REVOLUTION

CPUUS Holds National Convention
Sharpen Struggle AgainstRevisionism!

During the last week of June, the revisionist Communist Party, USA (CPUUS) held its 21st National Convention. It took place amidst a storm of publicity and hoopla—designated to give the impression that the CP is "on the offensive." To rush this message and whip its troops up, CP number one Gus Hall resorted to bald-faced fantasy: "Who can seriously question the fact that we are now the most visible, most influential, the most unified, the best organized, the most popular, the liveliest, perkist and most unified force on the left bank of U.S. politics?"

The CP revisionists' overwrought intention is to use this Convention as a "turning point" in their efforts to draw among the masses of people, both openly and in disguise, to spread their revisionist poison and build up their strength. Hall's report to the Convention emphasized repeatedly that the CP must push itself by hook or crook into the "many areas where life has presented a vacuum..."

It is not "life" but the deepening imperialist crisis that has created the situation the CP so openly hopes to exploit. The U.S. working class is responding to the monopoly capitalist's effort to push the burden on their shoulders with a massive upsurge of struggle. Increasingly workers are actively rejecting the class collaboration peddled by the top trade union leaders and taking the fighting stand. "It's not our crisis and we won't pay for it!" This typifies the sees of class consciousness generated in intense struggle against the capitalists.

Objectively the situation is excellent for these seeds of class consciousness. But the CP leaders are beginning to question the foundations of monopoly capitalist rule. The Vietnam war and Watergate inspired such mistrust that the CP hopes to shake the hold of bourgeois democratic institutions here had on the U.S. working class. The situation will continue to be favorable for the working class. The crisis is deepening, further weakening the ruling class and exposing the rot and contradictions at the heart of the monopoly capitalist system.

But an objectively favorable situation does not guarantee the advance of the working class. Only to the extent that it has revolutionary class consciousness can the proletariat take full advantage of every opportunity the objective development of the class struggle creates for it. And only to the extent that it becomes conscious of its historic role through the work of its vanguard, the Marxist-Leninist party, which enters into all the struggles of the masses, helps them sum up and see the road ahead, and nourishes the seeds of class consciousness that are born in the struggle. There are other forces attempting to enter the struggles of the masses, who seek to turn the present good situation into its opposite, to use it to advance their own narrow interests at the expense of the working class. Among these is the revisionist CPUUS.

What is Revisionism?

Revisionism is Marxism-Leninism with the revolutionary heart cut out of it; which means that it's not Leninist. And it's not Leninist because it is most inert central to the science of revolution—that only the working class can lead the struggle to abolish the capitalist system, that this can only be accomplished by the armed overthrow of the bourgeois state, and that only the role of the working class—the dictatorship of the proletariat—can open the way to classless society, communism.

The CPUUS is proud of this denial. Not only does it refuse to even mention the dictatorship of the proletariat, but its draft constitution, presented at the Convention, provides for the expulsion of any member caught advocating "force and violence!" For all that the CP proclaims itself the party of the working class, it raises the class mind of the petty bourgeoisie (and thus the ideology of the bourgeoisie) as a banner against the proletariat.

Like the most backward petty bourgeois, the CP regards itself as the repository of all knowledge and virtue and has only contempt for the workers. The Draft Main Political Resolution to the Convention opens about how "our struggle" against the war (our "stand" against foreign aggression, "our views" on Watergate have been adopted by the masses. And, as these revisionists see it, only the CP can save the workers from "the morally corrupting effect of racism when a process which begins in the earliest grades of school and which has placed a hideous moral blot on the white population of our country."

As you can see, the so-called "Marxism, any class analysis or any fire directed against the bourgeoisie in all this. The masses are cursed with a "hidden" moral structure, an "imperialistic" outlook of the bourgeoisie—can "save" the masses from themselves—and "save" capitalism from the mass struggle, which is the real proletariat.

Nowhere is the CP's petty bourgeois class clearer than in their desperate attempts to deny the class nature of the enemy and the need for its violent overthrow. The CP proclaims that the fight is to "control" the "monopolies." Here is the simultaneous renunciation and respect of the petty bourgeoisie for the big bourgeoisie. And in other words, the CP wants a piece of the action! They want to ride the struggle of the working class to a position where they can share in (and some day control) the exploitation of the class—for their own good, of course.

The revisionists respect the ruling class as they never will the workers. Their chosen road to power is using their ability to control and misdirect the mass struggle away from revolution as a bargaining chip with the U.S. ruling class.

Heart of Current Strategy

The heart of the current strategy of the CPUUS is to draw the masses firmly to "participate in democracy" in a way that will enhance its "political influence." At a time when millions of workers have a strong perceptual understanding that there is an area about the rich and that politicians are corrupt, hypocritical and generally outright liars, the task of communists is to counteract this with an understanding that "American democracy" is a very tattered veil that covers the iron fist of the dictatorship of capital. The CP, on the other hand, is forced to don the glove, explaining that the problem is that the "strong presidency" is "controlled by the monopolies," and Congress must be strengthened.

