

PLP

CONVENTION

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Report on Basebuilding

Over the last year I have learned alot in trying to build the the party in Jamaica Plain, (a mostly white community), and within the anti-busing movement. There are about 6 points which I will try to elaborate on.

1. It's good to get involved in things like community schools. They are public schools whose after-school program is "controlled" by a community council. They attract alot of good teachers and parents who hate the Boston School Committee like poison and are seeking an alternative through community control.
2. You need to work collectively to build the party. Individualism breeds just that, not communism.
3. Don't bury your head in the sand at the sight of the anti-busing movement. You can fight racism within the movement and within white working class communities.
4. Have faith in the people; don't give up at the drop of a hat.
5. Workers will defend communist ideas even though they are not won to them. But their defending these ideas is part of the process of being won to them.
6. If you don't explain your politics, you just build anti-communism.

1. Community schools are good to work with.

As I was about to have a baby and wouldn't be able to go into teaching for awhile, last summer my cluo decided I should find out what was going on in my community. I sampled different meetings and it was decided that I should get involved with "gassiz" Community School and its council. Community schools have been set up all over the country. During school hours they are public schools and after school they provide recreational programs for children and adults. In Boston, they are run through the Mayor's office, not the Boston School Committee. The first community schools were funded by one of the big auto manufacturers. Now they get funds from the city, from the foundations, and Safe Streets (the Figs.) The ruling class wants them because they keep kids off the streets and prevent stealing and riots. The working class should fight for them because they provide very cheap recreation and some educational programs.

So I got involved in the program. I went to the council meetings and just listened. I joined the slimnastics class and talked a little to the other women. And I did volunteer work. I assisted in the cooking classes and got to know some of the teenagers. I taught a creative writing class with one or two students. I joined in with the rest of the people to go to the city council hearing to prevent the Boston School Committee from taking over control of the community schools. We went to more city council hearings to demand an adequate budget for the community schools. I had a good time, got to know people who hate the Boston School Committee and will fight city hall whenever they see fit, and I earned their respect as someone who cares about the program. However, by doing only this I was appealing only to their bourgeois sense of "we can make our community school work," (under ~~capitalism~~)

2. You need to work collectively to build the party.

Getting involved was good, but my work in terms of building the party was weak. This was because I discouraged political advice from my club with my arrogance. I acted like I had really made a hit with the people and I was just great. I treated my comrades with contempt and I thought of myself as hot shit, which, literally was all I was in terms of building P.L. This attitude prevented my work from being discussed but it also created a competitive, hostile atmosphere within the club. For ex., I haughtily attacked a comrade with "That sounds very racist." what I was saying was, you are racist, (implying that I could never be), so I'm better than you. Needless to say, our problems with racism didn't get discussed. My attitude came under sharp criticism and it was decided that I go into another club and not criticize anybody-just concentrate on listening and learning from other comrades. If this didn't produce any changes, I was to leave the party.

My approach to building the party has changed alot since I have seen the importance of working collectively. Before this criticism of my work was made, I had done very little to build P.L. In about seven months I had accomplished the following ~~with~~ with my individualistic style of work:

a. Saturday sales on Centre St. in J.P.

b. I sold the paper to the Coordinator of the Community school program. (I was going to go from the top down because I was afraid of the working class.) He bought a ticket to the Jan. 20 demo but since I didn't explain SDS anti-racist politics to him, he came to our demo, saw a sea of red flags, heard the slogans, and he left to join the Trot march. I didn't struggle with him about racism before the demo because I was afraid he wouldn't come and I would lose the "glory" of bringing the Coordinator to the demo.

c. I made an announcement about Jan. 20 at a community school council meeting, giving a brief explanation of the demands. I was immediately attacked by a right winger who said, "SDS is a communist group and communists should not be allowed to speak at meetings." The council president nervously changed the subject. Later a white m.c. woman spoke and thanked me for reminding all of them about the war. Then a black w.c. woman who had bought CD somewhere said that she didn't agree with the "C.P." but she read their literature and they had alot of true things to say. Then she launched an attack on the v.p. of the school for racism which I didn't support with one peep. After the meeting the J.P. Little City Hall Mgr. told me not to try to win people ideologically but just try to get the bodies down to Washington (which is exactly what I did with the Coordinator.) Others gathered around me, apologizing for the right winger, saying how they appreciated all my efforts at the school and hoped that I would continue to come to meetings. It was clear that they thought I was a nice anti-war, anti-racist young woman and didn't want to see my feelings hurt by being insulted with the epithet "communist." I allowed them to continue thinking that I was not a communist, by not saying anything.

d. I circulated a petition about Southern Univ. at the

the school. I hadn't discussed it with anyone in the club, because I just wanted to surprise the club with it and brag about it afterwards. But the petition I drew up only "condemned" the shootings at S.U/ and made no mention of the cops doing it. So everyone at the school signed it but I had no political struggle with them.

e. I sold the paper to some council members at a talk given by the police commissioner at the school. I saw these people many times and never even asked them if they had read the paper or what they thought of it.

I took the criticism of my work very seriously because I didn't want to be asked to leave the party. I really had no idea what could be accomplished by working collectively. But here's a few things that did happen.

The state board of ed. came out with a busing plan which was supposed to racially balance the schools. The plan was so bad that it seemed that it was really designed to build racism. White parents in J.P. and elsewhere in Boston rose up in racist protest. It was tremendous that our party decided to jump right into this movement where even angels fear to tread. We put out a couple of leaflets and distributed them at racist rallies and community meetings and were never physically attacked. At first our line was sectarian; it opposed the state's plan and called for certain improvements for all the schools out for the ghetto schools first. But because we didn't support any other plan for integrating the schools (which would allow black and white parents to unite in struggle against the rotten schools), we objectively lined ourselves up along side of the met racist people who would begrudgingly yield to the preferential upgrading argument just as long as their kids could stay in their neighborhood schools and the black kids would stay in theirs.

Myself and another PL'er passed the first leaflet out in front of the Agassiz school to a group of women going to an anti-busing rally led by the School Committee and Louise Day Hicks. Some mothers yelled at us for trying to stir up racism where there was none, and "where was Progressive Labor Party three years ago when we were fighting for the park?" We were threatened with force if we tried to get on the bus. Our leaflets made racists defensive about their racism and, I think, afraid to attack us because it would be obvious. My closest friend, D., a white w.c. woman who also did volunteer work at the school, as well as other women I knew from the class, were the only ones to talk to us without screaming, but they argued that there was no racism in the movement.

I was scared and I'm sure if I hadn't been working closely with the club, I would have given up at this point.

Three right wingers went to the assistant coordinator (a nice guy with too many SLP friends) and said they wanted me out because they didn't want a communist mingling with their kids. So the council president called me and asked me not to distribute leaflets in front of the school because, although she agreed with our position,

she thought it would hurt the school. (Some group had distributed their anti-pig, pro-abortion newsletter there and the Council was still being harrassed months later by the school committee. Thus, the president feared that we could provoke the same reaction.) I pretty much agreed with her and said that I wouldn't distribute the lit. in front of the school. I was really unclear about how our line would build a stronger community school, until we talked about it in the club.

Party members helped me to see that the anti-racist line put forward in our leaflets would help weld together the community to be better able to fight for improvements in the schools, win more parks, get a bigger budget for community schools. Our leaflets might even help ward off the race riot the school committee is trying to stir up.

A motion was passed in the community council to discourage leafletting in or outside the school to prevent more right wingers from coming into the school and blaming the council for leaflets distributed there. At this point, I hadn't won members of the council to see the need for our line.

From a discussion with the black woman on the council, Y, it became clear that a part of what we were saying was sectarian. She pointed out that schools should be more integrated otherwise the racist school committee would continue guaranteeing that black kids got no education. The leadership and the teachers' club talked this over and won me to see that we should support some plan for integration with minimal busing. (This is possible in Boston because black and white neighborhoods are fairly close.) But we wanted to support such a plan in the context of preferential improvement for predominantly black schools and then for all the schools. So I approached a white parent from a predominantly black school in JP who had been advertising an alternate plan for integrating the schools, that some parents had drawn up. I had all along been criticizing them for their plan saying that busing and integration weren't the key issues. It was pure sectarianism, these parents were actually concretely fighting racism by trying to win the right wing led anti-busing group in JP to support their plan. She was glad that we had changed our minds about the plan but didn't want us to openly support it as PL; she also told me she had almost punched me in the nose when she first saw our leaflet. She had said that there was no racism in JP and that we were just stirring it up, that we should spend our time passing it out in S. Boston. (At any rate, she had gone home and read the leaflet, liked most of it, and even looked up communism in the dictionary.)

We started talking about running an anti-racist (party) candidate for school committee within the party. When I told her about this, she said let's run a slate, a PL'er, her, and a black friend of hers (both active in their community school). We had trouble finding a PL'er to run and eventually the two parents changed their minds about running for school committee for personal reasons. But they introduced us to another black woman and all of them said they would help work on the campaign.

Most recently, of her forces they work with, maybe ^{officers} CPers and natiolists of sorts

have been attacking us to them. Their basic appeal is that you can't fight racism, or you are just banging your head against the wall; the state has accepted their plan and they don't care if racist whites come to their school or not. They are just going to fight to make their school better. When they first presented this argument to me, they were hostile and said they didn't want to help work on the campaign. We discussed their political arguments some. Then I told them that SDS wanted to draw up a petition that would raise the issues we'd been talking about and spend the summer canvassing the neighborhoods. So they both said they wanted to see it and maybe offer criticisms, and one said she would help circulate it at the school if she liked it. Now one of the women wants me to meet and discuss the petition with 2 friends of hers, one of whom is the education director from APAC (an anti-poverty agency). We have yet to figure out how we will pursue this as APAC helped the police carry out a vicious attack on the party a few years back.

When community council elections came up. I worked out a leaflet for my campaign and the politics were very weak. I had discussed it with U, who had ~~said~~ to leave all the anti-racist, pro-socialist stuff out. All should say is that I am concerned about the community school program and I want everybody to be treated equally. I struggled with here over it but came up with a leaflet which was opportunist on our fight racism line and lacked class hatred. Club members pointed this out and the end result was a very sharp leaflet saying my main qualification for community school council was my desire to fight racism which hurt black and white alike, that I was in PL, and for socialism. Party members helped distribute the leaflet. I was one of 21 people elected to the council. I got 71 votes (only 11 of which were PL or challenge club members.)

