

## II. FUSION AND THE TWO STRATEGIC TASKS OF PARTY BUILDING

Fusion is the merger of scientific socialism with the spontaneous working class movement. The result of fusion is that "the class struggle of the workers becomes the conscious struggle of the proletariat to emancipate itself from exploitation by the propertied classes. It is evolved into a higher form of the socialist workers' movement, the independent working class Social Democratic party." (Lenin, CW 6:257)

By merging socialist theory with the class struggle of the proletariat, as the class becomes aware of its historic mission and its broader aims, the subjective conditions for revolution are developed. The party, which is the highest expression of this fusion, in turn focuses its work on deepening the fusion with the working class, organizing and educating the class to overthrow capitalism and build socialism under the dictatorship of the proletariat, and bringing ever wider strata under the influence of the party.

"...In every country this combination of socialism and the working class movement was evolved historically, in unique ways, in accordance with the prevailing conditions of time and place... It is a very difficult process and there is, therefore, nothing surprising in the fact that it is accompanied by vacillations and doubts." (LCW 4:368)

### A. FUSION AND THE ADVANCED

In every country, the first step in fusion has been the winning of the class conscious vanguard, the advanced workers who everywhere determine the character of the mass movement, who are its natural leaders and devote themselves to the organization and education of the working class. These advanced workers constantly seek to understand the basis and resolution to the exploitation of their class. When introduced to the ideas of scientific socialism they grasp them, and make them their own through study and propagate them among the masses.

Correctly grasping the question of fusion and the advanced will determine whether or not the communist and workers' movements will be fused, and the kind of Party we are building. Especially in this period of party formation, this is a most important question to address and to have the correct answer to.

The main deviation on this question has been to the right, led by the RCP and the OL. They have not applied the theory, nor have they made concrete investigation of the actual history of the movement; their method has been empirical, assuming that "those militant activists I meet are the advanced", if indeed they talk about the advanced at all. The basis has been subjectivism in the form of empiricism and pragmatism, "get rich quick" schemes for building their party. It has resulted in building their own organization by whatever means necessary, has led to the failure to fuse the communist and workers' movements and a failure to build a revolutionary vanguard party. The results are already clear for all to see; what the OL is building is a mass reformist organization and the RCP has built a "party" of the petty bourgeoisie.

There is also a "left" deviation on this question. This has not been the main error in the movement, but has been present. PRRWO in the past made this error, but failed to repudiate and transform and so in the past months has fallen deeper into it. The "left" error has consisted of a dogmatic use of the theory, failing to look at the concrete conditions and coming up with a view of the advanced that does not correspond with reality, and which isolates from the masses the few advanced that it does attract. It leads to building a sect, not a genuine revolutionary party, and so this error too ends by failing to fuse the workers' and communist movements. This latter deviation does not show itself so much in their definition of who is advanced, but in how they put this definition to use, in other questions like what is the relation of the mass movement to party building, how are we to conduct propaganda in this period and what is the correct relationship between propaganda and agitation, and their content; how are we to do trade union and united front work?

WVO, while it has presented a definition of the advanced which has come incorrect aspects, has given answers to these questions that are overall mostly correct. They argue for a high level of propaganda, topically related, providing the workers

with an integral view of U.S. society, all other classes in the U.S. and the world, and how they stand in relation to the working class and its aims. Their view of the way in which to identify and win the advanced, the role of the advanced in mass work in this period, in trade union work, united front work, and how all this relates to party-building is also mostly correct. They do, however, have incorrect aspects of their view on winning the advanced and fusion.

They have a view that the distribution of consciousness in the class is in a "bell distribution" or shaped like a football, making the advanced a statistical percentage of the population, and liquidating the universal aspects of the advanced. They fail to emphasize the intellectual character of the advanced, who are actively studying, seeking answers to the questions facing the class. They also have a static view of the distribution of the advanced, not seeing that the number of advanced workers coming forward is related to the ebb and flow of the movement.

In addition, they have an incorrect view of the backwards or lower strata of workers. They incorrectly define the backwards workers as being the reactionary core of the class or the consolidated liberals, rather than as the least class conscious members of the working class. They mistakenly say it is "anti-working class" to say that a large stratum of the class is, at this point, to be included among the backwards or lower strata of the working class. In fact, this is a reasonable conclusion examining the conditions in the U.S. today. Indeed, a large proportion of the working class falls into this category presently due to objective and subjective factors influencing the working class movement.

Thus fusion consists of the union of scientific socialism with the struggles of the proletariat. In this period of party formation, the main aspect of the struggles of the proletariat is the advanced workers. Correctly defining this relationship is answering the question of the correct relationship of the mass movement and party building and of what kind of party we are trying to build. Defining this relationship correctly will result in building a strong party of the class, firmly based on the theory of scientific socialism and able to lead the working class forward to socialist revolution.

