

DEDICATED TO MARXISM-LENINISM-MAO TSETUNG THOUGHT AND ITS APPLICATION TO THE CONCRETE CONDITIONS OF THE UNITED STATES

EDITORIAL STATEMENT

THE CHIEFS OF OUR CIRCLES ARE BUILDING THEIR 'PARTIES' TO LIQUIDATE THE PARTY

In choosing for our masthead the name FORWARD, the precedent to which we appeal is the "Forward" (Vperyod) founded by Lenin in 1904...

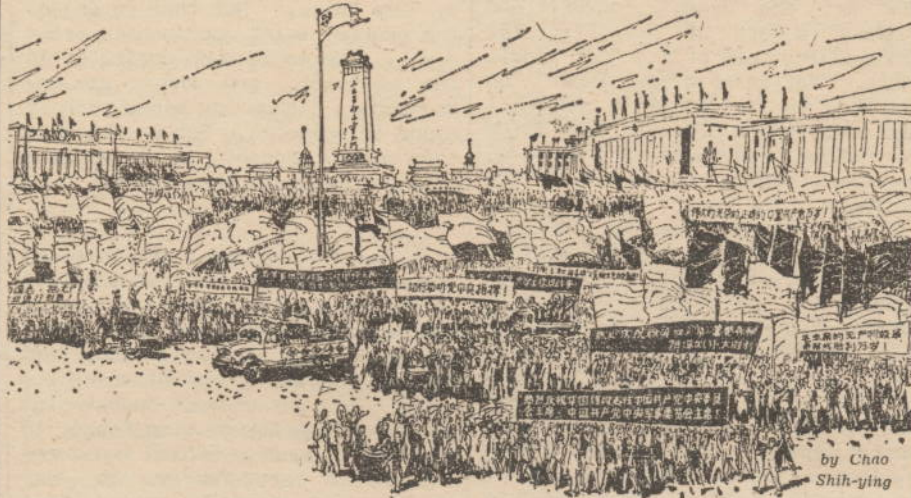
The Marxist-Leninist movement in the U.S. today is undergoing a similar relapse, a temporary retreat which is likewise being conducted under the "Party" banner.

The first to break with this spirit was the Revolutionary Union. Lacking anything remotely resembling a mandate from the majority of Marxist-Leninists...

Despite the universal condemnation which this splittist manner of forming a party earned from virtually all quarters of our movement...

In making this comparison, we are by no means appealing for a return to the alleged "good old days" of the party-building movement.

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Exuberant Demonstrations, Like This Giant Rally in Peking's Tienanmen Square, Greeted Selection of Hua Kuo-Feng to Succeed Chairman Mao Tsetung, Ouster of 'Gang of Four'. Events Were Broadcast Live on TV.

MARXISM OR KLONSKYISM?

-- HOW THE OCTOBER LEAGUE'S TOP CIRCLE, LED BY M. KLONSKY, USES METHOD OF SUPPRESSION AND DEMAGOGY TO CONSOLIDATE BROWDERITE LINE ON WAY TO ITS "FOUNDING CONGRESS."

The Call, organ of the October League, published in its issue of Nov. 30 an announcement of the "expulsion" of Martin Nicolaus...

By MARTIN NICOLAUS

Ideological struggle is the lifeblood of a Marxist-Leninist organization. Countless experiences in the history of the communist movement...

In the long run of history, the correct line inevitably emerges victorious, and revisionism will be defeated.

Sometimes the Marxist-Leninist line triumphs over the revisionist line; the current struggle in China led by Comrade Hua Kuo-feng against the "gang of four" is an example.

STUDY PARTICULARS

While firmly believing in the inevitable victory of Marxism-Leninism in the long run, therefore, Marxist-Leninists insist also on examining each particular struggle on its merits...

To judge each struggle and its outcome according to its particular features is a Leninist principle. When the opportunists of his day, the Mensheviks, succeeded after the Second Congress in 1903...

"They did indeed make a revolution after the Congress; and it is

true, too, that generally speaking the world does move through revolutions. But the concrete significance of each concrete revolution is not defined by this general aphorism...

(One Step Forward, Two Steps Back in Collected Works Vol. 7 p. 412)

Today in our movement, it is the turn of the top leadership of the October League to shout "victory" -- over "revisionism," over the "circle spirit" and what not.

All this big fuss, though serious, has a comical aspect for someone who

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Marxism or Klonskyism

IS A PAMPHLET-LENGTH ARTICLE

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The Struggle in China:

THE EAST STAYS RED

Chairman Mao Tsetung Prepared Well For His Successors to Carry on Cause

HUA IN, 'GANG' OUT, CHINA GLAD

China's biggest, most exuberant and most militant demonstrations since the Cultural Revolution have greeted the selection of Chairman Hua Kuo-feng...

The joyful events, in which more than 50 million people participated, mark a happy ending and a bright new beginning after the chain of calamities -- the grievous deaths and natural disasters -- that befell the country in the first three quarters of 1976.

The transition from Chairman Mao to Chairman Hua has been, all in all, a smooth and orderly one. Only a few weeks of relative political uncertainty intervened between the day when all of China stood still in deep grief for Chairman Mao...

WELL RECOMMENDED

Chairman Hua comes well recommended. He is Chairman Mao's nominee for the post, and enjoys the obvious support of the Chinese people.

Hua is a veteran Communist who rose to national prominence in the course of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. He was elected to the Party's Central Committee in 1969...

Two years later, Hua was named to head up the Party commission to investigate the crimes of Lin Piao,

AN EXCERPT FROM AN IMPORTANT 1975 SPEECH BY HUA KUO-FENG IS ON P. 4

the sham "Leftist" who was an ultra-Right conspirator plotting to make a fascist coup.

In April 1976, at the same time that Teng Hsiao-ping was stripped of his posts, Hua was promoted to the post of Premier left vacant by the death of Chou En-lai.

At the same time, he was promoted to First Vice-Chairman of the Communist Party, the "number two" position. Not coincidentally, as it turns out, this appointment bumped the then second-ranking party leader to the "number three" spot.

All the nominations and decisions of April were on the personal motion of Chairman Mao.

Thus Chairman Hua, like Chairman Mao himself was, is a tried and tested fighter in the struggle both against the open Right and the sham "Left" forms of revisionism.

TACHAI CONFERENCE

Chairman Hua has played a vanguard role in implementing the principle of "grasp revolution, promote production," which Chairman Mao formulated in the Cultural Revolution.

(Continued on Page 3)

Study Guide

To Lenin's Major Writings on:

- \* PROPAGANDA
\* ECONOMIC AGITATION
\* POLITICAL AGITATION

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## EDITORIAL

(Continued from Front Page)

ainst those who are misusing the noble banner of the Party in order to drag us back with a vengeance to those old bad days. In our estimate none of the formations presently proceeding toward its rebaptism as a party qualifies for that lofty title any more than did the RU. None has truly settled its political accounts with the others, and none has achieved a clear theoretical and practical hegemony. Indeed in the case of the October League, as is set forth in more detail in the main article in this issue of M-L FORWARD, the motion toward its founding congress has been accompanied by a tremendous backsliding on key questions of ideological and organizational line. We find no compelling evidence that any of the circles in question will have earned after the occasion of its founding congress a qualitatively higher label than before. The difference, rather, is that after the occasion, the same circles drape themselves in the "Party" banner to make exposure of their backwardness to that degree more difficult. Just as Lenin said in regard to the victory of this sort of opportunism during and after the intended founding congress (the Second Congress) of the RSDLP, the circle spirit "inveighs against the circle spirit in order to conceal the victory of the circle spirit over the Party spirit." (One Step Forward, Two Steps Back.)

Let us be clear. We would be the last to raise any protest about the proliferation of parties in our movement if this motion were being conducted in a spirit of modesty and with an eye on the historical necessity and inevitability of uniting the great majority of Marxist-Leninists into a single Party on a principled basis. From the historical viewpoint, each of the present and imminent parties can only be regarded as a provisional formation that unites a minority of the Marxist-Leninists. In effect, each of the present formations, whether it regards itself as a party or not, constitutes a faction of a Party that exists still only as an ideal, and that will not exist in reality until the factions unite on a principled basis and liquidate factionalism. Our current provisional parties can play a progressive role insofar as they view themselves in this modest and self-critical light and behave accordingly; that is, insofar as they prepare, in the very act of constituting themselves as parties, for their future dissolution into the larger Party. In fact, the party-forming motions of the current period, beginning with the RU-RCP, are the direct negation of this spirit. Each claims to be the Party for now and all time; each asserts that practically all Marxist-Leninists who can be united into the Party have been united into its party, and practically no Marxist-Leninist elements exist outside itself, only opportunists. Each, in the act of forming its party, liquidates the task of building the Party. That is the point.

The general result of this manner of party-forming is a hardening and further entrenchment of the circle spirit and a deeper fragmentation of the party-building movement along circle lines. Yesterday's frank acknowledgement that we were living in the era of pre-party formations gives way to a period of political hypocrisy in which every form of backwardness and primitivism drapes itself in "Party" bunting. This new form of opportunism, beyond a doubt, is a more resilient and stubborn obstacle on the road toward the genuine Party than was the circle spirit in its plainer, more obvious forms. The more parties we have, the further backward are we dragged from the Party.

The only ones who will benefit from this regression into petty sectarianism will be the enemies of the movement to build the Party on the basis of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought -- the "centrists" of the Guardian, the Trotskyites, and of course the revisionists of the CPUSA. The advanced workers,

on the other hand, will condemn the present charade and bombast, seek out its causes, and fight to overcome this backwardness, reminding the movement that the proletariat can have only one general staff, not three, four, or more.

An inevitable byproduct of the current raging of the circle spirit is an unmistakable lowering of the ideological level. Here, too, the RCP set the example, quietly and without a word of self-criticism jettisoning some of its "pet" ideas (e.g. "Nation of a New Type") on the way to its founding congress, and adopting a program that tried to please everybody and wound up meaning nothing to anybody. Its polemics, for their lack of principled content, have set the pattern for the party-forming motions of our current period. Instead of more rich, lively and enduringly instructive polemics -- at least on one side, if not on all -- there is an all-sided cheapening of ideological struggle, a replacement of one clear, principled line of demarcation after another with a muddy phrase and a flagwaving appeal to circle loyalty. Take the OL's course. The closer it advances to its founding congress, the more it blurs what it stands for and engages in wholesale co-optation of major (incorrect) ideas from its contenders. Its polemics, too, are sinking deeper and deeper into demagoguery. In the case of PRRWO, to take the extreme, its ideological depletion was already fairly complete a year ago, and ideas had given way to insufferably empty and stupid invective. Now even these so-called "polemics" are fading, and the latest issue of its organ is devoted two-thirds to reprints from the classics -- a tacit confession that the group has little or nothing more to say. As for Workers' Viewpoint, that group's leadership is now busy branding as obsolete and reactionary the very views it trumpeted as dogma not a month earlier. It gives the impression of an exhausted sprinter on his last kick.

Actual or imminent ideological depletion, theoretical exhaustion, political bankruptcy are the features of the present party-forming motions, just as was the case with the RU-RCP.

A period of tremendous forward strides has exhausted itself, and a powerful retrograde tide is attempting to drag the whole movement backward with it to a new ice age of circle rivalries, with all the ideological impoverishment this implies. Under the "Party" flag, this current will inevitably revive and is reviving much of the cast-off opportunist baggage of yesterday, but in "new," more "original" forms.

The periodic ideological exhaustion and retrogression of large sections of our movement is a practically inevitable product of the historical circumstances in which we are working. It has been 20 years, an entire biological generation, since the CPUSA decayed irreversibly into revisionism. The task of constructing the single, unified, genuine Marxist-Leninist Communist Party can no longer be a matter chiefly of reconstituting the Party out of the readily available healthy and battle-tested forces of the old organization. Most of the latter have retired or are retiring from full-time political activity. We are forced to construct the Party mainly or almost entirely out of fresh, untrained forces. Moreover, virtually all our leaders come under the same heading. The task of founding the Party theoretically, ideologically, as a precondition to founding it organizationally, has fallen onto the shoulders of a generation which, just like the youthful leaders of Russian Social-Democracy in the late 1890s, is almost wholly self-taught. Filled with determination but primitively armed and equipped, we are liable after only a few years of strenuous work to fall prey to ideological exhaustion, and thus to regress. The majority of our present or imminent party (but not Party) leaders are in this state. True, the Party needs a core of stable leaders; but stability must not be used as an excuse for stagnation and decay into revisionism.

How will our movement, guided and inspired by Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought, overcome the formidable obstacles which the circle spirit presents, now that it has raised itself in appearance to a higher power? We consider as refuted by experience the approach of "sweet reasonableness" and of seeking unity mainly through quiet diplomacy, which has been espoused by the representatives of MLOC and, in an even more sugar-watery way, by "New Voice." Not that we reject the gentle, quiet approach in principle. We would much prefer it in the abstract, and there are undoubtedly places and times when it alone is suitable. But in the main the malady cannot be cured with this remedy, and this for two reasons.

In the first place, the "gentle" approach cannot prevail in the face of the hard-bitten circle spirit of the several handfuls of highly "experienced" and tactically "skilful" leaders whose degeneration or relapse into out-and-out opportunism is the retrograde driving force, in the direct sense, behind the current tide of party-fakery. To use the "gentle" approach toward these elements is like petting cobras; you will only get bitten every time you do it. Faced with a similar problem 35 years ago, the Albanian communists finally adopted the desperate but necessary and successful expedient of barring all of the chief leaders of the old pre-party groups from eligibility for leadership of the Party.

"Sweet reason" and quiet diplomacy fail, more fundamentally, because they are unable to meet the demands -- and frequently proceed behind the back -- of the mass of the comrades and the many leaders who are not infected with circle blindness. In these forces lies the hope of the future. These comrades do not need and do not want a diet of cotton candy. The solid nourishment of Marxist-Leninist theory applied to our concrete conditions as a guide to action is what is wanted. We need reasonableness, yes, but not syrup. We need the sharp-edged reason of materialist dialectics, the sword of Marxist-Leninist science. The workers, above all, who have entered our movement in small but growing numbers over the past few years, will show no patience with tactics of struggle based on a policy of concessions and retreats in the face of circle narrowness and hypocrisy. The workers have the least to gain and the most to lose from play-acting at party-building.

The problem lies in the ideological realm; and the first task is a proper drawing or redrawing of the lines of demarcation. We consider that the principal immediate obstacle in the path of the party-builders is the fact that the foremen on the common building site, out of narrow interests, have drawn many of the guidelines in an unprincipled and impractical fashion. Parts of the construction site reveal guidelines criss-crossing like a mad cat's cradle, and other parts are still practically untouched. There is the work of cutting apart the tangle of lines created by circle narrowness and creating a realignment based on consistent principles; there is the work of preserving the sound and solid achievements of the past; and there is the work of building in the areas where development has been neglected.

We have chosen as our starting point -- introduced in this issue and to be developed in detail in No. 2 -- the question of "agitation and propaganda," and of the Party's "chief form of activity in the first main period of party-building." Here is an outstanding case of a key question which the major organized trends in our movement consider "settled," but which urgently requires "unsettling" again if the work of party-building is to go forward both against the open Right and the false "Left" retrograde lines. Before M-L FORWARD No. 3, we hope to have before us at long last the draft programs of one or more of the organizations who are presently (prior to publishing such basic documents!) calling for their founding congresses. We plan

in future issues of FORWARD to participate actively in the debate on programmatic questions, and to advance our own proposals. While conducting the publication according to definite principles, we will open our pages to other serious viewpoints with the intention of engaging them in struggle for the benefit of our readership.

In thus outlining the beginnings of a general plan for polemics within our movement, we wish to emphasize that we consider this form of struggle by no means adequate to the task of constructing the single unified Marxist-Leninist Party of the U.S. proletariat. To achieve that aim will require a real newspaper, and what we possess now is hardly a proper magazine yet. This issue of the paper is in fact mainly a pamphlet, and No. 2 will also have this character. What is needed is a regularly and frequently published "organ of militant orthodoxy" (Lenin) which, like the old *Iskra* and *Vperyod* and their successors, must be devoted chiefly to political agitation. In our country and in our period of history, this means chiefly agitation for the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is on the ladders and the scaffolding of the organization of such a project -- a newspaper devoted chiefly to agitation for the dictatorship of the proletariat -- that the cadre and leaders of the Party of the U.S. proletariat will receive their training and will develop as a Marxist-Leninist core worthy of the name vanguard.

We consider that the most suitable location for the publication of such a newspaper is Washington, D.C., the seat of the political power of U.S. imperialism. The establishment of such an organ is an especially urgent task in view of the mass frustration with "the government," bound only to deepen in the course of the Carter administration, and which excuses no delay in taking up the task of popularizing the dictatorship of the proletariat as the only progressive and viable solution.

We are keenly aware that we are drawing a large plan and setting high, difficult aims, but have extremely few resources. Our confidence in the future stems from the experience of the communist movement, which shows numerous inspiring examples of a just cause with few resources at the outset eventually overcoming even more formidable obstacles and emerging triumphant.

As Premier Chou said in his report to the Tenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China:

"Chairman Mao teaches us that 'the correctness or incorrectness of the ideological and political line decides everything.' If one's line is incorrect, one's downfall is inevitable, even with the control of the central, local and army leadership. If one's line is correct, even if one has not a single soldier at first, there will be soldiers, and even if there is no political power, political power will be gained. This is borne out by the historical experience of our Party and by that of the international communist movement since the time of Marx."

The historical experience of Lenin's "Forward" is one of the bright illustrations of this truth. As Stalin recounts, the top leadership of the Russian party had at that time "split into two sections: the Bolshevik section (Lenin), and the Menshevik section (Plekhanov, Axelrod, Martov, Zasluch, Potresov.) Lenin then stood alone. If you only knew how much howling and shouting there was then about the 'irreplaceables' who had left Lenin! But experience of the struggle and the history of the Party showed that this divergence was based on principle, that it was an essential phase for the birth and development of a really revolutionary and really Marxist party. The experience of the struggle at that time showed, firstly, that the important thing was not quantity, but quality, and secondly, that the important thing was not formal unity, but that unity should be based on prin-

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## EAST STAYS RED

(Continued from Front Page)

Tachai village is the standard-bearer of China's socialist revolution in agriculture. It is a model in "grasping class struggle as the key link" in transforming China into a strong, modern socialist country.

It was these and other abilities that led Chairman Mao last April 30 to write to Hua, "With you in charge, I'm at ease."

There is every indication that Chairman Hua's leadership will also put "at ease" all the genuine followers and friends of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought around the world. Both in domestic and in foreign affairs, Chairman Hua is carrying forward Chairman Mao's correct line, and is giving fresh proofs with each passing week that he is a worthy successor to this high and responsible post.

### PROVOKED A CRISIS

Already the smashing of the Wang-Chang-Chiang-Yao anti-Party clique was such a proof. After Chairman Mao's death, the four provoked what several Party sources have described as an "extremely grave crisis" by trying to usurp power, contrary to the wishes of Chairman Mao, the Party, and the people of China.

Other reports, still not officially confirmed, speak of an attempt to assassinate Hua on the orders of the "four." Hua's leadership of the central committee in taking decisive action against the "gang" in this crisis saved the dictatorship of the proletariat, and averted a grave risk of China turning color.

Thus Hua's selection to the leadership of the Party brought great joy to the people of China and their friends around the world. On the other hand, it is a disappointment to all those who prayed that China after Chairman Mao would turn revisionist like the USSR did after the death of its great leader, Joseph Stalin.

It has not turned out that way. The East remains red; the proletariat retains state power, and has become stronger by purging itself of an opportunist scourge.

### SUMMED UP LESSONS

A large part of the credit for the successful transition goes to Chairman Mao himself, who prepared for it long before his death.

One of Chairman Mao's major contributions to Marxism-Leninism was precisely to sum up the lessons of what happened in the USSR, and to take measures to assure that it would not be repeated in China. He armed the Chinese people theoretically and practically and taught them to be vigilant against capitalist-roaders like Khrushchov emerging within the Party.

In the words of Hua Kuo-feng's memorial speech:

"In the new historical period of

socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat in China, Chairman Mao summed up both the positive and the negative experience of the international communist movement, made a penetrating analysis of the class relations in socialist society by applying the Marxist-Leninist theory of the unity of opposites, and pointed out that the principal contradiction in socialist society is the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

"For the first time in the history of the development of Marxism, Chairman Mao explicitly pointed out that there are still classes and class struggle after the socialist transformation of the ownership of the means of production has in the main been completed, put forward the thesis that in socialist society there are two different types of contradictions -- those between ourselves and the enemy and those among the people themselves, and advanced the great theory of continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat.

"Chairman Mao time and again admonished the whole Party, the whole army and the people of the whole country, 'never forget class struggle'; he pointed out that socialist society covers a considerably long historical period and that, throughout this historical period, there



The Good News Comes to South China (Sketches from Peking Review)

are classes, class contradictions and class struggle, there is the struggle between the socialist road and the capitalist road, there is the danger of capitalist restoration and there is the threat of subversion and aggression by imperialism and social-imperialism, and established the Party's basic line for the entire historical period of socialism. In view of the changes in class relations and the characteristics of the class struggle in the period of socialism, Chairman Mao drew the scientific conclusion: "You are making the socialist revolution, and yet don't know where the bourgeoisie is. It is right in the Communist Party -- those in power taking the capitalist road. The capitalist-roaders are still on the capitalist road."

All these and others of Chairman Mao's teachings constitute weapons for preventing a revisionist takeover and a capitalist restoration in China, weapons that were not available in the USSR 20 years ago.

Moreover, these teachings of Chairman Mao's have been popularized throughout China. They have greatly raised the Chinese people's vigilance against new Khrushchovs, and sharpened their eyes for distinguish-

ing genuine from sham Marxism. Thanks to Chairman Mao, the Chinese masses have a high level of political consciousness; this is a powerful bastion against the threat of a revisionist usurpation and restoration of capitalism.

### HOW TO STRUGGLE

Furthermore, Chairman Mao taught the Chinese workers and peasants how to struggle under the conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat. He initiated and led the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, led them in "bombarding the bourgeois headquarters," and taught them "it is right to rebel against reactionaries."

Thereafter, Chairman Mao initiated a series of campaigns in continuation of the Cultural Revolution, such as the campaign to criticize Lin Biao and Confucius, the campaign to study the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the campaign against the right-deviationist wind stirred up by Teng Hsiao-ping, and others.

These campaigns have taught the Chinese people in their millions rich lessons from experience in how to struggle against various types of capitalist-roaders in the Party under the conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This, too, was part of Chairman Mao's work to prepare the country to fight against any efforts to restore capitalism in China, even long after his death. Even if a Khrushchov should emerge one day at the head of the Party, the Chinese people, remembering the lessons of Chairman Mao, will know very well how to deal with him or her, and will rise up and restore the proletarian dictatorship.

### PROLETARIAT STRONGER

Thanks to these theoretical and practical preparations made by Chairman Mao, the proletariat in China is in a comparatively stronger position for combating revisionism than was the case in the USSR 20 years ago. The Soviet Union was, after the Paris Commune, the first dictatorship of the proletariat in world history; it was a pioneer effort with no previous experience to go by, and it thus developed some weaknesses which the bourgeoisie was able to exploit to its advantage. This was a grave setback, but it has benefited the people of China as a lesson by negative example.

### WARNED THE GANG

Chairman Mao also made preparations for his succession in a direct form, and gave concrete leadership on the question.

More than two years ago, he warned Wang Hung-wen, Chang Chun-chiao, Chiang Ching and Yao Wen-yuan:

"You'd better be careful; don't let yourselves become a small faction of four," and he warned in particular of the "wild ambitions" of Chiang Ching. He reminded them of the "three dos and three don'ts" ("Practice Marxism, not revisionism; unite and don't split; be open and aboveboard, don't intrigue and conspire") and in May 1975 admonished them again: "Don't function as a gang of four, don't do it any more, why do you keep doing it?"



Volcanic Demonstrations in Shanghai Against 'Gang of Four.'

At the same time, Chairman Mao laid before the Political Bureau of the Central Committee the task of settling this matter of the gang of four, if not right away, then before the year was out; and if not in 1976 then in 1977. Thus, the inspiration for the campaign to smash the "gang of four" came directly from Chairman Mao. He personally instructed the party to settle this matter.

Chairman Hua's initiative in launching the mass campaign against the Wang-Chang-Chiang-Yao anti-Party clique is in keeping with Chairman Mao's line and is in the fine tradition of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

### GANG 'LEFT'?

As for this "gang," its claims to sympathy are based on the reputation it cultivated as the alleged Left of the party. The whole U.S. bourgeois press panders to this claim by dubbing the four the "radicals" or even the "Maoists." The revisionist press has the same idea; it hopes that the Communist Party of China under Chairman Hua will be more "moderate" than under Chairman Mao, meaning: more yielding to revisionism.

Not surprisingly, the "centrist" press chimes in with its echo. The most notable case in point is Jack Smith's recent series in the Guardian. One only wishes that Guardian managing editor Smith had the forthrightness of his convictions. If he believes that the "four" genuinely represented the Left, without quotation marks, then he should bluntly oppose Chairman Hua and the people of China and just as squarely defend the "gang," as one or two negligible "Marxist-Leninists" (in reality, Trotskyists) have had the frankness to do.

Instead, Smith covers endless pages with verbal convolutions and contortions trying to defend the four with one hand, by labeling them the genuine trend, while trying to "defend" Chairman Hua with the other hand -- by slandering him as a bureaucratic, opportunist, "centrist" and essentially revisionist figure (in short, more or less in the Guardian's own image...).

(Continued on Page 4)

## EDITORIAL

(Continued from Page 2)

History showed that Lenin was right and the 'irreplaceables' were wrong. History showed that if these contradictions between Lenin and the 'irreplaceables' had not been overcome, we should not today have a genuine revolutionary party." (On the Opposition.)

We too are confident that the howling and shouting of our present-day "irreplaceables" will come to nothing, and that all their 'soldiers' and all their dollars will not save them from their inevitable ruin. The great majority of the Marxist-Leninists in the U.S., just like the Russian Marxists long ago, will throw off the diehard handful who usurp the Party flag to liquidate the Party.

