hand over the masses of workers to be devoured..." (Collected Works, Vol. 8, p. 185.)

In addition, there will never be a successful revolution without the seizure of the means

In addition, there will never be a successful revolution without the seizure of the most strategic means of production, like steel, railroads and mining. Therefore we must go into unions like the United Steel Workers, the United Mineworkers, etc. to build support.

This sums up our position on why we work in unions, but this is only half the question. The other half is, what do we do once we are in the unions? First we have to know who is the enemy.

## WHO IS THE ENEMY?

We all realize that the main enemy is the capitalist class, but this enemy has many faces and many fronts. Inside the labor movement the main tactic of the capitalists is the line of pure reformism. It is our job, as it was Lenin's, Stalin's and Mao's job before us, to combat this bourgeois line and present the class with the correct revolutionary line. The report, Reform Vs. Revolutionary

Struggle in the Labor Movement, gave a good explanation of this:

"Reformism regards socialism as a remote goal and nothing more, and actually repudiates the socialist revolution and aims at establishing socialism by peaceful means. Reformism advocates not class struggle, but class collaboration." (J. Stalin, Anarchism or Socialism)

This statement by Stalin exposes the nature of the reformists' outlook. Reformism is a program of relying on gradual change and making things a little bit better, slowly. It develops out of faith in the fair mindedness of the bourgeoisie. This is a shakey foundation to build a program around, that is, the dependence on the liberalism of monopoly capitalists.

The reformists feel that they can serve humanity and progress by getting up close to the most reactionary forces in society. With faulty logic like this it is no wonder that the labor movement is on rough ground. Stalin said in Dialectical and Historical Materialism, "...in order not to err in policy, one must be a revolutionary, not a reformist." What Stalin says here is very simple in appearance but very deep when realized in practice. It means the difference between moving a force of workers on an offensive drive for social change and just demands, educating them as to the nature of capitalism in the process, or sneaking around, dealing with the 'liberal' and the 'just' bosses, using the workers for a backstop (in other words, class collaboration). It means the difference between getting reforms by means of revolutionary action or getting reforms as a handout from the ruling class. When the revolutionary method is not applied the reformist dealings give the boss a fine oppor-

tunity to buy off the opposition from the top, an opportunity which he readily accepts. The reformist method gives the ruling class a free reign with the 'carrot and the stick! The reformists tell the workers about how reasonable the bosses are and warn them (the workers) not to cause trouble. (They're getting the carrots and don't feel like giving them up.) We know what that leaves for the workers. They get the stick!"

The report continues by talking about three basic expressions of reformist trade unionism. The business union concept which was made popular by Gompers, which says that management and unions are in business together and what is and what is good for GM is good for her workers. The second type is the social democrat reformist policy of talking about the needs of the workers being broader than just nickel and dime issues. This grouping is best represented by Reuther, Woodcox and Bridges, who talk about social problems like the war and discrimination, but always defend the interests of the company. The third type is represented by Goldblat of the I.L.W.U. and Matless of the United Electrical Workers, who talk like communists, but act like fascists. These social-fascists talk at peace rallies, demonstrations and other events, but when it comes down to the real issues of fighting for organization of the unorganized and defending the interests of the working class as a whole, they develop a hands-off policy. Each of these different types of union misleaders represents, in one form or another, agents of the companies and the capitalist class. Whether through hard talk or soft talk, they have attempted to fool the class into a reformist bag that only aids the capitalists in the long run.

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This reformist philosophy and its leaders have harmed and destroyed the revolutionary fight-back of the rank and file for the last 30 years. But these phonies couldn't get away with this trickery without the aid of the Left.

## REVISIONISM COVERS FOR REFORMISM

In order for the reformists to continue to fool the people they had to gain the aid of the Communist Party U.S.A. This so-called communist party has consistently supported the position of these reformists against the position of the rank and file. In the Los Angeles Area, for example, the C.P.U.S.A. openly defended the financial secretary of a U.A.W. local who was attacking the rank and file caucuses. This is just one example of how the revisionists have covered for the fascist labor leaders. The Reformism report says that, "Reforms are regarded by the revisionists as a partial realization of socialism, not as a buffer between the classes or a tactic of the bourgeois ruling class."

## ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM AIDS REFORMISM

"Anarcho-syndicalists don't see revolution as the act of an entire class overthrowing another class. They don't see the need for the class as a whole to strike out against the bourgeois state. They see the revolution as an individualistic occurrence where 'everyone does their own thing!' The workers will overthrow the bosses, the students will take care of the universities etc. And, most importantly, they deny the need for a strong workers' state, a dictatorship of the working class. Being idealists they push the line of 'no state'." (People's Tribune, March 1971, pg. 10).