There are right and "left" deviations on this question as well. As Lenin stated in 1900:

"...our fundamental task is to facilitate the political development and the political organization of the working class. Those who push this task into the background, who refuse to subordinate to it all the special tasks and particular methods of struggle, are following a false path and causing serious harm to the movement. And it is being pushed into the background, firstly by those who call upon revolutionaries to employ only the forces of isolated conspiratorial circles cut off from the working class movement in the struggle against the government. It is being pushed into the background, secondly by those who restrict the content and scope of political propaganda, agitation and organization.

(LCW 4:369)

Lenin here might well have been talking on the one hand of PRRWO/RWL and of OL/RCP on the other.

The right errors on this question result in degrading the science, belittling the role of theory, degrading the level of propaganda and agitation to the level of the spontaneous working class movement, of intermediate and backward workers, resulting inevitably in building a Party of reforms. The "left" error would result in withholding the science from the struggles of the working class, separating communists and the advanced workers from the mass movement, and resulting only in building a sect divorced from the masses. Both the right and the "left" forms fail to fuse the workers' movement with the communist movement.

In the past RWL has been primarily afflicted with right errors on all these questions. Now, in recognizing these right errors, the RWL has flipped over to the "left" side, absolutizing the other aspect of the contradictions between Party building and the mass spontaneous movement. While some right errors are still being made, the RWL is overwhelmingly "left". If this is not resolutely broken with, criticized, repudiated and transformed, the RWL will inevitably degenerate into an isolated sect.

## B. LEVEL OF FUSION TODAY

The Bolshevik correctly defines fusion as "the connection of Marxism-Leninism (ML) with the spontaneous workers' movement." But it very quickly goes on to say that "there has been fusion between the two great movements of socialism and the working class," (p.30) To prove this startling assertion, the B\* list the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, Malcolm X, the Black Panther Party, HRUM, SNCC, SDS, YLP, SOBU (sic), and ALSC. They say that elements came forward to turn themselves into communists from among these organizations.

By saying "there has been fusion", B betrays a failure to grasp the nature of fusion and of the tasks of our movement. Fusion must be based on scientific socialism, not on eclectic socialism. The organizations listed grew up in the period dominated by eclecticism, and they too were eclectic, utopian and not scientific socialists. Today we need to break with this earlier period, repudiate eclectic socialism as a revolutionary "theory" and firmly base our movement on MLMTT, the only scientific socialism. Saying "there has been fusion" is the same as saying that fusion is based on eclectic socialism. This is a failure to break with the past errors that characterized our movement until the late sixties: such a failure makes it impossible to move forward to the future, impossible to build a party on the basis of correct principles. This is true whether one has a correct textbook definition of fusion or not. This error both degrades the role of scientific socialism and overestimates the general level of the advanced in this period.

The current level of fusion is very low. Few AW's<sup>\*</sup> are communists. The level of mass struggles is increasing, however, and will increase the number of AW's coming forward, if communists use the period correctly and provide communist leadership to the mass movement and engage in mass propaganda and agitation to bring forward AW's. Saying "there has been fusion" fails to assess correctly the real situation in the US today, and only serves to lull us into complacency by diminishing our tasks. It fails to seek truth from facts, but rather substitutes a subjective wish for an objective truth.

## C. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FUSION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCIENCE

The error concerning the level of fusion rests on a more profound misunderstanding about the development of socialist theory. RWL liquidates theoretical work as the basis of fusion, which produces the one-sided and vulgar view of the process of fusion. This failure to grasp the relationship between theory and practice by RWL is revealed (as on so many other questions) not by clearly and blatantly incorrect statements, but by the Bolshevik's profound lack of clarity. The question of the origin and development of socialist theory, of MLMTT, of its coming from the scientific investigation of the intelligentsia, is a basic Marxist-Leninist truth, one requiring absolute clarity because it points to the necessarily conscious character of proletarian ideology. As Lenin repeatedly pointed out, bowing to the spontaneity of bourgeois ideology, belittling the role of theory, the role of the conscious element, are the roots of all opportunism. Not being clear about the development of the science sets the basis for belittling it. RWL, however, waffles on this point, revealing again a hopeless muddle.