The current period of false party-building began in the autumn of

1975. Its charm will not endure much beyond the spring of 1977. It will be recorded in history as the last general revolt of the circle spirit against the Party, and as the last wave of opportunism that had to be fought and defeated outside and without a Party framework. Whether the circle chiefs of our period like it or not, whether history goes forward with them or over them, the current proliferation of false parties will be the final stage of preparation for the real thing. It is in the course of the struggle against the fake-party spirit that the genuine Party will be built.

Note: As soon as we have the resources we intend to publish a Spanish section; in the meantime we apologize for this and other shortcomings of the paper. The second issue will be out in February. Financial support is essential.

Correspondence is welcome and will be answered and/or published.

## MARXIST-LENINIST FORWARD

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## EAST STAYS RED

(Continued From Page 3)

By these acrobatics -- and by little letters with a home-cooked odor to them -- the Guardian editors are trying to prepare their readers for the inevitable Guardian Viewpoint entitled "China has Gone Revisionist" (or: "Has China Gone Revisionist?"). This idea of theirs was already clearly implicit in their slanderous attacks of last May on China's foreign policy, and Irwin Silber let it slip out at a Chicago forum a month after. It is written between all the lines of Smith's series and will be written in the headlines of the Guardian in due course. Perhaps the editors are delaying the pronouncement only in order first to clear out their stock of Chinese work jackets. Those whose basic business is providing a "left" cover for revisionism and Soviet social-imperialism must be prepared, it is plain, to forego some profitable little sidelines when the pinch comes.

### LEFT VS. 'LEFT'

Marxist-Leninists cannot take lightly the label, Left. It is no better if one pretends to use the terms Left and Center merely "to locate various forces in relation to each other, not necessarily as political judgements." (Smith, Guardian, Nov. 10) The "location of forces in relation to each other" is precisely the point. Marxism-Leninism is the Left, without quotation marks. It is the most principled, the most militant, far-seeing and scientific element. Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Tsetung all were leaders of the Left, without quotation marks. All those who claimed to be the "Left" in opposition to them were in fact "Left" only in appearance, with quotation marks. In their real political character they were the same as the more open Right opportunists, the revisionists. The Right and the sham "Left" are the same bourgeoisie in different disguises. The end result if either of them comes to power is the restoration of capitalism.

### STEREOTYPES

The "four's" claim to represent the Left, without quotes, rests on some very loose ideas-by-association. They were leaders in Shanghai, a city with a long and brilliant revolutionary tradition, the birthplace of the Communist Party of China; and they emerged to prominence in the course of the Cultural Revolution. Hence, by loose association, it is claimed that they must have embodied the revolutionary traditions of Shanghai and the genuine spirit of the Cultural Revolution. The facts now being uncovered one by one about the "four" make mincemeat of these superficial stereotypes.

The "four," it appears, looked on Shanghai as their "base" much as bourgeois politicians look on their wards or constituencies as a "base" for grabbing and exploiting. They forgot, as the bourgeois politicians in all countries forget, that this "base" is not a slab of stone, but composed of active, conscious human beings, who can and will rise up to topple whoever abuses it. The four were guilty of extremely serious abuse of revolutionary Shanghai.

They tried to use Shanghai as a base to attack Tachai, and they tried to use Shanghai as a base to attack Peking.

### ATTACK ON TACHAI

Peking Review No. 46 carries a revealing account from Tachai describing the repeated attacks of the "gang of four" on this standard-bearer of the socialist revolution in agriculture. Wang Hung-wen is said to have been the leader of the "four" in regard to attacking Tachai, but Chiang Ching's personal visit there in the autumn of 1975 left a particularly vivid impression on the eyewitnesses.

Chiang arrived, uninvited, with truckloads of baggage and a small battalion of attendants. She reportedly forbade people to sing

"The East Is Red," the immensely popular song in praise of Chairman Mao, and forbade kids to wear the red scarves that symbolize their determination to become worthy successors to the revolutionary cause.

Chiang spent the evenings watching imported films she had brought -- she was in charge of China's film production -- which the working people of Tachai judged "X"-rated by their standards. She had herself photographed on foot and on horseback against every conceivable backdrop, and even had her staff dig a fake "war time trench" at a scenic spot overlooking Tachai village to make a more dramatic photograph.

On Sept. 5 came an urgent message to go to Peking, Chairman Mao was in critical condition. She was playing poker when the message arrived, and kept right on playing, in no hurry to depart.

Mr. Smith of the Guardian is of the opinion that reports of this sort constitute "sexist slanders." Why does Mr. Smith play Sir Walter Raleigh and throw down his cloak for this arch-reactionary person to walk on? Why does Mr. Smith refuse to unite with the millions of Chinese working women who took to the streets to cheer with enormous relief and joy the exposure and downfall of this corrupt and bourgeois woman who hated Tachai and hated Chairman Mao and socialism with all her heart? This is nothing but an extension, on the international level, of the Guardian editors' basic line on the woman question.

### CHIANG MEMORIAL STY

After Chiang Ching left from Tachai, the peasants filled in the "war time trench" she had had dug, and built a kind of memorial to her visit by constructing a pig sty on the spot.

Is it thinkable that the masses of Tachai would have taken to the streets in a demonstration of support for Chiang Ching and her gang if they had realized their ambition of seizing power in China? No way. And the eyewitness report from Tachai appears typical of the kind of impression the whole "gang" created over a period of time all over China.

### CRIMINAL EXTREMES

A particular "prize" for hypocrisy must go to Yao Wen-yuan, the chief propagandist for the "gang." To write pretty-sounding phrases about "restricting bourgeois right" while hooking up with the likes of Chiang Ching, who exemplified bourgeois right on the rampage -- this is carrying the contradiction between theory and practice to criminal extremes.

To try to use the city of Shanghai as a base for attacking Tachai is itself a flagrant violation of the policy of restricting bourgeois right under socialism. A basic element in this policy, always followed by Chairman Mao, is gradually to overcome the differences in material and cultural standards between the city and the countryside, between industry and agriculture -- between "Shanghai" and "Tachai." These differences are a leftover from capitalism, in which the city develops at the expense of the countryside and becomes a parasite on it. Every Right and "Left" deviation in the history of socialist countries, beginning already with Bukharin and Trotsky in the USSR, has tried by various stratagems to aggravate and to widen these differences, sowing antagonism between workers and peasants -- with grave results for the dictatorship of the proletariat. The trademark of every such deviation has been one form or another of opposing the city to the country. Using Shanghai as a base to attack Tachai is a policy in a direct line of succession from these counterrevolutionary earlier attempts at restoring capitalism.

In addition, reports that have not yet been confirmed in every detail indicate that the "gang" tried to turn the militia of

Shanghai, and then of all China, into their private counterrevolutionary armed force with the aim of staging a seizure of power. Some of the reports say that the "four" issued an order to the Shanghai militia to mobilize with weapons in hand to come to their rescue in case they were arrested. If such an order was indeed given, there is no indication that the militia and women of Shanghai lifted a finger to obey it.

### HATED IN SHANGHAI

By trying to convert the birthplace of the Communist Party of China into its graveyard, by abusing Shanghai to attack Tachai and the central government in Peking, the "four" built up a powerful hatred toward themselves not only in China generally, but in Shanghai especially. Nowhere in China were the demonstrations of joy at the selection of Chairman Hua and of fury at the "gang of four" so prolonged and volcanic as in Shanghai itself. For a full week from dawn to midnight the city of Shanghai was filled with demonstrators of every age group, occupation and description, powerfully relieved and exuberant that the city was free at last of these scourges, these ugly blots on the city's revolutionary banner.

### LIKE LIN PIAO

It is going the same way with the "four's" myth of embodying the spirit of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Lin Piao, too, made the claim to embody that spirit, continually shouting "down with revisionism, down with Liu Shao-chi" and trying to pass himself off as the genuine successor to the cause of Chairman Mao.

"When the scheme of the Lin Piao anti-party clique to usurp Party and state power was brought to light and came to naught," states a report on the "four" from China, "the 'gang of four' resembled frightened fish that narrowly escaped the dragnet." Like Lin Piao himself, the "four" reportedly "actually were the chief culprits who incited bourgeois factionalism, engineered 'all-out civil war' (struggles by coercion or force in many places during the Great Cultural Revolution -- Note by Peking Review translator), called for suspecting and overthrowing everybody and undermined the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution." The promotion of factionalism and of sectarian, splittist warfare, the indiscriminate flinging of labels at anyone and everyone who opposed them, the heaping of "criticisms" and "accusations" without rhyme or reason, nitpicking and exaggerating small weaknesses into alleged gigantic "crimes," wild howling and shouting to spread confusion among the people -- these were the earmarks of reactionaries who operated under the cover of the Cultural Revolution to try to sabotage the Cultural Revolution. It was for such elements that the phrase "waving the red flag to strike at Chairman Mao's forces" was coined. The "four" tried to pervert every campaign they participated in and to turn it to counterrevolutionary ends.

### DEEPEN EXPOSURE

The people of China, under the leadership of the Communist Party headed by Chairman Hua, are now engaged in a great campaign to deepen the exposure of the "gang of four," and to root out their pernicious influence. This campaign, personally inspired by Chairman Mao before his death, is a continuation of the great campaigns Chairman Mao led during his lifetime both against open Right and sham "Left" deviations. In the course of this struggle, the people of China will further sharpen their ability to distinguish genuine from sham Marxism and to combat revisionism in every form. This campaign will further strengthen the Communist Party's leading role and the dictatorship of the proletariat, and speed China's progress on the road of socialism and proletarian internationalism, toward communism.

Thanks to Chairman Mao's wise preparations and to Chairman Hua's decisive leadership, China's gravest crisis since Liberation in 1949 has been resolved with comparative ease and in a relatively short period of time. It has been resolved with a victory for Marxism-Leninism, for the line of Chairman Mao, for the workers and the poor and lower-middle peasants of China, and for the countries who want independence, the nations who want liberation and the people who want revolution all over the world. There will still be further class struggles and further twists and turns ahead, as Wu Teh pointed out in his Oct. 24 address to the rally on Tienanmen Square in Peking. This is a law of socialism. The events so far, however, give every ground for confidence that the Chinese people, under the leadership of Chairman Hua, will resolve the present and future contradictions as triumphantly as they did under the leadership of Chairman Mao.

Chairman Mao has passed away, but his presence and work live on. The memorial hall to Chairman Mao now being constructed on Tienanmen Square will allow the millions of visitors who come to Peking from all over China and all over the world to pay homage to the great leader and teacher of the proletariat, the greatest Marxist-Leninist of our time. The publication of Vol. 5 of Chairman Mao's Selected Works and then of his Collected Works, entrusted by the Central Committee to the supervision of Chairman Hua, will be great events in the history of Marxism-Leninism, real "red letter days," that are eagerly awaited by revolutionaries the world over.

## HUA KUO-FENG:

(A brief excerpt from Hua Kuo-feng's Report summing up the work of the National Conference on Learning From Tachai in Agriculture, October 15, 1975.)

China's socialist revolution and socialist construction at present are in an important historical period of development, and the nationwide mass movement In Agriculture, Learn from Tachai has also reached a new important stage. A great militant task before us is to get the whole Party mobilized, make ever greater efforts to develop agriculture and strive to build Tachai-type counties throughout the country. This is an urgent task in implementing Chairman Mao's important directive on studying theory and combating and preventing revisionism and in consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat; it is also an urgent task in pushing the national economy forward so that China will be advancing in the front ranks of the world before the end of this century, as well as an urgent task in racing against the enemy for time and speed and doing a good job of getting prepared against war. The whole Party must get mobilized vigorously, attain unity in thinking and pace, unite and lead the people of the whole country to accomplish this great political task.

To build Tachai-type counties throughout the country means building every county in China into a fighting bastion which adheres to Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line and the socialist road. In this way, the leading bodies at all levels in the country will be further revolutionized. The cadres and members of our Party and the masses of the people will greatly raise their understanding of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. Our dictatorship of the proletariat and socialist system will be further consolidated and developed. And we shall have greater might with which to smash attacks in any form by any enemy. . .

Learning from Tachai in agriculture and building Tachai-type counties throughout the country is a great revolutionary mass movement to continue the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat and build socialist agriculture with greater, faster, better and more economical results. Like the land reform, agricultural co-operation and people's commune movements it is another great revolutionary movement in the rural areas.



# MARXISM OR KLONSKYISM?

(Continued from Front Page)

knows the circumstances. As if Nicolaus had been the head of a major department, or leader of some organized trend, grouping or faction! On the contrary. I never attempted to form anything of the sort. Contrary to the insinuations of the Klonsky circle, I followed punctiliously the rules of procedure in our ideological struggle, even when the Klonsky circle flagrantly violated them. Though formally I was a member of the leading body, my major assigned responsibility in the last few weeks was to proofread The Call. All this noise over the departure of a proofreader!

Why then the hullabaloo? What "threat" did I represent that occasioned this display of melodramatics on a scale the Klonsky circle doesn't ordinarily even devote to Gus Hall (whose party, incidentally, it has started to treat as an insignificant magnitude)? The answer is that I had the temerity, unknown in the immediate environment of Chairman Klonsky, to disagree with, then to oppose, to expose and to refuse to submit to the ideological and political line of what I shall call "Klonskyism."

There was a time when this was not a mortal sin. In those days, Klonskyism -- despite persistent weaknesses -- moved on the whole on the Marxist-Leninist road; and in those days Klonskyism confidently permitted and encouraged ideological struggle in a democratic-centralist way within the organization. That was a long time ago. Things have changed since then. Today, Klonskyism has departed in its heart from the Marxist-Leninist road, and lacks the confidence to permit itself to be disagreed with and to resolve the differences in a Marxist-Leninist fashion. Today Klonskyism is like petty warlord bully-ism, anxious, insecure, and therefore given to lashing out, to loosening torrents of abuse, howling "revisionist" at every leaf that stirs and shouting "death!" at all who don't prostrate themselves in the dust at its feet.

Klonsky is wrong; that is why he shouts and threatens so. . . .

The advanced workers and Marxist-Leninist intellectuals will not allow themselves to be impressed by such melodramatics. They will not be swayed by glib comparisons with other struggles in other times and places. They will demand a full account of the differences, the aims and methods of struggle each side employed, and they will not rest content with hearing one side only, but will insist on a more rounded picture.

The members of the October League are in an especially favorable position in this regard. There exists a fairly extensive documentary record of this controversy. It runs to nearly 200 pages of internal documents, of which about two-thirds is my papers on various occasions, including the lengthy paper I submitted with my letter of resignation. Any member of the October League who wishes really to be able to speak on this controversy should investigate that record, make a full and independent study of the documents, analyze the issues, and form a judgement without preconceptions, just as Lenin urged the members of the Russian party to study the minutes of the Second Congress. Now that the divergences have turned into a break, what possible reason can there be for the Klonsky circle to deny OL members access to the record? (While I was a member of the organization, the Klonsky circle blocked every one of my papers from general distribution to the membership.)

If they do achieve access to the record, however, OL members will find that matters did not develop quite as they have been painted in The Call....

Our differences of line, emerging, developing and deepening over a period of months, involve the basic theory and method of party-building; they involve basic points of policy toward different trends in the U.S. imperialist ruling class and in the labor bureaucracy; they involve some points of history and theory regarding the restoration of capitalism in the USSR, and they involve some points concerning the world situation. Saving the last two points for the next issue of M-L FORWARD -- the differences on these scores are not irremediable -- I shall lay out our major disagreements in the course of this article.

Basically, taken all together, the differences in this particular struggle all come down to the difference between Marxism-Leninism and "Klonskyism."

What is "Klonskyism"? The reader will see in the following pages its distinguishing features. Klonskyism, the ideology and methods of M. Klonsky, chairman of the October League, signifies an incomplete break with the bourg-

eois-democratic and petty-bourgeois revolutionist movements of the 1960s. It means an incomplete rebellion against the revisionism of the CPUSA. Klonskyism means a shallow, superficial advance from the historical sources of much of our movement; it means failure to advance completely and thoroughly to Marxism-Leninism, and thus it means relapse and regression into the old ideology, carrying the colors of the new along with it. If one word can describe what Klonskyism has become today, as a result of its unconquered bourgeois and revisionist heritage, it is Browderism. Browderism means revisionism at the top of a revolutionary organization; it means a line of capitulation to the bourgeoisie promoted from the summit of an organization dedicated to overthrowing the bourgeoisie; it means a line of liquidating the Party nestling in the very leadership of that party. Klonskyism today has degenerated into Browderism.

Yes, Klonskyism has won a "victory" for the moment. It has consolidated its grip on the October League -- by what means, I will show -- and will not be unfastened by ordinary, routine measures. The "victory" of Klonskyism in this particular struggle is indisputable. But what kind of victory was it? It was like the outcome of that struggle described by Lenin in One Step Forward, Two Steps Back:

"The furious gale raised all the mud from the bottom of our Party stream; and the mud took its revenge. The old hidebound circle spirit overpowered the still young party spirit." (Vol. 7, p. 413)

The victory of Klonskyism, of the hidebound spirit of the Klonsky circle, was such a "revenge of the mud." However, just as there are revolutions which are more like reaction, as Lenin said, so there are "victories" which turn out to be more like defeats. This triumph of the mud will be temporary. It will serve as a valuable lesson by negative example in party-building, and thus it will contribute despite itself, and over it, in moving the Party -- the single, unified Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of the U.S. -- nearer within reach.

## 1. The Methods of Klonskyism

Almost everyone knows Chairman Mao's three basic principles:

"Practice Marxism, not revisionism; unite and don't split; be open and aboveboard, don't intrigue and conspire."

Knowing them and being able to repeat them, on the one hand, and actually putting them into practice, however, are very different matters for the Klonsky circle. While the Klonsky circle has these and other fine words on its lips, experience shows that what it has in its heart is a different set of principles altogether. "Practice Klonskyism, not Marxism" is the first and most fundamental of its principles. From this follow its principles of method, which run like this: "why unite? It's easier to launch ruthless attacks, make sweeping accusations, form blocs and force a split! Why risk being open and aboveboard? It's quicker to suppress, lie, bluff, fake and bully your way through!" Revisionism in ideological and political line inevitably resorts to revisionism in methods of struggle, and thereby begins to expose its essence. Let us study the methods of Klonskyism.

At the very moment, roughly a year ago, when the decision was made to make the formation of the party the chief immediate task of the period ahead, the Klonsky circle decided to clamp the lid on the ideological life of the organization.

Without revealing anything that could hazard the security of the organization, I can say only that a drastic modification was undertaken in the vehicle by which OL members participated in the ideological life of the organization on a countrywide basis.

The modification, made on the proposal of the Klonsky circle, was said to be for "practical" reasons. Perhaps so. Whatever the motives, however, the objective result was that this former omnibus of criticism, self-criticism and ideological struggle was converted into something more like a four-seater, a de facto private vehicle for carrying the views of the Klonsky circle. Other views had to "walk" or "stay home."

I opposed this proposal at the time, but did not take a firm enough stand. I allowed myself to be won over by the "practical" arguments and by the promises that the same functions would be taken over and continued in public organs. For this I criticize myself. I failed to see clearly at the time that this modification was, underneath its innocent appearance and perhaps innocent intent, a serious error of principle. The beginning of the immediate pre-party period required a broad expansion of ideological struggle, an

invigoration of ideological life at all levels, if the right-opportunist deviation, the anti-party ideas, within its ranks, were to be pinpointed and corrected.

Where is the direct source of the right-opportunist deviation within the October League? As in any organization, bourgeois influences are continually active and can rear their heads at any point. I think that a calm, systematic survey of history will show, however, that the chief source, within the OL, of this deviation, has been the very top, the Klonsky circle.

Who promoted the erroneous line of helping to "unparalyze" the liberals in Congress against the "fascist tide" or "fascist threat" during the Nixon impeachment days? Who promoted the policy of singing the praises of liberal labor bureaucrats such as Miller and Sadlowski "against the fascist labor front"? Who was the source of the federationist "temporary leading body" scheme for building a party without a program or a congress? These gross right-opportunist errors, together with others what are not so widely known, originated with no other source than the top leading circle headed by M. Klonsky, and in particular their source is M. Klonsky himself. It was none other than the members of this same circle who fought for these right-opportunist ideas, who figured out whole systems of rationalization for them, and who spread them throughout the organization and the movement.

In short, as the organization entered the immediate pre-party period, the leading proponents of the right-opportunist deviation took over as their private property the only weapon with which that right-opportunist deviation could be exposed and criticized.

No wonder, then, that the public acknowledgement of "errors" was so brief and shallow, and that internal examination of these errors was even briefer and shallower!

No wonder that the label "rightism" has been flung here, there, and everywhere without rhyme or reason, but the bullseye of the target has escaped every blow!

No wonder that the "new" lines on party-building, on the liberals and on the trade unions, proposed by the same top circle in supposed "criticism" of the old right-opportunist lines, are just as right-opportunist in essence as before!

The result of the top leadership's initiative to dampen ideological struggle was, in the end, that the October League entered the immediate pre-party period with the right-opportunist deviation within it covered up, slightly transmuted, and greatly strengthened and consolidated.

In sum, Klonskyism in methods means first of all stifling ideological struggle, usurping the party forum and turning it into a circle forum, blocking and diverting criticism, and perpetuating old opportunist lines in a new guise. But that is not all.

### "FREEDOM" FOR OPPORTUNIST THEORY

Not long after this initiative, the top circle proposed a modification in the previous role of the theoretical journal, Class Struggle. The argument this time was to broaden and to expand its scope so as to include views that were (it was claimed) not in line with the views of the October League, but formed part of the "Unity Trend." This was not unreasonable in the abstract.

The particular case for which the new role was designed, however, was another matter. The item in point was the article "On Building the Party Among the Masses," by the League for Marxist-Leninist Unity. (Class Struggle No. 4-5)

This article advocates an eclectic, opportunist, retrograde and essentially anti-party line on "party-building." As far as our movement is concerned, the line of this article is the line of Workers' Viewpoint, but disguised and "sugar"-coated.

I fought against the publication of this article. The top leadership of the organization fought for its publication. I yielded on condition that a criticism of the LMLU article be published. I wrote up such a criticism some weeks later, sharply exposing the right-opportunist essence beneath the "left" phraseology of the LMLU-WVO "party-building" line. The top leadership indefinitely postponed -- killed through pigeonholing -- my request that the criticism of LMLU be published in Class Struggle, anonymously or under a pseudonym if this was thought preferable.

It was clear that the scope of the theoretical journal was being "broadened and expanded" in one direction only: more "freedom of expression" for theoretical opportunism, but not for the critique of this opportunism.

(Continues Straight Through; Ends on P. 19)



This is a second basic feature of Klonskyism in its methods.

The reason why the LMLU's camouflaged version of the WVO line on party-building enjoyed such powerful patronage soon became apparent. Not long after publication of the LMLU article, the OL's top leadership appropriated the LMLU line, lock stock and barrel, and proposed it as its own line for adoption by the body empowered to make such decisions. Going against the opportunist tide created by the top leadership on behalf of this proposal, I wrote more papers, argued and fought, and went down to defeat. With the exception of my sole "no" vote, the entire leading body surrendered en masse to the theoretical misleadership on questions of party-building of the neo-"Wing." Under the banner of "fighting rightism," the Klonsky circle threw itself into the arms of the same right-opportunism disguised under "left" phrasemongering. To put it succinctly, under the banner of fighting Comrade Avakian's line, Comrade Klonsky led the organization in a capitulation to Comrade Tung's line.

Clearly, the root of the thinking which had led to the Klonsky circle's "temporary leading body" scheme for party-building had not been pulled up. The OL's top circle had not profited from this fall into the pit to sharpen its wit, to go deeply into the theory of building a Leninist party, and to elaborate definite, clear and comprehensive ideas of its own. Instead, under pressure to come up with "something," to "define its stand," the Klonsky circle clutched at a piece of fashionable "theoretical" gibberish and gobbled it up. Any rubbish for the sake of blessed "unity"! -- with opportunism.

#### AGITATION FOR PROLETARIAN DICTATORSHIP

The definite viewpoint I had arrived at and consistently defended by this juncture was that Stalin's famous sentence fragment from his rough notes on the Party, namely "propaganda as chief form of activity," refers to propaganda work in the general sense -- to the propagation of ideas, the preparation of public opinion -- rather than to propaganda in the particular, narrower sense of "presenting many ideas to one or a few persons." Further study of Stalin's and Lenin's works, and of the different commentaries on the question, led me to the conclusion that the Leninist answer to the question: 'what must be the Party's chief form of activity in the first main period of party-building?' is neither propaganda in the latter sense, nor economic agitation, but rather political agitation; and further, that in our own historic situation in the U.S. the cornerstone of the Party's activity in the first main period must be political agitation for the dictatorship of the proletariat. In the second issue of this publication I intend to lay before the reader a full explanation of the grounds for this view, its practical implications, and the reasons for rejecting the alternatives. I mention here only this slogan-like main point "political agitation for the dictatorship of the proletariat" in order to provide the necessary background for understanding the next move in the struggle.

#### THE WORST CRIME IN THE KLONSKYIST BOOK

After the session of the leading body I have referred to, the blossoms of political hypocrisy inherent in the Klonsky circle's earlier moves opened up to their full poisonous splendor.

On the lips of the Klonsky circle were fine phrases about the rights of the minority, about the principle of resolving the political differences through continued ideological struggle with each side having the right to present its views through the proper channels, about continuing the study of the question, etc. etc.

The reality behind this display was otherwise.

The first step the Klonsky circle took was to carry to the ranks, in the forum the circle had usurped for itself, a so-called summary of my point of view that was both punitive in its form and false in its substance.

In its form and manner, this "summary" -- as one member of the top circle personally admitted -- dealt out a qualitatively sharper attack on me, who had done nothing improper, than is dealt out as a rule in cases where comrades commit serious infractions that endanger the organization as a whole. To disagree frankly and in the proper place with an idea of Klonskyism, to admit error on minor points but to hold your ground on the main points in face of the Klonsky circle's arguments, to vote "no" when the Klonsky circle wants you to vote "yes" -- this is an unforgivable "insult" to the self-esteem of Klonskyism. It is the worst crime in the book of the Klonsky circle, and its injured circle vanity is bound to seek revenge. As I found out shortly.

Worse than the punitive form of the sumup was its political content. This summary asserted

-- and The Call No. 30 has now made it "official" -- that there is no substantial difference between the line of economic agitation for trade union demands (a la RCP), and the line of political agitation for the dictatorship of the proletariat. The sumup did not even refer to a distinction, much less a difference, but characterized my line as just "agitation" in general, and "therefore" accused me of "rightism."

