

Hail the 7th Anniversary of the Founding of the American Communist Workers Movement (Marxist-Leninist)!

May 12, 1976, marks the 7th anniversary of the founding of the American Communist Workers Movement (Marxist-Leninist), the first national center for the dissemination of Mao Tsetung Thought in the U. S. and a predecessor of the Central Organization of U. S. Marxist-Leninists. The ACWM(M-L) was founded at the call of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and marked a decisive new stage in the struggle of the American Marxist-Leninists to build anew a genuine Communist Party of the American proletariat based on Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. With revolutionary boldness and daring, the small number of comrades of the Cleveland Workers' Action Committee decided to shoulder the decisive tasks of the American revolution on a national scale, take up the banner of the Internationalists in fighting shoulder-to-shoulder with the comrades who were to form such glorious fraternal parties as the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist), the Communist Party of England (Marxist-Leninist) and the Communist Party of Ireland (Marxist-Leninist) and come under the discipline of the international communist movement led by Chairman Mao and Comrade Enver Hoxha.

In 1969 when the ACWM(M-L) was formed there was a situation of great revolutionary tumult. There were surging mass movements and, simultaneously there was great confusion on fundamental questions of orientation. Everyone was asking what path the revolutionary activists should take. The revisionist "Communist" Party of the U. S. had long since been destroyed from within by revisionism; it had become an out-and-out agent of Soviet social-imperialism while it collaborated with the U. S. monopoly-capitalist class in suppressing the people's movements. The Progressive Labor Party (founded in 1962 as the Progressive Labor Movement) was the first national anti-revisionist center. But it reached a point where it stopped fighting revisionism and instead adopted the entire method and style of work of the revisionists, only hidden under "left" phrases. Far from giving guidance to the masses, the PLP failed to give concrete analysis of concrete conditions, set itself in opposition to the mass movements, attacked the national liberation struggles including that of the Vietnamese people, attacked the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and Mao Tsetung Thought and degenerated into the trotskyite sect it is today. "New Leftism", the illegitimate off-spring of social-democracy, was rotting alive and decomposing rapidly. Without Marxist-Leninist leadership the revolutionary mass movements had been left rudderless, prey to bourgeois ideology and misdirected.

In this situation, it was Mao Tsetung Thought that showed the path forward. In 1966 the Great Proletarian Revolution, personally initiated and led by Chairman Mao, had burst upon the world like a clap of spring thunder. Around the world a great impetus was given to the international communist movement and anti-revisionist centers and Marxist-Leninist parties were set up in a number of countries. In the U. S. many revolutionary activists summed up the lessons of the struggle and decided that only Mao Tsetung Thought showed the path forward. But this only took place in the course of a bitter struggle against opportunism. All sorts of "alternatives" to Mao Tsetung Thought were put forward. Anarchism and terrorism had their supporters. The "independent" radicals, who berate the Marxist-Leninists as "Frankies of China", put forward their "independent" ideology, which turned out to be Castroism (Guevara-ism, Debrajism). Castro, by this time an abject puppet of Soviet social-imperialism who had even approved the invasion of Czechoslovakia and had covered up the revisionist parties' role in the murder of Che

Guevara, was just the militant-sounding front man needed by Soviet revisionism for opposition to Marxism-Leninism. At the same time, certain leaders from the youth and student movement, who had made serious errors in the '60's, preferred to adapt Marxism-Leninism to New Leftism, and continued to promote old wine in a new bottle. It was this adaptation of Marxism-Leninism to New Leftism that gave birth to neo-revisionism, a form of revisionism that accepted Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought in words only, while in practice counterposing building the Party against building the mass movements, remaining passive and rather silent about the important documents of Mao Tsetung Thought, refusing to regard oneself as part of the international communist movement led by Chairman Mao and Comrade Enver Hoxha, and adopting a vulgar "left economist" approach to the masses that negates the role of consciousness among the masses.