Because working to tie the masses to bourgeois democracy is so central to CP strategy, the biggest debates at the Convention were over the correct way to go about it. They centered on whether or not the time is right to pull together a third, "people's" party to compete with the Republicans and Democrats. So sharp was the debate that the scheduled nomination of the CP's candidates for president and vice president (Gus Hall and Arnold Davis) was put off until next year, after that they would have more time to get together a unified line on the elections. The CP will undoubtedly select candidates not only in the national elections, but in dozens of state and local elections. The main purpose such campaigns serve is to give the impression that the CP is a public platform, which are very important now with the official "offensive." The CP will probably serve to draw millions of cynical Americans back into electoral politics, nor would an occasional open CP member election or a few board significantly increase the CP's political clout.

The CP revisionists desperately want to build a third party, but at the same time of making it turns them nervous. The problem is that there is no way the CP can do it alone. The only way to create a third party is to bring together a variety of opportunity forces within the mass movement. The CP can then work within such a party and struggle with the other opportunities for control.

The CP is angling for a party that is "pro-" "free-enterprise" trade unionists like Jerry Wurf of AFSCME and Arnold Davis of the "New Left" social democrats like Michael Harrington, old anti-war forces, etc. Key among these are politicians, particularly "minority" political parties like the Congressional Black Caucus, who have already been elected to office as members of one of the two major bourgeois parties.

The CP knows that none of these careerists will come along unless a third party can offer them a good deal and solid fig leaves. CP strategists are having a hard time figuring out what kind of intermediate forms, or "new people's" party or monopoly politicians, CP people will use to keep these forces away from the two main parties to a point where a third party can be pulled together.

Some Say Stay With Democrats

There are others in the CP who argue that it is just too dangerous to pull out of the Democratic Party. The Draft Main Political Resolution warns against prematurely withdrawing from the two parties. Instead of a "bourgeois candidate," one might nominate one or another "independent-minded" candidate with a somewhat "anti-stalemate," and an independent following." In other words, if somebody like Teddy Kennedy runs, play down the third party business for the moment as "people's anti-monopoly candidate." Although the CP may well go this route in next year's presidential election, the third party business for the moment is "people's anti-monopoly candidate." Although the masses aren't buying the Democratic Party as their own, and getting in on the ground floor of a new party, should one ever develop, it will be provided with a basis to expand its political power and bargaining position with the ruling class.

Aside from the electoral quarrel, the Convention made grandiose plans to lead the struggles of the nationalities, youth, women and the working class into a vanguard of-socialism. It called for an easy time attempting to insert itself into all the "vacuums" it sees, for it is an organization racked by problems and contradictions.