Holy smokes! Lenin spent more than five years and wrote four or five volumes fighting against the line of economic agitation and for the line of political agitation, and our chief arbiters of ideological struggle declare that the poor man was wasting his time, it's all the same! Amazing. On one side the RCP's "Worker" papers, chiefly economic agitation; on the other side Lenin's *Iskra*, chiefly political agitation -- and the Klonsky circle says both are "just agitation," and "rightist"! Avakian's line and Lenin's line equally opportunist . . .

The deliberate intent of this sham "sum-up" (and, as I discovered some time thereafter, its effect) was to "whip up a storm" of prejudice among cadre throughout the organization, and to put the paper cone hat of "chief rightist" on my head.

Klonskyism is ready to sacrifice any principle in the interest of its narrow circle motives. The interests of the October League demand that ideological struggle be conducted in an open and above-board way in order that the correct line will emerge stronger from the struggle against the incorrect. The interests of the Klonsky circle demand, however, that the line that disagrees with it be suppressed and a sham substitute be hung out as a target, so that ideological struggle is diverted into tilting at windmills and knocking down straw men, for the benefit of the incorrect line of the Klonsky circle. The interests of the October League demand drawing a sharp line of demarcation between economic agitation and political agitation as forms of activity; but the interests of the Klonsky circle demand blurring over the differences. The interests of the October League demand distinguishing clearly between "Avakianism" and Leninism; the interests of the Klonsky circle demand muddying over the differences, and condemning Leninism implicitly as "rightism." In each case, the interests of the Klonsky circle prevailed over the interests of the October League and of Leninism. Klonskyism throws the interests of the October League and the principles of Leninism out the window, and is prepared to commit any kind of chicanery in pursuit of its narrow circle interests. This is another basic feature of Klonsky methods.

#### STUDY IS 'VERBOTEN'

In reply, I drafted up a study guide intended for the members of the leading body, covering some key works by Lenin on propaganda, economic agitation and political agitation. It was my hope that deeper study of these questions -- the amount of study had been very limited -- would lead this body to rethink and to reconsider its earlier decision to adopt the "party-building" line of LMLU-WVO.

Can you believe this, dear reader: the little circle at the top refused point-blank to distribute the study guide -- a study guide! -- to the other members of the leading body! They did not even display the frankness, in stating their grounds, of admitting that the study guide led to a political conclusion with which they disagreed, but claimed simply that the study guide was "no good" and that they would produce a "better" one when they were ready. (Wouldn't it have been wiser to conduct study before making decisions and launching a campaign to whip up a storm, comrades?)

Dear former comrades of the leading body: this study guide is printed on the back page of this issue of M-L FORWARD. It has its strong points and its weak points. Judge them for yourselves. Judge also whether those who do not think you competent to make this judgement, and who set themselves up as a wall between us, are leaders of the Party type.

Extreme arrogance is another basic feature of Klonsky methods. This little handful arrogates to itself the right to stand in judgement over the leading body of the organization and to block perfectly open, aboveboard and straightforward written communication between its members. It gives itself the right to act as a censor over the leading body and to split and cut off its members one from the other. Klonskyism is splittism; it is the opposite of democratic centralism; it strives toward the dictatorship of a bourgeois clique rather than toward the dictatorship of the proletariat.

#### SPLITTIST CAMPAIGN ON 'CALL' STAFF

Immediately after the top circle launched its punitive, demagogic "sum-up", and in the same breath as the suppression of the study guide, the Klonsky circle launched a campaign of suppression and demagoguery on the *Call* staff. For several weeks the circle had block-

ed publication in *The Call* of practically every article I wrote on current news developments. These articles consisted of topical exposures of U.S. imperialism, of the liberal ruling-class politicians, of the liberal trade union bureaucrats Sadlowski and Miller, and of the Guardian's "centrist" talk about "party"-building.

In place of the usual process of criticizing and rectifying errors in the drafts of these articles, the Klonsky circle launched an extraordinary "campaign" of "struggle" over "political line."

I put all these terms in quotation marks, because what the Klonsky circle initiated consisted of five per cent or less genuine and correct criticism and struggle over political line and 95 per cent or more demagoguery, name-calling, invective, vilification and all sorts of other splittist, small-circle rubbish. It was not a Marxist-Leninist campaign but a retrograde, opportunist tide that they whipped up.

To stir up this storm, the circle leaders encouraged every kind of backward idea with words of praise, united with diametrically opposed lines to form an unprincipled bloc, offered promotions to those who engaged in the most unbridled, shameless opportunist attacks, cajoled and pressured those who vacillated, and used every other technique in the arsenal of opportunism.

It began with Chairman Klonsky, after a few hypocritical phrases about "unity-struggle-unity" and so forth, likening my humble self to Liu Shao-chi, Lin Piao, Teng Hsiao-Ping and Trotsky for good measure, by which M. Klonsky meant to imply that he was Mao Tsetung, Stalin and Lenin all rolled into one. From that point the progress was all downhill; by the fourth week, the earlier namecalling having lost its effect, Chairman Klonsky resorted to labels like "tyrant," "mad professor," "rightist trash" and similar profound things. Throughout this enlightening and instructive experience, which laid bare the full degeneracy of Klonskyism, ringleader Klonsky followed the method of multiplying the differences, of turning small things into big things, of opening up one area after another and of heaping "criticisms" and "charges" one on top of the other, faster than ten saints could have replied to them all.

The use of such methods indicates that the user no longer acknowledges the person at whom they are directed as a comrade, but wishes to achieve or to consolidate a break in organizational relations. This is their inevitable result. Used on behalf of Marxism-Leninism against die-hard, incorrigible counter-revolutionaries (e.g. the "gang" in China), they serve a useful and necessary purpose. Used on behalf of Klonskyism, they are reactionary demagoguery, splittist small-circle rubbish.

This "campaign," claimed Chairman Klonsky, was a direct continuation of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China. In reality, it was a resurrection of the sham tactics of factionalism and splittism with which the fake Marxists within the Cultural Revolution sought to undermine and sabotage the Cultural Revolution. And for my trying to point this out to the comrades, the Klonsky circle accuses me of "slandering the Cultural Revolution"! It is they themselves who slander the Cultural Revolution by wrapping their demagogic, retrograde windy nonsense in the great Cultural Revolution's bright red banner.

Two major episodes in this campaign, both reflected in the documentary record for anyone who has access to it to verify, particularly stand out as characteristic.

#### WAVES RED FLAG TO ATTACK CHAIRMAN MAO'S LINE

In one meeting, the Klonsky circle advanced the assertion that the Khrushchov revisionist clique's usurpation of state power in the USSR in 1956-57 amounted, ipso facto, to the full restoration of capitalism in the USSR. In other words, that the bourgeoisie's seizure of the superstructure, in and of itself, in the same stroke and instant, fully and completely created a capitalist infrastructure or economic base.

After citing historical and philosophical reasons why the transformation of a country's economic base, even from socialism to capitalism, is not such an instant and automatic matter, I pointed out also that the Chinese comrades, to my knowledge, generally took the view that the restoration of capitalism in the economic base, begun by Khrushchov, was completed and universalized (i.e. that capitalism was fully restored) by Brezhnev-Kosygin. As evidence I pointed to the pamphlet "Khrushchov's Phoney Communism and its Historical Lessons for the World," published by the Chinese comrades in the summer of 1964, shortly before Khrushchov's ouster by Brezhnev-Kosygin. The pamphlet says that the Khrushchov revisionist clique has turned the proletarian state power into a fascist-type dictatorship and is using its control of the superstructure to restore capitalism. The USSR now faces an unprecedentedly grave danger of the restoration of capi-



talism becoming an accomplished fact, says the pamphlet -- and the ink hardly had time to dry before this warning proved to be well grounded.

In rebuttal, the chief of the Klonsky circle, OL chairman M. Klonsky, launched into a half-hour diatribe against the pamphlet "Khrushchov's Phoney Communism." Puffing himself up, on the basis of his visits to China, as an alleged "expert" with "inside knowledge" of the Chinese comrades' affairs, he asserted that this pamphlet, written before the Cultural Revolution, had in fact been inspired and perhaps even personally authored by Liu Shao-chi; that this pamphlet had been exposed as revisionist in the course of the Cultural Revolution; and that this pamphlet had been withdrawn from circulation by the Chinese comrades for this reason and could no longer be obtained from Chinese publications distributors. In concluding this speech, laced with sarcasms and with polemical hammer blows, Klonsky accused me of peddling Liu Shao-chi's line, covering up for Khrushchov, promoting revisionism, etc. etc.

So powerful was this speech, so laden with alleged expertise, that I myself was taken in by it, and for three days I tried to reconstruct mentally the history of the USSR according to the foundations indicated by Klonsky. Then, driven by gnawing doubts, I went to China Books & Periodicals in Chicago to verify Klonsky's claims. I found, contrary to my chairman's fist-pounding assertions, a sizeable stack of the pamphlet "Khrushchov's Phoney Communism" in plain view on the shelf, and that the item continues to be distributed by Guozi Shudian (China's central book distributors). As far as anyone at the store could recall, the item has sold fairly briskly year after year through all the phases of the Cultural Revolution and the continuation campaigns.

Chairman Klonsky's nuclear blitz against the pamphlet "Khrushchov's Phoney Communism" was a crystal-clear, concrete and living example of "waving the red flag to beat down Chairman Mao's forces," of shouting and yelling "Down with Liu Shao-chi" and "Down with Khrushchov" in order to attack Marxism-Leninism.

Some days after being confronted with the facts concerning the "Khrushchov" pamphlet and the Cultural Revolution, Klonsky admitted off-handedly that his assertions had been a "mistake." But neither this passing acknowledgement, nor my attempts to seek out a basis of principled unity with him in order to prevent the differences from widening into a break, diverted him from the path of demagoguery along which he had been proceeding. My efforts to seek principled unity, to cool frayed tempers, and to work out compromises on secondary, non-principled questions, only made matters worse, because Klonsky misread them as signs of willingness eventually to submit on the major points as well, and thus took encouragement to resume fanning the reactionary storm with even more demagogic forms of struggle.

In reality, the OL chairman's red-flag-waving polemics against Marxism-Leninism, this frantic brandishing of the red flag as a club to beat down Chairman Mao's line, was no accidental "mistake." It reveals the essence of the entire political position promoted and supported by the Klonsky circle in the process of consolidating its grip on the October League.

#### A CENSORSHIP LIKE THE OLD TSARS'

A second episode in the struggle showed to what reactionary lengths this circle was willing to go. It took place in a side ring of the main arena of struggle, on a committee convened to finalize a list of selections for an anthology of Lenin's writings on party-building, intended for publication as a book. I was present, having drafted the original list of suggested selections. The work went smoothly until suddenly the same Klonsky launched a vehement attack on one of the articles on the original list, demanded that it be struck out of the anthology, and with the support (as usual) of his circle, succeeded in having it cut out.

The target of this attack -- can you guess it? -- is Lenin's "Political Agitation and the 'Class Point of View,'" in Collected Works Vol. 5, pp. 337-343. In this article, Lenin refutes the accusation that Iskra's principles of political agitation allegedly violate the proletarian "class point of view" and that they "blur over class antagonisms."

Not by coincidence, the so-called main criticism which the Klonsky circle was throwing at my banner of political agitation in its "storm" on the Call staff was precisely that of "abandoning the proletarian class stand" and "blurring over fundamental class antagonisms."

The Klonsky circle's "main criticism" was an almost verbatim repetition -- practically a plagiarism -- of the charges brought against Iskra by Martynov, the Economist, and by Nadezhdin, the Economist-terrorist.

The Klonsky circle suppressed this valuable article of Lenin's in order to cover up their

political plagiarism of old opportunist rubbish.

Even Lenin cannot get his writings past the Klonsky circle's censorship! Klonskyist suppression takes up where the old tsars left off -- and Klonskyist reactionary suppression, because it wraps itself in the cloak of Marxism-Leninism, is all the more effective and dangerous.

#### THE 'CREDO' OF THE KLONSKY CIRCLE

On Oct. 11, the Klonsky circle's "charges" and "criticisms" were put in the form of a paper, which defined also the circle's own stand and line on a number of basic questions. It demanded I "accept the criticisms" and "unite with the line" of that paper. The line of that paper, which I will refer to hereafter as the "credo of the Klonsky circle," is a revisionist line, specifically Browderite in type; it is a line of capitulationism and ultimately liquidationism. Marxist-Leninists have a duty to accept correct criticisms, to expose and repudiate their errors and unite with the correct line. But Marxist-Leninists likewise have the duty to refuse to accept opportunist "criticisms," to expose and to repudiate such "criticisms," and to oppose and to break with the incorrect, opportunist and revisionist line. By its methods of demagoguery and all-around suppression to protect its opportunist line, the Klonsky circle left me two choices: submit to revisionism or leave the October League. I left.

The October League as a whole and in general cannot be held directly responsible for the events I have described and for the revisionist political line analyzed below. Most of the comrades know next to nothing about this, or little that is true, in any case, and their means for fighting the opportunism of the Klonsky circle through normal channels are severely limited by the fact that the Klonsky circle controls these channels. Three or four individuals must be held responsible, who form a little circle that practices covering up for each other's mistakes, applying a double standard to themselves and to other comrades, and the methods of hypocrisy, double-dealing and suppression of Marxism that I have described. They form a little handful that has concentrated and consolidated the power of the organization in its hands, and has set itself up above Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought, above criticism, above the October League and above its leading body. The chief of this circle personally bears the chief responsibility for its reactionary thinking and doing.

#### THE GANG DENOUNCES THE "GANG"

It is more than a little ironical that the Klonsky circle is now singing the praises of Chairman Hua Kuo-feng and denouncing the "gang of four" in China. There is the heavy smell of hypocrisy about this. Chairman Klonsky, in particular, several times blocked my suggestion that The Call publicize and draw favorable attention to Hua's important speech at last year's National Conference On Learning from Tachai, which has been published as a pamphlet; Chairman Klonsky said he was "not impressed" with it. As for the "gang of four," my experience with the Klonsky circle has been that this circle has been steadily degenerating into just such a gang, without principles or scruples, concerned only with their own positions of power and their own self-aggrandizement. The pretty phrases of this circle deceived me for quite some time, just as Yao Wen-yuan (the chief propagandist of the "gang of four" in China) took me in with his article about bourgeois right, which I quoted two years ago in my series of articles on the restoration of capitalism in the USSR.\* It took some time of living and working in direct contact with the Klonsky circle day after day, and engaging in struggle with it, to see fully what lies behind the facade.

Not only its basic political line and its political methods -- its methods of promoting opportunism and suppressing Marxism-Leninism, its methods of heaping abuse, flinging labels and wild accusations, its methods of waving the red flag as a club against Marxism-Leninism, its methods of threatening and strong-arming when it has no arguments -- but also its work style and lifestyle approach those of a degenerate "gang." Under the guise of "liaison work," or even for no reason at all, it makes a habit of wasting the organization's money by stuffing itself at expensive bourgeois restaurants. It promotes and organizes poker games not only in evening hours that would be better spent studying, but also on important working occasions. It pressures cadre who live on subsistence budgets into taking part in this gambling and pockets their food and rent money. It delights in pasting up a certain kind of obscene pictures and making a certain kind of

\*Yao's article, "On the Social Basis of the Lin Piao Anti-Party Clique," was aimed, according to Peking Review No. 50, p. 13, at undermining the Party by whipping up a campaign "against empiricism" in order to divert the campaign to study the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat, initiated by Chairman Mao.

sexual jokes in its working quarters. Its habits have been the subject of quiet complaints and criticism by many comrades for a long time. It is overdue to expose this degeneracy and sweep it out.

#### MORE WINDY NONSENSE BY THE KLONSKY CIRCLE

In The Call No. 30 (Nov. 29), the Klonsky crew has finally carried its windy nonsense -- or parts of it -- into public print. Good! The more the Klonsky circle presents to the public its wild accusations and fabrications, its hypocritical flinging of the label "revisionist" and its shouts of "Death to Revisionism," the more it will contribute to its own exposure and its downfall.

The only thing that is wholly accurate in this frenzied howling and shouting by the Klonsky crew, which bears the inimitable personal stamp of M. Klonsky, is the spelling of my name. Even the "expulsion" is a mere grandstand play. They "expelled" someone who had already ceased to belong to them, having resigned in protest against the line and methods of the Klonsky circle which controls the October League. This they prefer to cover up.

The Klonskyite insinuation that I took away some property of the organization -- Klonsky alleges I "stole some money" without saying allegedly whose money -- is a libel and a slander. I took not a dime, not a ballpoint pen nor a roll of scotch tape of the organization's property. On the contrary, my allegedly revisionist book and other activities have brought quite tidy sums into the coffers of the organization, which the Klonsky circle has been content to appropriate without a murmur of complaint. The only "money" to which the Klonskyite insinuations could be referring is the community property of my marriage; so low has Klonskyism sunk that it is reduced to emulating bourgeois scandal sheets like the National Enquirer and Midnight Special by printing one-sided tittle-tattle from divorce cases, knowing that they are printing less than the whole truth. I warn the owners and publishers of The Call (who are, of course, the same Klonsky circle in its capacity as sole stockholders and directors) that when they descend into the gutters of bourgeois journalism, they must be prepared to be sued under the bourgeois laws regarding use of the press for defamation of character with malicious intent. Can you find no other means to boost your stagnant circulation?

#### ROAD TO PARTY TOO STEEP FOR KLONSKYISM

Some will say that the Klonsky circle has always been a hypocritical, degenerate "gang," and that nothing has changed in this regard. I do not share this view. There was always a "seamy" side; there were always persistent weaknesses -- but let those who have no weaknesses cast the first stone. In the case of the Klonsky circle, there has been a qualitative degeneration into revisionism, a transformation of secondary aspects of weakness into principal, dominant characteristics.

In the whole party-building movement in the U.S. there was once no organization which had as much potential for leading the way to the construction of the single, unified Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of the U.S. as did the October League. Recall, for example, its leadership of the fight against the RU's liquidation of the Afro-American national question, recall its exposure of the CLP at a time when most of the so-called "theory trend" was infatuated with that sham; recall its principled struggle against the Guardian's "centrism," its accurate prediction of the breakup of the "Wing"; recall the Nov. 1975 Call Conference, the Fight-Back Conference in December, the achievement of a weekly newspaper; recall the strikes and other struggles to which the October League gave leadership . . . recall all these and other strong points and you will see why, for a certain period of time, the October League, despite all its weak points, was the number one hope for the future and the number one preoccupation for almost every other group in our movement.

That peak of the October League's influence, that peak of deserved near-hegemony acknowledged by friend and foe alike, occurred barely a year ago. Undoubtedly, if the road to the Party were a level road or a downhill slope from that peak, the October League would still be leading the whole movement toward the Party today. If the political qualities adequate for scaling the peaks of pre-Party influence were adequate for reaching the Party as well, if a group of climbers could advance toward the Party while remaining the same, then the Klonsky leadership would not have degenerated into the Klonsky gang. Unfortunately, the road to the Party runs steeply and tortuously uphill from even the highest pre-party peaks. You cannot coast to it, you cannot rest on your laurels and fly to it like in a dream. You must climb; and this final ascent is more difficult, more demanding, than the climb from the plains to the pre-party foothills. It puts each mountaineering group to the most severe test. Weaknesses of secondary importance on the easier stretches turn into major



impediments here, and often prove fatal. You cannot be victorious in the struggle for the Party by remaining the same as you were when you were building and multiplying circles. Either you progress in keeping with the new tasks, or, by staying the same, you degenerate and fall backwards.

The difficult ascent to the Party proved too difficult for the leading team of the October League. As Lenin said, "It is one thing to sacrifice the circle system in principle for the sake of the Party, and another to renounce one's own circle." (Steps.) The Klonsky circle tried to advance toward the Party while clinging dearly to its circle, its circle weaknesses, its circle mentality and all the rest of its circle baggage. And why not, it reasoned, since, despite these weaknesses, it had climbed so high already? Lacking a scientific map of the trail, overloaded by opportunist baggage, ideologically flabby and complacent from its earlier successes, and too accustomed to the stuffy comforts of small-circle life, the guiding team of the October League lost its balance on the tortuous ascent and has slid relentlessly down the slope, like quite a few others. And now, also like others, it is tugging hard at the rope to its followers, trying frantically to persuade them with all kinds of yelling and shooting off flares that down is really up, that mud is really snow, and that the pit where it is stuck is really the bright summit of the mountain.

#### AND SO, "FAREWELL"!

And so, farewell, dear "guiding team" of the October League! I did my level best to keep you from throwing yourselves into the swamp. If you must go, however, you must go; this is your perfect right, and I do not dream of preventing you from promoting your methods and your line as widely as you can. On the contrary, I hope to give your methods and your line even wider publicity so that all who are concerned with the defense of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought and its application to the concrete conditions of the U.S. may form an independent, informed judgement of your nature. The line of agitation for the dictatorship of the proletariat, which you have tried by every means to suppress within the October League, is a correct line. It is in accordance with Leninism, and it is in accordance with the objective and the subjective conditions in the U.S. All your measures of fakery, hypocrisy and suppression directed against this line are so many cases of picking up a rock only to drop it on your own feet. The more you rant and rail against this line, the stronger will it become; the more you throw mud at this banner, the brighter will it shine. Keep it up, comrades! Fire away not only with your own "original" ammunition, but also with the arguments you have borrowed and are borrowing from Avakian and from Tung! The more you fire, the more you will expose that you have sunk into revisionism, that you have become reactionary, and that the forward march toward the single, unified Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of the proletariat must proceed without you and over you.

And now, in order to speed this forward march, let us have a look at the ideological and political line which all your reactionary measures have served to protect and to promote; let us have a look at the political content of Klonskyism today.

## 2. Political Agitation and the 'Class Point of View'

A most suitable starting point for studying the difference of lines in our controversy is the article by Lenin which the Klonsky circle does not wish the Marxist-Leninist movement to study, namely Lenin's "Political Agitation and the 'Class Point of View'."

There are some points in this article which are particular to the Russian conditions of that time (1902) and not applicable here and now. But there are other points -- and these are the main points -- which take us straight to the heart of the issue.

Lenin begins his article with an illustration. A certain high Russian nobleman, Stakhovich, has made a speech urging a political reform, extended freedom of religion. A Tsarist newspaper sharply attacks the nobleman's speech. Lenin's newspaper *Iskra* follows this controversy in detail, analyzing the arguments of both sides and the material interests that stand behind them.

For doing so, *Iskra* in turn is attacked by several circles of Russian Social-Democrats, who accuse it of "departing from the 'class point of view' for striving ... to follow all manifestations of liberal discontent and pro-

test." (Collected Works Vol. 5, p. 339) These critics seek to persuade *Iskra* "to abandon the many-sided campaign of exposure (i.e. the widest possible political agitation) against the autocracy."

And indeed, the pages of *Iskra* devote extensive coverage to the analysis of contradictions between and within different sections of the Russian ruling strata, exploring at length the rifts between the bourgeoisie and the autocracy, within the bourgeoisie, and within the autocracy itself, and between them and other strata. So much does *Iskra* focus on these questions that one of the critics exclaims in mock horror: "'Good Lord, what is this -- a Zemstvo paper?'" meaning, a review of government affairs?

Lenin's reply to these critics -- they come from the openly Right opportunist (Economist) side and from the sham "leftist" Economist-terrorist corner -- consists of two parts.

#### 'SUPPORT FOR LIBERAL OPPOSITION'?

Firstly, he criticizes the erroneous class analysis underlying some of the criticisms. He points out that the interests of the Tsarist autocracy do not coincide fully with the interests of all sections of the Russian bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie, as some of the critics believe. The contradictions between sections of the bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeoisie on the one hand, and the autocracy on the other, give rise to a liberal opposition to Tsarism; and under these conditions, Lenin points out, the proletariat is obliged, among other things, to provide "support for the liberal opposition." (p. 341)

This portion of Lenin's reply to the critics is clearly bound up to the concrete conditions in Russia at that time, and does not have general validity for here and now. "Our" big bourgeoisie no longer has any revolutionary tasks to fulfill toward any other class, as the Russian bourgeoisie did toward the Tsarist autocracy. Our oligarchs of banking and industry are the ruling class. The liberal tendency in the imperialist ruling class thus no longer forms a "liberal opposition" to the ruling class, but nothing more than a liberal "opposition" within the ruling class -- an "opposition" arising out of the conflict between different rival groups of monopolists, and varying in shape and intensity with the heat of the class struggle, the world situation, the constantly changing strengths of the different financial groups, etc. Nor does the petty-bourgeoisie in the U.S. today, as a general principle, have any unfulfilled revolutionary tasks before it; this can be said only of the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nationalities, where the right of self-determination or of territorial autonomy (regional and local) has been suppressed by the U.S. monopoly capitalists. It is by no means the liberal section of the national bourgeoisie of the oppressed nationalities which champions the fight for the right of self-determination, however.

All this, however, is not at all the main point in this immediate context, and its further development belongs into the future discussion of program for the U.S. revolution. (A remark in passing: If Comrade Klonsky persists until then in his completely degenerate fabrication that I upheld a "strategy of alliance with the liberal imperialists" in our controversy, I shall be forced not only to publish photostatic copies of the original documents of the struggle to expose his "poetic license" and "gift of invention" with quotes, but also to make a compilation of all the remarks of praise and flattery for the liberal imperialists and their agents that appeared in *The Call* from 1973-75 under Klonsky's editorship. In attempting with a most reckless bluff to use me as a scapegoat for that particular deviation, Klonsky tacitly confesses that the gravest charge he could bring against me is that of upholding Klonskyism. Indeed, I confess I did, a year and a half ago at a public forum in Seattle, find myself, contrary to my will, advocating a strategy of alliance with the liberal imperialists. It was when a questioner -- a police provocateur -- forced me to defend the line of M. Klonsky on Watergate.)

It would be turning Lenin and Leninism upside down, and ignoring the central argument of Lenin's article here, to imagine that *Iskra*'s policy of political agitation had support for the liberal opposition (in Russia, 1902) as its principal aim. Quite to the contrary. Its principal aim was to oust the liberal leadership from its position at the head of the struggle against the autocracy.

