



ELECTIONS '76--

CPUSA IS NO ALTERNATIVE

The Communist Party, USA (CPUSA) candidates for president and vice-president, Gus Hall and Jarvis Tyner, are telling the US working class that there is only one alternative to the 'two-headed' Republican-Democratic Party, only one way to make your vote be heard in Washington -- that is to vote communist in '76. They have been shuttling across the country with their message of 'peaceful transition to socialism through the ballot box', claiming that 'if you want to make waves, if you want to rock the establishment boat, you can do that only by voting for the communist candidates in '76.'

In fact, Tyner goes so far as to claim that a large vote for them would bring forth a hail of federal money and programs (in fearful response to the demands listed in their program). 'A vote for the CPUSA is like money in your pocket.'

Statements and appeals of this type are consistent with the opportunism and revisionism of the CPUSA. There is only one alternative to the capitalist system, but it is not the CPUSA. Rather than appealing to the revolutionary aspirations of the people, the CPUSA appeals to the most backward, narrow, self-interest of the proletariat. Rather than educate the proletariat in communism, explaining why proletarian revolution is the only alternative to capitalism, the only way to end wage-slavery, the CPUSA peddles reformism, restricting the aims and activities of the working class to the winning of reforms. The CPUSA, rather than leading the revolutionary struggle for reforms, tails behind the spontaneous actions of the working class, handing over leadership and coalitions to the liberal bourgeoisie.

The CPUSA has a long history of revisionism, of revising the philosophical, economic and political foundations of revolutionary Marxism and substitution of bourgeois theories of reconciliation of class contradictions and of class collaboration. As the elections approach, it is no wonder they emphasize the rotten theory that socialism can be achieved through peaceful means, through the electoral system. This theory denies a fundamental principle of the science of class struggle, that the bourgeois state must be smashed and the dictatorship of the proletariat established. The CPUSA tries to build the illusion among the proletariat that socialist revolution will be 'voted in', that the bourgeoisie will peacefully surrender state power. History has proven over and over again that struggle for state power is a violent struggle and even if the CPUSA lies about it, the bourgeoisie certainly knows the truth. And the class-conscious proletariat knows, too, that the revisionism of the CPUSA does a great service to the bourgeoisie by paving the way for fascism.

That is why these agents of the bourgeoisie within the working class must be exposed and isolated. For without a break with revisionism and opportunism we cannot wage a successful struggle against 'our' imperialist bourgeoisie. The revolutionary energy of the proletariat must be united politically and organizationally into a genuine communist party, a party armed with Marxism-Leninism. This is the only alternative!

PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION and the SPLIT IN THE WORKING CLASS

A new pamphlet analyzing the development of the labor aristocracy and the split in the US working class; the tasks of communists; appendix on SF city strike

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ated mainly in large cities, they educated a privileged minority who had disrespect for manual labor and contempt for the 80% of the population that was illiterate.

After 1949, great changes occurred: enrollment soared, illiteracy decreased, pre-school education developed. But the educational opportunities, academic standards and teaching methods still perpetuated the old inequalities. In 1966, Mao Tsetung launched the Cultural Revolution to transform education so that it would improve the lives of the majority. This educational movement continues today.

THEORY AND PRACTICE: The communist theory of knowledge is based on the idea that knowledge comes from practice and that no theory is valid until it is demonstrated in practice. Chinese education, then, combines theoretical learning with practical experience. Field trips, school workshops and open door education are employed. From early age students take part in productive labor and what they make is put to use (wooden tools, paper bags, chess sets, etc). Students and teachers spend time on communes and in factories where they learn from workers and peasants and also teach new skills. In turn, workers and peasants come to the schools to give technical training and tell about the struggles and achievements of working people, before and after the revolution.

TEACHING SOCIALIST VALUES: The Chinese know that education, and who it benefits, depends on who runs the society and owns the means of production. Consequently, the aim of education in China has been to raise millions of successors to the revolution who will defend and strengthen socialism. This requires the purposeful teaching of socialist values: cooperation, self-reliance, equality and public service. Children are taught to value manual labor through visits to factories and communes and by producing things themselves.

Through organizations like the Little Red Soldiers and the Red Guards, students get involved in collective planning of tasks, helping others with school work and disciplinary problems, assisting teachers and providing political leadership for the student body. They are also encouraged to criticize teachers who do not adhere to socialist standards. Thus children learn to work together in preparation for their role as socialist workers and peasants.

CAPITALIST EDUCATION IN THE US: While American schools claim 'equal opportunity for all', in fact they perpetuate a bourgeois class outlook. Working class children must accept authority unquestioningly, adjust to menial and boring tasks, remain passive and punctual, while bourgeois children have all sorts of opportunities to develop leadership skills and excel. All must learn to compete for rewards, but with few exceptions, working class children do not get them -- they remain bound to their class.