At our next club meeting we will try to work out a strategy for trying to recruit some of these good people to PL.

3. Don't bury your head in the sand at the sight of the anti-busing movement. You can fight racism in a white working class community.

a. We had a PL leaflet all ready to distribute at the very first anti-busing rally. And it had quite an impact on Boston. It seemed like everybody had read the leaflet. When we went to pass it out a second leaflet, many people said, "I've already read it." Or "Is that that communist leaflet?" In a debate among 4 white women over amnesty, we heard one say, "I guess I must be a communist like it said in that leaflet." Another woman said, "If you forget all that stuff about revolution, there isn't a position I agree with more." Another woman at an anti-busing rally argued with her friends over the leaflet and then told a PL'er, "Maybe there's a little bit of communism in me, too." A politico at this rally said over the mike, "According to Progressive Labor Party, 'we're all a bunch of racists.' And Louise Day Hicks attacked us. In answer to something we said of her, she said 'I didn't just crawl out of the woodwork, I've been leading the anti-busing movement for years.' Interestingly enough these racists made no comment about a John Birch society leaflet which got passed around which said that white children would be raped, maimed, and robbed at black schools.

b. I got 71 votes in the council election, running on an anti-racist platform. On the other hand, 7 nominees from the ~~anti~~ racist anti-busing group only received an average of ~~31~~ 31 votes apiece.

I had sold a cd sub to a white woman who works in an employment office. She lives in Jr so I had just dropped one of the campaign leaflets in her mail box. She and her husband came to vote for me and clapped very loudly when ~~she~~ I was introduced.

This election is an important victory and has inspired our party to go on and try to build a base in S. Boston where racist hysteria is on the rise. In a mainly white project there, a black youth was shot and 30 Puerto Rican families driven out. A young w.c. guy from S. Boston, who has had a vacillating attitude toward ~~it~~ for a long time is so enthused by this victory he is going to help us do work there.

c. D. has changed her mind and now supports an alternate plan for integrating the schools of Jr/ She had been one of the ones who argued with me when we passed out the leaflet at the Agassiz school. Now she sees and dislikes the racism in the anti-busing movement. She has always disliked racism. However, she has to be won to see how 1.) other ideas she has are racist and 2) that racism isn't just bad morally, it keeps capitalism together.

d. I know we have ~~done~~ some good so far because the racists are so defensive about their racism that they do everything to hide it. All they have attacked me with so far is being a communist, an unwed mother (bullshit), and one racist claims she saw me in the principal's office with my pants off. The more she tells this story, the more she exposes herself.

4. Have faith in the people; don't give up at the drop of a hat.

1.) At various times during this anti-busing movement I became very subjective, I wanted to give up after the scene at the bus when D. was arguing with me that there ~~was~~ no racism in the movement. (In fact, this was good, as I knew what she thought at the time and could deal with it.) Party members really kept me going. I didn't want to go to a meeting the next night where I knew the leaflet would be mentioned. It was pointed out that if I didn't go I would consolidate everybody to the right. So I went and ended up having a very good discussion about racism with two council members. One of them told me at the next meeting that if certain adults could not get along with me (because of my communist ideas), it was their problem, not mine.

2.) D. is another case in ~~point~~. ~~I already mentioned how she changed her mind about the busing movement.~~ ^{point.} When I called her after the scene at the bus, her husband answered the phone; when I said hello, he covered up the phone, D. said something, and then he hung up. I assumed she didn't want to have anything to do with me because of the leaflet. But when I ran into her on the street and she was real friendly, I asked her why her husband hung up on me. It turned out they were having a fight and she didn't want to talk to anybody. I was amazed; but even more amazing is that, before the busing stuff, when I had had virtually no political discussions with her, her husband had told her he didn't want me to come over anymore because I was a communist. She had argued with him and won and now he's friendly when he sees me (although he disagrees with a lot of our ~~ideas~~ ideas.)

3.) When the 3 right wingers had tried to get the ~~ideas~~ council.

to oust me from the school, I felt terribly unliked. But the council had never even suggested that I not do ~~stuff there~~. All they did was pass a resolution discouraging leafletting inside or in front of the school. Also one of the council members had defended me to one of the right wingers who wanted me out with, "Look, Nancy, we've already hashed this all out on the council (referring to the Jan 20 meeting), and she can do what she wants."

4.) I already said how Y., a black woman on the council, defended me when I was red-baited. I felt she had been sort of cold to me during the year, but I think it's just because she's moody. It was her criticism of our anti-busing leaflet which helped us to see that we had to support a plan for integration.

She really surprised me at the council election when she told me she rounded up 10 people to come and vote for me and a black friend of hers. Now I am going to ask her to canvas with the anti-racism petition.

5.)

5. Workers will defend communist ideas even though they don't agree with them.

I have said how both Y and D. did this. Recently D. has been defending me, as a communist, left and right. At an anti-busing rally 5 racist women from Jr attacked her for talking to me. She told them to shut up, that I was a good friend of hers, and she would talk with whomever she pleased. A few weeks later she ^{nominated} me for the council. When D. talked to me about what I should say in the campaign leaflet, she wanted me to leave the politics out. But when she saw the final copy, which was very left, she said, "I like it, but no one else will." In spite of believing this, she showed a copy of the leaflet to a good friend and brought another friend to come and vote for me. (And this friend who voted for me is very racist.)

Then, after the election D. ran into some people from the anti-busing group. They told her that they had been told not to vote for me. She told them, "Oh, really. I voted for her. She's a very good friend of mine." I have to make a concrete plan to win her to agreeing with communist ideas, so she can really win over all of these friends she has.

Another point is that the people who voted for me do not completely agree with our analysis of racism and the need for socialism. Many of them seemed to feel compelled to tell me, "well, you know I'm ~~ready~~ not ready to join up," or "I don't agree with your ideas but I respect your right to say them." They voted for me because they knew I was concerned about the school and they knew the racists weren't. One guy I never even talked with before the election, told me that he had struggled with the janitor. "The janitor at the school had pointed me out saying, 'That girl is a fucking communist.'" At the end of their conversation the janitor said, "well, I'll probably vote for her. She'll probably push hard for good things." Then when I told this story to D. she said, "Of course, everybody knows that about communists."

Right now we are discussing the need to build WAm in Jr. What I have been doing is trying to win people to a very left line which is hard. We need a left-center group to bring people into, and from it we can recruit to the party. I'm not very clear on this yet-like what politics will it have? And how would we relate

to 30/40/

6. If you don't explain your politics, you just build anti-communism.

The other day a woman in my babysitting pool told me that this woman she knows in the anti-busing group had pointed me out on the street. She whispered, "She's a communist, you know. She comes to all our meetings and just writes everything down. But she never says anything." I have gone to too many meetings this year and not said anything. I didn't speak because I just thought everybody would be anti-communist and red-bait me. This was proven wrong as many people came to my defense and the defense of what we stand for, and even if it had been true, ~~it would~~ my speaking would have helped you personally, then you'll be opportunist, and for sure nobody will be on to fight racism and capitalism. Good politics makes good friends. An yway you look at it, if you don't say what you think you can't have a good relationship.

For a long time I was building the image of myself as a sly communist, sort of a silent well-meaning person, but underneath an evil-intentioned red. Since no one knew what I really thought, they could free associate on the idea of me being a communist.

When I sold the paper to people, I didn't talk to them about it afterwards. I even assumed that they would know I was a communist just because I sold them the paper. This was wrong. It's good to sell the paper to your friends because OD explains things clearly and without opportunism, as well as reporting alot of things that you won't always remember to talk to people about. But you won't win anybody unless you discuss their reaction to the paper with them.

As far as I can tell my political opportunism came from going overboard with the fight against sectarianism. At first I had stopped myself from struggling over every point that people raised, but by the time I got to the Agassiz, I was stopping myself from struggling over anything. I figured I'd let the paper do my talking. The opportunism also came from my lack of study and the ensuing watering down of my political understanding.

My tendency to be non-political is deep; and my petit bourgeois revolutionary attitude, which makes me want to give up at the least little set-back, is probably even deeper. But with help from the party we will be able to consolidate these victories in Jr.

Karen P.

ON THE ROLE OF A COMMUNIST PARTY

Reading the preconvention bulletins has been a very encouraging reminder of the vitality of our party. I was struck with the growing understanding of the role of the party reflected in the bulletins, especially in the statements on the individual and revolution, the Bolsheviks and the d. of the p. (by David Levey), on intellectual and cultural work, and the dialogue around "the right wing trend." Not only are we apparently maturing, the way all revolutionary parties must, but I think we are in a position to raise the understanding of the relationship of a communist party to the masses to a higher level than has yet been reached by the international communist movement. Why PL should do this probably reflects our previous emphasis on base building, our origins in the struggle against CP revisionism, and our understanding of the lessons of the Cultural Revolution in China. I can't make any global statements about this new understanding, but I would like to comment on some of the issues that I believe are important in its development.

(1) THE RIGHT-WING TREND IN THE PARTY. Most of the dialogue on this stressed the opposition of sectarianism and opportunism. I think the unity of the two needs to be stressed. The right wing trend is not new. It was there all along, during our most sectarian period. Our work usually went something like this: we would attempt to set up a united front. When we weren't too busy figuring out who shouldn't be in it, we were very busy making sure its line was close to the party's line without the d. of the p. We put a lot of effort into arguing over every little point in the line of the UF. We put very little effort into talking about socialism, d. of the p., etc. Result: we usually wound up as the sole real leaders of a small, isolated left-center coalition which was very left without being communist. Our line was generally opportunist, a watered-down version of the party's full position; our practice was sectarian--we tried to make the politics of the UF conform to this line point-for-point. What we should have been doing (and should be doing) was building UF around one or two important mass positions (e.g., rehire this worker, fight psychosurgery). This mass position would be the essential, non-negotiable unity of the line of the UF. Our vanguard and socialist ideas should then be put forward as such, with the clear understanding that they may not be the leading ideas of the UF.