#### BASIC QUESTION: WHO WILL TEACH, LEAD?

Who will undertake the political education and the leadership of the working class and its allies? The liberals -- or the Marxists? This is the fundamental question Lenin raises, and this goes to the essence of *Iskra*'s principles of political agitation. This essence is not limited in its validity to Russia in 1902; it is valid and fundamental in any country and in any period where one of the

prevalent forms of bourgeois ideology is liberalism (reformism), and where this ideology has an influence within and over the working class.

If the Marxists, in their newspapers, show themselves indifferent to the words and deeds of the liberals and pay little attention to them, the result will be that the liberals' own presentation of their views and their cause is laid before the working class without challenge. To ignore the conflicts, no matter how trivial, which arouse one form or another of liberal dissatisfaction, means to yield to the liberals the position of political teachers of the working class; and to yield this position means to surrender it to those who uphold not the scientific class point of view of the proletariat, but rather the point of view of the bourgeoisie.

"It is precisely the 'class point of view' that makes it impermissible for a Social-Democrat to remain indifferent to the discontent and the protests of the Stakhoviches," Lenin emphasizes. (p. 340)

Those who criticize *Iskra* for its preoccupation with conflicts within the government and with "liberal issues," he adds,

"...show that they are indifferent to liberalism and thus reveal their incomprehension of the basic theses of the Communist Manifesto, the 'Gospel' of international Social-Democracy. Let us recall, for instance, the words that the bourgeoisie itself provides material for the political education of the proletariat by its struggle for power, by the conflicts of various strata and groups within it, etc." (p. 340)

And, in fact, in the U.S. today the "conflicts of various strata and groups" within the bourgeoisie (between liberals and conservatives and fascists; within each of these tendencies, etc. etc.) provide an extremely rich material for the political education of the working class, perhaps much richer than in Tsarist Russia. At the same time, "our" liberals, much more so than in Lenin's time, have at their disposal the means of using this material in their own particular way, i.e. in the bourgeois way, for teaching the proletariat bourgeois political lessons day after day. In fact the liberal newspapers, the liberal tendency in the mass media, the specialized trade union, nationality, cultural and other media, are daily and hourly utilizing the material provided by the conflicts within the bourgeoisie -- and every other material -- in order to teach the proletariat liberalism, reformism.

#### AGITATION -- OR LEAVING LIBERALS IN COMMAND

All the more urgent and imperative for our conditions, therefore, is Lenin's warning that "the tendency of the above-mentioned socialists consciously or unconsciously to restrict the scope and content of political agitation is particularly harmful." (p. 340)

All the more imperative for our situation, therefore -- where the immediate strategic aim is not to achieve bourgeois democracy but to achieve the dictatorship of the proletariat -- is Lenin's teaching that:

"It is our direct duty to concern ourselves with every liberal question, to determine our Social-Democratic attitude towards it, to help the proletariat to take an active part in its solution and to accomplish the solution in its own, proletarian way. Those who refrain from concerning themselves in this way (whatever their intentions) in actuality leave the liberals in command, place in their hands the political education of the workers, and concede the hegemony of the political struggle to elements which, in the final analysis, are leaders of bourgeois democracy." (p. 341, emphasis added.)

All the more impermissible, therefore, is the Klonsky circle's suppression of this article of Lenin's, and all the more revealing is this suppression. The basic lesson of this article is that the restriction of political agitation (for whatever motive) is tantamount to capitulation to the liberals, it means surrender of the political education of the proletariat to the liberals; it means conceding hegemony in the political struggle to the leaders of bourgeois democracy. This point cuts straight to the heart of the "credo" of the Klonsky circle. On point after point in our controversy, the line of the Klonsky circle reveals the identical capitulationist content. Whether hidden under "left" phrasemongering or out in the comparative open of "criticism" papers that you are supposed to unite with, the thinking of the Klonsky circle always comes back to this same defeatist philosophy, this same policy of surrender to the bourgeoisie.

Political agitation for the dictatorship of the proletariat -- or leaving the liberals in command. Those are the alternatives. Marxism stands on one side, Klonskyism on the other, of this basic issue.



### 3. Klonskyism "versus"

#### Liberal Politics

The Klonsky leadership's errors of two and three years ago on the question of the liberal wing of the ruling class and of the trade union bureaucracy are by now fairly widely known, and some of them have been at least formally acknowledged as errors. But how deep did this acknowledgement go? Was the root of this chain of errors -- this bourgeois-democratic deviation -- exposed and pulled out? The test lies in the "new" line of the Klonsky circle on these questions, i.e. the line that took the place of the one that was acknowledged as erroneous, at least in part and in words. This "new" line, the line currently in effect, forms the subject here.

What does this "new" line consist of? In a word, it is the old line with a facelift. Instead of a relatively open and "frank" line of tailing behind the liberal wing of the ruling class, there is a policy of evasions, feints and screens, both in practice and in theory, which continues the old policy in a more disguised, and hence more dangerous form. The "new" line is related to the old as "centrism" is related to revisionism; that is to say, in essence it is the same, but in its appearance it is more polished, more sophisticated, more camouflaged and more insidious.

Let us study one by one the major evasions, disguises and feints in order to strip them away and get to the real content of Klonskyism, its capitulationism.

#### A. PRETENDING THAT LIBERALS DON'T EXIST IS NOT THE WAY TO DEFEAT THEM!

Between 75 and 100 million people in the U.S. watched the three presidential debates in the past election campaign. The Call, as organ of the Klonsky circle, devoted to this mass bourgeois campaign of political education a total of about six inches of space, and all of that devoted to Ford's blunder on Eastern Europe. This policy of noncoverage, this benign neglect of political affairs, was a glaring case of leaving the political education of the workers in the hands of others. Somehow the "centrist" Guardian, the openly revisionist Daily World, the Trotskyite Militant, not to mention the big bourgeois news media, all found in these debates sufficient material for teaching their audiences their political philosophies and views, but the only Marxist-Leninist weekly in the U.S. could find nothing to say, no way to use the events to teach Marxist-Leninist philosophy and politics. The basic assumption under this indifference is that the workers are supposedly too "apathetic" or "uninterested" to hear the Marxist-Leninist analysis of political affairs; and this amounts to blaming the workers for one's own backwardness.

Given such an indifference on the part of the Klonsky circle to political material in general, there is even less exposure devoted to the role of the liberals in particular. Out of 26 issues of the weekly Call -- half a year -- only three carried sizeable articles focusing the exposure on liberal politicians (Nos. 1, 5 and 15). None was a product of the Klonsky circle's initiative or effort; at least half a dozen others were killed by the Klonsky circle's discouragement of such efforts before they were produced. Of the three that appeared, I wrote two myself, and my next was suppressed after the first draft. The Klonsky editorial policy displays the same "enthusiasm" for exposures of the liberal politicians and labor bureaucrats as the Silber policy shows for exposures of Soviet social-imperialism; the difference is that the Klonsky editorial censorship is more effective because of its "Marxist-Leninist-Mao Tsetung Thought" disguise.

#### 'COMMON CALLS BY ALL FACTIONS'

For the Klonsky circle's basic "view" of the liberals, the reader should consult the Call editorial of Aug. 30 on the conventions of the Democratic and Republican parties.

"Despite the bitter internal struggles going on within both ruling class parties," it says there, "the conventions were filled with common calls by all factions for continued racial segregation, renewed aggression against the third world, continued superpower rivalry with the Soviet Union, and even greater tightening of the domination, exploitation and repression of all working people."

Except for repeating for the nth time, again without any fresh facts or data, the same general (and true enough) formula about a "detente" and an "anti-detente" wing, nothing at all is said about the substance of the "bitter internal struggles" within the parties. All we hear is of "common calls by all factions for continued racial segregation ...!"

Were the Call editors (more accurately, was the Klonsky circle) on the moon at the time these conventions were held? This description is not even accurate for the Republican convention, where the consensus lay rather in denying that problems like "racial segregation" etc. exist; but as to the Democratic convention it is sheer fantasy. The editorial pretends that there does not exist a sizeable faction of these imperialist politicians who, instead of calling for continued segregation, called for just the opposite. They called for an end to U.S. support of third world dictatorships, they called for an end to superpower rivalry, they called for higher wages, justice and freedom for working people and minorities, etc. etc. ad infinitum. The keynote address by Rep. Barbara Jordan summed up this liberal demagoguery to the highest degree of rhetorical perfection, and also got the biggest ovation of any speech including Carter's.

The Klonsky circle's sum-up pretends that liberal politicians don't exist! Of course, if liberals don't exist, if all imperialist politicians openly call for what they really stand for, then there is no need to take up the laborious task of exposing them, no need to expand the scope and content of political agitation. . . . As Marx said, if appearance coincided with essence, there would be no need for science.

In reality, the Klonsky circle's indifference to the liberals -- here carried to its logical extreme of complete blindness -- is only a way of demonstrating impotence in the face of the liberal rhetoric. Avoiding the existence of liberals is one of the surest ways of leaving them a free hand for educating the workers in their point of view, the point of view of the bourgeoisie.

#### A MODEL OF FLATTERING THE LIBERALS

Moreover, as the same editorial demonstrates by example, blindness to liberalism is also a step toward (consciously or unconsciously) echoing their campaign rhetoric. In the next to last paragraph it says: "Ford also made hay off of the lie that he had 'pulled the country out of its crisis.' While unemployment continues to soar, Ford used his massive TV exposure to claim that an era of prosperity lies ahead." Hear! Hear! Except for the "folksy" grammar ("made hay off of"), this line could have been lifted verbatim from a Democratic Party press handout.

For a supplementary illustration of the truth that those who are indifferent to the liberals are condemned to repeat them, the reader should study the front-pager in No. 19, titled "Jobless Rate Climbs." The focus from the outset is the "Ford administration," as if the source of all evils lay there, and the article rakes Ford and his spokesmen again and again over the coals of the rising jobless rate, just in the manner of a Democratic Party after-dinner fundraising speech. A sentence about "the capitalist system itself" is tacked on the end, long after the audience has fallen asleep. Only one bland paragraph is slipped in about the Democrats' reaction to the rising unemployment rate, and Carter's highly interesting (and un-liberal) statements on the occasion to the effect that balancing the budget was his first priority are passed over without comment. There is even an oblique pat on the back for the liberal Democrats in a sentence that contrasts the 4 per cent unemployment rate "during President Kennedy's administration" with the 7 per cent rate under Ford. The Klonsky circle calls this a model article. It is. It is a "model" of capitulating to and flattering the liberal bourgeoisie.

#### B. PORTRAYING THE LIBERALS AS SANTA CLAUS IS NOT THE WAY TO DEFEAT THEM, EITHER!

Sharply challenged on this score in our struggle, the Klonsky circle then took a slightly different tack. In the context of a discussion over the political significance of the recent widespread cutbacks in liberal-sponsored government reform programs, the Klonsky circle issued a "warning" to the effect that the U.S. ruling class still has a great capability for restoring the reforms they have been cutting back, and thus "co-opting the struggle." Watch out for the liberal politicians, was the message, because once they get into government they will pass reform after reform and thus co-opt the revolution.

Well and good; this is a point well taken in the abstract. It would be foolish to draw from the facts of the present deepening economic crisis the conclusion that capitalism is incapable of temporarily restabilizing itself. It would be absurd to believe that capitalism has exhausted its potential for making reforms to coopt the revolution. It would be nonsense to believe that capitalism could collapse of its own accord under the weight of its contradictions, without being hit. These general points, however, are not at all the issue. The issue is, how to fight the liberals' ideological and organizational influence over the

spontaneous movements here and now, in order to replace that influence with the influence of Marxism-Leninism and of a Marxist-Leninist Party? How can we prepare the ground of public opinion now to assure that these movements will come under Marxist-Leninist rather than under liberal leadership in the earliest possible future? How to agitate against the liberal politicians here and now, that is the question.

In this concrete context, the Klonsky circle's warning to 'watch out, the liberals will make reforms' is nothing more than an echo and endorsement of the liberals' campaign promises to the masses.

#### A LAUGHABLE 'REVOLUTIONARY' SPEECH

It is like stepping before an audience of workers, following, say, a Mondale campaign speech, and saying:

"Workers! The liberal politicians have promised you that if you do no more than go to the voting booth and cast your ballot for them, they will restore the cutbacks, oust the rotten judges, bring justice to the minorities and women, and give you large-scale measures of relief and reform. Well, we warn you, if you follow the liberals' leadership, reform is exactly what you are going to get ...."

Long before this speech can get around to pronouncing the conclusion, "we however offer you revolution!" it will have been drowned out by laughter. The Klonsky circle's "warning" is based on the Santa Claus theory of the liberal bourgeoisie, namely the idea that the liberal bourgeoisie keeps its campaign promises and concedes reforms and relief for the workers -- without being forced to do so by the spectre of revolution.

Let's look at history. The Great Depression of the 1930s, as everyone knows, brought about an enormous increase in the misery and oppression of the masses. It also brought forth, first slowly, then with mounting intensity, a spontaneous movement of resistance verging at points on spontaneous rebellion. In the course of this crisis, the then-revolutionary CPUSA was able to win ideological and then organizational leadership, in whole or in part, of the most important spontaneous movements; it was able, to a greater extent than had previously been achieved, to channel, concentrate and convert spontaneous resistance into organized, conscious revolutionary action.

It was not out of any goodness in their hearts, but out of fear of the mounting power of the working class movement -- fear of revolution -- that the liberal wing of the bourgeoisie in that crisis struggled (in its bourgeois fashion) against the conservative wing and overcame it to a sufficient degree to produce the government reform programs that the conservatives still today sometimes call "socialistic": the "progressive" income tax, Social Security, unemployment compensation, welfare, the right to form unions and bargain collectively, the beginnings of civil rights legislation, etc. etc.

#### BYPRODUCTS OF REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE

These were not "gifts" from the liberal bourgeoisie, they were byproducts of revolutionary struggle. The intent of the bourgeoisie in yielding these reforms was precisely what Stalin indicated in Foundations of Leninism, namely to use this policy as "an instrument for strengthening that regime, an instrument for disintegrating the revolution." It is always this way under the bourgeois dictatorship. Nothing is "given" to the workers and oppressed minorities except as a byproduct of revolutionary struggle; whatever is "given" is given only in order to disintegrate the revolutionary struggle; and when the revolutionary threat has temporarily disintegrated, receded and waned, whatever was won before is taken away again.

Why was the liberal policy of the imperialist ruling class at that time -- essentially the policy of Roosevelt -- successful in disintegrating the revolutionary threat, while the fascist demagogues and the stand-pat Hooverite policies utterly failed to do so? Evidently, errors and weaknesses on the part of the CPUSA, stemming from the influence of Browderite revisionism, must bear a very large share of the blame. But how, precisely, did these errors manifest themselves? No doubt those who point to a lack of Marxist-Leninist education and study within the CP as an error are correct; but this does not really answer the question, no more than saying the wreck of the Titanic was due to lack of education in the principles of navigation and meteorology. More particular, specific factors need to be identified. One of them was certainly this: the CP's failure, due to the Browderite influence, to conduct systematic political agitation (exposure) of the liberal bourgeoisie; indifference and



benign neglect of the liberal bourgeoisie; in short, failure to practice Lenin's teachings on political agitation and the 'class point of view.'

During the 1960s there was a modified, smaller-scale second edition of the reform policy of the 1930s. This time there was no genuine Communist Party (its secondary weaknesses had become the principal aspect), but the ruling class had the war in Indochina to carry on, and the spontaneous rebellions in the ghettos, the growth of the Black Power movement in the South, and all the other outbreaks of resistance during the period compelled the bourgeoisie to resort to the "War on Poverty," the Peace Corps and Vista, some child care and a few Black Studies and bilingual programs and some other crumbs.

#### PERIOD OF 'TAKING AWAY AGAIN'

At the present time, in 1976, we are in a period of "taking away again." On practically every front, the trend is to erode and to cut back again the "house that the liberals built" to save capitalism from revolution in previous decades. Even the Social Security program, financially the mammoth among the Depression-era reform creatures, is being steered toward a gradual extinction.

The economic factors making for this trend are, in general, not very mysterious. The sharpening economic crisis, the accumulated burdens of deficits and debts, the weakening world position of U.S. imperialism, the strain of stepped-up war preparations in face of the other superpower's expansion account in the main for the economic side of the trend. This will hardly be cause for debate among Marxist-Leninists.

It is on the political side that certain Marxist-Leninists have trouble penetrating the "mysteries" of what is going on. In reality there is no great mystery to it. The Number One political factor why the ruling class is today embarked on its takeaway policy is that the mass movements of resistance to its established order are by and large "safely" under liberal leadership and liberal organizational control. And the number one cause of this cause is the retrograde trend among Marxist-Leninists which capitulates to this influence and does not, instead, make the exposure of this influence its number one concern.

How should Marxist-Leninists answer the promises and blandishments of the liberal politicians? Certainly not by "warning" the workers -- before the election -- that the liberals will keep their campaign promises. This Klonskyite notion makes agitation of any kind impossible. Especially when combined with the Klonskyite idea that all agitation is inherently rightist (an idea for which Tung warmly applauded Klonsky in the September Workers' Viewpoint), this thinking must paralyze not only Party work, but also Fightback work. The depressing effect of Klonskyism, of the theorizing of M. Klonsky, is one of the chief factors behind the extent of ideological confusion in the National Fight Back Organization, which has prevented it from keeping pace either with the bright prospects raised at its founding conference a year ago, or with the objective pace of development of the economic crisis and of the spontaneous movements.

#### A WAY TO BEGIN

"Workers! The liberals have promised you, in exchange for your votes, all kinds of reform and relief. They are lying through their teeth. They will not keep one out of a hundred of their pretty promises. If you want reform and relief -- and we all know how hard the situation is -- the first thing you must do is to break with these liberal leaders, who lie to you year after year that the way the working class gets anything is to rely on them and to rely on the rules of this political system. This political system is designed and run for one purpose only . . ."

In such a way, approximately, but with fresh material of political exposure taken from daily events for illustration, is how a Marxist-Leninist speech in the present circumstances (this was written before the election -- MN) ought to start out. With such a beginning -- but never with the beginning that takes liberal promises for whole coin -- a Marxist-Leninist will get a hearing from the workers, will be able to expose the nature of the democratic shell that conceals the capitalist dictatorship, will be able to explain the necessity of revolutionary tactics and to make clear the senselessness of the existing system and the inevitability and desirability of a wholly different form of state in which the workers are the ruling class, etc. In such a way, a Marxist-Leninist will be able to begin to undermine and to defeat the ideological influence of the liberals over the working class, to destroy the credibility of the liberals as masters of the political education of the workers, and thus to prepare the ground of public opinion for smashing the liberals' organizational leadership as

well, and replacing it with the leadership of Marxist-Leninists.

To raise the warning that the liberals will be able to co-opt the struggle in the future is also a singular form of blindness to where the struggle stands today. The liberals co-opted the present struggles years ago, they are daily co-opting them right under our noses; the task precisely is to un-coopt the struggles. The immediate danger is not so much the ability of the bourgeoisie to co-opt a revolutionary mass struggle that does not yet exist, led by a revolutionary party that has not yet been built, as the much more subtle ability of the bourgeoisie to co-opt the revolutionary party and the revolutionary struggle before it begins, in embryo, by way of a quiet, almost imperceptible and "unpunishable" -- as Lenin put it -- corruption of the Marxist-Leninist party-builders.

In the last analysis, this Klonskyite talk of warning about a future-co-optation is a cover for not attacking the co-optation that is presently in the saddle. It is a "clever" excuse for retreating from the spontaneous mass movements, another form of capitulation to liberal leadership.

#### C. REJECTING ALL TACTICAL ALLIANCES IS ALSO A FORM OF CAPITULATION TO THE LIBERAL LEADERS.

In the course of several of the more important factory and community struggles in which the October League was involved in earlier years, it formed tactical alliances with various reformist leaders. For example, there was an alliance with Early Mays in the Brotherhood Caucus at GM's Fremont assembly plant in California; the alliance with Hoseah Williams in Atlanta; and more or less 'platonic' alliances with Arnold Miller in the UMW and Ed Sadlowksi in the USWA. The latter consisted more of ideological support (hence 'platonic') than of actual working relationships, but the question at bottom is the same.

Virtually all the leaders who figured as allies in these struggles of two or three years ago no longer do so today -- to put it mildly. A recent OL leaflet from Fremont, for example, showed Early Mays (now a UAW bureaucrat) tied to a railroad track with the "rank and file express" bearing down on him. Hoseah Williams has set up a manufacturing business with a loan from one of Atlanta's more notorious racists; Miller helped expel The Call from the UMW convention, and so forth and so on.

How are these experiences to be summed up?

The Klonsky circle maintains two sets of dishes on this question, one for display when company comes, and the other for actual use.

For display, the Klonsky circle writes in its series of articles on the trade union question that tactical alliances with bourgeois trade union and community leaders are sometimes necessary and permissible, but that, within them, the Marxist-Leninists must maintain their right to criticize their allies and must keep the initiative and exercise independence.

This is in substance correct. In following this line of analysis, one is led to examine the past alliances entered into by the OL to see whether or not the proper conditions existed, and whether or not the OL maintained the independent role and the initiative that are the key to the success of the relationship. One will be led to see that in a number of cases the answer is "no;" that the initiative was lost, and that the alliances became a cover for tailing the liberal leaders. In some cases, it was not even recognized that the allies were in fact liberals, i.e. leaders following a bourgeois line within the workers' movement; and thus, when the alliance came to its inevitable end, there are feelings of surprise, shock, revenge, etc. etc.

In public, the Klonsky circle correctly defends the permissibility of tactical alliances in the proper conditions. But in actual use there is a different set of dishes. In its own kitchen, the Klonsky circle shouts "damn all alliances with bourgeois leaders," and denounces the very idea of them as "right opportunism." Thus, when I had the temerity to suggest in the internal struggle that our past tactical alliances in trade union and community struggles had not yet been thoroughly summed up and the errors within them analyzed, the Klonsky circle roared back that all tactical alliances represent "unprincipled compromise." It is for upholding the permissibility of tactical alliances, under the proper conditions, in trade union and community struggles, that the Klonsky circle accuses me of "advocating alliance with the liberal imperialists." Since the liberal trade union and community leaders -- of the stripe of Mays, Williams, Sadlowksi, etc. -- are in essence ideological and/or actual agents of the U.S. imperialists, "therefore" tactical alliances with them are tantamount to alliance with U.S. imperialism. This is how the Klonsky circle reasons. Profound, isn't it?

In fact, the Klonsky circle does not believe its own public analysis of the question of tactical alliances, but has evolved an internal line of phrasemongering isolationism. It sums up its past alliances in the way that romantic lovers, three times burned, swear never to hold hands again, and go off to a monastery.

Along this line of analysis, one is led not to examine the errors committed in the course of past alliances, but rather to imagine oneself very pure and correct, and to shout and curse the "dirty bastards" of allies who "tricked us."

#### WHAT ARE TACTICAL ALLIANCES FOR?

This way of summing up the experience of the OL shows that the Klonsky circle, in reality, still does not understand what alliances are, what their purpose is, and what is to be expected of this kind of allies.

"Only those who are not sure of themselves can fear to enter into temporary alliances even with unreliable people; not a single political party could exist without such alliances," Lenin pointed out already in What Is To Be Done. "But," he added, "an essential condition for such an alliance must be the full opportunity for the socialists to reveal to the working class that its interests are diametrically opposed to the interests of the bourgeoisie." (Collected Works Vol. 5, p. 362.)

In other words, there is nothing wrong in principle in entering into alliances with people who are "unreliable," and who may at any time turn into open antagonists and try to stab one in the back -- like Mays, Miller, etc. The point is not to enter into alliances with one's eyes clouded by romantic illusions about the nature of the ally. The error of the OL's policy lay not in making alliances per se, but rather in failing, within the alliance, to "reveal to the working class that its interests are diametrically opposed" to the interests of its ally; and it failed to "reveal" this because in most cases, it did not, itself, "see" it. Moreover, to this day the Klonsky circle does not see that any leaders who arise spontaneously from within the ranks of the workers' movement will -- unless Marxist-Leninists intervene and win them systematically to Marxism-Leninism -- inevitably be reformists, liberals in outlook. To this day the Klonsky circle promotes illusions about such leaders; at one and the same time as it foams at the mouth against "alliances with bourgeois leaders" it preaches trust and reliance on leaders who are no less bourgeois in ideology than were Mays, Miller, etc., before they achieved prominence, office, spoils etc.

Stalin continued and defended the Leninist policy on alliances. He said:

" . . . political agreements, political blocs between the Communists and reactionary leaders of the working class are quite possible and permissible. . . ."

"But why are such agreements necessary at all?"

"In order to gain access to the working-class masses, in order to enlighten them as to the reactionary character of their political and trade-union leaders, in order to sever from the reactionary leaders the sections of the working class that are moving to the Left and becoming revolutionized, in order, consequently, to enhance the fighting ability of the working class as a whole."

"Accordingly, such blocs may be formed only on two basic conditions, viz., that we are ensured freedom to criticize the reformist leaders, and that the necessary conditions for severing the masses from the reactionary leaders are ensured."

(On the Opposition, FLP, pp. 357-58.)

Somewhat later in returning to the theme, Stalin emphasizes:

"Care must be taken, however, that such agreements do not restrict, do not limit the freedom of Communists to conduct revolutionary agitation and propaganda, that such agreements help to disintegrate the ranks of the reformists and to revolutionize the masses of workers who still follow the reactionary leaders." (On the Opposition, p. 800.)

#### ALLIANCE NOT SYNONYMOUS WITH FRIENDSHIP

It follows from this that it is quite wrong to confuse the concept of alliances with the concept of friendship. Some alliances are based on friendship; others are not, and it is harmful to get them mixed up, as does the Klonsky circle. The sort of alliances we are discussing here -- tactical, temporary alliances with reformist, liberal leaders in the working class and oppressed nationality movements -- are alliances with enemies. These alliances (provided the proper conditions are assured) are nothing more than the continuation by other means of the war against these antagonists. The purpose of such alliances is not to form lasting bonds with the ally, not to



help and support the ally, but quite the contrary, to assure the downfall of the ally, to disintegrate the ally's forces, and to form lasting bonds with the workers who had been misled by that ally.

(Alliances are one form of war; but they are not the only form. I say this against WVO's making a fetish of this tactic under the banner of "unite to expose," and even applying this notion to revisionist front groups. This ignores Stalin's insistence on the proper conditions. History has shown that revisionist front groups by their very structure, aims, and composition, do not offer the conditions in which the tactic of alliance "to expose" succeeds in its aims; on the contrary, in those conditions this tactic only serves the revisionists. WVO offers several vivid illustrations of this truth in its own experience . . . The only correct tactic in regard to the revisionist party and its front groups is strict boycott; not "unite to expose" but "break to expose.")