The ACWM(M-L) was founded on the basis of taking up the decisive tasks facing the American revolution on a nation-wide basis. At a time when the questions of fundamental orientation for the revolutionary movement were under debate, the wide-scale dissemination of Mao Tsetung Thought was essential. At a time when the revisionist "Communist" Party had betrayed the proletariat, the ACWM(M-L) advocated building the party. To be in the thick of struggle in the late '60's and early '70's, to be part of the working class, meant to take a stand that the Marxist-Leninists must right from the start work to build anew a genuine Communist Party in the U. S., and must adopt Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought as the theoretical foundations of that Party. The ACWM(M-L) resolutely stood in the thick of struggle. There were other groups that advocated Marxism-Leninism in a general sense. There were even groups that had some contact with and agreed with the Internationalists and supported Chairman Mao and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. But of all these, only the ACWM(M-L) was ready to sacrifice everything and, with faith in the masses and faith in Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought, concentrate on the crucial national tasks. ACWM(M-L) followed Chairman Mao's revolutionary guideline: "'Grasp firmly'. That is to say, the Party committee must not merely 'grasp', but 'grasp firmly', its main tasks. One can get a grip on something only when it is grasped firmly, without the slightest slackening. Not to grasp firmly is not to grasp at all. Naturally, one cannot get a grip on something with an open hand. When the hand is clenched as if grasping something but is not clenched tightly, there is still no grip. Some of our comrades do grasp the main tasks, but their grasp is not firm and so they cannot make a success of their work. It will not do to have no grasp at all, nor will it do if the grasp is not firm." For this reason ACWM(M-L) grew rapidly from the comrades of the former Cleveland Workers' Action Committee to a national organization in a number of cities, and united around itself all the other groups of American Internationalists. Meanwhile the "wise old men" of opportunism attacked the dissemination of Mao Tsetung Thought, communist propaganda, as "ultra-left" and "turning off the masses". They sneered that the ACWM(M-L) was just a bunch of "Cleveland Crazy's". Of course revolution always seems insane, crazy, unreasonable and downright impolite to the representatives of the nonbound exploiting classes. Today too the "wise old men" of opportunism who would like to turn the clock back on the gains of the past years are engaged in judging, speculating on and mainly splitting the American Marxist-Leninist movement by applying one after another arbitrary

and sectarian criterion to the various groups. Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought is not for them a sufficient basis to unite on, so they concoct their "interpretations" of Marxism-Leninism as a basis to split on. They are trying to turn Marxism from a living guide to action into something dead, scholastic and incredibly dry and abhorrent. Some of these elements have pointed at some of the writings of ACWM(M-L) and sneered that ACWM(M-L) did this or that wrong, did not know this or that quotation, ad infinitum. They do not know the first thing about communism -- a communist is not someone who has merely memorized all the Marxist books, but is someone who takes up the necessary tasks to advance the proletarian revolution, to advance the particular stage of revolution. Comrade Lenin pointed out: "If the study of communism consisted solely in imbibing what is contained in communist books and pamphlets, we might all too easily obtain communist text-jugglers or braggarts, and this would very often cause us harm and damage, because such people, having learned by rote what is contained in communist books and pamphlets, would prove incapable of combining items of knowledge, and would be unable to act in the way communism really demands." The ACWM(M-L) followed Chairman Mao's glorious principle of "LEARN WARFARE THROUGH WARFARE" and deepened and broadened its grasp of Marxism and engaged in study and investigation in the course of serving the American revolution. This is what gave its newspapers, articles and leaflets their great vitality and life, their great appeal to the broad masses who were thirsty to see Mao Tsetung Thought in action.