RWL begins with a correct textbook understanding of the origin of socialist theory. We are told that the development of the science only takes place on the basis of "profound scientific and historical knowledge." But in the next sentence RWL strays away and tells us that this was the task of revolutionary intellectuals from the propertied classes." (p.26, emphasis ours) What does this mean? How does RWL view the tasks of communist intellectuals today? Does this mean that revolutionary intellectuals already developed the science and their role is now over? And that the working class is now capable of spontaneously developing socialist ideology and the correct political line? RWL's failure to answer these questions downplays that it is only with the correct leadership of a Marxist-Leninist Party that the working class movement in any country can develop the correct political line and socialist ideology. RWL's unclear view of the development of the science belittles theory and restricts the tasks of communists. This belittlement of theory emerges even more sharply as RWL elaborates on this point:

NOTE: on abbreviations\*

B= Bolshevik (RWL's journal)  
AW= advanced worker

" Two movements converged in Russian (sic) and this convergence is repeated in all capitalist countries, as the working class movement struggles with opportunism and fuses with scientific socialism. In Russia, the movement of socialist theory proceeded toward the working class and thereby began to integrate the universal principles of Marxism with the actual conditions of Russia and thus Russia (sic) working class movement in doing so further developed Russian Social-Democracy (Communism)...

" As the process of fusion develops, the contemporary level of the science develops. In the struggle to apply Marxism, the science is enriched and integrated with the national and international conditions. The relative quality of the science the depth to which it does (sic) in elaborating a particular question disclosing internal contradictions and external conditions increases, as well as the number of questions it is forced to speak to in the course of making revolution increases. This movement of the science is closely bound to fusion. Because the working class is the only class whose conditions of life prepare it for the science of MLMTT..."

" So it is the working class that must grasp MLMTT and enrich it as it struggles to overthrow the bourgeoisie..." (p.26-7)

This view of fusion and the development of the science is characterized by confusion and lack of clarity. While there are aspects that are correct, due to omissions and out-right incorrect statements, we conclude that RNL does not know what they are talking about, and end up seriously belittling theory, in general, and belittling the theoretical work that the communist movement needs to do in order to move forward and to develop the programme, strategy and tactics of revolution in the U.S., in particular.

In the above quote, RNL states that the spontaneous movement struggles against opportunism and it says that the spontaneous movement "further developed Russian Social-Democracy." The consistent struggle against opportunism and the development of communism are both, in the first place, questions of science, scientifically determining the interests of the working class and waging a persistent and ruthless ideological struggle against opportunism, against those who would abandon the interests of the working class as a whole for any reason. Because of the pervasiveness and dominance of bourgeois ideology in capitalist society, the working class cannot spontaneously and consistently carry on the necessary struggle against opportunism. Such a struggle can be waged by the proletariat systematically and consistently only when armed with theory, only with the weapon of a firm basis in proletarian ideology, and this ideology is a consciously worked out world outlook. Any belittling of the conscious character of proletarian ideology serves to disarm the proletariat.

The passage also reveals the muddled view the Bolshevik has of exactly what the development of the science is, what it means to apply the universal truths of MLMTT to the concrete conditions of making revolution in the US, and how this relates to fusion with the advanced. To repeat, RNL writes, "As the process of fusion develops, the contemporary level of the science develops... so that it is the working class that must grasp MLMTT and enrich it." While practice is the basis of all theory, and the rich experiences of the working class as it makes revolution are the basis of the general truths of theory, theory does not grow out of just going among the workers as Bolshevik implies. Bolshevik confuses the relationship of fusion to the development of the science, making it look as if fusion results in theoretical development.

The development of the science, theoretical work, the elaboration of the real economic contradictions in our society, their historical development, and the integral whole they make up is the basis on which we go among the working class in order, primarily in this period, to win over the advanced. It is the basis of fusion. Clearly, there is a dialectical relationship between the development of the science and fusion. But we must grasp which aspect is principal. The CWC holds that on the basis of MLMTT and its application to the concrete conditions of making revolution in the U.S. and answering the long-term and short-term questions facing the class, i.e., through the development and elaboration of primarily political line, that on this basis, fusion moves forward. As fusion develops and moves forward the line, the progress in revolutionary struggle, and hence, the theory, are furthered and enriched. This takes place first of all through the mass line, the continuous linking of the particular

needs and demands of the masses with the general programme, strategy, policies, etc. The mass line is constant source of enrichment and development and elaboration of the Party's line. Further, the development of fusion which leads to the increasingly class conscious struggle of the proletariat generates increasingly richer experiences from which the science develops. Thus, if our line is correct, scientifically developed and aimed at fusion with the working class, party building and party formation will move ahead. "This theory, based on a detailed study of Russian history and realities must furnish an answer to the demands of the proletariat.... the greater the progress made in elaborating this theory, the more rapidly will Social-Democracy grow..." (Lenin, LCW 1:297)

This view is in complete contradiction to the line put forth by RWL that the science develops as fusion develops. As we have pointed out, there is an aspect of truth in this. But first RWL substitutes this aspect for the whole. And then we hear RWL saying that the development of the science "was the task of revolutionary intellectuals." And then as we will discuss below, they keep talking about "Bolsheviks" belittling "the role of the advanced in hammering out political line," at the same time that they tell us that holding "unite Marxist-Leninists as principal led us to overemphasize liaisons and coalition work." Comrades, it becomes clear that they are the ones who belittle theory and the role in the development of the revolutionary working class movement.