When the struggle against sectarianism was waged with some success, the opportunism behind our sectarianism was unmasked. We had been pushing so hard to build the UF around the totality of our militant left-center positions because we did not really see ourselves winning masses of people to communist ideas. We have certainly been reluctant to talk about socialism in the midst of truly mass struggles. That is one part of the problem. On a deeper level, I think that I and most of the comrades I know are not all that certain or confident about communism. It has largely been a slogan for us, and the complicated sets of relationships involved in the change from bourgeois to proletarian

on medical education in major medical journals; also stuff about medical education in China and Cuba and they would attempt to formulate a Marxist critique of medical schools and medical education which is detailed and factual, not just theoretical, and derive a more complete strategy from this. This kind of study is vital for hospital workers, too, but they would concentrate on trade union history and thus develop a deeper approach to TU work.

Leo Villard

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An approach to cultural work in a place like New York, where there are many clubs in close geographical proximity might involve setting up a cultural committee, with one representative from each club. The committee could plan monthly cultural activities and also organize workshops for art, writing, photography, woodworking, etc. Our mass line in this area should be that of the left in the Cultural Revolution--culture must be built by the participation of the broad masses and not superstars. People who are profficient in some area (playing an instrument, carpentry, etc) should be involved in developing these skills in other people. These workshops should be seen as political tools and an important part of base building.

If artists, writers, etc. who took part in these workshops were won to the party, we could then set up clubs of artists whose political work would be to organize other artists.

IT'S TIME TO SHARPEN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST SEXISM AND FEMINISM.

Complacency, lazyness, bourgeois ideology-revisionism- have held us back in the struggle against sexism and feminism. The facts are hitting us on the head, what could be more obvious? There is widespread super-oppression of women among the working class and its allies and especially among racial minorities. It is systematic, affects every aspect of life, and it is justified by male chauvinist ideas. It is organized by, and benefits, the ruling class.

Economic oppression : the statistics are blinding... higher unemployment rate, lower wages, less job security, ^{unpaid maternity leave} women constitute a high and higher percent of the labor force... some of the most exploitative industries (garment, electronics, ~~industry~~ service industries) and some of the worst jobs involve almost exclusively women... etc...

Social oppression : responsibility for house-keeping and child-rearing... lack of adequate child-care facilities... worse medical care (e.g. abortion laws)... being treated as sex objects by the media... ^{practices forced sterilizations} etc...

No one in the Party denies all this. Yet, as a Party, our response is not adequate. Where are we at?

①. We fight the material oppression of working class women. In the Bay Area for example, we are trying to unionize office workers, organize student nurses, unite phone operators with other phone workers, oppose child-care cuts, support campus workers, and more. This is to our credit. We do much more of this than any women's lib group, and probably more than

all of them combined. This disproves the claims of some of our feminist friends who claim the Party is sexist. We are in the thick of the struggle of working class women to improve their lives.

2. The short-coming within that, though, is that we do not clearly point out the systematic sexist pattern of the US and that it needs to be fought as such. In particular, the success of these various struggles ^{often} rests on unity between men and women and this requires the defeat of male chauvinist ideas. Right now we do very little if anything on the ideological and cultural fronts on the questions of sexism and feminism. This must change.

3. Even though we fare better than practically any other organization, we are sometimes liberal in fighting sexist attitudes in the Party, among our friends, or on the job. This is partly due to a lack of consciousness on our part: we are not fully aware that sexism hurts men as well as women. ~~They are not fully aware that sexism hurts men as well as women.~~

4. Our response to the ruling class-led feminist movement has been feeble and ineffective. This is a serious weakness, since it is a mass movement and it is building every reactionary idea in the book. ^{each of these points} (More on ~~the~~ later.)

Most of these points are not new. ~~They have been raised before~~ ^{However,} the discussion so far has not been adequate. ~~On the other hand, the discussion so far has not been adequate.~~

~~Here is the solution.~~ This can be solved in the coming period; we can come back from the convention with a real Party line on sexism and feminism!

~~However,~~ In what discussion we have had, some interesting arguments stand out: "Sexism is not that important." Tell that to the ruling class! They spend much more money on pushing sexism than anything else (since ^{almost} every movie, TV show, billboard, etc is sexist!) They seem to think sexism is pretty important. "Racism is more important" True. But that does not mean we should not do more on sexism. ~~Should we not fight individualism because anti-communism is more important?~~ "Women's lib is a white middle-class phenomenon" So was SDS in 1967! ~~These arguments are of a revisionist nature.~~ All these arguments are of a revisionist nature. Instead of dealing with reality and how to change it, they provide excuses for a do-nothing, go-slow, don't-rock-the-Party outlook.

We are beginning to rout this kind of attitude. The pre-convention discussion has stressed the fight against the rightward trend, ^{and} the struggle on the cultural and personal-ideological fronts. In the past, we have refused to let our revolutionary practice be held back. ~~When a straight look at reality showed us that the communist movement, including our own Party, had been wrong, we have stuck our neck out and advanced by developing the line.~~ Some examples from the few years since the last convention: racism, nationalism, Vietnam, ~~China~~ China. There is no reason not to ^{do the same and sharpen} our line on sexism and feminism.

1. IN THE THICK OF WORKING CLASS WOMEN'S STRUGGLES.

Over 1/3 of the ^{employed} working class is made up of women. Average wages for women are little over half what they are for men, and yet half the women who work are the sole support of themselves and/or families. Our organizing of clerical workers into unions (as at Met Life, SF) is objectively an attempt to take on the ruling class's sexism. But very few of the articles in Challenge have pointed this fact out. As I understand it, organizing women has been made more difficult because of bourgeois propaganda to the effect that workers' wives are mainly wives, not workers, and that therefore unions are not important to them. The ruling class has convinced many women to see themselves as temporary workers, supplementing their husbands incomes, or waiting to find a husband. If this has been evident at Met Life, it must be dealt with as part of the ruling class's systematic divide-and-rule scheme which affects women in an extra hard way. In other words, when a plant has a disproportionate number of black workers in super-shitty jobs, justified by some racist stereotype, we call that company racist. The same should be true for female workers working in awful conditions -- it's sexist. Office work, known for being boring, monotonous, tedious, is considered 'women's work'. Men are supposed to feel above it all, while women are supposed to exhibit a higher tolerance for it.

Similarly in the case of welfare, where most recipients are women. We're involved in some struggles here too, and we've been sharp in pointing out the racist nature of the welfare system. Let's not neglect the fact that it is sexist too. More women are hit directly because of the higher unemployment for women, and the sexist lack of childcare facilities, both of which force poor women onto welfare. The point here is that we don't analyze welfare as part of an overall strategy of the bosses to subjugate women in a special way. Dialectics teaches us that phenomena are not isolated but are interconnected -- We must apply this reasoning to the thousand and one examples of women's oppression.

2. IDEOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL FRONTS

Taking the offensive against sexist ideology is crucial, if we in PL seriously intend to advance on the ideological front in a strong way fight from the beginning, as no other communist party

has. A few tiny starts have been made. In one case, PLers united with members of SESPA to get an anti-Shockley resolution passed by the American Physical Society Convention last year, and at the same convention led a confrontation with the author of a physics book containing three extremely sexist jokes. In another case, a PL member ^{who was the teaching assistant for} ~~giving~~ a biology course with a sexist text, along with a few members of the class, convinced the prof to announce to the class there was no scientific basis for the statement that infant boys show more aggressive behavior than infant girls. Masses of people must see PLers as militant fighters against every expression of bourgeois thought and bourgeois injustice. The stereotypes of women are numerous: we're inferior intellectually; we're passive; we're overly emotional; we're mainly concerned with sex and 'getting a man'; our place is in the home; our role to serve our husbands; we're the weaker sex; we're unstable, unpredictable; we can't drive; we need protection -- etc, ad nauseum. These stereotypes can be connected with very concrete forms of oppression: for example, 'place in the home' hence don't provide day care, and hence unpaid household labor, even though it is socially necessary work. Or 'unstable', hence don't upgrade job and so on. We suggest the culture club write up an in-depth analysis of the stereotypes, how bourgeois culture foists them on us, and how they are used to justify women's oppression. ^{The same should be done for racism as we rarely discuss the} Another article could cover the upsurge of decadent ^{forms} movies and pornography as part of a stepped-up campaign to build ^{racist} the grossest forms of sexism. ^{ideas}

On the campus, sexist texts and profs ^{take and the relation to ruling class racist practice.} should be taken on, not instead of racist ones, but in addition to them. For students to see an organization of men and women fighting sexism would be refreshing and a blow to feminism with its accompanying guilt-tripping for men.

3. FIGHTING SEXISM WITHIN PL

Not only has this aspect of bourgeois ideology been mainly left unchallenged, but Party members themselves often are guilty of perpetuating sexist attitudes in their own lives, for example through sexist jokes like "Oh so she finally got him" (referring

to a PLer moving in with his girlfriend). This kind of thing is offensive and disgusting -- not to mention counter-revolutionary. Maybe the worst part of it is that other members rarely challenge such remarks or struggle with the ones who make them about why they are sexist. If this isn't liberalism, I don't know what is.

It is, of course, to PL's credit that extreme chauvinism in the form of sleeping around or beating one's wife is not put up with and that members have been expelled for such activity. Other aspects -- such as men doing housework and caring for the children; basebuilding among women as well as men; encouraging women's leadership -- don't seem to be ~~the~~ major problems right now. Whenever and wherever they occur, Party members should deal with them sharply.

But the only way to really up the ante within the Party is to step up the struggle against the ruling class, by strengthening mass struggles against the economic, social and psychological oppression of women.

The above program (points 1&2) can be implemented without setting up a separate section to deal with sexism. In fact a new consciousness must be incorporated into all our work, at all levels -- meaning all of us are responsible, with the leadership holding the heaviest burden. Though sexism is widespread and deeply divisive, the fight against it should not be seen as being of the same strategic importance as anti-racism and 30/40. *Here's why.*

4. RACISM AND SEXISM

The ruling class wants people to think that somehow women's interests run counter to that of minorities. In Berkeley a pathetic situation arose in which the City Council froze all hiring in city positions until it was worked out whether jobs should go to women first, or to blacks first. The 'radicals' on the Council were the main ones responsible for this situation. Obviously blacks and women ^{not to mention everyone else,} all suffered while unemployment climbed.