Undaunted by the pinpricks of the opportunists, the ACWM(M-L) upheld the universal truth and applicability of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought and applied it to the concrete conditions in the U. S. The ACWM(M-L) enthusiastically disseminated works of Mao Tsetung Thought as well as important documents of the International Communist Movement including The Political Report to the 9th National Congress of the Communist of China, the 1968 and 1968 statements by Chairman Mao in support of the Afro-American struggle against racial discrimination and violent repression and Chairman Mao's Solemn Statement of May 20, 1970, "People of the World Unite and Defeat the U.S. Aggressors and All Their Running Dogs!" The ACWM(M-L) also laid stress on the Marxist-Leninist teachings on the necessity for a party. The ACWM(M-L) disseminated Mao Tsetung Thought in application to the concrete conditions of the U. S., gave exact analysis of struggle on the cultural front, denounced growing fascism in the U. S., and opposed such concrete manifestations of revisionism, trotskyism and New Leftism as the opportunist "single-issue" politics, which sought to subvert every outbreak of the mass movements into philistine shock and moralism over isolated events, "exceptions" to the system, rather than leading the mass movements in conscious opposition to the entire monopoly-capitalist system. A notable feature of the ACWM(M-L) right from its founding was that it consistently opposed vulgarization, economism and talking down to the masses, and sought to give all its agitation, whether on economic, political, cultural or other subjects a genuinely revolutionary and communist content.

The monopoly capitalist class did not wish to see the dissemination of Mao Tsetung Thought among the working class, oppressed nationalities and other oppressed masses. The ACWM(M-L) was an organization with a militant and daring style of work that did not capitulate to

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and collaborate with the U. S. imperialists, in direct contrast to the revisionist and trotskyite groups. The bourgeois state therefore waged many attacks upon the ACWM(M-L). Although the ACWM(M-L) was only a small organization, there were over 90 arrests of members and supporters between 1969 and 1973. The ACWM(M-L) joined in the resistance movement of the broad masses against Nixon's fascist atrocities and advocated the line of active resistance to fascism. One high point of this struggle occurred in July, 1970, when the Wallaceite fascists under the direction of the state machine tried to organize a "hard-hat" march in Cleveland. The ACWM(M-L) relied on the working class, aroused extensive public opinion against the fascist "hard-hat" march, and on July 26 militantly marched right through the "hard-hat" march with red flags and aroused the Black, white and Puerto Rican youths and masses against it. This knocked the wind out of this once-feared movement and it soon vanished completely. Mention should also be made of the many comrades who spent substantial time in prisons, never capitulated or broke down before the fascist authorities and emerged from jail in high revolutionary spirits. These comrades displayed the spirit of daring and self-sacrifice, in short, the spirit of revolution. Only with such a spirit is it possible to organize against the imperialist state and prepare for the eventual overthrow of monopoly-capitalism.

Thus the ACWM(M-L) took a resolute stand in opposition to the increasing fascism of the monopoly capitalist class and organized the masses against the state (government apparatus) of the monopoly capitalists. The question of one's stance in practice with respect to the state is very fundamental. The revisionists have betrayed the proletariat and created much confusion on this question. They prettified the imperialist state machine and advocated that instead of smashing it one could obtain a stable parliamentary majority and peacefully transform the state into an apparatus serving the workers. They held that there is an "ultra-right Pentagon" but that there are also "sober-minded", "realistic" and "sensible" imperialists like Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy. In this way the revisionists gave "theoretical" justification for their practice of diverting the mass movements away from aiming directly at the monopoly capitalist enemy and for their collaboration with and capitulation to U. S. imperialism. ACWM(M-L) resolutely opposed these revisionist theories and practices, organized against the state apparatus of the monopoly capitalists and clearly exposed the fascist and utter reactionary nature of both the "liberal" and "conservative" political representatives of monopoly capital. The revisionists collaborated with the state. And it is revisionism that prompted some elements to call ACWM(M-L)'s active resistance to fascism "ultra-left" and "provoking the police". This is not an innocent activity, it aids the state in its suppression of the masses by isolating the revolutionary activists as "provoking" the fascist attack while whitewashing the poor, provoked capitalist police and state.