This philosophy aids reformism by disorganizing and by talking against communist leadership and theory; this gives full play to the reformists and their wishy-washy programs.

## TROTSKYISM: SABOTUERS OF THE REVOLUTION

Within the labor movement the Trotskyites are active agents of the capitalist class. Trotskyism means opportunism! It means sounding "left" but acting "right." History has proven this to be true. For example, while Trotsky himself pretended to be fighting for the Russian workers, he was in fact being paid by the German imperialists! Another example; during WW11, when revolutionary Russia was being attacked by fascist Germany, the Trotskyites openly supported and aided Hitler! We ask, "Why did Ho Chi Minh, Mao Tse-tung, Fidel Castro etc., immediately see to it that all Trotskyites

were shot, not just chased out of their respective countries, but shot?." Because the Trotskyites did all they could to sabotage and destroy the revolutions. They were clearly enemies of the people. The situation has not changed! We must carry on a relentless struggle to destroy Trotskyism wherever it raises its head.

## THE RESTATING OF MARXISM-LENINISM IN THE LABOR MOVEMENT

The report, after showing who and how the enemy puts road blocks in the way of the class, sums up by stating what we must do in the unions. Our main task is Party building. That means that we must first bring the philosophy of Marxism-Leninism to the class. We must not be afraid to fight for socialism. We must build Communist cells and units as our primary task. We must fight for reforms in a revolutionary way, and expose the reformists for what they are. As Communists we know that reformism cannot stop fascism. Reformism as a philosophy represents the interests of the bourgeoisie. The working class must see the need for revolutionary philosophy. Our fight must be to build not just a good union, but to build a Communist Party. We must follow the motto of the Tribune, "The Communist's ideal should not be a trade union secretary but a tribune of the people, able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression." Lenin

This report established clearly why we should be in the trade unions, and who the internal enemies of the class are. In the next report we will try to deal with the question of the minorities in the labor movement. This section of the class represents the most oppressed, exploited, and unorganized sector of the labor movement.

## ALBANIA

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about 1/2 of our incomes go to taxes). At the same time prices of many medicines, foods, utensils and clothes were reduced from 10%-80%. These are just some of the advances possible under socialism.

Albania plays a role in world affairs far beyond what her size would indicate. She is a leader in the communist world in the fight against revisionism, first of Tito, then of Krushchov and now of Breshnev. The PLA attacked the new Tsars of Russia as social-imperialists for their attack on Czechoslovakia in 1968. They have consistently defended the People's Republic of China, the work of Joseph Stalin, and revolutionary Marxism in general, against the attacks of the revisionists. Albania has been a leader in exposing U.S. Imperialism and its schemes against Korea, Vietnam, the Congo and other areas. As a

member of the United Nations, Albania has consistently demanded the admission of China and the censure of the imperialists. In a speech just last year the Albanian representative attacked the U.S. Imperialists as "the principle bastion of racism in the world" and pointed out the repression of the black and brown people here and the fabulous profits that the international monopolies make off the exploitation of the workers in Rhodesia and South Africa.

Albania is an example to the peoples of the world. A small country, devastated by wars, and surrounded by hostile governments, she has built up her economy through her own efforts. She has created a rich life for her people. She has attained a place of dignity in the world, not by aggression, but by continually exposing reaction and supporting just struggles of liberation.



Enver Hoxha, First Secretary of the Party of Labor of Albania.

## CHINA (viene de la pagina 3)

los obreros norteamericanos tienen solamente una estrategia realista si desean tener paz y esta es derrocando y destruyendo al imperialismo de los E.U.A.

Pero el imperialismo no puede ser destruido hasta que la clase obrera de los E.U.A. se una y construya un apoyo masivo para la gente de Vietnam, Laos, Camboia y China. Nosotros tenemos un mismo enemigo--luchando juntos, venceremos!

Nosotros le mostraremos a los imperialistas lo que en verdad significa luchar por "libertad" y "democracia". A nosotros "libertad" significa libertad de opresion y dominio imperialista; y "democracia" significa suprimir esta pequena clase de asesinos, los imperialistas, para que la mayoria, la clase obrera, pueda tener real democracia!

VICTORIA PARA LOS PUEBLOS INDOCHINOS!

LUCHAR POR LA DICTADURA DE LA CLASE OBRERA!