This debate between feminists and nationalists, over who is exploited more, builds racism and sexism instead of fighting them. Unfortunately there has been a recurring line of argument in the Party favoring the nationalist position, (i.e. racism is more

important, so ~~let's~~ forget about sexism), as an answer to some feminist friends who absurdly claim we 'overemphasize' racism.

Let us take an objective look at the situation and figure out what's right. It seems that economically, racism and sexism are in the same range, if calculated by wage differentials. Politically, however, there are major differences. Racism plays a much more crucial role for the bosses:

***Racism is used to justify imperialism in every case--/super-exploitation of workers in Latin America, Asia, Africa, Europe, by ~~the~~ ^{all US & other} companies; as well as imperialist wars, as in Vietnam, etc; and productivity drives such as the current one in steel.

***Racism is used to justify genocide both domestically and internationally (in the ghettos, barrios and in Vietnam).

***Racism is used to bring about fascism, the most openly vicious form of capitalist dictatorship, by obscuring who the real enemy ^{is} for the majority of workers ~~is~~.

Sexism is not the backbone for imperialist ^{exploitation,} genocide, or fascism, it just does not have the same kind of effectiveness for the ruling class ^{as} politically ~~strategy~~. This is why RACISM, and not RACISM & SEXISM, is the #1 tool of the bosses, and anti-racism the most important strategic component of the Party's line.

Is it reasonable to conclude that the fight against sexism is not that important? Not at all. In fact the super-exploitation of women is nowhere as obvious as in the black and Latin communities. So a blow against sexism is directly a blow against racism, since it is black and Latin women who benefit the most from anti-sexist reforms.

Not to mention the indirect way that anti-sexism benefits the fight against racism. The Universal Law of class struggle is: anything that helps workers as a class and hurts bosses, is a good thing for all workers. ^{But} ~~How~~ does this work for men?

5. SOME WAYS MEN ARE HURT BY SEXISM

The primary victims of sexism are obviously women of the working class and other oppressed sections of the population (students, intellectuals, etc). But what is usually overlooked is that non-ruling class men are also oppressed by sexism. How?

→Economically: 1- a pool of low paid workers (in this case women)

lowers wages for all. The ruling class has done this in

two very concrete ways:

"The first, the laying off of women and the rehiring of men in women's classifications at women's wages, was used in the 1953 recession in Detroit. However, men were more aggressive, less passive in their resistance to this policy. They were more easily organized into unions. There was no 'Feminine Mystique' to control them.

The second is the laying off of men and the use of more and more women with the reclassification of men's jobs as women's work. Electrical assembly in California used to be men's work. For years the men in the union felt that they could do better and should get more than women. As the gap in wages and conditions widened, so did the difference between the number of men and women in the union and the number of women in the industry where there was no union.

Electrical assembly and electronics industries grew rapidly during and after the war. Already having become known as women's work 'traditionally', the new employees were recruited from among women. The men in the union complained bitterly about how the women's wages kept theirs down because women would work so cheap and how the women were taking all their jobs. Naked self-interest should have led them to demand equal pay at the higher male rates instead of accepting the sexual differentials and to demand a 30 hour week at 40 hours pay, or such a sliding scale of wages and hours as will provide a job for everyone who wants it and at a high take-home pay." (Joan Jordan, The Place of American Women, 1968). *(By the way, that first one applies to public school teachers today)*

-Lack of Unity on the job leads to worse conditions for all, as in at the Phone Co. where separate locals for men and women workers has time and again weakened the fight of all ~~member~~ workers against AT&T.

3-The high cost of childcare is a real burden for both parents.

Health and Safety: 1-Lack of protective legislation for male workers.

For example, women are not permitted by law to lift excessively heavy things; but clearly these jobs lead to poorer health for men who day in and day out over many years, are forced to lift heavy crates or garbage cans or whatever.

Psychologically: 1-Bad family life. Our bourgeois upbringing leads all of us, in one way or another to have very reactionary expectations of family life, and what it will do for us. Common forms of this are seeing your spouse as your boss or servant, or primarily sexual playmate; idealizing the relationship so that struggle is viewed as a threat

to the 'harmony' rather than a necessary means for growth. These phony expectations, tightly intertwined with male chauvinist ideas, lead to tension in all marriages, and to the breaking up of many. Clearly, these results of chauvinism hurt men as much as women.

2-Relationships with children. Men often don't get to really know their own children, with the 40 hour work week and the consequent exhaustion during the hours they are at home.

All this shows that men should not feel threatened by the fight against sexism -- (Unless they are bosses, cops etc) -- on the contrary, they have much to gain. Every time we fall for sexist ideas, or hold back the struggle against them, the cash register rings for the bosses. Every sexist joke we allow to go unchallenged is another 10,000 bucks in Rockefeller's account. This outlook is in contrast to that of the feminists:

6. SEXISM AND FEMINISM

Another area where we have dragged our feet is the struggle against feminism. The bourgeoisie has been using a mass movement ("women's lib") to push anti-male ideas. This is a very bad development. Thousands and thousands of women (mainly students and intellectuals) have been misled into this movement. Much of its impact was negative. In spite of occasional attacks on sexism, the bulk of the fire has been against men. What a ~~disaster~~ disaster, from a working class perspective!

The results have been:

-More sexism: making fun of the women's lib movement has become the latest way to build male chauvinism.

~~xx~~-Anti-communism: Many women refuse to participate in the ~~struggle~~ revolutionary movement because it is "male-dominated".

-Individualism: seeking solutions to social problems thru creative sexual activities, breaking up the nuclear family, communes, etc.

-Racism: Building the idea that the fight against racism is at the expense of white women.

-Nationalism: Building the idea that whites cannot be won to fighting racism, as their main concern seems to be whether to wear a bra or not.

The politics of the feminists stink to high heaven. They fail to

see that sexism is nothing but a class question;; that men too are oppressed by sexism. Feminism has helped to build all the other aspects of bourgeois ideology. The women's lib movement is basically controlled by the bourgeoisie and their revisionist friends. We are partly to blame for this sad state of affairs, because we have failed to offer enough of a real anti-sexist alternative to it.

Some questions to think about :

- How do you deal with a sexist joke on the job ?
- How should the party relate to the women's movement ? (concretely)
- How could each club sharpen the fight against sexism and feminism in the context of its work ?

ON USING STUDENT GOVERNMENT REFERENDA TO BUILD ANTI-RACTIST STRUGGLE

This last quarter, Berkeley SDS sponsored a referendum which appeared on the student government ballot. This is an evaluation of this tactic and our work around it. The details of our chapter are included to show how a weak situation can quickly be changed when the tactic used is appropriate.

HOW WE WENT ABOUT IT:

At the end of winter quarter we discussed putting a referendum about Jensen on the ASUC ballot. SDS included the Party and two or three others somewhat active, with a somewhat larger inactive base. All seemed agreeable to the idea, although several Party members and others were not terribly enthusiastic. In fact there was quite a bit of demoralization about our shrinking chapter.

We discussed in our club what the referendum should say. We wanted it broad -- something that many other new people would be attracted by to work on. For this reason we rejected calling for Jensen's firing. We also discussed calling for removal of academic credit for his seminar course on his paper. Some of us thought this latter suggestion would be good because it would be sharp. On the whole we were convinced by other Party people that removing credit would raise the same objections as firing and at this time would not be significantly broader than firing. Hence we decided on "We condemn the theories of Arthur Jensen as being racist and unscientific. We further call upon the Academic(faculty) Senate and the ASUC (student) Senate to set up a committee to investigate the extent to which these theories are being taught here."

When the new quarter began, the pamphlet, (which we'd been working on for two months) was still not out. We were very slow in getting started petitioning. The current excuse was "we need to ask the student senators what the proper way to word the referendum is." So 3½ weeks into the quarter we started collecting signatures on a petition to put the statement on the ballot. On the third day, when we had about 80 signatures (we needed 1,000), we found out the election was sooner than we had been previously told and that we only had five more days to turn in the signatures. Half our club was sick so we were forced to resort to the one other 'channel' for getting referenda on the ballot: having the ASUC senate vote to put it on.

That ASUC meeting was reported in Challenge (the first Water-gate issue). We won overwhelmingly. We were then faced with only two weeks before the election! We set out vigorously to finish the pamphlet -- 3 more days of writing, 3 of typing and laying out and 3 at the printer. Meanwhile we passed out a leaflet announcing the referendum and a meeting to plan the campaign. The meeting (1½ weeks before the election) was attended by the Party people, 2 members SDS and 2 new people, both white, (one who'd been met through the leaflet). We organized door-to-door canvassing, leafletting outside large lecture halls and at dorm dinners, the rewriting of the leaflet to last till the election. Both new people got involved. We also planned a Saturday picnic and a forum the night before the election.

Within two days our mass campaign was underway. All the planned activities came off, although the picnic was small. Most importantly, many new people helped leaflet -- it was easy

to meet people and there was an immediate goal which people could right away start working towards. Once the pamphlet was out we had the table up every day for 2-4 hours. We started getting attacked by letters in the student newspaper. We asked Prof. A to write up a response. He did and we talked to six other faculty we knew who also signed it.

A WORD ABOUT TIES

Several aspects of the campaign were successful to the extent that we had been building ties all year. One area was with profs. In the last few months we had begun to work closely with a faculty member of Jensen's department and had gotten to know several others in the Life Sciences. One grad student in our club is now mainly working with faculty and grad students in Science. Most of the signers of the letter came from his ties in his department. One of these wrote ^{to the student paper} ~~his own response~~ to a letter attacking us. Other faculty had been met earlier in the year in a classroom.

FACULTY ** KEY TO BUILDING THE ANTI-RACIST STRUGGLE

The impact of the faculty letters was fairly strong and quite important. As we pointed out in the Jensen pamphlet, the fact that Jensen is racist rests on his being unscientific. This is true because of the nature of the social 'sciences'. Furthermore, the media has at least semi-successfully created the image of Jensenism being opposed only by militants outside the respectable academic fields. Hence students often asked us "But wouldn't it be better to refute him scientifically?" Pointing out that in fact he had been, but that all the scientific refutations in the world didn't prevent the government and the

media from believing, spreading and implementing his ideas, placed us in an even stronger position, (stronger than simply saying, oh he's a racist pig whose ideas are used to justify and increase racist oppression -- which of course we also said.) Then, having faculty on this campus back us up on the need for a political movement, on the need for students to take a stand, made the referendum the logical next step in people's eyes.