Fusion is based on scientific socialism; Confounding fusion with the development of the science can only degrade the role of theory. If we imagine, as RWL does, that "as fusion develops the contemporary level of the science develops" and leaves it at that, we would be led to make the focus of our work winning the advanced while ignoring the meticulous, arduous work of examining the concrete conditions of U.S. capitalism in its development, in the movement and relation of all classes in society, not only the working class. RWL's view of fusion implies that workers cannot be won to an incorrect line as if workers mystically embodied correct ideology. This is nothing but vulgar materialism. RWL's vulgar materialism, by downgrading theoretical work, threatens to disrupt the process of basing fusion on theory, thereby leading it to building the party on the weakest foundations. This vulgar materialist approach is similar to that taken by RCP, which holds that the Party's philosophy, its ideology and ultimately its program, strategy and tactics all derive from "the experiences of the masses." The RWL, as we will show below, objectively has the line that winning the advanced to communism is the principal strategic task at this point in party building, because of the "role of the advanced in hammering out political line." (p.34, Bolshevik) as if comrades new to the science would be the main force developing political line. Such an unclarity in the formulation of the line on fusion can only come out of assuming that the vanguard of the class already has this understanding of Marxism-Leninism. All of these views, the overestimation of the level of fusion, of the level of the contemporary development of the advanced and their role in the development of the science, are an overestimation of the level of spontaneous development of consciousness that the working class is able to achieve by its own efforts alone. Although the Bolshevik claims that it has the communist position on how the "working class... cannot develop scientific socialism..." (p.260, objectively keeps slipping into an erroneous view. This reflects a continued failure to break with the vulgar proletarianization line, the view that the material conditions of the working class determine consciousness and make for a Marxist-Leninist understanding.

Lenin is clear on this question. In WITBD?, he writes,

There can be no talk of an independent ideology being developed by the masses of workers themselves in the process of their movement... this does not mean, of course, that the workers have no part in creating such an ideology. But they take part not as workers but as socialist theoreticians... only when, and to the extent that they are able, more or less, to acquire the knowledge of their age and advance that knowledge. (p 48, FLP)

RWL's vulgar materialism leads it to equate itself with the correct line because of its "proletarian kernel", that the "class composition of our organization is relatively good..." This view wholly negates the relative independence of ideology from the material basis once it is generated, i.e., this means that although ideology develops on the basis

of material conditions and the proletariat as a class is more conditioned by its material life to grasp MLMTT, people of non-proletarian class backgrounds are able to adopt and develop proletarian ideology just as members of the proletariat can be dominated by bourgeois ideology. In fact, under bourgeois rule and in the absence of the conscious intervention by proletarian ideology, the working class movement is dominated by bourgeois ideology. Again, this is the essence of Lenin's teaching on the unconscious character of bourgeois ideology and the way that any belittling of the conscious element leads us to spontaneously proceed on the basis of bourgeois ideology.

RWL's line, regardless of its intent, leaves open the possibility that Marxism is spontaneously developed by the working class movement. Under the guise of "upholding the leading role of the proletariat," RWL is opening the door to abandoning our tasks and duties as communists, and thus betraying the cause of the proletariat. It is precisely the line that RWL is putting forth that Lenin attacked and pointed to as bowing to spontaneity.

#### D. THE TWO STRATEGIC TASKS

During the period of party formation, the tasks facing communists are, as Stalin writes in summing up the development of the Bolshevik Party, to "recruit into the Party the best elements of the working class, those who were most active and most devoted to the cause of the proletariat; to form the ranks of the proletarian party and to put it firmly on its feet. Comrade Lenin formulates this task as follows: 'to win the vanguard of the proletariat to the side of communism...'" (Stalin, "The Party Before and After Taking Power" Works, 5:105) We unite with the view that there are two main strategic tasks involved in building the Party throughout the development of the Party. These are: uniting Marxist-Leninists and winning the advanced to communism. Just saying these, however is not enough. We must understand what they mean in terms of what we have to do, how they each contribute to party building, which is the principal task at any point, and how each relates to fusion of the communist movement with the spontaneous workers' movement.

