

Build A Class Party; Build A Mass Struggle!

A year has passed since the Tribune published the article, "Build a **Class Party**, Build a **Mass Struggle**". That original article was written to indicate to the class and to the Communist League the general path of the U.S. revolution and to make a marked distinction between us and the scores of **middle class** adventurers that populate the left in the United States.

The propositions contained in that article a year ago are still true and will be true for so long as capitalism is being fought in the United States and the world.

First of all, we want to re-assert our position as **revolutionaries**. We are **revolutionaries** because we are convinced that the capitalist system cannot bring the people anything but war, depression, unemployment and moral degeneration. The Negro people, the Puerto Ricans, the Mexican-Americans and the Indians are facing a new wave of lynch violence that is being prepared to drive them back into the semi-slavery they have been fighting against. The poor on welfare are being attacked with the idea of starving them into sweat shop low paying jobs--making them become a real reserve army of the unemployed that can be used to attack the militant workers and drive down the wages. The working class is being attacked with all sorts of laws, amendments, injunctions and union busting procedures that will leave them defenseless before the attack of the capitalists. As Lenin said, "Imperialism is reaction down the line". When a system cannot provide the people with work, leaves millions hungry, ill housed and ill clothed, it need be done away with. The capitalist system must go in order to liberate the people and lay the basis for the happiness of humanity. History has shown that there is no possibility of voting or talking our way into a better life. Our class, the working class, must seize the power of the state. They must take for themselves all the things that are necessary for life and happiness. The mines, factories, mills and farmland can and must be used for the people and not for the benefit of a few. All this requires a revolution. Therefore, we are revolutionaries and not just liberals or progressives who believe that something should be done to help the people.

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, the great teachers of the working class, used scientific analysis to prove that revolution is not only necessary but inevitable. The profound scientific teachings of these great revolutionaries raised

the hopes and dreams to the level of science, and gave mankind the weapon necessary to liberate himself. Therefore we are Marxist revolutionaries.

In 1917, the Russian workers overthrew the capitalist system. Faced with the unending slaughter of World War I, starving and brutalized by the Tzarist dictatorship, the Russian people rose up and seized for themselves the vast country we now know as the Soviet Union. The Russian workers were led by Lenin, who applied the teachings of Marx to the practical problems of the revolution. Lenin developed Marxism into a series of tactical and strategic maneuvers and assaults that brought the first workers and farmers state into being. **Leninism is Marxism in the period of imperialist wars and proletarian revolutions.** Therefore, we are not simply Marxists, but Marxist-Leninists. We stand on, use and develop a scientific revolutionary movement that is 150 years old. We utilize all this experience and knowledge in our struggle to overthrow this social system and its property relations. Understanding and using these scientific tactics and strategies means starting with reality, with the struggle as it exists, and not with hopes and dreams.

We are living in a period of maturing social consciousness of the masses. People are beginning to see and act on the obvious division of the country between rich and poor. Most of the struggles in the country today are based on this simple understanding that the rich get rich because the poor are poor. This elementary understanding accounts for the growth of Populist sentiment in the left wing.

However, the people must, and are beginning to pass through this stage of social consciousness into something infinitely higher, that is class consciousness. It is only from the launching pad of class consciousness that a revolution can develop. Therefore, it is very important that we study and understand the content as well as the form that the daily struggle takes. Only in this way can we constantly raise the political level of the struggle.

In the struggle against imperialist war, against increasing exploitation and oppression, the mass movement is steadily growing in militancy. The colonial world is striking blow after blow at the imperialists. The wars in Asia, Africa and Latin America are cutting deeply into the political stability and the economic reserves of the imperialists. They are and will attempt to take up the slack by tightening

the screws on the U.S. workers.

As the capitalists intensify the exploitation here at home, the workers are going to fight back. That fight back today, has to take the form of social consciousness - of a Populist sort of struggle. The reason for this is that the workers cannot develop class consciousness by themselves. They have to be taught this form of consciousness. This is the task and role of the communist parties.