#### "LEFT" PHRASES COVER RIGHT OPPORTUNISM

Tactical alliances with liberal leaders in the working class movement are one form of carrying on the strategic war against liberal leadership of the working class movement. Provided the proper conditions exist, such alliances are entirely permissible, consistent with Marxist-Leninist principles, and even obligatory. Those who take an absolutist stance against alliances with bourgeois leaders of the working class, as does the Klonsky circle, are depriving the Party of the proletariat of one of the indispensable weapons in its arsenal for exposing the liberals and building the leadership of Marxist-Leninists. To reject tactical alliances with bourgeois leaders "on principle," to howl and shout that such alliances amount to "alliance with the liberal wing of the U.S. imperialists," to forget altogether about the difference between tactics and strategy -- all these stratagems of the Klonsky circle are nothing more than another form of abandoning the battlefield, of capitulation to bourgeois leadership.

This is the hidden internal connection, the consistent opportunist logic that links the Klonsky circle's evasions on the question of fighting the liberal leaders of the working class with the Klonsky circle's phrasemongering against alliances. The "leftist" phrasemongering, as always, is a cover for Right opportunism.

From a relative open form of right opportunism to a phrase-covered continuation of the same error; from active tailing to passive withdrawal; from tailism to capitulationism -- this is the "progress" of the Klonsky circle.

#### D. CONJURING UP THE 'FASCIST TIDE' IS STILL ANOTHER WAY IN WHICH KLONSKYISM ABDICATES TO LIBERALISM.

The Klonsky circle's acknowledged right-opportunist errors of two years ago were all associated with the spectre of the "fascist tide" or "fascist threat." At that time a policy of more or less open support and praise for the liberal bourgeoisie and its labor lieutenants was promoted under the banner of "unity against fascism." In effect, this line adopted the rhetoric, or part of it, of the United Front Against Fascism, without studying too closely the conditions under which it is appropriate or taking seriously the Party's obligations to maintain its independence and its proletarian stand.

It is worth noting, therefore, that the Klonsky circle has been trying since The Call No. 18 to conjure up the spectre of a fascist tide again. The front page article in that issue begins with the assertion that "the government, along with fascist-led front groups, has markedly stepped up its racist propaganda and violence aimed at maintaining segregation." This is also the message of the banner headline: "Racist Terror As Schools Open." It is not until we go further into the article that we are told, as a point of "fact," that out of 29 cities with school busing projects, racist violence at the opening of school occurred only in Boston, Louisville, and unnamed "other cities." Finally, at the very end of the article, it says: "Many of the fascist-led organizations that were able to build a mass base temporarily in Boston and Louisville have declined in influence in the last year."

Which is it? The declining fascist threat reported in the final paragraphs, the limited number of fascist incidents reported in the middle of the story, or the "stepped-up" fascist tide proclaimed in the lead paragraph and emblazoned across the front page? You can take your pick. A serious, all-sided investigation of political trends in a concrete and factual way has never been the forte of the Klonsky circle. The banner headline and the lead paragraphs, however, show clearly enough, without the need to spell out details, how the

Klonsky circle interprets the mixed and contradictory evidence it gives: the "fascist tide" is on the rise again.

This time, however, with a twist: as a means of "exposing" the liberals. The issue of the liberal wing of the U.S. imperialists had become a point of struggle; the Klonsky circle has to try to show that it is not true that it conciliates and capitulates to the liberals; and thus we have "exposures" of the liberals against the lurid backdrop of the fascist threat.

The main point of these "exposures" is the charge that the liberals conciliate to the fascist threat, that they downplay the real scope of it; in short, that the liberals capitulate to fascism, and thus bear a share of the responsibility for its growth.

#### A 'DIALECTIC' OF HALF-TRUTHS

Exposing concrete instances of liberal conciliation to the fascist trend, it must be admitted, is a step forward over pretending that liberals don't exist, or that they are Santa Clauses, or that, like lepers, they must not be approached with a ten-foot pole. But does it take us into the political essence of liberalism; does it elevate the view of the proletariat above the horizons of bourgeois democratic politics? Is it, in short, Communist political exposure?

No. The best proof that it does none of these things is in the line of WVO, which has been "exposing" the liberals for conciliation to fascism for many, many months before the Klonsky circle picked up the same theme, and which has even tried to puff up this half-truth into a "dialectic" which it accuses the October League of "not understanding." (See Workers Viewpoint, Nov. '76, p. 10.) There is truth to this charge: the October League does not understand the "dialectic" of the liberals and fascism any more than WVO does; but at least the Klonsky circle has met WVO's criticism more than half way by trying to foist the same metaphysics off as "exposure" of the liberals.

The thesis about the liberals' conciliation to the fascists is a half-truth, a conditional and relative truth and not an absolute. There are times, places and conditions when the liberal (as well as the conservative) trends in the ruling class conciliate and capitulate to the fascist trend in the ruling class; other times and conditions where they oppose and restrict the fascist trend. Otherwise, if the thesis of liberal capitulation to the fascists were an "iron law," then the entire U.S. imperialist ruling class would have become thoroughly and completely fascist decades ago, and so would every other imperialist bourgeoisie. To raise the conditional truth of liberal conciliation to fascism into an immutable idea is to tamper with Lenin's teaching in State and Revolution that the democratic republic, i.e. the state form of bourgeois democracy, is the "best possible political shell" for the exercise of the capitalist dictatorship. Whether the liberal and conservative ruling class trends act to preserve that shell, which carries immeasurable advantages for their rule, or whether they act to abandon this shell and resort to the "open, terroristic dictatorship of the most imperialist, most chauvinist" of their ruling-class brethren -- this depends on conditions. There is no abstract "inevitability" about it. Any attempt to raise up a "dialectic" on the foundations of half a truth is bound to produce metaphysics. Whether this metaphysics is used as a rationalization for becoming indirect auxiliaries of the fascists, or direct ones, (as in the case of WVO and RCP, respectively, in the Boston busing crisis of two years ago); or whether it is used as a ground for reducing Communists to bourgeois democrats, for turning Communists into liberals, a la Klonsky, in either case this metaphysics remains captive within the bounds of bourgeois democracy. We either imitate the aspect of the liberals that conciliates to fascism, or we imitate the aspect of the liberals that acts to preserve the "democratic" shell covering the capitalist dictatorship. The whole argument between these two alternatives remains on the ground of bourgeois democracy; it is a quarrel between the two faces of liberalism.

#### WHY ARE THE LIBERALS THE MOST DANGEROUS?

Wherein lies the danger posed by the liberals? We come to the essence of the liberal politics, and teach the proletariat Communist political lessons, only when we examine the dialectic of liberalism in relation to the dictatorship of the proletariat. Whether the liberals defend the bourgeois dictatorship in its naked, fascist form or whether they defend it in its concealed, "democratic" form, this depends on conditions. But their defense of the bourgeois dictatorship in one form or another, and their opposition to any form of the dictatorship of the proletariat -- this is not conditional; it is absolute.

The other trends of bourgeois ideology, it goes without saying, are as opposed to the dictatorship of the proletariat as liberalism is. But the liberals' defense of the bourgeois dictatorship, and the liberals' incessant campaign against any idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat, is by far the most dangerous, and indifference to liberal politics must be condemned as by far the most harmful form of political indifference in general.

Bourgeois ideology in its liberal form has a far greater grip on the minds of the workers and oppressed nationalities in their masses than any other form of political thought. Open conservatism has a "labor" following mainly among the labor aristocracy and among the backward strata of the working class; it is a minority. A fraction of the most backward segments is attracted to fascism, but neither this nor conservatism has been able to claim a dominant position among the working class, especially not the core of the proletariat in basic industry, for many decades in the U.S., and is not likely to be able to do so in the future. Anyone who cares to analyze the evidence of working-class political thought and action in the U.S. at least during the past three decades, will be able to see that the mass of the workers stands not merely to the "right" of Marxism-Leninism, which is obvious, but also to the "left" of conservatism and fascism. The ideological ground it occupies is one or another shading of liberalism, reformism; and it is on this basic ground that virtually all the forward-moving elements, the more politically awakened workers, the spontaneously-emerging rank-and-file leaders and activists, will be found to stand. Liberalism is the specific form of bourgeois ideology that is spontaneously developed and reproduced by the masses of the working class and oppressed nationalities under the bourgeois dictatorship in the U.S.

This is one main reason why Marxist-Leninist agitation and propaganda, in analyzing and exposing the different varieties and trends of bourgeois political flora and fauna, must give pride of place to the analysis of the liberals and of liberal ideology. To educate workers in Marxism-Leninism means, in the majority of cases, to help and lead them in the struggle against bourgeois ideology in the liberal form. The task of moving workers from the conservative form of bourgeois ideology to the liberal form, by contrast, which more than a few Marxist-Leninists (including the Klonsky circle) confuse, consciously or not, with the former, is the function of the liberal ideologists of the bourgeoisie. The "old" trade union line promoted by M. Klonsky for more than two years, under the slogan of "Move the Trade Unions to the Left," was a case of such a confusion of roles. (The "new" one is the same, as we shall see.)

The liberal ideologists, for their part, have polished to a high degree the art of imbuing the working class with reformism, and of relighting the candle of faith in the bourgeoisie each time a storm of political experience blows it out. The liberal politicians are professionally distinguished from their colleagues of the other trends by their rhetoric of concern for the plight of the masses of workers and minorities, by their pose as champions of the poor and downtrodden against the "rich" and the "Establishment," and by their promises to relieve the burdens and solve the problems of the masses through one or another set of political and economic reforms. In the great division of labor among the electoral politicians of the bourgeoisie, to the liberals falls as a rule the role of misrepresenting the dissatisfied, leaving to the conservatives the less strenuous work of representing the satisfied. Although the ranks of the liberals are constantly being diminished by fatigue, decay, and disillusion -- every few years a newer generation of liberals condemns an older for having sold out -- these ranks are as constantly refreshed again with recruits not only from the universities, but with skilled graduates of the spontaneous struggle -- still more artful practitioners who know how to disguise bourgeois ideology in the latest fashions of speech and of political posturing, be it "radical," "socialist," "communist" or "Marxist-Leninist." By this means the liberals achieve a far greater and more continuous hearing before the working class, and their networks of communication are far better implanted in the masses, than those of any other form of bourgeois political thought.

It follows that the liberal ideologists and leaders are not merely as dangerous as other bourgeois trends, but more dangerous; and that those who wish to take up the task of preparing the ground of public opinion for a revolution must take as their primary target of exposure and analysis precisely the liberal theoreticians, the liberal propagandists, the liberal agitators and the liberal organizers, in all their shades and varieties. To make this exposure a secondary task, to try to get by with phrasemongering, or to put it



in boldface in general position papers but not to practice it day after day, means to liquidate it in fact. To wait to take up this task for the moment when the liberals directly attack the Marxist-Leninists, when they begin their red-baiting and smear campaigns, is to wait too long. Exposure of the liberals is not a question of defense, but of seizing the offensive; it is not a matter of occasional skirmishes, but a matter of the basic strategy of proletarian revolution.

#### LIBERALS AGITATE AGAINST PROLETARIAN RULE

The profession of the liberals is to divert the proletariat from its historic task of smashing the bourgeois dictatorship and establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is the liberals who have made it their specialty to agitate against the dictatorship of the proletariat among the working class, to give defense of the bourgeois dictatorship a "popular," even "working class" flavor; and it is the liberals who are the most effective, the most skilful, the most expert in leading the working class into a compromise with the bourgeois dictatorship and thus undermining and liquidating the revolution.

There, and not so much in the related and dependent question of the liberals and fascism, lies the principal danger posed by the liberals. This is the principal reason why the liberals are the most dangerous of all the trends in the U.S. ruling class.

The dialectic of the relation between liberalism and fascism, insofar as it really is treated in a materialist, dialectical manner, is by no means without importance for the proletariat. The shell of bourgeois democracy concealing and supporting the bourgeois dictatorship has its temporary advantages for the proletariat as well. The reactionary destruction of this shell, the reduction of the bourgeois dictatorship to its openly, completely terroristic form, is a powerful setback to the proletariat and its revolution. History has proved this many times. But it must never be forgotten that the defense and preservation of this democratic shell is of basic interest to the proletariat only because and insofar as it permits the proletariat to unfold its class struggle more freely and openly against the bourgeois dictatorship, only because and insofar as it permits the proletariat to advance the revolutionary destruction of this shell and the achievement of its own dictatorship.

#### 'GUILTING THE LIBERALS'

There is not a hint of this dialectic in the Klonskyite "exposures" of the liberals; on the contrary, in our struggle on the Call staff, the Klonsky editorship consistently censored out any references to the dictatorship of the proletariat, claiming this was "dogmatism." Instead of working to convey the ideas of the dictatorship of the proletariat to the working class in an ever more lively, topical, vivid and all-sided form, Klonskyism labors to conjure up the pessimistic spectre of the fascist tide, and then throws in a few phrases about "liberal conciliation" in the guise of "exposure."

Back in the 1960s, in the days of the bourgeois-democratic movement, this sort of "exposure" of the liberals had a name. It was called "guilting the liberals," and was a widely used ploy for raising money from liberals at their cocktail parties. Whether it still raises money today I don't know; but in any case, experience has shown that it is not a policy for freeing the working class from liberal hegemony but rather for chaining revolutionaries to liberal dependency. For all the years that have passed since those days, the Klonsky line on the liberals has not made one real step forward.

#### E. THE KLONSKY THEORY ON THE LIBERAL POLITICAL LEADERS IS A 'CENTRIST' EVASION.

We now pass from the 'particular' to the 'general'; from the Klonsky circle's feints and evasions on the question of the liberals in this and that particular aspect, to the Klonsky circle's general formula on the liberals as such.

The reader who scans the pages of the weekly Call in its first half year for a theoretical formulation on this question will search in vain. A theory is certainly implicit there, in the de facto policy of downplaying and neglecting exposure of the liberals; but an explicit formulation has not been published.

Lack of publicity, however, does not necessarily mean lack of a position. To find the Klonsky circle's present position on the liberals, we must unearth one of the principal theses of the Klonsky circle's "credo," i.e. of the document that you must unite with or be labeled "revisionist" and a "lover of the bourgeoisie," etc. etc.

This Klonskyite thesis, stated verbatim and in full, is that:

"The liberals are every bit as much of the imperialist ruling class as the conservatives."

Let's note in passing that this thesis of October 1976 represents an advance over the Klonsky circle's views of May 1976, when it denounced the whole idea that differences exist within the ruling class between liberals and conservatives (an idea that had crept into the April Call) as a bourgeois and revisionist fabrication. As late as May, in other words, the Klonsky circle recognized within the ruling class only the distinction between liberals and fascists -- exactly the same notion that underlay the errors of the "fascist tide" deviation, and of course a notion that is very flattering to the liberals in their competition with the conservatives.

Two points must be made about the Klonsky circle's "new" thesis that "the liberals are every bit as much of the imperialist ruling class as the conservatives."

In the first place, if it is meant to be taken in the strict sense, it is nonsense. Only a tiny fraction of liberals (those who hold the liberal ideology) are literally part of the imperialist ruling class. The vast majority of people with this form of political philosophy are members of other classes and strata, most of all the working class. Moreover, each particular class and stratum gives to the basic stock of liberalism its own particular stamp, which Marxist-Leninists must also learn to recognize and to overcome.

#### THE THEORY OF 'THEY'RE ALL THE SAME'

More noteworthy, however, is the main part of the Klonskyite thesis, namely the notion of "every bit as much." The same idea is also often expressed in the words "they're all the same," accompanied by a gesture of dismissal. "Six of one, half dozen of the other," "not a dime's worth of difference" are other ways of saying it.

And, of course, this is true in the abstract and in general. All imperialists, all reactionaries of every stripe and in every period of history are, in general, the same. They must all be hit, as Chairman Mao said, or they won't fall. Neither Chairman Mao nor any other leader and teacher of the proletariat, however, believed that a knowledge of this universal truth was adequate as a guideline for making war on any concrete set of enemies in particular. It is necessary to grasp not only the universal aspect, but also and especially the particular features of the situation. Which of the generals that the enemy sends against us does us the most harm? Which of his tactics is the most effective against us? To which kind of enemy propaganda are our troops, our supporters most susceptible? Etc. These are questions that cannot be ducked in politics in "peaceful" times any more than in politics by means of war. The commander who answers such questions with a few puffy phrases about "they're all the same" will certainly go down to defeat; the enemy could not ask for a better friend than a windbag such as that in command.

#### A SHIELD FOR THE LIBERALS

The Klonskyite thesis of "every bit as much" is such a form of windbagery. Which of the leaders, tactics and lines of propaganda that the U.S. imperialist ruling class sends against us today is the most dangerous to our cause? "The one is every bit as bad as the other," answers "General" Klonsky. Such an answer is really a way of ducking the question, and ducking the question is a way of ducking the fight.

To say that the liberals are "every bit as much" imperialists as the other ruling class trends is a roundabout way of saying that the liberals are not more dangerous to the cause of proletarian revolution, that we should not make them the special focus of attention, that we should not assign the highest priority to defeating this most insidious and most dangerous of enemy policies. The Klonskyite thesis of "every bit as much" is really a shield to protect the liberals; it is another, somewhat more subtle and sophisticated form of conciliating and capitulating to their hegemony as teachers and leaders of the proletariat.

This Klonskyite thesis is really a form of "centrism." It applies to the contradictions between different trends in the U.S. imperialist ruling class, as regards the internal class struggle, the same smokescreen tactics as the editors of the Guardian used to do in face of the contradictions between the two superpowers in the world situation. The Guardian editors also used to say a few phrases about how the USSR was "every bit as much" a superpower and an imperialist as the U.S.

Even today the Guardian "centrists" occasionally sprinkle in some of this rhetoric. But this abstract phrase, taken as a principle of policy on the international situation, is nothing more than a screen to prevent exposure of the more insidious, more perfidious, more aggressive, ambitious and dangerous features of Soviet social-imperialism in particular. The theory of "every bit as much" is a cover for saying "not a bit as much" and for practicing "not a bit." To screen the more insidious and dangerous form of imperialism is in essence to promote it. As Carl Davidson very truly said in his article on the Guardian's position on Angola (in Class Struggle No. 4-5, p. 33), "those who conciliate to social-imperialism and revisionism tend to become advocates of revisionism and social-imperialism." The same truth holds for domestic politics. Those who screen the liberal wing of U.S. imperialism in effect promote it; and this will be forced out into the open, inevitably, in the course of struggle.

The Klonsky circle's "centrism" on the domestic class struggle in the U.S., as regards policy toward the different trends within the ruling class, is the twin brother of the Guardian editors' "centrism" on the different forms of imperialism in the world today.

From a more or less open and now discredited form of promoting liberal ruling-class hegemony, the Klonsky circle has "advanced" to a more sophisticated, disguised form of the same policy. From a bourgeois-democratic deviation that has been exposed to another form of the same deviation, not yet exposed; from open right-opportunism to "centrism" -- this has been the Klonsky circle's "progress" and "victory" in its "struggle" against (its own) opportunism. There can be no doubt that this "progress" is really a regression, that this "new" and more disguised defense of the liberal wing of the U.S. imperialists is more dangerous than the older, cruder and now discredited form.

#### F. THE KLONSKY THEORY ON THE TRADE UNION BUREAUCRACY IS AN ECLECTIC, ANTI-PARTY MUDDLE.

We now follow the Klonsky circle's line of reasoning down into the narrower and more restricted political world of the trade union movement.

Our raw material is the "new" (Klonsky line on the trade union question, propounded in a series of articles in late summer. The intent of the "new" line is to "rectify" the past years' right-opportunist deviation in trade union work, which showed itself in errors of relying on liberal labor leaders under the banner of opposing "the fascist labor front." The chief slogan of the old line was "Move the Trade Unions to the Left." Both the old bourgeois-democratic line and the "new" line that is supposed to rectify it are the direct responsibility of the OL's top leadership, i.e. of the Klonsky circle.

What are the principal features of the "new" line? When we examine its content, we will see that the content is the same as the old. But the form is novel (if not exactly new); the old opportunism now takes, in the first place, the form of eclecticism, and in the second place the form of "left" phrasemongering. On both scores the "new" line is an anti-party line, a line which leads not to party-building but to the dissolution and liquidation of the Party.

Let us see.

In the concluding, summary article, the following two propositions are advanced within a sentence of each other. They are the key theses for giving particular guidance in trade union policy.

(1) "The main enemy of the workers in the trade unions is the reformist and revisionist union leaders. It is these opportunists who have the greatest hold on the workers ideologically and organizationally."

(2) "Today the trade union leadership as a whole, including Meany as well as Sadlowski, are reformists."

These two propositions are mutually contradictory. As guidelines to policy they cancel each other out. Their combination is an eclectic one, a muddling of correct and incorrect, of a basically Marxist and a basically revisionist policy.

The first proposition is in substance a correct one. It tells us that the liberal trend in the trade union bureaucracy, the reformist union leaders generally seconded and supported by the revisionists, are the more dangerous enemies of the proletarian revolutionary cause, and that it is on these that the exposure must concentrate. It says that the exposure must concentrate. It says, in other words, that it is both more diffi-



cult and more necessary and more important to expose the Sadlowski types than the Meany types.

The second proposition immediately cancels out the first, and takes us directly onto the same path as in the case of the wings of the ruling class: it says that the Sadlowski types and the Meany types are both "reformists," that they are the same, that the one is every bit as much a danger as the other, that exposure of the one is every bit as difficult and important as of the other.

Again, we are given an abstract truth in place of correct concrete policy guidance. True, the Sadlowski types and the Meany types are both in their way agents and servants of the imperialist ruling class, both labor bureaucrats, etc. etc. This must never be forgotten or downplayed. As a guideline for policy, however, this general truth amounts to the same puffery and the same "centrism" in the face of different imperialist lines in the labor bureaucracy as in the case of these lines in the larger political arena.

#### THE "MIRACLE OF GEORGE MEANY"

This lumping together of Meany and Sadlowski, as if the same tactics that apply to one could work against the other, has, in addition, particular ironies of its own. It was hardly two years ago that Klonskyism proclaimed this same George Meany as kingpin of the "fascist labor front"! Yesterday a fascist, today a reformist . . . will miracles never cease? Truly, the Klonsky circle's version of the "dialectic of reformism and fascism" puts to shame anything that WVO was ever able to achieve in this line of work. In reality, as the saying goes, the truth lies somewhere in-between. Meany is today and has for decades been the almost archetypal leader of conservatism in the trade union movement, the long-term champion of the most hidebound, most craft-unionist stream of the labor aristocracy, and ally, friend and agent of conservative Democrats and Republicans alike. The only reforms Mr. Meany much cares about are those which directly concern the craft union elite of the working class, such as the 'common situs picketing bill.' On practically every other question of trade union and ruling class politics, not least of all on foreign policy, Meany and his ilk split down the line with the labor lieutenants of the liberal wing of the ruling class, i.e. the Woodcocks, Millers, and the Sadlowski types. Their mutual struggle for influence, position and a larger slice of the pie is to a great extent a reflection of and an echo of the internecine struggles among the different wings and groupings of monopoly capitalists who pull their strings.

#### THE 'SADLOWSKI TYPES'

Who are "Sادلowski types"? It means the so-called challengers to the top echelons of the bureaucracy -- the challengers, usually, to the "Meany types." It means the "challengers" and "opponents" of the chief agents of U.S. imperialism in the organized labor movement, who are themselves in fact not challengers to the domination of the organized workers by imperialism, but whose line is a line of compromise and conciliation with imperialism, with the imperialist state power, and whose victory means that reformism gains a fresher, firmer grip on the mass of the workers in the given circumstances, until they in turn are exposed.

It is these opportunists, these "Sادلowski types" (whether in fact they are liberal, social-democrat, Trotskyite or revisionist in affiliation, whether they represent U.S. or Soviet social-imperialism) who specialize in capitalizing on the growing rank-and-file discontent with the established and in most cases thoroughly conservative top union bureaucrats in order to channel this discontent into the safe outlet of reformism, compromise and "fresher" forms of collaboration with the ruling class. It is these opportunists who have the greatest ideological grip not necessarily over workers "in general" but over the more dissatisfied workers, over the workers who are most aroused against the top bureaucrats, the companies and the government; it is these opportunists who have the greatest influence on the workers who are politically advancing.

It is above all among the workers who are influenced by these opportunists that the Party must concentrate its work, if the phrases "winning the best elements" and "winning the advanced" (by some definitions) are to be more than phrases, and if party-building itself is to be more than a phrase.

It follows that if it is these workers, above all, who must be won to Marxism-Leninism and to the Party, then the main focus of exposure must be aimed in such a way as to win these workers away from precisely these opportunists, the "Sادلowski types," the liberals.

This is the correct content of the first proposition. It is above all these opportunists that Lenin refers to in that fine and clear statement of his, quoted in the OL trade union articles:

"The thinking worker knows that the most dangerous of advisers are those liberal friends of the workers who claim to be defending their interests, but are actually trying to destroy the class independence of the proletariat and its organization."

If you wish to win the thinking worker to Marxism-Leninism, if you wish to assist more workers to think more deeply and to become "thinking workers" in the sense Lenin indicates, then you must take as your chief topic of study and exposure these "liberal friends of the workers." In no other way can you promote the class independence of the proletariat and build its organization, its Party.

#### LEADING, LAGGING -- 'ALL THE SAME'

The Klonsky circle's other proposition, directly combined with this correct one and cancelling it out, is a wholly opportunist proposition. By lumping the Sadlowski and the Meany types together, making no distinction between them, it asserts that the new, rising reformism which is misleading the more discontented workers, the advancing workers among the mass of the rank and file, holds no greater threat than the old decayed reformism that has grown conservative (if it ever was anything else), and that only the more privileged and backward workers, the labor aristocrats, are not sharply dissatisfied with. This proposition tells us that winning the best and more advanced elements among the workers, of conducting agitation and propaganda among the mass of the "ordinary" workers, is no more urgent and has no higher priority in this period than winning the labor aristocrats and conducting work among the more retrograde elements. It is a proposition that asserts, in so many words, that leading the working class is no different and no more urgent than lagging behind it.