Until recently, we held the line that the two tasks of uniting Marxist-Leninists were "simultaneous and equal tasks." We want to repudiate this as an incorrect line. Our view of this question will be laid out below, but we want to briefly state our repudiation of this line and the basis for it in our organization. We operated with this position for several months based on the "unprincipled unity" line we discussed in the introduction. Much too often we have been lax in pushing ourselves to come to independent views on the burning questions facing the communist movement, and on that basis be able to contribute to the struggle in the movement for the correct line. This was an example of failing to develop a deeper view on the question of party building, and thus being willing to unite with RWL on the basis of little struggle. We view this polemic as part of our struggle to break with the philistine attitude towards struggle we had tended towards which objectively stands in the way of the struggle for a firm and principled unity of communists, and stands in the way of the interests of the proletariat.

The RWL once held that uniting Marxist-Leninists was principal but in the Bolshevik it repudiates this line as incorrect. Although it never explicitly states that it now views winning the advanced to communism as the principal task, from its downgrading of uniting Marxist-Leninists historically and its exclusive focus on winning the advanced we can see that objectively this latter task is given the principal place. To fully see this we need to study their overall line on the two strategic tasks.

Bolshevik gives several reasons for repudiating "Marxist-Leninists unite" as the principal strategic task of party building in this period. It says it is: "...an incorrect line that, in the final analysis, leads to seeing ideology as key, to building unity on general principles, not the application of these principles to concrete conditions. This line has led to overemphasising liaison work and coalition work, while not placing sufficient emphasis on winning the advanced. This view, because of the spontaneity it breeds, strengthened a tendency to negate our main form of work, propaganda. Marxist-Leninists unite as principal thing belittles the role of advanced in hammering out political line. We believe that we must carry out the work of uniting Marxist-Leninists and winning the advanced to communism simultaneously." (p. 34)  
(emphasis in original)

There are many distortions, much confusion and lots of bad advice here.

First, as we already discussed, this view of the role of the advanced in hammering out political line belittles the role of science in hammering out political line. In this period, few advanced workers will make significant contributions to the science because few are yet communists. This is not to "belittle" their role, but rather to insist on political line being a product of the science of Marxism-Leninism, something RWL belittles with its view that "as fusion develops, the level of the science develops."

Second, RWL tells us how the holding uniting Marxist-Leninists as principal led them to overemphasize liaison and coalition work. This clearly betrays the narrow view RWL holds of uniting Marxist-Leninists. This is part and parcel of their view of party building; by this they show their failure to build the Party on the ideological plane and to hold political line is key. The main aspect of this strategic task is waging clear and sharp ideological, and particularly, political struggle. We also see common investigation and theoretical work, developing common propaganda as other important aspects of the strategic task of uniting Marxist-Leninists. We see using all opportunities and situations to advance the struggle to demarcate sham from genuine, and thus create the conditions for a solid Marxist-Leninist unity. No wonder RWL failed to succeed in the work of uniting Marxist-Leninists when Bolshevik, their "theoretical journal" just came out in the last month, three years after the organization was born. This, plus the unstable line of the organization, explains a great deal about why the RWL has been unable to unite Marxist-Leninists, except on grounds of narrow nationalism. We'll discuss this further below.

We are told that to focus on uniting Marxist-Leninists leads to making ideology key and to abandon the application of the general principles to the concrete conditions. Why is this the case? How must this be? It seems RWL is mistaking its own failure to unite Marxist-Leninists with a general problem with the focus on uniting Marxist-Leninists as principal. In doing this, the Bolshevik once again reveals its narrow view of ideology, seeing ideology as "general principles." This is one of the reasons they are unable to grasp how to build the party on the proletarian ideological plane.

Saying that "unite Marxist-Leninists is principal breeds spontaneity" is also not enough, in addition to not being convincing. It is not enough to say this as a general principle without explaining what it means, how it must be. In fact, placing winning the advanced as principal will breed more spontaneity since it is easier to get by with spontaneous errors with comrades who are just beginning to grasp the science.

RWL fails to explain why uniting Marxist-Leninists as the principal task is an incorrect line. What it is doing is saying that "we found it not to work well in our organizational efforts and so we will downgrade its significance." RWL is unable to justify any of these propositions ("uniting Marxist-Leninists as principal leads to ideology is key," "it breeds spontaneity," etc.) This is so because these views come not from a grasp of the science or any scientific attempt to apply the science, but only from their own narrow experience. Because they made these errors in implementing uniting Marxist-Leninists as principal, they now claim this must be true for the whole communist movement. This is nothing but empiricism and pragmatism.

We know that RWL's recent history has been characterized by tailing after first WVO and now PRRWO, without putting out an independent line. Downgrading uniting Marxist-Leninists represents a way of withdrawing from line struggle on a principled basis, making it easier for them to get by with fast talk and a raggedy line.