Teachers are given the task of promoting bourgeois ideas of male supremacy, national chauvinism, contempt for manual labor, individualism, competition, etc. all of which support the existing class structure. Lessons are filled with the glorification of individuals while ignoring the contributions and struggles of the masses of people.

School 'democracy' is a sham. Students who criticize teachers pay a price; suggestions are generally ignored; tracking is used to maintain class divisions; armed police often are present to maintain 'law and order'. In reality, bourgeois education is designed to produce a large class of semi-literate, semi-skilled manual workers who will be obedient and a small group of college-trained workers who will use their mental skills to faithfully serve the bourgeoisie.

FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM: The contradiction between the bourgeois aims of education and the genuine needs and desires of the masses of people can only be resolved when the system is overthrown. In China, the masses of workers and peasants rallied behind their communist party, which led the revolutionary struggle to socialism. And today education is in the service of the people. Quality education in the US, education which reflects the history, needs and outlook of the proletarian masses, requires that the US working class unite to build a genuine communist party which can rally behind it the support of the masses of people and lead the revolutionary struggle for socialism.

SPLIT IN THE WORKING CLASS

All across the country, from union to union, rank and file members are asking: just who do our union leaders represent? The general refusal of union leadership to fight for the true interests of the masses of workers is based on the fact that they have an economic reason for supporting the capitalists which goes beyond a little money under the table. In exchange for their services to the capitalist class, these labor lieutenants receive a bribe: they don't have to work; they own big cars and expensive houses; they're appointed to government commissions and corporate boards; they invest in the stock market, buy land in the Bahamas, and vacation with the ruling class. The capitalists get the money for this bribe from the superprofits of imperialism.

WHAT IS IMPERIALISM?

Imperialism is monopoly capitalism. It is the plunder of the world by a small number of powerful banks merged with the largest industrial corporations. Imperialism is moribund, or dying capitalism, it is parasitic and decaying capitalism. It is capitalism "grown into a world-wide system of colonial oppression and of financial strangulation of the overwhelming majority of the population of the world by a handful of 'advanced countries'" (Lenin, Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism). From the billions of dollars of profits squeezed out of the exploitation of millions of people, a tiny financial oligarchy rules a good part of the world. "Obviously, out of such enormous superprofits (since they are obtained over and above the profits which capitalists squeeze out of the workers of their 'own' country) it is possible to bribe the labor leaders and the upper stratum of the labor aristocracy." (Lenin, *ibid*)

WHO IS THE ARISTOCRACY OF LABOR?

This is a relatively small number of highly paid, skilled crafts and the labor lieutenants of capital, who get their support from the craft workers. One of the tasks of these trade union bureaucrats is to maintain the privileges of this small upper stratum of skilled workers relative to the working class as a whole. This serves the bourgeoisie, which is strengthened by the division among workers. And when the bourgeoisie can gain allies within the working class, it is twice strengthened. This is precisely the effect of the bribe of the labor aristocracy. As Lenin said, "this stratum of bourgeoisified workers, or the 'labor aristocracy' who are quite philistine in their mode of life, in the size of their earnings and in their entire outlook, is... the principal social (not military) prop of the bourgeoisie. For they are the real agents of the bourgeoisie in the working class movement. For they are the lieutenants of the capitalist class, real channels of reformism and chauvinism!"

RELATIVE PRIVILEGES OF THE WHOLE WORKING CLASS

While the labor leaders and the highly paid craft workers are permanently bribed, the entire working class in the US enjoys relative and temporary privileges. Compared to the rest of the world, the US working class has social, political and economic privileges not found elsewhere. But the contradictions of imperialism inevitably draw imperialist states into crises and conflict. With the intensification of inter-imperialist rivalry and national liberation struggles comes the decline of the profits of the US imperialists and their increasing attack on the US working class through inflation, speedups, layoffs, etc. And so the temporary privileges have been and will continue to be withdrawn.

BOURGEOIS AGENTS WITHIN THE WORKING CLASS

The task of the labor leaders is to perpetuate the illusion among the US workers that the main enemy and the cause of our increasing problems at home is the 'cheap labor' from the colonies and oppressed nations. So they push 'Buy American' campaigns and support legislative and police attacks on national minority workers and 'aliens'.

These labor traitors, along with the revisionist CPUSA, seek to tie the working class politically and ideologically to 'its' bourgeoisie. They seek to perpetuate capitalism and are its most loyal defenders within the working class.

REVISIONISM OR COMMUNISM?

First, we must recognize that the rise of imperialism created a split within the working class and its movement: on one side stands proletarian revolution based on the science of Marxism-Leninism; on the other, revisionism, opportunism and reformism. We must unite with the revolutionary mass of oppressed and exploited workers and make a decisive break with the revisionist and reformist trend. Without this 'there can be no question of a serious communist workers movement' (Lenin).