By combining into one "line" two antithetical propositions, two contradictory political lines, the Klonsky circle perpetuates and augments an eclectic muddle -- and muddles are the natural habitat of opportunism and revisionism. Directly related to this particular muddle is the Klonsky circle's continuing inability (and in fact unwillingness) to set on paper any clear line of demarcation between the present-day labor aristocracy and the mass of the workers, or to define the relation between the concepts "labor aristocracy" and "labor bureaucracy." You cannot fight opportunism within the labor movement without etching a sharp line of demarcation against the labor aristocracy; a passing phrase will not do the job. The Klonsky circle has acted in a highly "conservationist" manner toward this long-standing muddle in the OL's theorizing; it has sought by any means to preserve this ideological marsh.

#### AN ESCALATION OF PHRASEOLOGY

All this eclecticism is in no way salvaged or redeemed by the Klonsky circle's new slogan for trade union policy. In place of the old slogan, "Move the Trade Unions to the Left," we have the banner of "Revolutionize the Trade Unions" or "Turn the Trade Unions into Revolutionary Organizations."

What is the "progress" here? It lies in an escalation of phraseology. Add to the old Right opportunist slogan a rah-rah-revolutionary flourish (e.g., "Move the Trade Unions to the Left -- All the Way!!!") and you have the real content of the "new" slogan. This procedure of patching up opportunist lines with a "revolutionary" phrase or two is, unfortunately, all too characteristic of our Klonsky circle.

Phrases are cheap, it is often said, and in general this is true. There are some times, however, when phrases can be very costly. We are now, in particular, in a time of completing the laying of the ideological foundations of the Party (or of relaying them where they have been mis-laid), a time when theoretical clarity is of the utmost importance; and at such a time all phrasemongering ought to be punished more severely than usual.

The most harmful kind of phrasemongering in this period, however, is the kind that blurs over the distinction between what a Party organization of the Leninist type is and for what purpose it exists, and what mass organizations such as trade unions are and for what purpose they exist. To make even casual phrases about trade unions as "revolutionary" organizations, much less to inscribe this idea into one's banner for trade union policy, is precisely to promote this most harmful kind of confusion. Only the Leninist Party deserves the name revolutionary organization. The trade unions and other mass organizations ought to be and can be auxiliaries to this Party, they ought to and they can be support-

ers of the Party's policy, they ought to and can be won to follow the leadership of the revolutionary organization; but to demand that they rise to that same level and become the equivalent of the Party is not only to demand what is strictly speaking impossible, it is also to resurrect an old Right-opportunist, Economist fallacy.

#### TRADE UNION, PARTY -- 'ALL THE SAME'

What was the central point of dispute between Lenin and the anti-party opportunists at the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. which Lenin analyzes in One Step Forward, Two Steps Back? The dispute took place around Paragraph One of the Party Rules, and the central issue was precisely whether or not the trade union type of organization -- broad, open, loose -- could be termed revolutionary. The Mensheviks argued that it could, that a party -- a revolutionary organization -- could and should be modeled more or less on trade union lines; they sought to stretch and to extend the meaning of the term "revolutionary" so as to cover both the Party and the trade unions, and to blur over the difference between them. Lenin fought this blurring tooth and nail. Comrades who are presently studying Steps under the guidance of the OL should pay particularly sharp attention to section "I. Paragraph One of the Rules," which contains Lenin's arguments why trade unions cannot be termed revolutionary organizations. It is a polemic, in effect, against the Klonsky circle's "new" trade union slogan. Instead of carrying the spirit of party-building more deeply into trade union work, the Klonsky circle's phrasemongering carries the spirit of trade-unionism more deeply into party-building.

It must be pointed out in addition that the basic idea of "turning the trade unions into revolutionary organizations" is not new in the U.S. Marxist-Leninist movement, either. It represents the earliest theorizing on the trade unions of the RCP when it was still the RU, and was one of the reasons why that organization was baptized the "Revolutionary Union." The Klonsky circle's "new" line is a throwback to this old opportunist dream of creating "revolutionary unions" under capitalism. The RCP today has still not abandoned this basic conception. It merely flips from time to time into one or the other of the alternative deviations to which this concept lends itself: either the pretense that trade-unionist work is in itself revolutionary (the openly Right opportunist variant), or the attempt to build "pure," "really revolutionary" trade union organizations in place of the existing ones (the "left"-opportunist, dual-unionist variant). The RU flipped from the Right variant to the "Left" in 1972, and back from the "Left" to the Right at the time it became the RCP in 1975.

#### SHAM PROGRESS, REAL RETROGRESSION

The Klonsky circle's "new" trade union line, in its main points, is a sham critique and a real continuation and consolidation of the Klonsky circle's old Right opportunist deviations on trade union work. Even the strong points in the new version, as we shall see, are not for real but only for show. The more it advances toward the organizational formation of its party, the more the Klonsky circle backtracks and retreats ideologically and picks up anti-party rubbish. The more it advances toward giving its "trend" an organized form, the more it blurs the lines of demarcation between itself and others. The more it "criticizes" its own past rightism, the more it tries to cover itself with "revolutionary phrases," the more it sinks into the morass of opportunism. This is the "progress" being made by the Klonsky circle on its way to its party.

In a word, is the Klonsky circle becoming sharper and more vigorous in its defense of the independence of the proletariat in face of the "workers' liberal friends"? Just the opposite. The Klonsky circle is more and more turning into that kind of 'friend' itself.

With "progress" like that, who needs retrogression?

(Continued on next page)

"There can be no 'middle' line in questions of principle. Either one set of principles or another must be made the basis of the Party's work. A 'middle' line in matters of principle is the 'line' of stuffing people's heads with rubbish, of glossing over disagreements, a 'line' leading to the ideological degeneration of the Party, to the ideological death of the Party."



#### 4. Klonskyism and the Leading Role of the Party

The reverse side of the question of the liberals is the question of the leading role of the Party.

These two aspects are inseparable. To talk about aiming blows at the liberals without fighting to build Marxist-Leninist leadership, the leadership of the Party, is to talk without saying anything. Conversely, to fight for Marxist-Leninist leadership without fighting against the liberals is likewise empty noise, a sham.

Those who evade in various ways the basic duty of exposing and ousting the liberals as teachers and leaders of the proletariat will be forced also to evade and to downplay the basic leading role of the Party. To conciliate to the liberals, to cover up for them, means to promote them to leadership; and this, in turn, means to subordinate to them the leading role of the Party, to liquidate the Party's vanguard role.

The fact that the Party is not yet founded, and that the existing forces are not yet capable of acting as the actual vanguard of the working class in fact, does not diminish the importance of this question. We must know very clearly what kind of Party we intend to build, what role we envision for it. In order to reach the point where the proletariat in its millions in fact follows the leadership of this Party, we must have the goal clearly and firmly in view from the outset.

What kind of role is envisioned for the party in the thought of Chairman Klonsky? It is a role of dodging and evading the responsibilities of Marxist-Leninist leadership, a role of pretending to lead while in reality surrendering leadership to other forces. Klonskyism on the question of the leading role of the party is a series of evasions and disguises for liquidation of the leading role of the party; Klonskyism is a series of ideological rationalizations for promoting the leadership of the liberals in place of the leadership of the Marxist-Leninist Party. Klonskyism, in a word, is Browderism; it is revisionism disguised as Marxism-Leninism, capitulation disguised as leadership, and liquidationism disguised as party-building.

Let us strip away, one by one, the disguises of Klonskyism.

##### A. KLONSKYISM DENOUNCES THE LEADING ROLE OF THE PARTY AS 'DOGMATISM.' IT SEEKS FOR A 'THIRD KIND' OF LEADERSHIP, NEITHER BOURGEOIS NOR MARXIST-LENINIST IN CHARACTER.

Either liberal (bourgeois) leadership of the working class and the oppressed nationalities -- or Marxist-Leninist (proletarian) leadership. This is how the question presents itself in the reality of the class struggle today.

The Klonsky circle, however, believes that this is a terribly narrow, "dogmatic" presentation of the question.

We have already seen the Klonsky circle's phrasemongering on the question of tactical alliances with bourgeois leaders in trade union and community struggles, and we have seen the Right opportunist, capitulationist content of this shouting. The Klonsky circle, to listen to its rhetoric, does not want to approach bourgeois leaders even with a ten foot pole, and it rails and foams against the Leninist theory of temporary tactical alliances (in the proper conditions) as "Right opportunism."

On the other hand, the Klonsky circle also rejects the idea that Marxist-Leninist leaders -- the leadership of the Marxist-Leninist Party -- is the only real alternative to bourgeois leadership. This idea it condemns as "dogmatism."

Only Marxist-Leninist leadership -- the leadership of a genuine Party -- deserves the trust of the working class and the oppressed nationality peoples. Only such leadership is reliable; and this holds not only for the climactic battle, the act of insurrection to seize state power and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat, but also in the period of preparation for that moment, in the struggles for limited political and economic aims that enhance the fighting capacity of the working class. All other leaders -- leaders who fight for the limited aim only in order to disintegrate the revolution, to oppose and to under-

mine the ultimate aim -- will also betray the proletariat and the oppressed nationalities, later if not sooner, in the struggles for limited aims. This is a lesson of history. This is why we can say with perfect confidence that in the long run, the whole or nearly the whole of the U.S. working class will be brought to see that the leadership of the Marxist-Leninist Party is the only alternative to the treachery of the liberals and reformists. Even in the present period, when our forces are few and when our leadership chiefly takes the form of propagating ideas, of preparing public opinion, we must propagate both in word and in deed the truth that only the leadership of a Marxist-Leninist Party deserves the trust and confidence of the exploited and oppressed.

In the "credo" of the Klonsky circle, all the above is "dogmatism." The documentary record of our controversy, week after week from beginning to end, shows that the Klonsky circle opposes the line that only a Marxist-Leninist Party deserves the leading role. It upholds in its place the line that not only Marxist-Leninists but also other leaders are worthy of the proletariat's trust and reliance, and that the Party should preach this line to the proletariat.

##### SEARCHING FOR 'OTHER LEADERS'

The Klonsky circle says it doesn't want bourgeois leadership; "God forbid," it says, rolling its eyes. And at the same time it doesn't "insist" on the leading role of the Party, either. It condemns temporary tactical alliances with bourgeois leaders as "right opportunist," and it condemns insistence on the leading role of the Party as "dogmatist." What it is looking for is a third kind of leadership, neither bourgeois nor proletarian in character. It wants a "middle kind" of leadership that will obviate the need sometimes to form tactical alliances, on the one hand, and the need to always build the leading role of the Marxist-Leninist Party, on the other hand.

Wouldn't it be pleasant and agreeable if in this world there were such a kind of leadership? We would not have to fight the bourgeois leaders of the working class, we could just avoid their company. We would not have to fight to build a Party worthy of the name vanguard, we could just applaud the deeds of other leaders. Such an easy life is what the Klonsky circle aspires to.

In reality it is otherwise. The Klonsky circle's dream of "other leaders" is a flagrant abandonment of that "class point of view" it howls and shouts about. In this world there are only two kinds of leaders: leaders who uphold and fight for the scientific outlook of the proletariat, namely Marxist-Leninist leaders, and leaders who uphold and promote the ideology of the bourgeoisie, bourgeois leaders. There is no third kind; and any advocacy of reliance on such "other leaders" is at the expense of the Party and is tantamount to strengthening the leadership of the bourgeoisie.

What Lenin had to say on this question in What Is To Be Done is quite clear, correct and applicable without qualification to our situation today:

"Since there can be no talk of an independent ideology formulated by the working masses themselves in the process of their movement, the only choice is -- either bourgeois or socialist ideology. There is no middle course (for mankind has not created a 'third' ideology, and, moreover, in a society torn by class antagonisms there can never be a non-class or an above-class ideology). Hence, to belittle the socialist ideology in any way, to turn aside from it in the slightest degree, means to strengthen bourgeois ideology." (LCW Vol. 5 p. 384)

Isn't this terribly "dogmatic"? Either one or the other! What an inflexible, narrow, "leftist" presentation of the question Lenin gives...

The Klonsky circle's accusation that the line of either bourgeois leadership or M-L Party leadership is "dogmatism" -- this accusation is precisely a case of the sort that Chairman Mao described (in "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People"), when he wrote:

"The revisionists, the Right opportunists, pay lipservice to Marxism; they too attack 'dogmatism.' But what they are really attacking is the quintessence of Marxism."

The leading role of the Party is of the quintessence of Marxism. The Klonsky circle's preaching of reliance on other leaders is of the quintessence of revisionism.

In the course of the struggle, the circle headed by M. Klonsky was challenged to give illustrations and examples of the sort of "other leaders" they raised to a par with the leadership of Marxist-Leninists. They were challenged to defend this theory of theirs, to spell it out more fully and to try to cite the authority of the Marxist classics in its behalf.

In reply to these challenges, it did not dare give any illustrations or examples, to propose any names. It did, however, try to lay out its view a little more explicitly, and it did produce a very "classical" quote. Let us now have a look at these efforts of the Klonsky circle to dress up its theory of "follow other leaders" in presentable clothes to pass muster.

##### B. FIRST DISGUISE FOR BROWDERISM: THE THEORY OF THE 'HONEST WORKER.' CAN HONESTY BE A SUBSTITUTE FOR MARXISM-LENINISM?

After denouncing all tactical alliances as "right-opportunist," and then denouncing the leading role of the Party as "dogmatist," the Klonsky circle delivered itself of the following memorable pronouncement:

"But among the working class, our friends and allies are many. Lenin in What Is To Be Done and elsewhere stresses that we should fight to promote honest workers to positions of leadership."

There is not space and time to untangle all the confusion of ideas in this principal thesis of the Klonsky "credo," e.g. the confusion of 'friend' and 'ally,' the restriction of allies to the working class (what about among the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nationalities?), etc. The nub of the question lies in this phrase: "we should fight to promote honest workers to positions of leadership."

##### BROWDERISM WITH BLUE DENIMS ON

What we have here is really the Klonsky theory of "other leaders" (of a "third kind of leadership" dressed up in blue denims and wearing an honest face.

Let us get a grip on our historical context. We are in a period of intense ideological struggle prior to the founding of the Party. It is a time of many-sided struggles for theoretical clarity, for the correct strategy and tactics, for the drawing of sharp lines of demarcation in order that we may unite. It is a time when the strengthening or weakening of a "shade" can affect the course of political developments for years to come, as Lenin said; a time when a program is being hammered out, word for word, which is to serve as guideline for the Party's activity at least up to the triumphal moment of the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The question of which class must lead has been and remains a smoldering one. The question of alliances is still to be clarified in all its ramifications. The question of trade union policy is being debated. The question of who may join the Party, and of the qualifications of leadership, is a decisive line of demarcation against revisionism. All are supposed to be reading Lenin's One Step Forward, Two Steps Back, which explains the fundamental difference between a party that admits every professor and every striker, versus a Party built on strict Leninist principles. Subjectivism, that bane of small-circle existence, is supposed to be rooted out.

Such, approximately, is our context. And in this situation, the Klonsky circle -- after hurling accusations of "opportunism" and "dogmatism" this way and that, lays down on the table as its answer to our burning questions the theory of "promote honest workers to positions of leadership."

Which class shall lead? The class of honest workers. What ideology must play the leading role? Honesty. With whom are alliances permissible, and on what conditions? With other workers, if they are honest. Who may join the Party? Every worker, so long as he or she is honest. Who must lead? The most honest. How can we tell whether a line is genuine or sham? By whether or not the honest workers follow it. -- This, in so many words, is the catechism of the Klonsky circle, a few weeks before the founding of its party.

The nearer it comes to its founding congress, the greater the Klonsky circle's ideological bankruptcy. The more it shouts "onward," the more it relapses into the oldest and crudest of revisionist evasions. Let us, in order to criticize this retrogression, examine what is the role of honesty in politics, and whether honesty can be taken as a substitute for Marxism-Leninism.

##### PROLETARIAN HONESTY

The party of the proletariat has a clear-cut stand on the question of honesty. It insists on strict proletarian honesty in its ranks, and cannot tolerate double-dealing. Honesty is one of the outstanding characteristics of the proletariat as a class, standing in sharp contrast to the dishonesty that characterizes the rule of the bourgeoisie. The party appeals to and relies on the honesty of the proletariat as an important reserve in winning the masses of the workers away from opportunist leadership. The honest elements of the working class, who make



up the overwhelming majority of the class, will in the course of protracted struggles inevitably come over to Marxism-Leninism and reject the leadership of the bourgeoisie.

At the same time, no genuine leader or teacher of the proletariat has ever put forth the line that proletarian honesty in and of itself can be a substitute for the scientific world outlook of the proletariat, Marxism-Leninism. Honesty is a necessary basis, but it is not sufficient. Marxism-Leninism is not a character trait; it is a science. Any attempt to resolve questions of theory or line exclusively or even chiefly on the criterion of honesty is bound to fall into the pit of opportunism.

#### HONESTY AND THE GOTHA PROGRAM

This lesson, which Engels once summed up in the sentence, "honest opportunism is the most dangerous kind," is based on bitter experience in the Communist movement. Marx and Engels, in the book Critique of the Gotha Programme, analyze one such experience; it is worth recalling here.

The Gotha program was adopted in 1875 (in the German town of Gotha) by a congress of "unity" between two long-hostile trends in the German working-class movement. They were the Lassalleans (after their leader, Ferdinand Lassalle), who had long promoted an entirely opportunist, petty-bourgeois and revisionist line; and the Eisenachers, led by Wilhelm Liebknecht, who formed the revolutionary trend in the German workers' movement.

As it happened, the Eisenachers were nicknamed the "honest ones;" they called themselves the "honest" in contrast to the Lassallean opportunists.

At the Gotha Congress, unfortunately, these "honest ones" -- out of an honest desire for unity within the German workers' movement, no doubt -- capitulated lock stock and barrel to the worst opportunist theses of the Lassalleans and adopted them into the united program signed by both trends at the conclusion of the congress.

Amidst the ringing of bells throughout the Western European workers' movement to celebrate this "victory for unity," Marx and Engels sharply polemicized against the "unity program" adopted at Gotha, and subjected its theses to a searing examination. They were for unity, but based on principles.

Engels' comment on this revisionist program is that "The honest ones have once more been cruelly gypped by the dishonest." As for Liebknecht, who engineered the surrender of the "honest ones" to opportunism, Engels readily grants that Liebknecht was "surely honest." But, he adds, "he (Liebknecht) has always been confused theoretically." (Critique of the Gotha Programme, Peking, pp. 38, 77.)

Liebknecht, the honest leader of the honest trend in the workers' movement, led his followers into revisionism. This was a valuable lesson for the communist movement. It showed that, just as Marxist-Leninist theory is valueless if it does not unite with the honest stand and fighting spirit of the proletariat, and can even be used to cover dishonest aims, so proletarian honesty is nothing if it is not guided by Marxist-Leninist theory, and can even serve as a cover for revisionism.

Honesty is essential. But it is no substitute for theoretical clarity, for Marxism-Leninism.

#### REFORMISM ALSO DEVELOPS HONESTLY

The overwhelming majority of the proletarians in the U.S. as elsewhere are honest people. To imply, as the Klonsky circle does, that honesty is so rare that those who possess this trait should be promoted to leadership positions -- this really shows a low estimate of the moral character of the proletariat. But this is not even the main point that the Klonsky circle overlooks. What it systematically evades in its thinking is the fact that the whole working class under capitalism spontaneously, entirely honestly and without malice becomes imbued with one or another form of bourgeois ideology, most especially liberalism, reformism, trade unionism. Marxism-Leninism does not arise spontaneously, it must be "brought from without," as Lenin said. To promote to leadership workers who are not Marxist-Leninists, but rather "honest" (which, by the way, is not very flattering to Marxism-Leninism, any more than to the moral character of the working class) -- this means, inevitably, to promote liberalism, reformism, trade unionism to leadership.

This is the political content of the theory of "honest-workerism." It is revisionism with blue denims on; it uses "honesty" as a cover for liquidating the leadership of the Party.

#### C. SECOND DISGUISE: THE MANTLE OF THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL. HOW KLONSKY 'QUOTES' LENIN AGAINST LENINISM.

Having seen how Klonskyism uses "honesty" as a way of liquidating Marxism-Leninism, we will now proceed to see how Klonskyism also uses Marxism-Leninism in a way that is neither Marxist-Leninist nor honest.

The Klonsky circle's "credo" asserts that Lenin fathered "honest-workerism" in What Is To Be Done. Perhaps comrade Klonsky confused the passages in that work where Lenin quotes the Economists with Lenin's own words; it has happened to others. In any case, so far no proof of this assertion has been submitted. The Klonsky "credo" however, also asserts that Lenin propounded such a doctrine "elsewhere," and this elsewhere turns out to be Lenin's "Theses on the Fundamental Tasks of the Second Congress of the Communist International," dated July 1920 (in LCW Vol. 31, pp. 184-201). The Klonsky circle, it is plain, has the ambition of draping its theory of "other leaders" -- neither bourgeois nor Marxist-Leninist -- not only in denims but also in the authoritative mantle of the Third International.

Here is the passage from what work on which the Klonsky circle based its case:

"The more complete, lengthy and firmly established the rule of bourgeois democracy has been in a given country, the more the bourgeoisie will have succeeded in securing the appointment to such leading posts of people whose minds have been molded by it and imbued with its views and prejudices, and who have very often been directly or indirectly bought by it. These representatives of the labor aristocracy, bourgeoisified workers, should be ousted from all their posts a hundred times more sweepingly than hitherto, and replaced by workers -- even by wholly inexperienced men, provided they are connected with the exploited masses and enjoy their confidence in the struggle against the exploiters." (p. 191)

There! Isn't it obvious now that the line of promoting only Marxist-Leninists to leadership is just so much "dogmatism"? Doesn't Lenin say even "wholly inexperienced" workers should be put in leadership? Such, at least, is the conclusion which the Klonsky circle drew from this passage.

#### SOMETHING HAS BEEN LEFT OUT

But hold on! Let's study more deeply! The reader who makes an independent study of the text instead of taking the Klonsky method of quoting on faith will find, as I did, that the Klonsky interpretation has left something out. It has left out, to begin with, the sentence immediately preceding the point where it begins its quotation. Here is that sentence, with emphasis added:

"Hence, preparation for the dictatorship of the proletariat entails not only explanation of the bourgeois character of all reformism, of all defence of democracy, while private ownership of the means of production is preserved; it entails, not only exposure of such trends, which are in fact a defence of the bourgeoisie within the labor movement; it also calls for old leaders being replaced by Communists in proletarian organizations of absolutely every type -- not only political, but also trade union, co-operative, educational, etc." (p. 191)

Then follows directly the passage on which the Klonsky circle relies.

What is Lenin's point? Is it that communist leadership can be replaced by the leadership of others than communists, as the Klonsky circle asserts? Is it that there is no need for the Party to be the leadership of every kind of mass organization, as the Klonsky circle believes? Just the opposite! Lenin is insisting that all the other kinds of leaders of all the workers' organizations must be replaced by Communists -- even if this means that leaders with great skill and experience (at peddling liberalism and reformism) will be replaced by Communists who have no experience in leading posts.

Far from making any concession to the doctrine of "other leaders," as the Klonsky circle pretends, Lenin is in reality hammering home the point that "reds" must replace all other kinds of leaders, even if this means a sacrifice of "expertise."

This point is so basic to Leninism that Lenin fought to have it included, with success, in the basic framework of the Third International. It forms Paragraph No. 2 in Lenin's "Terms of Admission into the Communist International":

"Any organization that wishes to join the Communist International must consistently and systematically dismiss reformists and 'centrists' from positions of any responsibility in

the working-class movement (party organizations, editorial boards, trade unions, parliamentary groups, co-operative societies, municipal councils, etc.), replacing them by reliable Communists. The fact that in some cases rank-and-file workers may at first have to replace 'experienced' leaders should be no deterrent." (Vol. 31, pp. 207-8, emphasis added.)

Dismiss "other leaders"! Promote Communists to positions of leadership! That was the Leninist line, which the Klonskyite method of quoting Lenin has conveniently 'overlooked.' The Klonsky method amounts to trying to quote Lenin against Leninism, in order to try to drape its liquidationist line in the mantle of the Third International. Whose mantle is it, in fact, that the Klonsky circle has adopted? The doctrine of "honest workerism" and of a "third kind of leader" was in fact the cloak of the Russian Economist trend, which grew up under the influence of Bernsteinian revisionism. The opportunist doctrine and practice of downgrading the leading role of the Party was a direct factor in the gradual corruption and then the total betrayal and degeneration of the parties of the Second International.

#### D. THIRD DISGUISE: THE MASK OF ANTI-REVISIONISM. OR: KLONSKYISM CONVICTS ITSELF IN ITS OWN WORDS OF BROWDERITE REVISIONISM.

We saw above, on the question of tactical alliances in trade union and community struggles, that the Klonsky circle maintains two sets of dishes, one for show and the other for real. On the question of "promote other leaders" there is the same two-facedness, the same contradiction between the line put out for display and the line enforced internally.

Let us return to the series of articles on the trade union question. We will see there a fine show of anti-revisionism on the issue of Marxist-Leninist leadership vs. "promote other leaders."

"In the difficult battles to revolutionize the trade unions," -- it says there -- "it may sometimes be necessary to make tactical alliances with certain labor leaders. But it is never permissible for communists within such an alliance to abandon independent communist agitation and propaganda, to rely on these leaders, or to liquidate the tasks of building and consolidating revolutionary organization in the form of party cells and networks."

It is never permissible to rely on other leaders! How well the Klonsky circle can put the matter, when writing for external consumption...

"In all the key CIO drives, it was communists who organized the workers, planned strike strategy and mobilized support in workers' communities. Even CIO misleaders like John L. Lewis and Philip Murray, who had been part of the old guard officialdom of the AFL until 1935, were forced to acknowledge that communists were indispensable to the CIO campaigns . . . ."

"In the course of the CIO drives, serious errors were made under the growing influence of Browder, then CP general secretary. Browder cultivated and then consolidated the rightist errors which had begun to emerge when the party turned to mass agitation in the late 1920s and early '30s. The down-playing of communist aims and independence served as fertile ground for Browder's revisionism. (Note: were there no rightist errors before the Party turned to mass agitation? Is agitation really synonymous with downplaying of communist aims? -- M.N.) Browder opposed communist work on the basis that it would 'antagonize' the CIO bureaucrats. To advance his treacherous objectives, Browder spread illusions about the CIO misleaders, praising them as well as Roosevelt new-dealers as saviors and heroes of the working people."