In this country there is no communist party worthy of the name. There is no conscious vanguard of the workers in a period of militancy and rebellions. The only possible result is disorganized, unplanned, spontaneous struggles. The only road open to the masses is the road of heroic but unorganized mass uprisings and brave but individualistic armed resistance to the police and fascist gangs.

How are we to approach this situation where the capitalists are launching an offensive and the masses of the people are fighting back without an organized leadership, that is to say the masses are fighting **defensively**. In the Communist League, we believe that it is our duty to take all the necessary steps to change this spontaneous defensive fighting into organized offensive revolutionary struggles as soon as possible.

We note that there are two equally bad tendencies in the left today as regards the spontaneous struggles. On the one hand, there is the trend that stands completely aside from the fight. These so called radicals analyze the fight with the most profound terminology. They cheer the fighters onward and at the end of the struggle they again begin the "lets you and him fight" kind of agitation. On the other hand there are those who at the drop of the hat, rush into the street, get in the fight on the same political level as the masses and, at the end of the struggle strut around bragging about their role in fighting the cops, if they're not in jail or dead.

We reject both these tendencies. Basically they are both **reformist tendencies**—those who talked and refused to fight, as well as those who fought and refused to think. We want to put Lenin's teaching into living practice. The teaching that effects us the most today is the statement that the working class without its vanguard party, is like an army without its general staff.

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Build A Class Party



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However, no revolutionary organizations can become the vanguard of the proletariat, or become that necessary general staff simply by stating it. The role of conscious leaders has to be earned in the spontaneous struggle. We do not advocate either the right or the left tendency, but, we do see that the struggle as it exists in its spontaneous form is the only possible starting point. The imperialists understand better than we do that the struggle develops leaders and they go all out to co-opt these rising leaders and use them against the people. We believe that we have to struggle for these rising leaders and organize them into a political party that is based on the Marxist-Leninist science of revolution. The relationship between leaders and the masses is a very important one. There can be no leaders unless they are able to sum up and express the will of the masses, neither can there be a successful mass struggle unless there are trained and experienced leaders that have arisen from the masses themselves. Therefore, in our stage of growth, we have to take a most serious approach to the spontaneous mass movement.

The Communist League fully supports the mass uprisings against the attacks of the fascist police. Although these uprisings are defensive spontaneous fighting, they indicate the beginnings of real consciousness amongst the masses. But that consciousness cannot grow from itself. Revolutionaries have to be part of those fights--not just another soldier in the trench, but by using our limited numbers to convince the masses what they are fighting and how they must fight to win.

In the United States, this, in the beginning at least, is

going to be a slow process. This process is going to demand a real bolshevik patience and this unglamorous period is going to separate the solid revolutionaries from the petty-bourgeois adventurers. This slow detailed work will organize the individual resistance into mass struggles and will transform spontaneous struggle into revolution. We know that there can be no revolution unless the masses are conscious of the whats and whys of the struggle. That is why Marx said, "Theory becomes a material force once it is gripped by the masses."

In our approach to the spontaneous struggle, we have to start with present conditions. The fact that conditions all other facts is that the masses of the people in the United States are in the early stages of a massive revolution without a revolutionary Party--without a class conscious proletariat and, without a general staff.

The Communist Party of the USA is a revisionist rotten bunch that has become an adjunct of the State Department. The upper strata of the labor leaders are perfect examples of "labor lieutenants" of the capitalists. Actually, the conditions are such that the so called "leadership" of the working class is almost entirely counter-revolutionary.

The elements that are conscious are small, scattered and disunited. In varying degrees, almost all of them are caught up in the subjectivism that leads to anarcho-syndicalism. Anarcho-syndicalists don't see revolution as the act of an entire class overthrowing another class. They don't see the need for the class as a whole to strike out against the bourgeois state. They see revolution as an individualistic occurrence where "everyone does their own thing!" The workers will overthrow the bosses, the students will take care of the universities etc. And, most importantly, they deny the need for a strong workers state, a dictatorship of the working class. Being idealists they push the line of "no state".