STUDENT NEWSPAPER

The other area where ties paid off was knowing some of the staff of the Daily Cal. We had originally gotten friendly with them during the campaign against the ban. Whenever something important came up we went to them and struggled to have it put in. Sometimes we convinced them (usually not in one conversation) and often not at all. The main thing was to treat them as long-term allies, discussing the political importance of this or that anti-racist struggle. We tried not to get angry or end up calling them pigs when we failed. We made one mistake: the day before the election (which lasted 3 days), they came out with a position recommending a YES vote on the condemnation and a NO vote on the investigation. We should have immediately challenged this untenable position (That the campus shouldn't know the extent to which an unscientific and racist theory is being taught at this university?)

The closeness of the vote and the loss of the second paragraph indicated that probably a sharper referendum would have been factually incorrect. We moved many people to the left in the course of the campaign. Some joined SDS including several minority students. Some who thought Jensen a nut

understand how dangerous he is. Some who believed him unscientific are now convinced he's racist; others believed him racist and now see he's also unscientific. 800 pamphlets sold in 10 days before the election. Several black and Chicano students worked on the campaign and are now working with SDS.

PARTY BUILDING

This was a weak area. We were timid about raising the Party with people who did come around. For example, while our sales on campus were fairly good, some of the newly involved students still hadn't seen Challenge a week after the election. A few still have not seen the PL Mag article on eugenics.

Two weeks after the election a PL forum was held to which some of our immediate base, one new person and some revisionists came. We advertised it widely as "The communist view on Jensen -- No Free Speech for Nazi Scholars" with a picture of Jensen covered by a swastika. Considering that the issue was a mass one on campus by that time, it's not clear why more new people didn't come.

The two strongest people we won to SDS, one black and one white, are both leaving for the summer, as are the three faculty who are closest to us, which shoots the possibility of a base group.

FOLLOW*UP TO THE CAMPAIGN

It is important to be ready, before the campaign ends, to have activities planned which will help consolidate people moving closer to SDS and to offer things to do to people newly interested in the issue. We devised a questionnaire which was passed out in relevant (psych, ed, anthro, soci) classes. It

included the following questions:

Are racial differences dealt with in this class?

If so, was the treatment biased in your opinion? Explain.

Specifically, was Jensen's theory of genetic inferiority of minorities and the 'Lower class' presented? How about

Shockley or Banfield? Any comment on how these were presented?

Did any of your test books reflect what you would consider racial bias? Which ones and how?

If you answered yes to any of the above, do you think something should be done to change this? Do you have any ideas about how this could be done?

Leave your name and number here if interested in knowing more about SDS.

To this extent that we carried this project out, we learned some valuable information about how racism is dealt with in certain classes. Some students seemed interested in answering the questions and 1-2 students per large class gave us their names. The important thing is that we had new people involved in writing and circulation of the questionnaire. Given the success we had with this campaign at the end of a school year, such a campaign begun in the fall could really snowball.

SOME STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES IN CAMPUS ANTI-RACISM STRUGGLE...

In the past 6 months, since we have become much more active on campus in more of a mass way, we have involved ourselves and many others in various anti-racist struggles (or struggles in which racism was at least an aspect)-- among these rallies around Southern U., Wounded Knee, repeated struggle against racism of campus newspaper, organizing against cutbacks in EOP and financial aid and proposed tuition increase and a few fights in classes around racist ideology and/or textbooks and grading policies. The fight against the newspaper was probably the most successful. The paper has repeatedly printed racist cartoons and articles depicting minority students as "welfare students" (financial aid recipients), puppets (recently-elected student body president who is a black student was depicted as a "puppet" of his campaign manager), ignorant of their culture, ad infinitum. Our-selves and others wrote numerous letters to the paper, took the issue to the Communications Board and to the student government accusing the paper, in the person of the editor and the cartoonist, of racism and refusing to print opposing points of view. As a consequence of our actions, a racist cartoonist on the staff was censored by the student government and it has now become something of a mass issue on the campus, particularly among minority students (the campus is 51% minority students). We ran for student government on an essentially anti-racist platform -- 1 person won (a member of the party and SDS) and the other two came very close. We are now in a good position to push for a student government sponsored anti-racism committee -- a broader group than SDS, which could investigate, expose and fight against racist practices in the classroom and on the campus in general.

All this has been good (and six people are currently in a party study group), but one area we've been weak in is that of tying in all these individual struggles with the larger picture -- the resurgence of racist ideology and practice and how it is consciously used and pushed by the ruling class to oppress and exploit minority students and to keep us from uniting among ourselves and with the working class. In other words, "upping the ante" and winning students in a mass way to a clearer understanding of racism. Until we can develop in people this class understanding of racism so that it is easily recognized and immediately reacted to by a large number of students, both white and minority, we, as students, will be limited and subject to every divisive racist trick that comes our way. We can and must win people to the

party's line on racism ... & to the party.

FIGHT REVISIONISM, OPPORTUNISM AND RACISM IN THE PARTY ...

1. Make sure SDS makes regular public statements on campus (via leaflets, forums, letters to editor of campus newspaper, etc) tying in a current anti-racist struggle with the new wave of racist ideology, racism historically and how and why racism hurts all of us.
2. Be much more vigorous in initiating anti-racist struggles — paying particular attention to classroom work (several black students who are now interested in a student government sponsored anti-racism committee were met in this way).
3. Write regular C-D articles re: racism at Cal State LA (send in at least one an issue). Establish a realistic time and/or number quota for paper sales.
4. More party literature tables (at least once a week) and party forums on various aspects of racism — it's role in education and in building and maintaining capitalism and our role in smashing it and fighting for workers revolution.
5. Build the party study group — guarantee that it meets regularly and win members of it to building it and bringing their friends to it. Discuss C-D and other party literature with people.
6. Pay particular attention to working with and recruiting minority students to campus activity, study group and party. Club should regularly discuss club members relations with minority students.

terri evans
PLP

ON CLASSROOM AGISTATION AGAINST RACISM...

Last quarter I discovered about half-way through the quarter that one of the assigned books had an extremely racist passage in it, describing in detail why blacks were inferior and why it was justifiable to allow for separation between the races. It was poorly footnoted and followed by a statement by the author which alluded to the fact that the main problem with slavery was its "unhappy influence on white people". I raised it immediately in class, suggesting that such a book should not be used in class, that racism was being presented as truth, that such views were socially dangerous, etc. (I had not, however, built a base in class to the extent where I could and should have discussed it with others first). The professors response was completely defensive, saying he wasn't responsible for something someone else said a long time ago. I fought, of course, and got some nods of agreement and a few comments after class. But no one else joined in the discussion. Not feeling that I had adequately gotten my point across, I wrote a leaflet explaining how racism hurts everyone, tying it in with the recent revival of racist ideology and various aspects of racism on the campus. The teacher gave me five minutes at the end of class to discuss it, during which he conceded that the book was "in bad taste", but mostly attacked me. Again, nobody spoke in class (by the way, this was a lower division class, mostly freshman and sophomores, probably half minority students). After class several people told me they really respected me for standing up for what I believed in and fighting the teacher and agreed that the book should not be used. Finally, the last week of classes, I circulated a petition to remove the book from the course, which about 10 out of 35 people signed. Three of those people — black students — have subsequently become interested in the anti-racism committee we are trying to form in the student government. The outcome was generally positive (but the book is still being used).

I learned alot from my mistakes about how to do this to get maximal results as far as fighting racism in classes and racism and cynicism in students.

1. If we want to do this successfully we must start building a base the first day in class (especially on the 10-week quarter system). Try to arrange your schedule so you can come to class early and talk to people, sell C-D, pass out

leaflets about whatever is going on at the time and make announcements about same before class starts, if possible. Spend some time after class talking to people. All this can be done in every class.

2. Read the books assigned. Many books aren't as obviously blatant as the Unheavenly City -- many have racist pages, paragraphs, chapters, etc. I had a psychology book this quarter which supported the genetic theory of intelligence in the last chapter. I didn't discover it until I was studying for the final.
3. Participate and encourage class discussion -- try to avoid exchanges or "running battles" between yourself and the teacher. Make every effort to broaden the discussion to include other students. Discussing things beforehand, like if you intend to bring up a particular topic, could help.
4. Not all profs are hard-core racists. Some are. There are differences. Cultivating relationships with the more progressive ones is important. We should have the outlook of being able to win some of them and ally with them in these anti-racist struggles. In fact, if we don't, there is the danger of putting forth this anti-racist struggle as student against teacher.
5. If you are going to launch a struggle against a book, start talking to other students about it. Get some allies before you start.
6. Make every effort to win as many in the class before circulating a petition. We want to win and we can if we do it right. Try to get together a delegation from the class and possibly other sections of the same class to confront the professor. Always confront the professor first before going to the head of the department. If none of these things work, making it public on the campus sometimes does the trick.
7. The struggle against racism in the classroom must be tied in with the struggle against racist ideology and how racism hurts us all -- otherwise, ^{sounding} the importance of the struggle isn't clear and you run the risk of a missionary, if you're white.
8. We should have frequent party forums, leaflets, etc. on various aspects of racism.
9. Now and then we hear rumors that "so-and-so is a Jensenist"...we should be willing to take these classes and get others to take them with us.

terri evans
PLP

Let's write PL Magazine's articles on our own practice
(Army club members, GIs & vets, especially take note of p. 3)

History is the testing ground for theory. Yet we often think that history is 1905, 1917, 1939, and not 1965-1973. We forget that we are making history right now! To make history correctly, we must analyse critically the history we've already made. We don't do this nearly enough. We analyse history (e.g., Eugenics article, 7th Comintern article), but not our own. We expound on revolutionary experience in Ceylon, China, Greece, North Korea--but not on our own. We do excellent analyses of the current relations of forces in the world, but often do not zero in on what PLP is doing about these forces. What we need to add to all these excellent articles are in-depth, detailed analyses of the party's experience in various areas of work. Why our political line changed, why our style of work changed, how these changes occurred, the effects of different tactics and different mass lines, the role of leadership and democratic centralism in the outcome of activities. This is what M-L is all about-- analysing the concrete situation you're in scientifically and self-critically.