#### 'PROMOTE OTHER LEADERS' IS BROWDERISM

In sum, Browder spread illusions among the masses about "other leaders," about leaders other than Marxist-Leninists; he promoted such others to leadership and taught the proletariat to rely on and to trust such other leaders.

How incisively the Klonsky circle (in public) brands the Browderite theory of "rely on other leaders" as "treacherous"! How concisely the Klonsky circle points out (in public!) that this doctrine inevitably serves to liquidate the leadership of the Communist Party, and ultimately to liquidate the Party itself . . . .

And yet at the same time the Klonsky circle (in the internal life of its newspaper and its organization) promotes and demands submission to precisely this same foul line that it brands as revisionist (in public).

The Klonsky circle convicts itself in its own words of Browderite revisionism.



The Klonsky circle has degenerated into political double-dealing, political hypocrisy. It puts on the mask of "anti-rightism," of "anti-revisionism" and "anti-Browderism," but -- just like Browder himself -- it cultivates and screens the right-opportunist strain within the organization. This is an extremely rotten situation within the October League's top leadership, and constitutes a cancer eating away at the insides of the whole organization.

In direct proportion as the Klonsky circle advances, in outward appearance, toward its party, it is degenerating inwardly into Browderism. Browderism means that a revisionist line nestles at the very top of a revolutionary organization; it means that a policy of capitulating to the bourgeoisie is being promoted from within the highest echelons of the General Staff of an army dedicated to overthrowing the bourgeoisie; it means that the chief engineers on a great work site for building the Party are pursuing a line of wrecking the Party. Such was Browderism 40 years ago; such is Klonskyism today.

**E. BROWDERISM ILLUSTRATED: KLONSKYISM PRAISES BROWDERISM AS 'MARXISM' AND CONDEMNS MARXISM AS 'DOGMATISM.'**

The Browderite decay which the Klonsky circle promotes, and to which it demands submission, cannot be prevented from seeping out, like sewage, into print. Just as flowers fall off, do what one may, so seepage will happen when there is foulness inside.

One small but smelly example of this leakage is to be found in the conclusion of the Klonsky circle's sumup of the United Mine Workers' convention in Cincinnati, and in its editorial on that event, both in The Call No. 23 of Oct. 11. It is one example among a number that could be cited. I choose it because it appeared in The Call in the same week that Klonskyism composed its internal "credo," and illustrates in a concrete particular case what the general theses of the "credo" boil down to.

The article says:

"... the present leadership (all factions included) is working in the interests of the bosses, preaching class collaboration and opposing the miners' most precious right -- the right to strike.

"It is the leadership that is emerging from within the ranks themselves, the leadership that Miller, Trbovich and the rest are so badly trying to red-bait out of the UMW with their anti-communist frenzy, that will point the way forward in years to come."

The line of this last paragraph, according to the Klonsky circle, is "Marxism-Leninism," and they would not hear any criticism of it.

At about the same time, the Klonsky circle attacked as "dogmatism" the conclusion of a different article, this one on the Steelworkers Union convention in Las Vegas. This says:

"To make the USWA a fighting organization for the working class takes leadership of a different kind than Sadlowski, Miller or the revisionists. It will take genuine Marxist-Leninist fighters who lead the workers not only in the everyday struggles against the companies, but onward to the liberation of the working class as a whole. The building of an organization of such leaders in the heat of the struggle in steel and elsewhere -- the building of a genuine communist party -- is an immediate task, the urgency of which is underlined again by the reformist, opportunist treachery of the fake 'insurgents' at Las Vegas."

This, according to the Klonsky circle, was dogmatism.

These two conclusions contain diametrically opposed line on the question of leadership. Where will the leadership come from that will point the way forward in years to come? Two answers. One says it will come through the building of a genuine Marxist-Leninist Party -- and the other line (the Klonskyite line) says that the leadership "is emerging from within the ranks themselves."

The line that the vanguard of the working class will just emerge from "the ranks themselves" is the crassest Economism. It is part and parcel of the line of "honest-work-erism," of preaching reliance on "other leaders," and other Klonskyite and Browderite formulas to mask liquidation of the leading role of the Party.

The odor of this seepage grows even fouler when we consider who, precisely, this "leadership emerging from within the ranks themselves" consists of, and who are these forces that "Miller, Trbovich and the rest are so badly trying to red-bait out of the UMW," as the article puts it. The editorial in the same issue informs the reader that the UMW bureaucrats are trying to red-bait out of

the union not only the genuine Marxist-Leninists, but also the whole range of political tendencies to which the editorial -- bending way over backwards -- refers as "communists," "left-wing" and "militants." Namely the revisionist CPUSA, the Trotskyites of different stripes, as well as the up-and-coming reformist misleaders who are not yet in the present top leadership of the union, i.e. the future Arnold Millers in their embryonic stage of development -- the Klonsky circle would call them "honest workers." Strictly speaking it even includes Miller himself in part, since it was at him that the original blast of red-baiting was aimed (by Trbovich).

Phew! Indeed and in truth, this leadership that is "emerging from within the ranks themselves" stands a serious chance of "pointing the way" in the years ahead. It will point the way toward more revisionism, more Trotskyism, more reliance on the liberals, more reformism, more treachery, more conciliation and capitulation to the capitalist dictatorship.

**CULTIVATING TOMORROW'S WEEDS**

This is what the Klonsky circle considers pointing the way "forward" in the years ahead! Just as Browder did, the Klonsky circle flatters and cultivates these "other leaders" even when they are still relative unknowns, little seedlings hardly sprouted out of the ground. Klonskyism, precisely like Browderism, applies water and fertilizer today to the little seeds of tomorrow's big poisonous weeds.

The Klonsky circle's solicitude for the growth of these shoots, however, is ultimately a wasted effort. They will grow with or without the tender care of the Klonsky circle. All that is required for these foul weeds to "emerge from the ranks themselves" and to rise to the leadership of the spontaneous movements of tomorrow is that Marxist-Leninists should do nothing to combat the spontaneous tendency.

The Klonsky circle condemns Marxism-Leninism as "dogmatism," and it praises Browderite revisionism as "Marxism-Leninism." It is not surprising therefore that the Klonskyite editorial in the Oct. 11 Call calls the revisionist, Soviet social-imperialist, social-fascist rag, the Daily World, a "left-wing newspaper," and that it makes an appeal to the arch-anti-communist, Gus Hall, to "fight anti-communism." Throwing out the window the policy of "no united action with the CPUSA," this editorial issues an invitation to the revisionists to join with the OL in a common front in defense of trade union democracy. Is there anything surprising in such an appeal by the Klonsky circle? Not a thing. Anyone who praises Browderism as "Marxism" and denounces Marxism as "dogmatism" will naturally and inevitably be led to look on the revisionist CPUSA as an ally. All the shouts of "Death to Revisionism" and similar "bloodcurdling" rhetoric are only a cover -- only yet another disguise -- for the festering revisionist foulness at the pinnacle of the October League.

**5. Political Line and Organizational Form**

It is a basic principle of Leninism that the correct political line must struggle to become embodied in a definite organizational form, the organizational form of a democratic-centralist Party.

"The whole activity of Iskra as a separate group," wrote Lenin in One Step Forward, Two Steps Back, "has hitherto been a struggle for influence; but now it is a matter of something more, namely the organizational consolidation of this influence, and not merely a struggle for it." (Vol. 7, p. 322)

The consolidation of ideological influence in organizational form, in the form of a Leninist Party, "implies the establishment of authority, the transformation of the power of ideas into the power of authority, the subordination of lower Party bodies to higher ones." (p. 367.)

This much of Lenin's line on forming a party the Klonsky circle has understood rather well. It is now waving the banner of "party principles of organization" against the "circle spirit" in order to consolidate its own ideological influence over the circles associated with it, in order to secure the transformation of the power of its ideas into the power of authority, i.e. the subordination of the other circles to itself.

In all this, in and of itself, there is nothing objectionable, nothing to find fault with from a Leninist standpoint. On the contrary, the Klonsky circle should be criticized if it did not attempt to give its ideological line organizational form, and if it failed to struggle for the subordination of other circles to its own within the framework of a party.

However, it must be pointed out that this is still not the whole of Lenin's ideas on the question of party-building. The organizational consolidation of the correct line, rather, is only the culmination of a chain of preparatory steps forming a definite overall plan.

"Let us recall the main facts in the history of the preparations for the Congress," Lenin says at the outset of "Steps."

"Iskra declared at the very outset, in its announcement of publication in 1900, that before we could unite, lines of demarcation must be drawn. . . . Iskra acted with extreme caution in the summer and autumn of 1902 when it re-established the Organizing Committee. . . . At last the work of demarcation was finished -- as we all acknowledged. The Organizing Committee was constituted at the very end of 1902. . . . Thus the last thing we can be accused of is having been hasty in convening the Second Congress. We were in fact guided by the maxim: measure your cloth seven times before you cut it. . . ." (pp. 209-210.)

The Second Congress was held in July-August 1903. Iskra published its draft program in the summer of 1902, half a year before the constitution of the Organizing Committee and more than a full year before the convocation of the Congress. Lenin therefore had every right to protest against comrades who, after all this careful and deliberate "measuring of the cloth" prior to cutting it, began after the Congress to "start complaining and measuring it all over again."

The point, of course, is not that every party must spend x number of months between step A and step B, as if the birth of parties had a biologically determined gestation period. The point, rather, is that "measuring of the cloth seven times before cutting it" is also an expression of a Leninist principle of party-building. Before the correct ideological and political line can successfully consolidate itself in the organizational form of a party, it must have proved itself to be the correct line.

**THE KLONSKY CHRONOLOGY**

The Klonsky circle's order of progression toward its founding congress has followed, as is well known, a rather different chronology. After a false step (the "temporary leading body" proposal for founding a party without a congress and without a program) at the start, corrected in appearances in March 1976, the Klonsky circle convened the Organizing Committee in May, and set plans full steam ahead for the founding congress, prior to the publication of the October League's draft program. As this is going to press (December), The Call has still not published the programmatic proposals of the October League, but the bells are being rung for the founding congress.

This chronology, by comparison with Lenin's shows on the one hand, that the Klonsky circle is in a much greater hurry, much more eager and ambitious than was Iskra in seeking to give its ideas the organizational form of Party authority; and on the other hand, that the Klonsky circle has been much, much slower, more timid, hesitant and reluctant than was Iskra in informing the public what the definite principles and programmatic ideas are which it wants to consolidate. In fact, the cart of organizational consolidation has passed the horse of ideological influence. Readers of The Call now find themselves in the peculiar position of being urged in the strongest language to subordinate themselves organizationally, without knowing what program they are being asked to bow to. It is almost like a cultist religious appeal: first submit, then learn the mysteries of the godhead.

The Klonsky circle's procedure of ringing the bells for the founding congress prior to publishing its program draft is a complete caricature of the Leninist method of party-building. The Klonsky circle wants people to "cut the cloth" before measuring it even once, much less seven times. This has nothing in common with Leninism. The Klonsky circle thereby forfeits the moral and political right to expect that comrades will not complain and demand that the cloth be measured. Indeed, it is the duty of Leninists to lodge such complaints and protests and to insist that the Klonsky circle must lay its program before the public and win the battle of ideological influence for this program before it seeks to convert that influence into organizational authority. On this point of party-building procedure, it is the critics of the Klonsky circle -- regardless of their own definite lines -- who stand on the ground of Leninism and the Klonsky circle that stands on the ground of opportunism.

**VANISHING POLITICAL CONTENT**

More important than this question of procedures, however, is the ideological and political content that is emerging (or rather, disappearing) in the course of the process. Lenin, as is well known, insisted that "before



we can unite, and in order that we may unite, we must first of all draw firm and definite lines of demarcation." The October League, a year ago, had excellent possibilities for being able to complete the work of drawing lines of demarcation against the other trends in our movement -- provided, that is, that the OL could succeed in drawing lines of demarcation against its own right-opportunist tendencies. This did not happen. Just the opposite occurred; the right-opportunist tendency became dominant and consolidated itself. The result has been that the October League, under the command of the Klonsky circle; has increasingly blurred and muddled lines of demarcation that existed explicitly or implicitly prior to the formation of the O.C. The situation is not that the OL has not yet drawn enough clear lines; it is, rather, that it is drawing more and more blurry, muddled traces and wiping out any distinct ideological and political contours.

#### THE ROAD TO THE SWAMP

On this score we part company with the major organized competitors of the Klonsky circle in the dash toward the "Party." The chief reproach we level against the Klonsky circle on this score is that it has merged its line with the major opportunist lines outside the OL in the Marxist-Leninist movement, and has lowered itself to their level, striving to become the lowest common denominator. It has, in other words, surrendered what theoretical and ideological leadership it had in the Marxist-Leninist movement, and is trying to put together an eclectic patchwork out of other people's wardrobe. This is the road to the swamp, not to the Party.

In and of itself, there is nothing wrong in adopting the lines of other organizations. It can even be a virtue. The process of uniting the Marxist-Leninists and forming the single unified Party will require the lines of different organizations to come together into a single line. For this unity to be successful, however, it will have to be based on a principled, correct line. Therefore, insofar as other organizations have a correct line on one or another question, we should frankly unite with that line; insofar as they have incorrect lines, we should frankly oppose them. Klonskyism, by contrast, practices uniting and merging with the incorrect lines of other organizations; and of course it lacks any frankness in the process.

#### EVERY STRIKER, EVERY PROFESSOR

The principal example is the question of organizational line (line on question of forms of organization), which The Call has several times proclaimed as the key issue of the present period. What are the lines on forms of organization being debated in our movement? No one today (or hardly anyone) comes out openly any longer for federationism and against democratic centralism. Does this mean that there is no line struggle over questions of organization? Nonsense. The struggle has been raging for many months now, in the form of the struggle over "chief form of activity." This is a question of forms of organization, as I shall show in the second issue of this publication; and definite lines have emerged on it. There is the open right-opportunist line of "economic agitation as chief form of activity" of RCP and the concealed right-opportunist line (concealed under "left" phrases) of "propaganda as chief form of activity" of a number of groups formerly in or around or in the orbit of the "Wing."

Both are in essence federationist lines; the one leads to the kind of federationism that is modeled on trade-unionism, the other to national-federationism or even literary-circle federationism; it is the organizational principle of "every striker" on the one hand and the organizational principle of "every professor" on the other.

In the summer of 1976, after contributing next to nothing to this debate, the Klonsky circle finally defined the stand of the October League: "propaganda as chief form of activity." Lacking any clear, definite, integral party-building theory of its own, the Klonsky circle ended up by merging its line on the "key issue" in the present period with the line of WVO and the neo-Wing, whom at the same time it denounces as "anti-party elements." The Klonsky circle, in other words, by its own categories, adopted an anti-party party-building line (a party-liquidating line) on its way to its party congress.

The result is that the Klonsky circle today is incapable of drawing a clear line of demarcation between its "party-building" line and the neo-Wing "party-building" line. The Klonsky circle's theoretical arsenal has become so empty that it can put distance between itself and these forces only with the ludicrous fiction that the latter's line is "propaganda only." Worse yet, the Klonsky circle has got to the point where it is unable to find any arguments at all, but resorts to "settling its

accounts" with fists and clubs. First it embraces these groups theoretically, ideologically -- and then throws them out physically. It has to throw them out in order to cover up that it is in bed with their party-building line; and at the same time, in so doing, it exposes this fact even more vividly. In the spring of 1976, the OL was correctly lecturing PRRWO -- and RCP -- on the inadmissibility of settling ideological differences within our movement with lead pipes; in the autumn the Klonsky circle adopts the same methods, with the same results: deeper isolation for itself, greater support for those it attacks in this way.

#### CONCESSION TO MENSHEVISM

When we turn to the Klonsky circle's lines of demarcation on the other side, against the open Right opportunist line of RCP, there is the same distinct blurring, if I may put it that way. The "new" Klonsky catchphrase for trade union work, "turn the trade unions into revolutionary organizations," is another muddy brush stroke over the lines of demarcation on questions of forms of organization. It blurs over the essential differences between the trade union and the party forms of organization and makes a huge ideological concession to Menshevism.

The Klonsky circle's follow-up stroke, which was its declaration that economic agitation and political agitation are the same, "just agitation" and therefore "rightist," makes the muddle complete. Hitherto there have been only two trends in our movement that were unable to distinguish, even intuitively, between the two lines that stand behind these banners in the history of the communist movement. One of them is the RCP, which believes that its own economic agitation is the essence of Leninism; the other is PRRWO-RWL, which sees any kind of agitation as a deviation from the tasks of party-building. These two extremes now have a common junction in the "new" line of the Klonsky circle, which combines both fallacies into a single muddle.

Thus, in a few months' "ideological work" prior to forming its party, the Klonsky circle has managed, on the question it itself proclaims as key in the present period, to muddy its lines of demarcation and merge its principles with both the open Right and the sham "Left" opportunist lines in our movement at the same time. Both the party-building line that appeals to "every striker" and the party-building line tailored to please "every professor" have been incorporated and "synthesized" into a "higher dialectical unity": Klonskyism. One can say today that the struggle against Klonskyism is the struggle against the concentrated expression of everything that is backward in our movement, and that the ideological overcoming of Klonskyism means a leap forward for the entire movement.

#### A LOSS OF POLITICAL IDENTITY

Bravo, comrade Klonsky! The more your circle approaches the founding day of its party, the more it merges its line with the lines of those it denounces as anti-party forces. Instead of a progressive "settling of accounts" ideologically and theoretically with other tendencies, what is at work is a process of going deeper and deeper into debt, theoretically, to major opportunist competitors. Instead of a progressive clarification of lines of demarcation, there is a regressive effacing and blurring of lines, a loss of political identity.

The closer the Klonsky circle approaches the day when everything should be perfectly clear, the less it knows what it really stands for. Whether this growing amorphousness is mainly the unconscious product of the Klonsky circle's own degeneration, or whether it represents mainly a deliberate attempt to "unite" with the variety of ideological influences existing within the Organizing Committee is immaterial. Whatever the main reason (and both factors are at play), the inevitable outcome of this scandalous ideological retrogression will be, as Lenin said, a unity that "will be purely fictitious, (that) will conceal the prevailing confusion and hinder its radical elimination." (Vol. 4, p. 354.)

As Chairman Mao said, not having a correct political line is like "not having a soul." This is the fate of the Klonsky circle; it has lost its soul. What remains is muddled calculation, opportunist to the core and doomed to keep picking up rocks and dropping them on its feet.

One small irony in all of this is that, according to the Klonsky circle's last public charting of the trends in our movement, both the RCP and the "Wing"-elements are allegedly ultra-"Left." The Klonsky circle, to compound the confusion, thus positions itself in its own view at the right wing of our movement. In reality the Klonsky circle does not occupy the right wing of the Marxist-Leninist movement, as it believes. In consequence of all its strenuous muddying-over of its lines of demarcation, the Klonsky circle today forms a fea-

tureless marsh, a "centrist" formation, an eclectic muddle that is increasingly paralyzed (but no less furious!) inbetween the clearly defined right and "left" opportunist trends.

#### WISE MEN WOULD BE HUMBLE

The other side of this debased coin is the mounting arrogance which the Klonsky circle displays toward all Marxist-Leninists who stand outside its sphere of influence. At a time when the line and methods of the Klonsky circle have on the whole increased the ranks of the latter and contributed to the isolation of the OL, and after a year's time during which the major non-OL formations in our movement have perceptibly gained in strength and influence (a fact of which the Klonsky circle is privately aware) -- at such a time is the worst of all possible times for the Klonsky circle to start talking as if there existed only "opportunists" and no Marxist-Leninists anywhere except in the OL's own trend. It is a time when wise men would be humble.

Klonskyism chooses this time, instead, to proclaim that all those outside the Klonskyist trend are "opportunists" and "anti-party forces," and aping other windy nonsense from the RCP's performance a year ago.

This rhetoric and posturing, which the Klonsky circle has done nothing to earn, represents a drastic backsliding from its own earlier and more modest party-forming concept, according to which the OL's party-forming project was a preliminary step, a transitional form, on the road to building the full-fledged Party -- the single, unified Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of the U.S. -- thereafter, in the course of a continuing struggle to unite the Marxist-Leninists who remained in other formations, including other parties. This was the original concept of the slogan "struggle for Marxist-Leninist unity" and precisely this kind of unity is what the "international unity trend" in Belgium, France, West Germany, the Dominican Republic and other countries has as its goal. The Klonsky circle has broken with this more difficult but also more modest and basically more realistic concept, and now peddles instead the immodest (and, as history will show, illusory) self-advertisement that The Party is just a few weeks off and that they are it. History will punish this conceit, just as it punishes every other idealist notion.

In reality, the Klonsky circle's present "mountain stronghold" mentality of party-building, this small-circle gesticulation with the Party banner, is nothing more than another form of the capitulationism that runs like a white thread through all the Klonsky circle's thought and action. By thumping its political chest and roaring "we are The Party," the Klonsky circle is in reality saying: "we give up, we can't figure out how to unite the Marxist-Leninists or how to win over the honest forces that still disagree with us, so we'll take what marbles we can grab and quit trying." The red flag of party-building conceals the white flag of surrender in the battle for principled Marxist-Leninist unity, in the battle for the Party.

In sum, at the same time that the Klonsky circle has absorbed into its thinking all the backward aspects of the lines of other organizations, it has taken to denouncing the forward looking aspects of their lines with an embittered frenzy. The more the Klonsky circle degenerates into Browderism in its political content, the more it degenerates into sectarianism in form. In a word, the more it "advances" toward its founding party congress, the more it thinks and acts like a hidebound opportunist little sect. All the methods of hypocrisy, chicanery, demagoguery and suppression of Marxism-Leninism which we reviewed earlier are nothing but the necessary and inevitable consequences of this retrogression.

#### POLITICAL LINE AND FORM OF ACTIVITY

Finally, a few words about the inner connection between the Klonsky circle's ideological and political line, on the one hand, and its line on organizational questions (chief form of activity), on the other.

In many areas of its work the October League has been plagued by the complete liquidation of propaganda, in the narrow and precise sense of "presenting many ideas to one or a few persons." This is a right-opportunist deviation, no doubt about that. How to correct this deviation? The rectification cannot be accomplished merely by issuing a directive. Neither a correct directive, such as "combine agitation with propaganda," nor an incorrect directive, such as "make propaganda your chief form of activity," is adequate in itself to cure the disease. To rectify the deviation, the material for doing propaganda work must be supplied, and this material is the product of theoretical work. To present "many ideas" you must first have many ideas, and in order to have them, you must do theoretical work. Lacking theory, you will not possess "many ideas" integrally connected with each other;



and lacking that, you will not be able to do real propaganda at all (-- nor successful agitation --), and no amount of directives and orders will help.

This is one of the meanings of Lenin's well-known statement that "the role of vanguard fighter can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by the most advanced theory." (What Is To Be Done.)

#### MANY IDEAS ABOUT ONE OR TWO THINGS

How do things stand in this regard with the October League?

In one or a few areas of its work, a sufficient theoretical level exists for doing effective propaganda, in the precise sense. This is the case chiefly on the Afro-American national question; one can almost say it is in the case of the Afro-American question exclusively. Even here, unsettled theoretical problems remain, notably the relation between the struggle for the right of self-determination and the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat. Failure to advance on this question will inevitably bring with it backsliding. This apart, however, it is plain that on the Afro-American national question the October League has a theory; it has "many ideas" integrally connected; it has the wherewithal to cure the liquidation-of-propaganda ailment.

This being the case, there is no sound reason why the October League should, in this area of work, concentrate and organize its resources in such a way as to make the presentation of these ideas to "one or a few persons" its chief preoccupation for the next three, five, ten years or however many.

The policy of concentrating the main forces of the organization for a number of years on presenting many ideas to one or a few persons -- this is the precise meaning of the slogan "make propaganda the chief form of activity in the first main period of party-building."

If a party has "many ideas" -- at least in one or a few areas of work -- there is every reason for that party to set up specialized bodies within itself for conducting propaganda in this precise sense, while concentrating and organizing its main forces on presenting these ideas, a few points at a time, to the largest possible masses, in order that these ideas shall seize the minds of the masses and gradually become a material force. In this fashion the party from its inception plays a leading role in the class struggle and undermines the existing liberal, reformist leadership, while asserting its own, except that its leadership is still chiefly in the realm of public opinion (propaganda in the broad sense), not yet chiefly in the form of actual, practical organizational leadership of revolutionary mass actions.

(It should go without saying that action is essential in the first period as well, and that no political ideas can be thoroughly grasped in the absence of political experience. Lenin was quite clear on this.)

A party that possesses "many ideas," integrally connected, but adopts a policy of concentrating its forces on explaining them to "one or a few persons" -- without being in effect partially forced in this direction by external constraints, e.g. a tsarist, fascist or social-fascist dictatorship -- such a party is choking off its potential, shirking its Marxist-Leninist duty, and getting the tasks of party-building mixed up with the sinister ideology of 'self-cultivation.'

I shall return to these questions in the second issue of M-L FORWARD. The main point for the moment is that the liquidation-of-propaganda malady cannot be cured at all in the absence of an integral, worked-out theory -- in the absence of "many ideas" to present.

#### FEW IDEAS ABOUT ANYTHING ELSE

With this in mind, let us pass in final review the ideology of Klonskyism. The most immediately striking external characteristic of this set of ideas is its theoretical poverty; indeed its growing theoretical impoverishment the nearer it comes to its party. It has developed just as Stalin indicated: by the method of blurring over lines of demarcation, of stitching together its own line out of patches of different opportunist lines, by trying to obscure questions of principle with howling, shouting and phrasemongering, the Klonsky circle has fallen into "ideological asphyxiation" and even, as Stalin put it, "ideological death." (On the Opposition, p. 518.) The most extreme and concentrated expression of this decay is the Klonskyite "credo," whose principal theses have been analyzed above. The theoretical content of this catechism boils down to a half dozen opportunist catchwords; it is a thimbleful of Browderite poison. Even if we abstract from its political nature and regard it from a quantitative standpoint, we have to say that there is not "many ideas" here. There is not the

stuff to cure the liquidation-of-propaganda disease; there is material for the cheapest sort of "agitation" -- really only for phrasemongering, which is the negation of agitation -- but not for serious propaganda work.