Second, we must fight for better working and living conditions, for union democracy, for equal rights of national minorities and women. But no matter how strong and democratic the unions, they cannot challenge wage-slavery, which is the basis of capitalism. Unions can fight for better conditions for the sale of labor-power, but they cannot put an end to the system exploitation. This requires a revolutionary movement, one which will smash the imperialist state. History has shown that the working class must be organized on the basis of Marxism-Leninism in order to wage a successful struggle against capital. What we must do, then, is build a genuine communist party which alone can unite all the torrents of protest into one mighty ocean of revolutionary struggle.

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BOURGEOIS ELECTIONS: COVER FOR ATTACKS ON WORKING CLASS

On November 2, less than 50% of the voting population will go to the polls. Faced with a choice between bourgeois Democrat Carter and bourgeois Republican Ford, over half of the voters are, in effect, saying: this is no choice at all, just an exercise in 'formal democracy' in which workers get to choose which bourgeois party is going to lead in oppressing them for the next four years. But what about the other choices on the ballot, such as state and city propositions? Does it make any difference when workers vote on such issues as whether or not city employees have the right to strike? This is the question in San Francisco, where the Board of Supervisors has sponsored a series of anti-city worker measures.

BOARD RELIES ON SPLIT IN THE WORKING CLASS

First, let's look at why the Board is increasing its legislative attacks on workers in SF. The city, like other cities across the country, is in financial crisis. In municipal debt per capita, SF is second only to New York. The economic crisis, part of the general crisis of capitalism, means that the 'city fathers' must do whatever they can to shift the burden onto the backs of working people. The Board of Supervisors, fronting for the wealthy industrialists and bankers they are paid to represent, is using city workers as scapegoats, blaming them for everything from rising property taxes to deteriorating social services. The Board is able to do this because of their skillful manipulation of the actual split that exists in the working class, between a bribed

upper stratum, primarily craft workers and professionals, and the masses of workers, many of them women clerical workers: In other words, they are using the fact that a section of city workers are in fact relatively highly paid in order to turn working people in SF against all city workers. The Board is using the fact that in the past, this bribed upper stratum has consistently fought for its own, narrow interests, ignoring the conditions of the majority of workers.

WORKERS' RIGHTS UNDER ATTACK

Several of the propositions are serious threats to the right of workers to strike, to organize into unions, and to bargain collectively with management. In particular, Proposition B would take away the right to strike, by requiring city workers to be fired if they went on strike. Proposition O would destroy collective bargaining between workers and city government by putting wage demands before SF voters if the Board reaches an 'impasse'. Other anti-labor propositions are Proposition D (changes the way of determining rate of pay); E ('rule of three' allowing an appointed officer to choose between top three people on a civil service list instead of top one); I (exempts around 65 top-level positions from civil service regulations, allowing for open political appointments); J (allows Board to hire workers from private industry to do city jobs at lower pay); L & M (reduce and change retirement system). Some of these are aimed primarily at craft workers (D & J), but the net impact of all eight together is that the ruling bourgeoisie of SF has reached a point where it can openly shift the crisis onto the workers, by playing upon the actual divisions that exist within the working class.

BUILD A GENUINE COMMUNIST PARTY!

Workers should resist any attack on their living standards and conditions of work, and that includes voting against these propositions. But win or lose on the ballot, workers will continue to be wage-slaves, chained to exploitation at the hands of a few, as long as the state, with its army, police and courts, are all in the hands of the capitalist class. That is why it is so important to wage the struggle for reforms with a clear understanding of the need for revolution!

To wage a struggle against the growing attacks against workers, the proletariat needs leadership, but not the opportunist leadership it now has, from the rotten trade union bureaucrats to the revisionist Communist Party USA, all of whom represent the bribed labor aristocracy. When they fight at all, they do so only in the interests of this upper stratum of workers, while tying the masses of oppressed and exploited to reformism and reliance on the bourgeois state. These opportunists must be driven out of the ranks of the working class and replaced in the unions and mass organizations by democratic, rank and file leadership. At the same time, class-conscious workers armed with the guiding science of Marxism-Leninism must build a genuine communist party which alone is capable of truly leading the proletariat to socialism. It is the central, most pressing task to end the current state of affairs by building a communist party!

Workers' Press is written and published by the Marxist-Leninist Collective. We are a communist organization based on Marxism-Leninism, the science of the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. We are part of the international struggle of the working class to end exploitation and oppression by overthrowing capitalism and establishing socialism. We aim to bring communist ideas and analyses to the working class. We strive to broaden the outlook of our fellow workers and to arm workers with proletarian class consciousness so that together we can lead the struggle against all forms of oppression and exploitation by imperialism. To do this we must organize ourselves into an independent political party to concentrate the resistance of the proletariat into a single fighting force. Correspondence, criticisms, articles to:

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