Some articles which approach this current-history, self-critical method include the article on subverting public high schools, the article on GI organizing by Mack & Sallie Smith, the article on SDS and the anti-war movement, and Inside PL. Even these articles tended to be anecdotal, and not analytical. In many areas, the party does not yet have a couple of solid years of struggle which could justify such a historical-type article. But there are several areas where we could do this.

Consider the published work on the student movement. The best article was the one on the anti-war movement. Even this article lacked a detailed exposition and analysis of the role of the party, how the party functioned,

or the relationship between style of work and mass line, in particular, cases around the country. The main emphasis in the article was to characterize the general period, analyse the operations of various forces (liberal politicians, Mike Ansara, revisionists), and draw a few conclusions about future paths open to the party. But the paths--fighting racism with a nonsectarian style of work by doing classroom work--were not based on a self-critical evaluation of the period which was coming to a close. The article failed to carefully examine the ties of the party to various student organization (probably a reflection of our lack of ties in that period). Nor did it discuss how the party put forward various strategies and tactics within different groups and in different situations. One event which should have been analysed but never was was the party's role in 1970 NPAC convention. A self-critical analysis could have shown us that our tactics and political line there (confrontation on the issue of liberal politicians) led to a few people joining SDS, but that a different line (build local anti-war actions by principled struggle primarily in workshops) would have given us much better results. Such an account would have laid the basis for the anti-sectarian conclusions of the anti-war student movement article. An internal report on student work a few months back marked an effort to self-critically discuss our sectarian style of work, which was identified as the factor causing us to fail to win the anti-war movement to become an anti-imperialist movement under PLP influence and/or leadership. But the report was unnecessarily short, and while the general conclusions were correct, there was very little in the report itself to be convincing. One report which I found to be very helpful was the internal on NAM. The approach taken by the author was, after identifying the forces around, showed how the party related to them in a detailed fashion, and how the party could develop its work with that

group. Naturally, the report was short because it dealt with one conference. But why couldn't we have a longer report, just as detailed, on the student work in general? That would be creative M-L.

I am not contending that the analysis has never been done. I'm sure the NC has discussed such events in detail and have reached a certain understanding, as shown by the changes which have occurred in our work. But ~~the~~ the party's rank-and-file needs to know more than a summary to understand, and ^{to} carry out, new lines of thought and practice; future communists need the experience in an accessible form, not just in a casual way *buried in the head of party veterans*.

The need for such analysis has come home to me most clearly in the GI movement. Virtually nothing exists from left-wing work in the military. We know there were 100,000s of GIs marching in Paris, and in the Pacific after WWII; we know of a centralized, anti-imperialist GI organization which existed shortly after the war for a while; we know of US mutinies in WWI. But we don't know much about how the work was done, leaving us with the bourgeois historian's notion of spontaneity, or more often, nothing at all.

I would like to write the kind of article I've proposed in general on the party's GI work. To do this I need reports from all comrades who have been in the service ~~and~~ or who have had the army work as a primary concentration. I propose to organize the article around the ~~various~~ various mass lines we have taken over the years. These went chronologically, I believe, from nothing, to "Smash the Bosses Armed Forces", to "Stop Racism, Harassment, and the War", to "Stop Racism and Harassment", to "Smash Racism--Free Billy Smith," to "Stop Harassment--Non-Judicial Punishment by an elected EM board & Stop Racism." Generally speaking, these changes in line occurred at party meetings, and I'd

like people to fill in the dates as precisely as possible. I think the reports should also be organized around our changes in mass line as far as possible. Perhaps more important than our mass line was our style of work in the UF. These questions should be raised chronologically, summarized around the mass lines, coming out various party meetings. Some of the questions which should be discussed include: a serious evaluation of non-party forces we encountered and the effect our contact with them had; a detailed and specific account of basebuilding--precisely how many people were won closer, through what struggles, around what ideas; how consolidation continued or didn't continue when people PCSed or ETSed; democratic centralism--was it carried out and was it helpful concretely as an internal form of struggle and in building the GI movement and the PLP.

I'd like to add in passing that CAMP News is eager to read such a report because they are interested in how a disciplined GI organization functions--and the Army Club was it! Secondly, with our phasing out of GI work, the party should definitely have something detailed and written out, or much of our experience will be lost--after all, it won't be too many years before the party will make a concentration in the army again, and this time we should have more experience and analysis to draw on. So let's write those reports and send them to me! 9140 Richmond Hwy. Apt. 6-F, Ft. Belvoir, Va. 22060.

Our party has developed a clear insight that economic determinism is a reactionary ideology which leads us to sit back and let history take its (capitalist) course. We know that revolutionary organizations throughout history have propelled history forward by leading the masses against the oppressors.

There are objective limitations to what can be done in any historical period, but right now we are in a period when socialism and the transition to communism is historically possible. The making of revolution today is primarily conditioned by our ability to integrate with the masses, raise our mass and independent line effectively, build the party, always skillfully using our understanding of conditions of crises (war, recession, etc) which ~~we~~ plague capitalism to make the most progress towards revolution at any given time. Now, this understanding should be reflected by having a healthy number of articles on our own revolutionary practice in PL Magazine. Not to do so is a sign of creeping determinism in our thinking.

Rod G.
PLP
D.C.

WHO NEEDS TO FIGHT RACISM?

WHY SHOULD A REVOLUTIONARY FIGHT RACISM?

Why do we, as communists, believe that the most important thing to do now (to better build the party and revolution) is to fight racism? Why do we, as students, think that of all the crap pushed in universities (individualism, cynicism, sexism, nationalism, anti-communism etc.) it happens to be racist ideology that is the particular component in the barrage of ruling-class bullshit that has got to be wiped out rather than the others? Why, as workers, are fights for preferential hiring and upgrading and against racist firings to be given priority to fights against, say, forced overtime or safety etc?

It probably seems pretty strange (if not outright racist) for a party member to raise such basic questions. Needless to say, they are not asked merely rhetorically, but, rather, with a great deal of concern. This is because there has been a certain amount of reluctance in both our t.u. and student work to maintain at all times a principled position with regard to the anti-racist fight, and this indicates that we party members must not always see the fight against racism as being an absolutely necessary revolutionary activity. If we are not sure of our anti-racist stance in principle, how can we ever hope to obliterate racism in fact from our party much less from the entire working class?

Our club here in Buffalo (self-critical of our failure to sustain an anti-racist fight among workers and students, and concluding that we ourselves might not be fully won to fight racism) has made a number of attempts to answer the above questions. We have come up with some damn good reasons, of course, but some of us are not yet satisfied that they are the only reasons or the best reasons that might help in

winning others to the struggle.

First of all, we agreed that racism is monstrously lethal to members of the international working class. Bosses' racism has killed millions of non-white working people abroad, and murders thousands more in deadly ghettos and sweatshops here at home. Where it does not kill, it maims, deforms and dehumanizes: none of the bosses' other ideas serve so directly to physically rot-out masses of workers.

racism

Secondly, allows the ruling-class to isolate the extremely militant leadership of non-white minorities from the broader, white working class majority in the U.S. Non-whites see ruling class oppression most clearly, and are also the most ready to fight back. Ghetto and prison rebellions have shown that the bosses do not have things so firmly under control, and that they go apeshit in the face of sharp struggle. Revolution can best be promoted through an alliance with these most militant forces.

Race hatred also feeds fascism, and can be stimulated by bosses almost at will until it precipitates into race war. By setting white and non-white workers at each others throats and then retiring to some remote hideaway, the bosses could effectively defuse any (otherwise genuinely revolutionary) communist movement that had failed to rid itself of racism. (Is this race war / bosses' ace-in-the-hole argument current elsewhere? Is anyone familiar with the history of racial conflicts in the U.S. e.g. with Native Americans, Orientals, Mexicans etc.?)

Like the Vietnam war, racist practices by the gov't and its bosses expose the system as ruthless and inhuman, and can be eminently useful in discrediting U.S. "Democracy," and moving masses of workers to the left. (Anti-communists like to accuse us of "exploiting" minority

problems; do any of us believe there is even a grain of truth to it?)

During the present period of heightened competition in int'l markets, and with the decline of U.S. hegemony in them, racism is especially useful to the ruling class in extorting maximum profits out of workers' hides. This int'l competition probably accounts for the current racist offensive in the universities (Jensen, Ranfield et al.) as well as for continually rising prices, lower wages (slave welfare labor), speed up and increased lay-offs.

The anti-racist fight is patently central to our struggle for socialism, but we have, nevertheless, been other than adamant in fighting racism both in our t.u. and student work. Our sds efforts last semester, for example, tended to dissipate into fights only peripherally related to the fight against racist ideas. In our attempt to stop the arming of campus cops, we did not adequately tie-in the issues of guns and law and order tightly enough with that of racist ideology. We almost succumbed in the end to an opportunist alliance with mere pacifists.

Probably the main reason we did not have much success in convincing others of the need to fight racism was because we were not convinced all that well ourselves. What is needed is a deeper political understanding among party members of the meaning of the anti-racist fight for revolution in the U.S.A. It may be that this confusion is confined to us in Buffalo, what do other people think?