Because of these conditions and subjectivity, the League feels that we must re-state the essentials of the Marxist-Leninist theory and experience on revolution.

Most basic and fundamental to the art of insurrection are these words of Lenin, "To be successful, insurrection must rely not upon a conspiracy and not upon a party, but upon the advanced class. That is the first point. Insurrection must rely upon a revolutionary upsurge of the people, that is the second point. Insurrection must rely upon such a crucial moment in the history of the growing revolution when the ac-

tivity of the advanced ranks of the people is at its height and when the vacillations in the ranks of the enemy and in the ranks of the weak, half-hearted and irresolute friends of the revolution are strongest. That is the third point. And these three conditions for raising the question of insurrection distinguish Marxism from Blanquism." (Marxism and Insurrection)

Let us take a second look at Lenin's words. First of all an insurrection is an aspect of a revolution. A revolution is a mass upheaval wherein one class overthrows another class. An insurrection is the act by a political group of seizing state power.

It appears that every grouping on the left has some sort of romantic notion that they can pull off an insurrection apart from the general revolutionary upsurge of the masses. But that general upsurge is dependent on the political understanding and organization of the masses. Herein lies the wisdom of Mao's teaching that the leaflet precedes the rifle. Only the middle-class do-gooders become weary in the struggle to politically educate the people. The misguided ones, the lazy and the adventurers look down on the backwardness and ignorance of the masses and finally say that the people cannot make revolution and therefore they decide to skip that essential phase, and attempt an insurrection. But, they don't have the power to do that either, so they satisfy themselves with dreams and planting dynamite, that has so far killed more workers than capitalists. We rely on the advanced class--the working class. If it takes the next five years to organize and educate that class, then we will take five years; if it takes the next fifty years, then we will remain Marxist-Leninists and struggle for the next fifty years. There is only one way, one path--the path of Lenin. We have had enough experience in the past fifty years to know that the petty bourgeois "short cuts" only add more years and more suffering to the struggle.

Making plans for an insurrection isn't enough, because an insurrection is the crowning, so to speak, of a revolution. It is not a palace coup where personalities are changed, it is part of a revolution where classes are changed. An insurrection has to ride the crest of a revolution.

Lenin speaks of developing that insurrection at the "crucial moment in the history of the growing revolution when the activity of the advanced ranks of the people is at its height, and when the vacillations in the ranks of the ene-

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my and in the ranks of the weak, halfhearted and irresolute friends of the revolution are strongest."

In no way does that mean that the revolutionaries should sit back and wait until somehow or other there appears a crack in the solidarity of the ruling class. It is stupid to speak today of revolution without speaking in terms of going **to the class with leaflets and building study circles and above all developing a press that is taken to the hearts of the working class.**

Revolutionaries must take part in the political life of the nation in an independent way, that is to say, independent of the bourgeoisie. The revolutionaries have to help develop that revolutionary situation. Lenin says: "The fundamental law of revolution, which has been confirmed by all revolutions, and particularly by all three Russian revolutions in the twentieth century, consists in the following: it is not enough for revolution that the exploited and oppressed masses should understand the impossibility of living in the old way and demand changes; for revolution it is necessary that the exploiters should not be able to live and rule in the old way. Only when the 'lower classes' do not want the old way, and when the 'upper classes' cannot carry on in the old way--only then can revolution triumph. This truth may be expressed in other words: Revolution is impossible without a nation-wide crisis (affecting both the exploited and the exploiters). It follows that for revolution it is essential, first, that a majority of the workers (or at least a majority of the class conscious, thinking, politically active workers) should fully understand the necessity for revolution and be ready to sacrifice their lives for it; secondly, that the ruling classes should be passing through a governmental crisis which would draw even the most backward masses into politics...weaken the government and make it possible

for the revolutionaries to overthrow it rapidly." (Foundations of Leninism, page 45)

A good part of the objective conditions for revolution are already present in the USA--the vast and deep uprisings of the black and Negro workers, the prolonged strike waves, and the deep social antagonisms developed from the war prove that this is true. What is missing in the USA is the indispensable ingredient of the subjective factor. No matter how severe the suffering of the masses, no matter how broad the uprisings or the protests--**revolution is impossible without the subjective factor being present.** That subjective factor is class consciousness. It is the ideological backwardness, the lack of independent activity on the part of the masses that is the drag on the revolution. It is here that the battle has to be fought today. Our principle weapons of the day are the leaflet, the soap box, the study circle and the press.