A very significant example of collaboration with the state and contribution to fascism is given by the "independent radical newsweekly" the Guardian. In its issue of Feb. 4, 1976 I. C. Van Buskirk has an article in which on the basis of a friendly chat with Joe Burton, who is an unrepentant FBI agent involved in building a police advisory board in Tampa, Florida, the Guardian slanders the ACWM(M-L) and calls the Association of Communist Workers, a predecessor of the COUSML, a "police organization." This is a sinister activity. The Guardian admits that Joe Burton's functions for the FBI included trying "to prevent unity on any firm basis among Marxist-Leninist organizations" and "to isolate, slander and jail, if possible, movement activists," yet claims that Joe Burton "is useful because of the many insights his testimony offers..." Well, what does this make the Guardian then, this

mouthpiece for Joe Burton the FBI agent? Why, it may be asked, did the Guardian choose to attack the Association of Communist Workers, out of all the predecessors of the COUSML? The A. C. W. is well-known in Louisville as the forerunner of the Louisville Branch of the COUSML. The Louisville Branch is very active in combatting the fascist anti-busing movement and, prior to the Guardian's slanderous article, had been physically attacked by the fascist anti-busing movement as well as attacked in print twice by the Nazi-style paper N. A. P. F., which presents itself as the organ for whole state-organized fascist anti-busing movement in Kentucky. These attacks by the state have continued since the Guardian's article and one comrade has been arrested (see front page). The fascist anti-busing movement has thus run into a great deal of resistance, and for the state to protect it it must disrupt the ranks of the progressive people in Louisville, "prevent unity on a firm basis" and "isolate, slander, jail if possible" the activists in the resistance to the anti-busing movement. The Guardian has rendered much needed assistance to the state in this dirty work. This is particularly significant because the Guardian has gained notoriety recently for its position that to oppose Soviet social-imperialism is to be soft on U. S. imperialism. It seems however that while progressive people oppose both superpowers, the Guardian collaborates with both.

We have dealt above with some points of ACWM(M-L)'s history. We shall conclude with ACWM(M-L)'s future, with how it merged into COUSML. The ACWM(M-L) had right from its foundation laid great stress on the Marxist-Leninist teachings on the need for a Party and sought to unite with other revolutionary activists on the basis of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought in order to oppose revisionism and build a genuine Communist Party. Therefore the ACWM(M-L) took a vigorous role in the campaign for Marxist-Leninist unity around the "Call for a Conference of North American Marxist-Leninists". The "Call" played an important role in awakening the entire American Marxist-Leninist movement to the importance of party-building and to oppose the fallacies of neo-revisionism, the theory of "pre-party collectives", etc. The ACWM(M-L) was one of the founding organizations of the Central Organization of U. S. Marxist-Leninists at the Conference of American Marxist-Leninists in August 1973. The COUSML was founded as the embodiment of unity of the Marxist-Leninists and today it is the COUSML which carries the banner of the Internationalists in America and has inherited the traditions and experiences of the ACWM(M-L) as well as of its other predecessor organizations. There is the beginnings of a new stirring in the revolutionary mass movements. There is also motion in the Marxist-Leninist movement. Already the beginnings of a new wave of revolutionary activists are starting to come forward to unite with the COUSML. There are many tasks before the Marxist-Leninists. Theoretical work must be developed in order to establish a theoretical basis for American revolution as well as to defeat opportunism. Closer links must be forged with the masses of workers and other oppressed people. At such a time it is necessary to uphold the banner of the Internationalists, draw correct conclusions from the historical experience of the COUSML and its predecessors. ACWM(M-L)'s tradition of sacrificing everything in order to move forward the decisive tasks of the present stage of revolution must be kept in mind. On the occasion of the 7th anniversary of the founding of the ACWM(M-L) we must remind ourselves of the correct orientation so as to make a contribution to proletarian revolution.

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creasing. With the growing danger of a third world war grows the need for the U. S. imperialists to prepare for this war by trying to make a quiet rear at home by building fascism within