P.S. Another argument we hear from students against fighting racist ideology is that "It's not the ideas, but the concrete practices of racism that we should be fighting" or "Everyone knows that what's taught in school is bullshit, no need to kick a dead horse." Our answer to these arguments is to point out that the ruling class understands, even if we don't, that it is worth millions of dollars to them to set up and run universities which have as their MAIN purpose pushing racist ideology -- that racist practices require racist ideology, and that it's just wishful thinking to say that students aren't in fact strongly affected by what's taught at the universities. But is it true that the universities are mainly set up to push racism? We think the answer is Yes, but it's not an obvious point. After all, many people point out that ~~lots~~ lots, if not most, courses are technical, not explicitly political. Superficially it appears as if universities were mainly set up to teach a variety of job skills, not ideology. It's true a lot of jobs require skills learned at college. We think, however, that if it were just a question of various job skills, it would be MUCH more efficient and cheaper for the ruling class to have on-the-job training. Even advanced theory is better learned in conjunction with practical work. The history of vocational trade schools sheds some light on today's universities. In 1881, Colonel Richard T. Archmuty, a prominent architect from a wealthy New York family, established the New York Trades School. This school made no attempt to provide for an education with any sort of "cultural" value; it offered short vocational courses aimed at specific skills (bricklaying, plumbing, etc). Archmuty promised employers that his students would work for lower wages, and that as a special side benefit, the graduates of his training school would be free from union control. J.P. Morgan subsidized him with a half million dollar grant. The AF of I

had union-run apprenticeship programs, and was incensed at Archmuty's school. At one point Archmuty even sent his students in to break up a local strike. Thus, vocational training, superficially devoid of political content, was historically the object of a very political struggle over which class would control it. Universities teach necessary job skills, sure; but its for purely ideological reasons that students are forced to get these job skills by attending universities full time with required courses in Sociology, Western Civ. Psychology etc., rather than getting these skills in union-run apprentice and on-the-job training programs. Socialist education would be on-the-job oriented, so as to eliminate the division between mental and manual labor. Universities as they exist today would not exist, because their present form is due to the bosses ideological needs, not to the need for job skills.

ANTI-COMMUNISM AND THE PARTY'S WORK IN NEW HAVEN

Two members of PL have been in New Haven, Conn. for the past ten months. Despite some success in starting SDS here and winning people to sell Challenge the work has been hurt by anti-communism. We think discussing anti-communism is beginning to help us correct our mistakes and is clarifying our understanding of what are our crucial tasks.

Anti-communism is an ideology developed by the ruling class to separate the working class movement from the ideas and leadership of communists. Through spreading the ideology of anti-communism, the rulers hope to contain the movement against them. Usually their strategy involves isolating and smashing communists first and then attacking the movement as a whole, once it has been deprived of communist leadership.

Anti-communism works to discredit the idea of revolution - of workers' control of state power - and to confine working class struggle to 'acceptable' (to the rulers) reforms. Anti-communism amounts to a defense of capitalism - 'you may not like things now but life would be much worse under communism'. Anti-communism is the rulers' main weapon when things look bad for them. It will destroy us and the movements we are building unless we constantly fight it.

The recent experience of PL in New Haven shows how anti-communism can grow out of the party's own work. No doubt about it - the ruling class maintains a constant barrage of anti-communist ideas. And these ideas are present in ourselves, our friends, in the mass movement. But the way we as communists carry out the line, the character of our relationships with our base - these determine whether anti-communism will be defeated or built.

The January 20th demonstration in Washington brought the party closer to a number of students and professionals. We met a group of about ten students who were interested in starting SDS at Yale. Of these ten, three or four were especially attracted to PL. As 'independent radicals' they liked our boldness about putting forward revolution, they liked the working-class orientation of

Challenge, and most of all the fact that we considered it possible to build a mass student movement. Two of these people began selling Challenge with us on campus. They gave some money to the party and started involving their friends in building SDS. Another guy, though he was unwilling to sell the paper (we never tried hard to convince him to) sold PL lit informally to his friends and became the main SDS organizer.

Four months later none of these people are close. The two who sell Challenge wouldn't come to May Day and the SDS conference. The SDS leader makes overt anti-PL digs and is working with a liberal/revisionist 'community newspaper'. What went wrong?

The two standard responses: anti-communism was too strong in these individuals to start with or the mass movement wasn't built don't apply here. SDS grew modestly at Yale and these people weren't especially anti-communist when we first met them. Ostensibly they disagreed with PL's line on the primacy of fighting racism ~~and~~ on campus, fighting racist ideology. But this line came out clearly in the Jan. 20th demo and in the lit that first attracted them.

The main problem was that the two of us in PL didn't agree with the line on racism ourselves. This same out a number of ways:

1) Putting forward the line in discussion with these friends in a dogmatic and abstract way. This in and of itself built anti-communism and obviously didn't win them.

2) Not developing a strategy for fighting racism on campus. We dragged our feet on researching racist profs. and tended to do all the research by ourselves. We presented opposing these racists to SDS meetings as just one more good thing we could do or we described the professors as bad guys who, among other things, were racist. In effect SDS's anti-racist emphasis was limited to the party inserting phrases in leaflets about marine recruiters and Wounded Knee.

3) We won no minority students to SDS. We let the existence of a largely foreign student Challenge Club and an easily-achieved MECHA/SDS alliance cover up our racism. Our friends met through political work at Yale were almost all white. Black students came to SDS meetings but we didn't go out of our way to get to know them. We also didn't make this an issue with the other SDSers at Yale.

Given the fact that we in PL didn't agree with the line on racism we couldn't build an anti-racist movement and the line began to appear like a dogmatic fetish to students around the party. The situation was exacerbated by general opportunism which resulted in our not setting up a study group for months even though several students sold Challenge with us and even though one guy wanted to join PL. This failure to set up a study group made our closest friends feel like we just wanted them to be SDSers, that we considered them somehow incapable of becoming communists, that we weren't interested in struggle over the line, and finally that we ourselves were just interested in building reform fights. Our relationship with these people became corrupt - we gave them directives about SDS work to be done, if they balked we used our friendship as a lever. They began to take less initiative figuring out how to build SDS. We sometimes applied a sectarian corrective of long discussions of abstract and minor parts of PL's line. As new people joined SDS, we spent less time with these initial friends.

Some conclusions which might apply to the party's work elsewhere:

1) Anti-communism thrives on opportunism and cynicism. To the extent that these outlooks are present in PL members, anti-communism will be tremendously increased in the party's base.

2) We should be honest and critical about our level of agreement with the line. There was plenty of struggle about the line on racism in our club. The two of us from New Haven always hedged in describing our practice. We didn't bring out the full extent of our disagreement until we were pushed. We made it impossible for the club to help us develop a strategy for SDS and a strategy for winning our friends to a strong anti-racist position. Carrying out a line reluctantly inevitably builds anti-communism.

3) Not having a concrete plan for recruitment turned our closest friends into enemies. Opportunism doesn't even work on its own terms - these people became incapable of even being good reform fighters. Our relationships become corrupt if we don't have a plan for advancing people to a higher level of agreement, understanding, and commitment.

Although my experiences are somewhat limited, what I have learned can be useful to others in building a base. I work for a small publishing company, about 150 employees, mostly middle class professionals. I was attempting to organize a union drive and develop relationships with the people I work with and bring them closer to the party's ideas. This began about a year and a half ago. This report will deal mainly with what I didn't do, since that is the most useful criticism I feel I can make about the work.

Getting the union drive started wasn't too difficult since there were a number of issues that concerned people - no health care, pay differentials, work loads, etc. Even raising communist ideas and winning the respect of the other workers was possible. Many people felt that signing up for the union was a good idea but most were not willing right off to jump in and become active and open organizers against the company. The steering committee, with the exception of one or two people, was a reactionary group whose intent was to keep the struggle from growing.

The extent of my basebuilding was a few lunches and dinners and the few social events the union organizing committee held. I had no real strategy to develop any relationships in a systematic way. Discussing why workers need unions and why communists are necessary is correct, but without a consistent plan to develop real friendships these ideas are meaningless. This means that I did not have a plan to get to know anyone (with the exception of one woman) outside of a few discussions. The question is why I was afraid to develop communist relationships? How does my attitude reflect a revisionist tendency? First, it suggests the feeling that people don't like communism, they don't want to be struggled with. Sure it's true that people don't like to be struggled with - most say you don't have the right, it's an individual decision to become involved or not, whatever the issue is. ~~These~~ Even when people agree that the issue is correct they sometimes say, yeah, but what's in it for me, or I really don't

think it's worth it, you can't win anyway so why bother. At first, most people respond this way to fighting back. I was politely told to bug off and stop pressuring people into doing things they just didn't want to do. It's true that you can't force people, but what evidence was there that people didn't want to do anything? I think I was mainly concerned with what the right was doing and not seeing the real potential for developing the struggle by making a serious effort to know the people outside of the committee and having a plan to do it. This is a result of my own subjectivity and cynacism because of various attacks from the committee. (One time it was for writing a C-D article, another was a meeting^{held} to "expel" me while I was out of town.) Instead of remaining active and working with people outside of the committee, I did practically nothing which severely hurt the struggle. Because I wasn't recruiting others to the union or raising militant trade union politics, no one else was. To say I wasn't building the party in any way is obvious. My outlook was totally subjective, having nothing to do with the real situation which was potentially very good. On the other hand, where I did have a plan, like the one with a woman who was fired, there were results. We became good friends as a result of a whole lot of struggle and I was able to involve her in various party activities. Now she's in a c-d club.

My concentrating on the anti-communist elements was an irresponsible action toward the other employees and hurt the union drive. Not building a base and developing a center to counter these attacks was a result of my own anti-communism and subjectivity. Communist ideas become meaningful to those we're trying to win when we ~~have a plan to~~ really get to know what's on their minds and develop a plan to do it. Winning their respect as communists is ~~enough~~ not enough-building a real friendship produces a good situation for struggle, and understanding what building a mass party and a revolution is all about.

Sherry Gutner

In evaluating my work since joining the party, one weakness that is particularly glaring is my organizing in the classroom. Recently there has been a great deal of struggle in the student section about the need to do serious political work in classes, but despite this many of us haven't done very much there. I realize that many campuses don't have mass movements at present, and that standing in the middle of the campus leafletting won't win anyone to doing much, still my classroom work didn't reflect this type of understanding.

One problem that held me back in my work was lack of preparation. It's important to think about how what you say and do in a class relates to the party's strategy. I saw the need to put forward the party's line on racism in class, but I applied the line in a very mechanical way. In base building and organizing outside the classroom this was not a problem, which reflects the attitude I had about class room work: ie it's secondary in importance. Furthermore, most of the work I did was mass. I spoke in the class quite often, sold Challenge fairly regularly and sometimes F. L. That aspect was good because mass work is important, but my lack of individual work meant I didn't build much of a base. In looking back on it, this was a clear cut case of revisionism. The first thing on our minds should be to build the party, and to build the party properly we must use both mass and individual methods. I was won to the party because a comrade struggled with me day by day, and by not doing the same with students in my class, I was clearly not building the party. In any political work we do we can gauge how good it is by what kind of a base we are building. If we are not building one then something is wrong.