What the Marxist-Leninist left needs today is experience, to perfect and deeply understand the Marxist-Leninist theory and ideology that we have so agonizingly won from the revisionists. That means that in our practical work we should attempt only what is possible to complete. It means elevating our political, tactical and organizational know-how. The only path open to us in this difficult period and in the more difficult period ahead is the path of advance and retreat in order to advance again. The entire left must make a combat-type estimate of the relationship of forces. We must understand where we are, what we have to work with and then move forward. Engels said, "The time of surprise attacks, of revolutions carried through by small conscious minorities at the head of unconscious masses, is past. Where it is a question of a complete transformation of the social organization, the masses themselves must also be in it, must themselves already have grasped what is at stake, what they are going in for (body

and soul). The history of the last fifty years has taught us that. But in order that the masses may understand what is to be done, long persistent work is required, and it is just this work which we are now pursuing, and with a success which drives the enemy to despair." (Introduction to The Class Struggles in France.)

American history has placed the question very concretely to the revolutionaries. That question is, how do you take advantage of the objective situation to move the masses forward? The people are resisting the increasingly fascist policies of the government. The state is becoming more and more locked in struggle with the Anglo-American working class, the national minorities and the Negro and Puerto Rican nations. These oppressed classes and nations are very brave and very hard fighting, they are very militant. But the masses and the revolutionaries are hamstrung by the attitude of individualism that arises with and is an ideology of the capitalist class. If it were possible at this time to organize the individual acts of resistance that occur in one day in the USA you would have a real revolutionary upsurge. But capitalist propaganda, and the propaganda of its adjunct, the Communist Party USA, praises and urges on the attitude "You can't do that to me". We have to substitute the more scientific and sweeping concept "You can't do that to us."

The Communist League does not believe that individual acts against the system contribute to its downfall when these acts are out of relationship with and in contradiction to the general level of the struggle. However, we understand that the real weakness does not lie in individual spontaneous action. The real weakness lies in the fact that there is no Communist Party to systematize these actions. It is obvious that a thousand individual acts become a mass act once they are organized.

In the United States we are at the end of the period where spontaneous acts are going to contribute to the revolution. The crying historical need today is for a Communist Party that is based on Marxism-Leninism and has the proper ties with the masses.

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Fascist police attack demonstration. Workers angry over war. Waiting for food stamps in St. Louis.

"A good part of the objective conditions for revolution are already present in the USA--"

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The starting point is the masses. Mao's teaching, "from the masses, to the masses" must be our rule today. That implies however, that we get deep into the masses and start the process by learning from them. That does not mean from the individual toilers, but from the mass experience. Lenin teaches us: "Let us begin from the beginning. What are the fundamental demands which every Marxist should make of an examination of the question of the forms of struggle? In the first place, Marxism differs from all primitive forms of socialism by the fact that it does not bind the movement to any one particular form of struggle. It admits the most varied forms of struggle; and it does not "concoct" them, but only generalizes, organizes, gives conscious expression to those forms of struggle of the revolutionary classes which arise of themselves in the course of the movement. Absolutely hostile to all abstract formulas and to all doctrinaire recipes, Marxism demands an attentive attitude to the mass struggle in progress, which, as the movement develops, as the class consciousness of the masses grows, as economic and political crises become acute, continually gives rise to new and more varied methods of defence and offence. Marxism, therefore, positively does not reject any form of struggle. Under no circumstance does Marxism confine itself to the forms of struggle that are possible and that exist at the given moment only, recognizing as it does that new forms of struggle, unknown to the participants of the given period, inevitably arise as the given social situation changes. In this respect, Marxism learns, if we may so express it, from mass practice, and makes no claim whatever to teach the masses forms of struggle invented by "systematizers" in the seclusion of their studies." (from Partisan Warfare)