Third, Bolshevik says neither uniting Marxist-Leninists nor winning the advanced to communism is principal because they are "simultaneous." This is no explanation at all. Of course they are simultaneous; no communist organization would deny this, and we agree neither must be downgraded or we will make severe errors. But the Bolshevik leaves the pressing question about the relationship of the two tasks unanswered. It is unable and unwilling to answer it. Winning the advanced to communism and uniting Marxist-Leninists are conducted simultaneously and neither can be ignored. But uniting Marxist-Leninists is principal in this period of party formation.

There currently exists a low level of unity in the communist movement. It is necessary to forge the unity of will and action among communists to move toward the whole struggle of building the party and fusing it with the working class movement. Unity among communists is built on the basis of ideological and political unity. At this point the struggle for political line is the key link. Unity is the consolidation of ideological unity (unity of will and action), unity on political line and on organizational principles. This is work that must mainly be carried out by those with a grasp of the science, i.e., communists. As unity is built among growing numbers of Marxist-Leninists, the tasks of further developing the work of uniting Marxist-Leninists and winning the advanced to communism, and fusing the communist and workers' movements can be moved ahead still faster.

In a period when lines of demarcation are more clearly drawn, and a clear ideological and political genuine trend exists around which genuine forces are uniting, winning the advanced may be (or "would become") the principal task. During such a period, the movement will be moving towards organizational consolidation and the process of fusion, based on the higher development of the line, will be advancing more rapidly and all-sidedly.

Propaganda is the chief form of activity. The aim of uniting Marxist-Leninists is to enhance this work, to place it on a firm ideological and political foundation and to organize it widely. The purpose of developing the correct line is to develop the scientific understanding of the real conditions moving U.S. society forward and on that basis to develop the correct subjective factor among the masses to make revolution. Uniting Marxist-Leninists aids in organizing the work on both of these aspects of developing political line. Building the correct subjective factor for revolution among the masses remains our long term strategic task. It is a mechanical view to see stages in the development of the party that are rigidly separated from each other, such as the view that we should first unite Marxist-Leninists and then go on to propaganda or that we should first unite the vanguard and then go on to the task of working among the masses. The other error is the view that both tasks are equal and neither is principal. This becomes a way to liquidate certain tasks while making it look like an even-handed approach is being taken. In the case of RWL this is a cover for its reducing the work of uniting Marxist-Leninists on the basis of principled struggle and of eliminating the work in the mass movement under the guise of not "bowing to spontaneity."

#### E. BOURGEOIS NATIONALISM OBSTRUCTS PARTY BUILDING

In the district where we work with RWL virtually no work has been done to unite Marxist-Leninists, certainly not among Marxist-Leninists of different nationalities. If uniting Marxist-Leninists has been principal, reducing the focus on this can only eliminate this work altogether; in fact this has already happened in district 34 where the RWL liquidated its liaison with the CWC. The reason they gave was that they did not have a view of liaison---no view even though it had been their principal task.

This line of reducing the focus on uniting Marxist-Leninists is also a way of avoiding the difficult task of constructing a multinational organization. As we've shown above RWL has historically been plagued with bourgeois nationalism and has failed to break with it, never having fully struggled with it. Marxist-Leninists uphold proletarian internationalism as the highest principle. By downgrading the task of uniting Marxist-Leninists, the organization does not have to confront in as direct and principled a way the task of changing its national make up. This line on uniting Marxist-Leninists plus our observations of RWL's focus on winning Black advanced workers to communism are a way of preserving its Bundist character.

Revolutionary Black nationalism was the real basis of unity of the organization when RWL first formed, and it still characterizes the organization. Two of the five line struggles which Bolshevik claims "stealed" them were over Bourgeois Nationalism, and all of its line struggles have had Black Nationalism as a component. But in no case has the organization really gotten down to root out this problem.

It's important to emphasize again, the first "line struggle" began over the question of "communism or revolutionary nationalism", but ended up being conducted over and summed up by the organization as "a struggle against bureaucratism." (p. 68) This has to be a classic failure to get at the ideological root of a problem. Another "line struggle", the third of the organization, was over "national or multi-national forms for communist organizations, in particular the RWL." This struggle was described as "relatively shallow"--and so was the summation of the organization. The error was described as being "again bowing to spontaneity, to the influence of narrow nationalists within the BLM and the RWL." The basis, in other words, was the problem of certain individuals in the organization, not an aspect of bourgeois ideology afflicting the whole organization. So this was held to be a problem of certain individuals, but something which did not touch, evidently, the "proletarian kernel" and "good composition" that the organization has been "characterized" by.