This view of classroom work (that it is secondary in importance) is probably a mistake that many of us are making. But if we are going

to build a mass movement against racism among students it is going to start in the classroom. We have to see our class room work as key, and failure to build the party and the movement in class is revisionist, because it means we are hiding our politics in the place where most students are. If the classroom is where we are taught racist, anti working class and anti communist ideas, and we don't oppose them in class then we are aiding the ruling class and cutting our throats.

How Revisionism hurts us

Because I didn't build a solid base in the class, I soon became isolated. Often the prof and I would argue for five to ten minutes and no one else would join in. I soon noticed how isolated I was, but instead of looking for flaws in my work, I blamed the apathy of students. Later developments at B. U. showed how ^{so} wrong this is. Wherever we struggled for anti-racist ideas we won people to them. By not having individual struggle I drove people away, because they couldn't understand how important fighting racism is, just by what I said in class. To them I was a left wing nut who liked to talk. When I corrected this sectarianism by forming a group to present a class, ^{as} most of the students in the group became more friendly to our ideas, and some even fought for them. Having other students fight for anti racist ideas is important, because there are many points to be answered in class, and if I had tried to answer them all it would have the utmost in sectarianism. As Communists we are trying to work our way out of a job, and that means struggling with people to put the party line in practice. When we don't struggle, we aren't relying on the masses, and when we don't move people left the ruling class moves them right. My non struggle attitude in class was clearly a move to the right, which has been seen in the party in general.

It is fact, whenever we don't struggle we lose. It was obvious to me that I didn't really win any students to fighting racism, and I did see some students move more to the right.

As we got further into the year it became harder to sell Challenge in class. This is because I was becoming so isolated that by not building the party at an individual level, I even hurt my mass work. When I did organize a group in the class, sales picked up a little. In many ways I felt I was doing alright if I sold C-D, but C-D can only do so much by itself. I was mistaken not to follow up each and every person who bought a C-D and try to win them to a challenge club, or at least a class study group. Many students are middle class and need to be struggled with over C-D. They need a fuller analysis than C-D can give. P. L.'s are very useful in class and I should have tried to sell more. The students in the study group read the Eugenics article in the last P. L. and it gave them a much more class conscious approach to fighting racism rather than the missionary one they had held earlier. However, had I built this group earlier in the semester, then I could have won some students fairly close to the party, and our ideas would have been fought for by more people.

The mistakes I made were a combination of inexperience and revisionism. As a party we have to move quickly to stop the right trend we are now in and to learn from and correct our mistakes. We can win students to fighting racist ideology. Despite the errors I made in class room work, so e people did see the need to fight racism. In general at B. U. we found that with struggle we can build a movement against racism, but to insure the movement is built and that we lead it, we must see the class room as the key organizing place.

Alb Clavel

THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION

I'd like to summarize some insights gained from reading The Cultural Revolution in China, by Joan Roginson (Penguin Books, 1969). The book confirms some of the main points of RR III:

(I) The Cultural Revolution was a tremendous upsurge of workers and students against revisionism, involving stoppages in production, seizing of buildings, and many violent confrontations. Large groups involved saw fault in most of the political leadership of China.

(II) The GPCR was justified by many concrete manifestations of capitalist ideas and concessions to capitalism made by the CCP.

(III) The main internal force which diffused the GPCR and destroyed the Left forces was the leadership of the CCP, which (among other things) created or supported front groups which pushed pacifism, liberalism, and idolatry of Mao Tse-Tung.

Robinson herself is grossly pro-Mao and follows the line of the CCP Central Committee, but this often makes her observations and choice of internal documents grossly revealing. As she says in the Introduction, "The documents here give us far more insight into what was involved than can any analysis by an external observer." Obviously, none of them were written by the proletariat or its friends.

All the internal Chinese documents cited in the book were written during 1967, most of them during the "January Storm in Shanghai," part of the militant surge in the GPCR known as the January Revolutionary Storm. They were published in that City.

The documents seem to have had two main jobs: to confuse people about the role of the Left in the Cultural Revolution, and to make threats against the Left forces. The carry out the first of these two jobs, the various Right-led organizations made great use of the Mao cult. A typical beginning is "We, fighters of the revolutionary rebel organizations in Shanghai, loyal to you forever, extend our loftiest salute in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution to you, our great teacher, great leader, great supreme commander, and great helmsman, and the red sun that shines most brilliantly in our hearts." With his greatness established, they then quote Mao's call for "taking firm hold of the revolution and promoting production." This is also the 14th point of the Central Committee's 16 Points for carrying out the Cultural Revolution. It is then explained that although this slogan of "taking firm hold of production" was originally advanced by the bourgeois reactionaries to impede the GPCR, these same reactionaries were now using disruption of production to undermine the struggle (!):

"... large numbers of members of the Workers' Red Militia Detachments ... undermine production and sabotage transport and communications

under the pretext of going north to lodge complaints... (p. 98, 'The Shanghai Workers Revolutionary General Headquarters').

No doubt the Red Militia members were planning to politically "Bombard the Headquarters". But this and all other militant forms of struggle, including the mass movement of Red Guards to all parts of the country, were branded as plots hatched by enemies of the revolution or 'anarchists':

"Colluding with the capitalist forces in society, they are making use of problems concerning economic benefits to divert the general orientation of the struggle and to incite one group of people against another, causing breakdowns in factory production and railway and road traffic. They have even incited dockers to stop work, causing difficulties in running the port and damaging the international prestige of China (note: all kinds of imperialist ships were in the harbor). They are freely squandering the wealth of the state, arbitrarily increasing wages and material benefits, and granting all kinds of allowances and subsidies without limit, stirring people up to take over public buildings by force..."

People might have been terribly confused by this bullshit (maybe you are now). But for those who weren't confused, the Right-led organizations made things clearer still:

"No one is allowed to seize public buildings by force. After investigation, offenders shall be punished by the Public Security Bureau..."

"Those who opposed Chairman Mao, Vice-Chairman Lin Piao, the Cultural Revolution Group under the Party's Central Committee, and those who undermine the great Cultural Revolution or sabotage production, shall be immediately arrested by the Public Security Bureau in accordance with the law. Those who in the course of the movement undermine social order..., etc. (p. 104, by The Shanghai Workers' Revolutionary Rebel General Headquarters)".

In the Postscript, Lin Piao and Mao are quoted as they complain about this "anarchism", "lack of discipline", and the attacks on Chairman Mao, the People's Liberation Army, and the "revolutionary committees" set up by Mao. Mao's solution? "Party committees at every level must discuss this matter again and again and work earnestly to overcome such indiscipline and anarchy so that all the powers that can and must be centralized will be concentrated in the hands of the Central Committee and its agencies (p. 149)."

I'm not saying that the Dictatorship of the Proletariat doesn't need a centralized state apparatus and a strong Party in leadership. With others, I disagree with the implications of one article in Bulletin No. 7 (p. 39) that any party of any socialist state should be prepared to be swept from power by a Cultural Revolution. But in the case of China, the apparatus wasn't protecting the proletariat.

The Reports and Conversations section of Robinson's book (pp. 124-146), based on her travels in China, inadvertently demonstrates not only the extent

to which capitalist tendencies gripped China, but the extent to which the CCP leadership was part and parcel of this revisionism, and defended it until forced to "go along" with the GPCR. In one example, a sweet factory in Changai, Robinson describes the factory boss and management "before" the GPCR:

"...The capitalist...under the state-private system got his 5 per cent amounting to 360 yuan per month... (a small factory)

"...The former Director of the factory made serious mistakes. He was slack in his Party work and let in untrustworthy ex-bourgeois characters. He believed in co-existence with the old capitalist and allowed him to run the supply department of the factory. He was accused also of putting "feudal" designs of dragons and fairies, on the wrapping paper of the sweets. ~~... xxfxbagxmscanf~~"

"In management, he followed 'revisionist' policies. He did not take the workers into his confidence. He told them to trust the capitalist and built up his authority. He told the workers that without the capitalist they could not produce sweets, though in fact they had improved the quality of their products since the factory had been taken over.

"He did not put politics first, but, following the Liu-Teng line (Teng was a buddy of Liu Shao Ch'i), subordinated the workers to the technicians, and set up profits as the criterion of success; also he made use of a system of incentive wages. He came from a bourgeois family and lived in a bourgeois style. He had close relations with capitalists -- dined with them and exchanged gifts." (p. 131-2)"

This reminds me of the examples which Peking gave about corruption in Soviet revisionist factories, in a book published in 1968 entitled "How the Soviet Revisionists Carry Out All-Round Restoration of Capitalism in the USSR."

The heavy thing is when Robinson describes how "work teams" of cadre were sent in by the local Party headquarters to intimidate, diffuse, and attack the rebellious workers who criticized such corruption -- before Mao cautioned the cadre to "support" the rebellions. In one factory she describes how three successive teams were sent in to quiet things down (p. 126-7), and this pattern is repeated in the other examples given of factories and schools. After Mao called for "support" for the rebels, the work-teams seem to have had as their main job eliminating the Left factions and submerging all political differences in a Right-led united front: "We took his (Mao's) statement that 'there can be no cause for conflict within the working class.' As a result, we succeeded in getting rid of these differences. (p. 136)"

In closing, here are some choice quotes from the Introduction, also based on Robinson's travels and conversations (obviously mostly with officials):

"Special mention is made of the need to protect scientists and technicians whom though bourgeois, have contributed to national development." p. 15

"The movement, however, was still bubbling up from below, with little control from above," and "the limits set by the 16 Points... were often surpassed." p. 19

"Throughout the movement, the influence of Chairman Mao was strongly opposed to violence and disorder." p. 21

"During the worst period, July and August, Chairman Mao was not in Peking -- he was visiting places where violence had broken out." p. 67

"No suggestion was allowed of an attack on the Party as such." p. 22

"When production or transport were disorganized, army units came in to get it going..." p. 22

"There were some posters even against Chou En-Lai..." p. 25

Reading this causes me to fear more strongly the revisionist tendencies -- liberalism, self-indulgence, sexism -- that I feel within myself as a communist. The discussion of the precise role of the Party under socialism, and how we're going to avoid the mistakes of our predecessors before the after the fall of U. S. imperialism, should be constant.

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