We are clearly approaching a period of extreme difficulties. The increasing oppression points to another "long hot summer". The people are going into another period of struggle without a General Staff that is capable of organizing all the protests into one onslaught. It is obvious that the state will welcome another Watts or Detroit under the existing conditions, because it will provide them with all the excuse necessary to expand or even complete the drive for fascism. While we call upon the comrades and the whole left to be aggressive and militant in the struggle, we have to warn against becoming subjective. What we can and cannot do depends on more than our subjective wishes; it also depends on the objective conditions. Lenin wrote, "We now have wide experience in revolution, and this experience has taught us that we must employ tactics of relentless assault when the objective conditions permit it, when experience of

POLLUTION- (cont. from p.8)

The only "advances" the U.S. imperialists have made in solving the pollution problem is to "create" fancy new gases that cost them cheaper to make but are sold at higher prices. The imperialists have jumped onto the ecology band wagon--only to trick the U.S. working class. They will never change or do anything that would take money out of their pockets. They try to trick us by blaming pollution on the people and overpopulation. This is a bunch of jive! Does the working class sell insecticides that poison crops? Does the working class poison the water and pollute the lakes and oceans with industrial wastes? No! The imperialists



compromise has shown that the masses are indignant and that an assault will be an expression of this change of mind. But we have to resort to waiting tactics, to a slow mustering of forces, when the objective conditions make it impossible to call for a general and ruthless counter-assault. (from Collected Works, XXIII)

Before our friends on the Left begin again to scream about revolution, let them study the teaching of Karl Marx and see if our capabilities add up to the demands. Marx wrote:

"Now, insurrection is an art quite as much as war or any other, and subject to certain rules of proceeding, which, when neglected, will produce the ruin of the party neglecting them. Those rules, logical deductions from the nature of the parties and the circumstances one has to deal with in such a case, are so plain and simple that the short experience of 1848 has made the Germans pretty well acquainted with them. Firstly, never play with insurrection, unless you are fully prepared to face the consequences of your play. Insurrection is a calculus with very indefinite magnitudes, the value of which may change every day; the forces opposed to you have all the advantage of organization, discipline and habitual authority; unless you bring strong odds against them you are defeated and ruined. Secondly, the insurrectionary career once entered upon, act with the greatest determination, and on the offensive. The defensive is the death of every armed rising; it is lost before it measures itself with its enemies. Surprise your antagonists while

are just trying to shift the blame for pollution onto the workers so that the pollution problem does not become an anti-imperialist issue.

The imperialists will only come up with solutions that will make them more money while at the same time they will continue to dump their garbage throughout the world. This class of imperialists are filthy dirty slimes who will stop at nothing to make profits. And if they are not stopped they will destroy this whole planet! It is up to the working class to rid the earth of these monsters, to smash the profit system and take the power of the government into their own hands and make the world livable for the people of the world!

their forces are scattering, prepare new successes, however small, but daily; keep up the moral ascendant which the first successful rising has given to you; rally thus those vacillating elements to your side which always follow the strongest impulse and which always look out for the safer side; force your enemies to a retreat before they can collect their strength against you; in the words of Danton, the greatest master of revolutionary policy yet known, Audacity, audacity, and again, audacity!" (from Germany: Revolution and Counter-Revolution)

Let us sum up. Our country sorely needs and is entering into a new revolutionary phase of its development. But that revolution cannot really move forward until tens of millions of people believe in and are committed to that cause. The winning over of these millions is the principle task of the revolutionaries today. In order to accomplish this task a Marxist-Leninist Communist Party is indispensable. It is from this point of view that we call on the radicals and revolutionaries throughout the country to labor against the subjectivity and individualism that prevents the formation of a national proletarian party. Each of us--individually and organizationally is going to have to answer to history why this task was or was not accomplished in time. We have the objective conditions in our favor. In the treasury of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought, we have all the subjective weapons.

History has said, "You must." Let us reply, "We can."