Klonskyism cannot cure the problem of liquidating propaganda; Klonskyism itself is that problem in a most concentrated expression.

Why, then, is the Klonskyite ideology so keen, so insistent, so furious even about making propaganda its chief form of activity? One could understand this urge more easily if it came from people who are brimming over with theoretical productivity, and who imagine that all their creative output cannot be absorbed unless everything is reorganized and concentrated on this purpose. (One would still have to judge, of course, the political content of this propaganda.) But the Klonsky circle is not in this condition; its output of theory is rather slim, and nowhere more so than on the question it regards as principal in this period, the theory of party organization. It lacks any integral, comprehensive ideas of its own, and is thus forced to buy, beg, borrow and steal the work of others. It consistently follows the method of making decisions, drawing lines and whipping up campaigns first, and trying to conduct study and theoretical work only afterward, with the inevitable results. Every polemic that Klonskyism produces is a new certificate of its own theoretical poverty.

#### CAPITULATIONISM IN ORGANIZED FORM

What inner need, then, is served for Klonskyism by the line of "propaganda as the chief form of activity in the first main period"? Is it the praiseworthy desire, perhaps, to conceal its theoretical poverty as much as possible from the masses, and to restrict the awareness of its inner bankruptcy as much as possible to one or a few persons?

Unfortunately not. What is involved is the drive of Klonskyism toward the organizational consolidation of its ideological line of capitulation and liquidation.

It isn't enough, as Lenin said, to fight for the ideological influence of one's line; one must also give it its adequate organizational form. This is what Klonskyism is engaged in doing. Klonskyism cannot remain satisfied with trying to win ideological influence for the ideas of surrendering to the liberal leadership of the spontaneous movement and for the ideas of liquidating the party's leading role; it must win the authority, the power, to organize the work of Marxist-Leninists in such a way as to enforce these ideas, to guarantee that "other leaders" than Marxist-Leninists will head up the working-class movement of tomorrow and the day after.

Take, therefore, the scraps of revisionist theory wrapped in phrasemongering that make up the content of Klonskyism, and call this "Communism"; persuade a few handfuls of honest workers to sit still and listen to it for a while, and call this "propaganda"; call this muddled 'propaganda' circle a "factory nucleus"; and keep this up (despite everything!) as your chief form of activity for years and years -- and there indeed you have one of the guaranteed recipes now on the market for absolutely ensuring, beyond a doubt, that a Marxist-Leninist Communist Party will not emerge to disturb the tranquility of liberal hegemony. At least not from the forces that practice the line of Klonskyism.

The line of "propaganda" (in the strict sense) as "chief form of activity in the first main period of party-building" is the currently most fashionable formula that gives to the ideological and political line of capitulationism a suitable organizational form. It is a formula that arose in reaction to the "economic agitation as chief form of activity" line of RCP, but is a sham repudiation and real continuation of that equally capitulationist theory. This is the link, the underlying common essence, which has led the Klonsky circle, in step with its degeneration into Browderism, to adopt as its own both of these formulas at the same time. Capitulationism in ideological and political line inevitably adopts every form of capitulationism in matters of organization as well. They stem from the same revisionist root, and are bound to "find" each other.

#### ONE STEP FORWARD, TWO STEPS BACK

The ideological line of Klonskyism is like that "mud from the bottom of the Party stream" that Lenin talked about. Its organizational line is the old hidebound circle spirit raised up to the "chief form of activity." Do you wonder, reader, what Lenin meant by the "two steps backward" in the title of his book? Examine the development of the Klonsky circle: there, in the very process of taking one step forward toward the Party, the Klonsky circle has provided a textbook illustration of the two steps backward.

At the conclusion of his article "Political Agitation and the Class Point of View," with which we began this study of Klonskyism, Lenin describes, prophetically, what kind of political entity the Klonsky circle represents, and how the proletariat should proceed in regard to it:

"The party of the proletariat must learn to catch every liberal just at the moment when he is prepared to move forward an inch, and make him move forward a yard. If he is obdurate, we will go forward without him and over him."

Klonskyism, having moved its yard, has become obdurate, and grows more obdurate every day. Very well. There is no alternative. The choice is clear. The proletariat will go forward toward its Party without Klonskyism, and over it.

#### EPILOGUE:

#### Party-Building

#### and the Mass Line, 1977

Twenty years have gone by since the CPUSA degenerated irreversibly into a revisionist party. For twenty years the struggle to build a Marxist-Leninist Communist Party has been the central task; and for these two decades, successive groups of party-builders have advanced like wave upon wave toward the desired goal -- each time, so far, to fall short, recede and sweep backward with them, to varying degrees, the acquisitions of their advance.

To chronicle in any detail the history of these successive waves -- POC, PLP, CLP, RCP, and now regrettably the Klonsky circle -- is not my purpose here. It is, rather to call attention to the necessary link between progress and retrogression in the party-building struggle, on the one hand, and the ideas and movements of the masses, the state of the larger class struggle, on the other.

It is often said that the degree of fusion between the Marxist-Leninist movement and the movements of the masses leaves a great deal to be desired; and this is true beyond a doubt. There is a big gap to be bridged. But to imagine, because of this, that our movement has moved or can move separately and independently from the ideas and movements of the masses, like the floating Isle of Laputa in Gulliver's Travels, is to abandon materialist dialectics. Or rather, let us say that on every occasion when the movement has acted in this fashion, when it has forgotten who really makes history, then it has gone through a big crisis and a partial collapse, until in the course of struggle a new course has emerged in keeping with the movement of history and the state of the class struggle.

Just such a crisis was the political collapse of the CPUSA as a vanguard party, the crisis that gave birth to the Marxist-Leninist movement. Harry Haywood's article "The Degeneration of the CPUSA in the 1950s," (in Class Struggle No. 4-5) -- a chapter from his still unpublished autobiography, Black Bolshevik -- gives an excellent account of the way in which it was in the last analysis the masses of the working people who determined this crisis.

This crisis did not take place in any historical vacuum. Nor, as Haywood recounts, was it the external factor of Khrushchov's open espousal of the "three peacefuls" that was decisive -- the Marxist-Leninist wing in the party at first went along with these notions, though with great misgivings. The decisive factor, rather, was that the Afro-American masses of the South had begun the Civil Rights movement; they had staged and won victory in the powerful year-long Montgomery bus boycott, and were on the offensive all along the line -- but the revisionist leadership of the CPUSA abandoned this spontaneous class and national upsurge to reformist leadership.

In face of the valiant struggles waged by the Afro-American masses, the revisionists liquidated the Party organization in the South, promoted the leadership of the NAACP, and claimed that the movement as it then existed, under reformist leadership and with reformist banners, had reached the maximum strength and political consciousness that it was capable of reaching.

The Marxist-Leninists, by contrast, demanded that the Party play a leading role in these struggles, that it expose and work to oust the reformist leaders. The Marxist-Leninists argued that beneath the surface of the movement as it then existed, there lay the seeds, the smoldering desire, for a future revolutionary movement with far greater strength and far higher political conscious-



ness than "common sense" at that time thought conceivable.

There lay the irremediable differences, the issue that could be bridged by no amount of theoretical argumentation or factional compromise; no resolutions or conferences could solve it. It was the heroic struggles of the masses of the working people who forced revisionism into crisis, who posed the "either-or" before the Party, and who gave the decisive impulse to the birth of the Marxist-Leninist movement.

The masses of the working people, and they alone, are the real makers of history; but this truth, which runs so trippingly from the tongues of many of our ideologists, is too often forgotten when it comes to examining the history of the party-building movement and of the lines within it. No matter how "abstracted" this movement has been at times, its every step has been in the last analysis a reflection of, and in turn a reaction upon, the class struggle in the larger society and in the world -- the ideas and movements of the masses. It has advanced to the degree that it has moved forward in leadership of the proletariat and of the oppressed nationalities (even if that leadership has been more ideological than organizational); and it has regressed and fallen away to the degree that it has lagged behind the ideas and movements of the masses, failed to inspire and lead them, and opposed itself to them.

#### PARTY-BUILDING AND THE MASS LINE

Shouldn't this lesson of history be applied to the current tasks and controversies about party-building? It certainly should be. A Marxist-Leninist party is an organization of leaders. Such a party is nothing if it does not give leadership.

"Take the ideas of the masses (scattered and unsystematic ideas) and concentrate them (through study turn them into concentrated and systematic ideas), then go to the masses and propagate and explain these ideas until the masses embrace them as their own, hold fast to them and translate them into action. . ."

This instruction of Chairman Mao's (in "Concerning Methods of Leadership," SW III, p. 119) must be applied also to the questions of party-building that stand before our movement today.

But one must know how to apply it. It is not so easy. This method of leadership is like a chain of three links, all of which must be in place; like a problem of three stages, all of which must be solved for the end result to be correct.

If we do not begin with the ideas of the masses -- with these actual ideas, scattered and unsystematic as they are -- but rather with ready-made schemes or with library knowledge, then the end result will inevitably be utopianism or dogmatism, no matter how hard we work to solve the rest of the problem.

If we solve the first step correctly, but then fail to study, study, study so as to raise the scattered and unsystematic ideas of the masses up into concentrated, scientific, Marxist-Leninist ideas, then the end result will inevitably be tailism, Economism, trade-unionism, "honest-workerism," surrender of leadership, capitulation, degeneration and betrayal.

If, finally, having solved the first two steps correctly, we fail to propagate and to explain the concentrated, systematic ideas among the masses, persistently, patiently, in many different ways, over and over again, then we fall into the errors of closed-doorism, small-circleism, subjectivism and 'self-cultivation.'

The failure of one link in the chain breaks the whole; a party that does not have the whole chain together fails to lead.

#### WHAT FOLLOWS?

What concrete conclusions should be drawn from these general formula? How, specifically, should they be applied to the tasks of building the Marxist-Leninist Party here and now?

Every trend, every organization in our movement has given or will give, implicitly or explicitly, its own answers, its own solutions to this three-stage problem of leadership. The answers of Klonskyism, in my opinion, are wrong on all three counts. It takes the scattered and unsystematic ideas that the masses clung to a decade or more ago -- basic faith in bourgeois democracy, the desire to realize it where denied by national oppression and to preserve it against repression--; it does not raise these ideas to a systematic level, to the level of Marxism-Leninism; and now it has determined also to make small-circle life its "chief form of activity." Hence the peculiar blend of different kinds of backwardness that Klonskyism displays. But Klonskyism is

not alone in committing one or all of these errors.

Against Klonskyism and implicitly also against other trends in our movement, in whole or in part, and by way of prodding the work of party-building out of its present, temporary ideological rut, I submit the following three short theses:

#### THREE POINTS

I. The scattered and unsystematic ideas of the masses of the working-class and nationally oppressed people in the U.S. here and now, that have been developing over many years, are ideas of growing dissatisfaction and disenchantment with bourgeois democracy, ideas that increasingly recognize the bourgeois state as a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, ideas that grope for an alternative form of rule in which power resides in the hands of the working people and of the oppressed nationalities, and in which stern justice is meted out to the exploiters and oppressors.

II. The concentrated, systematic and historically scientific expression of these ideas is the dictatorship of the proletariat, which alone can guarantee the right of self-determination.

III. The chief task of the Party, the cornerstone of all its activity in the first main period of its construction, must be to propagate and to explain, to popularize the dictatorship of the proletariat among the masses.

Summed up in a sentence, these three points amount to this: political agitation for the dictatorship of the proletariat must be the Party's chief form of activity in this period.

#### "COMMON SENSE"

What!? Agitation for the dictatorship of the proletariat? I can already hear (and recall from memory) the howls of derision from comrades Klonsky & Co., who (like Martynov) confuse "agitation" with "calling to action," who will "prove" to all and sundry that the workers must first seize control of the trade unions before thinking of (this kind of) politics; they will "demonstrate" once again that the masses must first consolidate the defense of bourgeois democracy against the fascist tide before thinking of establishing a dictatorship of their own; and perhaps they will "demonstrate" also that the masses of the Afro-American people must first achieve the right of self-determination before thinking of the dictatorship of the proletariat. . . .

The basis of all these "arguments," all of which backslide into a two-stage theory of revolution in the U.S., is the same "common sense" that could not discern beneath the surface of the movements of the 1950s the awakening potentialities of a future revolutionary movement, which saw the existing bourgeois-democratic consciousness that guided the existing movement as the maximum that could be achieved, and which therefore resigned the leadership of that movement to bourgeois democrats, or reduced communists themselves to bourgeois-democratic roles. It was the "common sense," in other words, of opportunism, of revisionism, the "sense" of the bourgeoisie.

#### TO WAIT AND WAIT IS TO LIQUIDATE

Of course, we should wait for a very long time indeed if we waited for the spontaneous emergence of a mass movement for the dictatorship of the proletariat to put the question of agitation for this dictatorship before the Party in an unavoidable "either-or" form. To wait until objective events, crisis, war, etc., force the masses into action before taking up agitation for the dictatorship of the proletariat means to hand over the leadership of those mass actions, right now, to the present and future ultra-reactionary demagogues, who also "criticize" bourgeois democracy, who also "oppose" liberal hegemony, etc. . . . To wait to begin agitation for the dictatorship of the proletariat until the period when the masses are already in motion means to liquidate, in advance, the possibilities of achieving this dictatorship in fact when the historical moment arrives to pass from agitation and propaganda to action for this goal. Those who wait too long to begin agitation will inevitably let slip also the moment to begin organized, revolutionary mass action, proletarian insurrection; and, in letting that moment slip, they will commit an unpardonable crime against the proletariat and its cause.

"You cannot agitate for the dictatorship of the proletariat today -- the masses aren't ready to hear that sort of thing." "Only a small handful of people understand the dictatorship of the proletariat; you'd better stick to pushing this message in the propa-

ganda circles." "The workers just care about nickels and dimes; it's the intellectuals who worry about politics." This and in other ways is how "common sense" talks today. The duty of Marxist-Leninists is ruthlessly to expose and to break with such "common sense," to insist that the Party's chief task from its inception as a Party is to prepare the ground of public opinion in favor of the future revolutionary storm that will establish the dictatorship of the proletariat, and to refute all notions that there is no possibility of doing so, that the masses are too backward to hear such ideas, that there is no fertile soil for such seeds to take root, etc. etc.

#### POPULARIZE THE PROLETARIAN DICTATORSHIP

Against such "common sense" -- and likewise against the oh-so-"advanced" elements who liquidate the dictatorship of the proletariat by reducing it to a phrase, like a stuck record -- or those who say it is time for the assault -- and likewise against those for whom the dictatorship of the proletariat is a brilliant theme for literary evenings but not for day-to-day agitation -- against these and other different shades of Right and "Left" opportunism, it must be maintained that the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat today forms the essence of the mass line, and that anyone who does not take up the task of popularizing (not: vulgarizing) the dictatorship of the proletariat, and who does not make this work the cornerstone of all organized, Party activity, has no right to be called a Marxist-Leninist.

Heresy! Crazy! -- shouts "common sense." On the contrary, gentlemen and ladies, it is you who repeat heresies, and quite well-worn ones with name tags on them, when you place before the Party some "higher" task than to agitate for the dictatorship of the proletariat; and it is you who are out of touch with reality if you cannot find, if you cannot uncover, in every ghetto and barrio, in every strike, in every shop floor, every prison and other place where the masses gather the dim but smoldering coals of desire for the dictatorship of the proletariat, the "fertile soil" for sowing, implanting and cultivating the ideas of the proletarian dictatorship; it is you who lack genuine common sense if you cannot find in the daily events of political life ever fresh material for popularizing the dictatorship of the proletariat in a still more vivid, still more concrete and accessible form. I repeat, if you cannot see this, if you will not take up the work to do it, you have no right to be termed a Marxist-Leninist, and your parties and press organs have no place in the ranks of orthodox Communism.

#### A PARTY WORTHY OF THE NAME

Do you reproach this "strong language"? Let us see. Earlier on, in connection with a related aspect of the question of the leading role of the Party, we had occasion to quote Point Two of Lenin's "Terms of Admission to the Communist International." Now please study Point One of the same document:

"1. Day-by-day propaganda and agitation must be genuinely communist in character. All press organs belonging to the parties must be edited by reliable Communists who have given proof of their devotion to the cause of proletarian revolution. The dictatorship of the proletariat should not be discussed merely as a stock phrase to be learned by rote; it should be popularized in such a way that the practical facts systematically dealt with in our press day by day will drive home to every rank-and-file working man and working woman, every soldier and peasant, that it is indispensable to them. Third International supporters should use all the media to which they have access -- the press, public meetings, trade unions and co-operative societies -- to expose systematically and relentlessly, not only the bourgeoisie but also its accomplices -- the reformists of every shade." (LCW Vol. 31, p. 207)

Popularize the dictatorship of the proletariat! Drive home to every working man and working woman that it is indispensable to them! That was the Number One task, the most basic duty, the principal standard Lenin set for parties wishing to be recognized as Communist. There is no doubt that it is a demanding standard, a lofty goal. There is even less doubt, however, that our party-building forces, who have already made such giant strides in the past decade, who have time after time overcome one form of retrogression after another, who possess infinite reserves of energy and enthusiasm, will also take up this task, fulfill this duty, and prove worthy of this brilliant standard set by Lenin. When we have an organization that lives up to this standard -- and we can have, we shall build such an organization! -- then we shall have, at last, the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of the U.S. proletariat, the Party worthy of the name.





## LENIN on Propaganda, Economic Agitation and Political Agitation

### A STUDY GUIDE

Many Marxist-Leninist study guides suffer from one of two alternate failings. Either the questions are too broad and open-ended, so that the mind floats off into vagueness; or the questions demand mere repetition or paraphrasing of the text, with little thinking involved. How can you learn Marxism-Leninism this way?

Some months ago a group of prisoners in a federal penitentiary produced a study guide to Marx's *Capital*, Vol. 1, which avoided both weaknesses. It had sharp, pointed questions that required problem-solving; it put out assertions that required you to refute them, and it even had 'trick' questions of the true-or-false sort to test how firmly you had grasped the subject. There was no sliding by or phrasemongering your way through. It made you sweat -- and so you came out having learned something. This study guide borrows from that model.

Beginners will find some parts of this guide rough going. It was written for the use of the leading members of the October League in the context of a specific struggle over "chief form of activity." (See page 6 inside for the place of this study guide in the struggle with Klonskyism.)

The readings are from Vols. 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9 of Lenin's *Collected Works*. The selections are by no means exhaustive, but hit the main points that were in need of clarification at that moment in the struggle. Those who don't have access to the *Collected Works*, but have *What Is To Be Done*, can still follow Parts Two and Five.

Comments and criticisms are welcome. -- Ed.

P.S. Almost all the statements and ideas that call for analysis and argument in the Questions below are false.

#### PART ONE: THEORY, PRACTICE, AND REVOLUTIONARY MASS ACTION

READINGS: Excerpt from "What the Friends of the People Are," Lenin's *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, pp. 296-299; and excerpt from "Two Tactics," LCW Vol. 9, pp. 68-71.

1. Is propaganda a part of theoretical work or of practical work? Is agitation a part of theoretical work or of practical work?
2. Analyze the following idea: "At a time when the chief task is to solve theoretical problems, without which practice cannot make progress, the chief form of work that is called for is propaganda."
3. Does a revolution ever develop to the point where propaganda and agitation in themselves are insufficient to meet the revolutionary tasks? If so, what other form of activity then becomes primary?
4. Analyze this idea: "During the first main period of party-building, the main form of work is propaganda; when the second main period opens, the party's main form of work becomes mass agitation."
5. Show how the above two readings from Lenin demarcate the beginning of the first main period and the second main period, respectively; and draw conclusions concerning the tasks of theoretical work, propaganda, agitation and the organization of mass revolutionary action in these periods.

#### PART TWO: WHAT IS AGITATION AND WHAT IS PROPAGANDA?

READING: *What Is To Be Done*, Chapter III, Section B: "A Tale of How Martynov Rendered Plekhanov More Profound."

1. State the precise definition of propaganda and of agitation, then analyze and agree or disagree with the following ideas, giving reasons:
  - a. The propagandist provides comprehensive explanations of the capitalist system to the masses of people; the agitator rouses them to action.
  - b. The propagandist puts forth the ultimate aims of the working-class struggle, while the agitator's main work is presenting immediate demands.
  - c. The propagandist mainly addresses intellectuals and students; the agitator's main field of activity is among the broad masses.
  - d. The propagandist is mainly concerned with political questions; the agitator chiefly takes up questions of the economic struggle.
  - e. The propagandist necessarily addresses himself to advanced workers; the agitator takes the average workers for his audience.
  - f. A person doing propaganda mainly works in one-on-one situations; agitation mainly involves addressing larger groups.
  - g. Agitators are rarely found among the top leaders of a Party; only propagandists are qualified for this.
2. In what way did the Economists "render more profound" the definition of agitation and propaganda? What political purpose was served by revising the definition in this particular way?
3. Who was it that said that *Iskra* puts propaganda in the forefront and makes agitation secondary; from what political viewpoint was it said; what was meant by it, and what was Lenin's reply?

#### PART THREE: PROPAGANDA, PARTY ORGANIZATION AND PARTY LITERATURE

READING: "Draft Declaration of *Iskra* and Zarya," LCW 4, p. 320.

Take a clear-cut position for or against the following ideas:

1. The main work of most of those who engage in newspaper work is propaganda, as distinct from agitation.
2. The main task of those who are engaged in building a party is the publication of a magazine, as distinct from a newspaper.
3. A magazine should aim mainly at the intelligentsia; the newspaper is mainly for workers.
4. A topic such as the need to observe democratic centralism or the importance of combining open and secret work cannot be treated in an agitational organ.

FURTHER READING: "A Letter to Our Comrade on Our Organizational Tasks," Vol. 6, p. 235. Read also the footnotes to this at the back of the book.

State whether the following are true or false, and why:

1. The party organization should consist primarily of circles devoted primarily to propaganda.
2. It is imperative to organize propaganda circles in every factory and every district of town.
3. The over-all leadership of the organization's work in each district should be in the hands of a group primarily devoted to propaganda.
4. New recruits to the organization should as a general rule be assigned to do propaganda work. In this way Economism is combated.

5. If every member of the organization mainly engages in propaganda, the level and quality of propaganda done by the party will be raised.

6. The task of organizing and promoting propaganda work should be strictly centralized, and should be given special care and attention.

7. In the St. Petersburg struggle (consult the footnote) Lenin defeated the Economists there with the thesis that the organization should make propaganda its main form of work.

FURTHER READING: "Preface to the Pamphlet 'May Days in Kharkov.'" LCW Vol. 4, p. 357.

1. "To engage in propaganda, a real party organization is absolutely necessary; not so much for agitation." Correct or incorrect?

2. "To engage in propaganda, a real party organization is a help but not indispensable; adequate agitation, on the other hand, cannot be done at all without a party organization." Correct or incorrect?

3. "Since only a small number of advanced workers fully grasp the Marxists' strategic objectives, it is premature to advocate agitation for them among the masses." Correct or incorrect?

#### PART FOUR: AGITATION -- ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL

READING: "New Tasks and New Forces," Vol. 8, esp. pp. 211-213.

1. By what three notable transitions was the development of the Russian revolutionary movement marked at the time Lenin was writing?

2. Analyze the following:
 

- a. In the history of the Russian movement, the transition to propaganda as main form of work was the step forward from economic agitation as main form of work.
- b. The step forward from propaganda as main form of work and from economic agitation as main form of work was political agitation.

3. In the Marxist-Leninist movement in the U.S. of recent years, which trend has been holding up the banner of economic agitation as chief form of work? Which trend has consistently waved the banner of propaganda as chief form of work? Is there a principled alternative to both of these lines?

FURTHER READING: "Tasks of the Russian S-Ds" Vol. 2 p. 327.

1. According to Lenin's description of the practical activities of the Social-Democrats at that time (Note: this was before Economism openly reared its head), which of the following is true and which is not:
 

- a. Their activity was propaganda only.
- b. It was agitation only.
- c. It combined agitation and propaganda, with propaganda in the forefront.
- d. It combined agitation and propaganda, with agitation in the forefront.

2. What is the difference between economic agitation and political agitation, in general? Give illustrations from our practice.

3. As regards agitation, which kind should be primary?

4. As regards political agitation (and propaganda), what are the two main kinds, in their political content, that Lenin describes? Are there parallels for them in our situation? Give examples from our practice.

#### PART FIVE: POLITICAL AGITATION AND PARTY-BUILDING

READING: *What Is To Be Done*, Ch. III, Sec. C: "Political Exposures and Training in Revolutionary Activity."

Take a position on the following ideas and give your reasons:

1. The economic struggle is the best and most widely applicable starting point for us to arouse the masses to political activity.
2. Our task, in a word, is to lend the economic struggle itself a political character.
3. As soon as the police intervene in a strike, we should begin political agitation.
4. The propagandist supplies the masses with political education and training; the agitator moves them to apply what they have learned into action.
5. The chief function of political agitation is to find out who the advanced workers are; then the propagandist takes over and raises their political consciousness.
6. In order to raise workers to the level of class-conscious workers and to recruit them to the party, what is mainly required and most effective of all measures is the organized study of Marxist-Leninist books.
7. It is the duty of Marxist-Leninist intellectuals engaged in building a party to deepen, intensify and expand a thousandfold the work of political exposures, political agitation.

FURTHER READING: *What Is To Be Done*, Ch. V, Section B: "Can a Newspaper Be a Collective Organizer?"

State whether the following ideas are in agreement with Lenin's or not, and why:

1. A newspaper, consisting mainly of political agitation, cannot possibly play the central role in building a party organization and training its members.
2. The chief role of a nationwide newspaper is to guide the propaganda activity of the different circles and to link them together. This is its chief task in party-building.
3. The fulfillment of our dream to build a party of communist leaders at the head of a mobilized working-class army, ready to march into revolutionary action, can best be achieved mainly through the organization of widespread political agitation around a newspaper.

FURTHER READING: *What Is To Be Done*, Ch. V, Section C: "What Type of Organization Do We Require?"

1. In order to "organize our troops," what kind of activity is chiefly necessary?
2. In order to bring about a fusion between the "elemental destructive force of the masses" and the "conscious destructive force of an organization of revolutionaries," what activity is chiefly necessary?
3. What activity was the cornerstone of the program, the tactics, and the organizational work of *Iskra*?