When the Draft Resolution talks about the CP's "internal life," it reads like an autobiography: cadre in work places don't want to build rank and file groups because it's too difficult; collectives, even at the national level, don't meet regularly; membership has barely grown; members won't admit they're in the CP to the masses; many don't even believe a
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vanguard party is now necessary for revolution.
But the CP faces a contradiction even more basic than its organizational mumification—it's effort to serve at the same time as the vanguard of the working classes of the US and USSR. The loyalty of the CP's leaders to the Soviet ruling class, which props it up financially as well as militarily, is obviously compounded by the CP's commit- ments and other events in various parts of the world, and stands as a model of the kind of "socialism" that apparatus will establish in any country. It is a "socialism" based on giving a new class of exploit- ers—a new bourgeoisie that arose within the Soviet state—a role in the building of the CP. By sub- verting socialism and restoring capitalism—the chance to ride on the backs of the workers and exploit them, a "socialism" not socialist at all, but social- imperialist (social in words, imperialist in deeds and in fact), but trades on the great prestige that the Soviet Union won as the world's first socialist state.
On the other hand, much of the membership and social capital of the CPUSA is most directly concerned with winning some reforms to improve its position within the US, and this is the basis on which these forces are attracted to the CP. But this requires col- laboration with the US working class and promotion of its interests, which are in ever sharper conflict not only with the US working class—the class in funda- mental contradiction with the old bourgeoisie—but with the Russian ruling class—representing the other superpower in the world. The CP thus walks a delicate line between recruiting the weaker, not com- fusion, is the principal aspect of the relation between the two superpowers, and this contention is growing sharper all the time.
Trying To Serve Both
The CP's main answer to this has been to try and blur over the contradiction and serve both imperialist ruling classes. This shameful in- volution in the two superpowers has served both as a mantle of peace-loving righteousneass that the two can clouse together and leave the common people of the world out in the cold, and as a form of political contention between the two, contention which threatens to erupt in a world war horizon.
The CP aims their pitch at the sincere desire of the masses for peace and holds up deterrence as a magic potion that will bring not only peace but full employment. Should this, tissue of deceit dierves the masses twice, of course. This means that the CP is going to continue to turn off many more to revoluutionary ideology and pol- itics.
In doing this the CP plays on the long history, the fact that it once was the genuine vanguard of the USSR proletariat and did lead tremendous mass struggle against fascism in the 30's. With the CP's new offensive, it will be playing this history even more to con- vince the workers that its ragged revolution and the theory that is the real thing.
To maintain this impression, the CP resorts to every kind of trick on the growing influence gen- eral Marxist-Leninist class. The Left Main Political Resolution again and again attacks: "Meskom," while claiming that it is "on the decline." These attacks on "Meskom" (a "people's republic" of China, which has been less the center of "social- ist" pretensions of the USSR and has led a world- wide anti-imperialist struggle and defending both superpowers, is uncumbered. It carries over to the Chinese context, where it can be a useful national line and struggle for revolution here, for by their very actions they shine a bright spotlight on the Chinese Nationalists. Also, the CP’s relationship with the CP, labor secretary, called at a Convention work shop for CP members to unite with the union veterans and support "red-bait" and "smash "Maosists" out of the plants. It is also dangerous to underestimate the ability of the CP to mislead the masses in their immediate struggles. The revisionists perform an important se- rvice for those labor traitors, poverty pimps, dema-
gues and petty politicians they proclaim to be "pro- gressive." They provide "troops" who work to build such opportunities up and they provide them with a "left" cover of support from the CP and its paper front groups to help get them over the masses better as "fighting workers" toward the "socialist" revolution. The same thing is true of the CP's feintish attempts to infuse new blood into the institutions of bourgeois democracy. The CP's efforts to develop the "anti-monopol" political forms, dead-ends into which the bourgeoisie will try to channel all manner of class struggle in the working class.
There are clearly elements among the ruling class who are willing to overlook the CP's ties to the Soviet Union, at least for the present, for the benefit it is able to provide, and who also want to use the CP—far from now at least—to promote detente to disarm and confuse the masses. The CP has recently been the subject of flattering shows on educational TV, complimentary magazine articles, publicity for its convention. The CP is not going to let go of such a way to run for run for run, to prove it can be a real hindrance to the development of the revolutionary workers move- ment both now and in the future.
The CP's Convention holds several important less- ons. The Communist Party, USA is not just a joke. For all its weaknesses, the CP remains the first line in the struggle, the working class. The CP, and all manner of similar beasts, are looking for ways to turn the growing difficulties of the class struggle around the struggle of the masses to their own advantage—but, of course, for the preservation of capitalism, one face or another.
Communist movements must be ready to rise against the struggle of our class, the proletariat, no matter what blockades the bourgeoisie can serv- ants place in the way. We stand on the threshold of the formation of the genuine proletarian party in the U.S. The main task of this Party will be to intensify its work among the workers, not to the bourgeoisie, not to some opportunist's "vacuum," but to build the struggle, class consciousness and revolutionizing the working class against the anti-imperialist struggle, and lead it toward the goal of socialist rev- olution.
A Question of Line
At its very foundation the Party of the working class must grasp the basic idea of the CP's ideology and its degeneration into a revisionist wing of capitalism. The class struggle is a question not only of ideas, but an essentially class question. It is nothing that is peculiar to the CP, which was always a revisionist revolu- tionist. Revisionism is not only a question of ideology, of world outlook and program based on that outlook. It is the promotion of the outlook and interests of the bourgeoisie within the working movement.
The essence of revisionism— as with the bourgeois outlook in general—is to see the working class as only good for producing and only concerned with what it gets in exchange for producing for the capitalists. Rev- isionism denies that the working class is the most revolu- tionary class in history, the class that will transform all of society, by overthrowing capitalism and elimi- nating all apparatus of capital, creating a new society for a whole new epoch in human history, where mankind "universally and simultaneously change itself and the world." (Mas Tetsuo)
Under the rule of capital, revisionism in outlook leads to economism in political activity—to limiting the working classes to the struggle for better terms within capitalist wage-slavery, in place of the struggle to eliminate wage slavery. Revisionism leads to defending the interests of the bourgeoisie, using the mass movement, at most, as pressure to win a few reforms under capitalism, but not using the class struggle to achieve peaceably through a series of such reforms. It is a defense of slavery—specifically capitalist wage- slavery—in the guise of championing revolution of the slaves.
Revisionism arises even within the Party of the working class, except that it is not on the basis of a part of and not separate from class society—its "division of labor" between mental and manual work, etc., and because of the influence of the Revisionist philo- sophy of the bourgeoisie. It is not an expressed and struggled against, both within and outside the Party; revisionism will lead to the transformation of the Party itself from a weapon of the working class in the struggle against capitalism to a tool of the bourgeoisie against the working class, as happened with the CP.
As a result of imperialism and the class struggle intensifies, the ruling class will foster and promote reformist illusions, phony "progressive" and revision- ism within the working class movement. Because of the lack of a clear line of demarcation, the CP can have only limited value to the US ruling class, through its value of its line only its Left wing. When the Soviet Union is no longer the US ruling class in standardizing socialism and promoting that there is no alternative to capitalism. Because of the CP's ideology and political line, revisionism will increasingly be promoted by the bourgeoisie in its efforts to subvert and splinter the working class. This will affect the class organization in various groups and form- ations, besides the CP.
The Party and its Party must be vigilant against this, and, as a key part of its class warfare against capitalism, must continue to wage a fierce and tireless fight against revisionism, without fear or favor, including those that arise within the ranks of the Party itself. In this way, the Party will be able to lead the working class in fulfilling its grand historic role.
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