Chairman Mao teaches us that "nothing reactionary falls unless it is hit." Comrades, to break with Bourgeois Nationalism in your midst, sharp ideological struggle must be waged to transform all you cadre; the question of Bourgeois Nationalism must be faced head on. It is, as we will show later, the main deviation in your organization and you will continue to make major line flips until this deviation is broken with.

RWL's local work in terms of winning the advanced has been of a clearly Bundist character. In a recent coalition around International Working Women's Day (IWWD) we have a clear example of the results of RWL not even seeing their bourgeois nationalism as a problem. There was some struggle in one of the coalition committees over what speakers we would have at the program. A CWC comrade suggested a local middle-aged woman who was a militant white worker in her union and who had led the rank-and-file in struggles against racism and sexism. At that time the only white speaker was a comrade from the CWC. The comrade was not suggesting that anyone else be replaced, but that we add one more speaker. The open RWL cadre argued against the white worker being one of the speakers, and not on the basis of her politics but on the basis of the particular workers' "style" and her not being "dynamic enough." Aside from the fact that this is completely false in that this worker is in fact quite dynamic, that is still no basis on which to have argued against her speaking. The committee finally united on the worker being asked to speak (although as it turned out she wasn't free for that date). But the point, however, is that the RWL has a responsibility as a communist organization to build the multi-national character of the workers' movement, and given the national character of the RWL and the fact that its work among the masses focuses exclusively among Black workers, they have the duty to seize upon every chance and every opportunity to transcend this Bundist character of their work.

In raising this particular criticism we also need to raise a significant self-criticism, namely, our failure to raise this issue before. There have been conditions that have contributed to this failure on our part. For one, the summing up we did with RWL around the IWWD focused on the actual event and we had not traced the particular incident above to be a manifestation of RWL's bourgeois nationalism. We raised the criticism in the general, saying that we wanted to meet with RWL to criticize their failure in the task of uniting Marxist-Leninists and that the basis of this failure was bourgeois nationalism and pragmatism. But due to the liquidation of the liaison and the postponements of meeting together to carry on struggle over these questions, it was never raised. However, while we need to understand the conditions which gave rise to the problem, what is more essential and more at the heart of the question is the basis of our error. We have come to understand that national chauvinism can take several forms. One form is the out and out chauvinism which has characterized the RCP. However, another manifestation is liberalism, a philistine white guilt which manifests itself in a philistine, no struggle attitude. We think that this deviation on our part stood in the way of our coming to understand the bourgeois nationalism on the part of RWL. By not criticizing it, we allowed RWL's bourgeois nationalism and our philistinism/centrism to obstruct party building. The unprincipled unity line that dominated our relationship with the RWL for a long time was a more subtle manifestation of this philistine white guilt. It took the form of a romanticization of and an infatuation with the prestige of the revolutionary national movements. We must break

with this liberalism just as RWL must break with nationalism, if we hope to build a party based on principle.

In the face of this major deviation on narrow nationalism, how does RWL propose to unite ML's?

F. UNITING ML'S IS BASED ON "A CORRECT VIEW OF POLEMICS"

The Bolshevik explains that in applying the two strategic tasks upholding "a correct view of polemics... is a key aspect of our view of unity." (p.35) They then proceed to treat us to a sample of this "correct view" in their polemic with WVO. This polemic is unprincipled, sophist, and demagogic, and results not in unifying ML's but in breeding disunity, confusion and mistrust. This is worth examining point by point.

RWL charges WVO with: 1)running from struggle, not defending their line, 2)resorting to bourgeois maneuvering, 3)only raising abstract, debate and avoiding struggle over the concrete questions facing the movement and 4)along with OL, liquidating the party.

1)Clearly WVO is not running from struggle. Not only did they defend their line in Boston at the forum, but they are traveling all over, particularly to places where RWL is, in order to struggle over line. They are publishing journals and newspapers that push the line struggle.

2)As far as "bourgeois maneuvering" is concerned, our view of the recent forum sponsored in Durham by WVO was that RWL was far more guilty of this than WVO. The chair at the forum, a WVO representative, did make errors, but these were overshadowed by the national representative of the RWL who substituted reading from the Bolshevik and repeatedly telling the audience to "check it out" for the more difficult task of principled ideological struggle to clarify differences and arrive at the truth. In addition, we have read and heard reports of FFM, ALSC and internal purges being conducted before line struggle was held. On hearing both sides of this question presented at the forum, we concluded that RWL was guilty of a lot of heavy-handed bourgeois maneuvering, all under the guise of "ruthless struggle against opportunism."

3)Bolshevik states that WVO refuses to struggle over the concrete but instead the "attempt was to have us go through abstract debate over 'what is ideology' and 'conscious and unconscious revisionism' without interrelating it to a defense of their views on how revisionists are 'muddled and confused' or why we should enter into unity of action with them." (p.38)

This is a very revealing passage. Anyone familiar with the recent polemics of the revolutionary wing knows that there is a profound line difference over the question of whether or not all revisionism is conscious. This is not at all an abstract question, but a matter of immediate practical consequence. If you believe, as the RWL does, that all revisionists are conscious, then it is one small step to seeing them as conscious agents of the bourgeoisie, and thus conducting line struggle not as a principled search for the correct line, but as a witch hunt to root out police spies and provocateurs. This "abstract" difference has led the RWL almost to this point. Look at the June, 1976 issue of Palante where RWL has a frenzied article about some recent "purges" they have conducted. Check it out;

In the next sentence after they distort the debate on the question of conscious and unconscious revisionism, the Bolshevik states that, "In fact, in their attempt to slip and slide, they had the nerve to say that the ideology of the proletariat was not dialectical and historical materialism and that the ideology of the bourgeoisie was not metaphysics and idealism,-- a clear revision of MLMTT." (p.38) This does not reveal anything about the struggle with WVO except how empty RWL's view of ideology is. By reducing both bourgeois and proletarian ideology to their philosophical roots, they erase all the specific forms which those ideologies may take, and all the other aspects of ideology. A fine example of bourgeois ideology, that rests on but cannot be reduced to metaphysics and idealism, is the bourgeois nationalism which characterizes the whole Bolshevik. In this way the Bolshevik raises their ignorance to a principle.

They finish their "polemic" with a distortion of WVO's alleged "unwillingness" to struggle over the question of the advanced and relate it to periods and fusion. All one needs to do to see how absurd this is, is to look at the latest issue of the WVO journal, number 4, as well as back issues of the journal, where all these questions are treated in detail.

RWL concludes this part of their "polemic" by saying that "under the smokescreen of demagogy and sophistry, they tried to evade defending their line on party building." (p.39) They are talking about WVO, but this statement is accurate only if applied to the RWL.

4) Finally, the Bolshevik sums up the WVO as liquidators (p. 39), disruptors of party unity under calls for unity. They then quote Lenin to tell us that WVO/OL are a bloc (!) who objectively liquidate the Party. Comrades, practice, real live, will show who is acting to liquidate the Party. There are liquidators in the Communist movement, i.e. organizations and elements who would disrupt the struggle for unit among genuine communist, by either refusing to struggle or struggling in an unprincipled and demagogic way. As RWL quotes, Lenin stated that the bloc of Liquidators was foredoomed to a scandalous downfall because it was built on a lack of principles, on hypocritical and empty phrases." (LCW 18:24) What better description could there be of the Bolshevik's method of conducting "polemics".

RWL's line on polemics, most clearly revealed by the Bolshevik itself, is not key to uniting Marxist-Leninists. In fact it negates the struggle to unite Marxist-Leninists and substitutes instead self-righteous demagogy. This is what their "correct line on polemics" amounts to.

#### G RWL'S OVERALL LINE ON PARTY BUILDING REDUCES TO A FORMULA FOR A SMALL CIRCLE

The main points in the RWL line on party building and the two strategic tasks of uniting Marxist-Leninists and winning the advanced to communism reduce to a formula for building a circle. The spirit of the small circle pervades the Bolshevik and makes its posturing about having "the correct line" on party building (p.19) an empty boast.

What we need in order to overthrow the bourgeoisie in this country is a party able to unite the best elements of the class, the most dedicated selfless and class conscious fighters in the interests of the whole class, on the basis of a scientific plan for revolution in the US. Rather than pursue these broad aims with the correct attitude of humility, the comrades content themselves with small achievements and exaggerated claims. They would do well to follow Chairman Mao's advice when he says, "The most ridiculous person in the world is the "know-all" who picks up a smattering of hearsay knowledge and proclaims himself "the world's Number One authority"; this merely shows that he has not taken a proper measure of himself. Knowledge is a matter of science, and no dishonesty or conceit whatsoever is permissible. What is required is definitely the reverse -- honesty and modesty." ("On Practice" SW 1:300)

There are several aspects of RWL's small circle spirit. 1-The effect of RWL's self-righteous identification of itself with the correct line (it never had an incorrect line), it has a "proletarian kernel" that can do no wrong, it only is "taken in" by or "fall prey to" or "falls victim to" this or that opportunist or swindler or goes from perceptual to rational; 2-its focus on advanced workers as the principal strategic task of party building; 3-its sectarian attitude toward the communist movement; and 4- its unchecked bourgeois nationalism all combine to make for a line on party building that objectively holds that organization is key. In all the above, the Bolshevik makes clear that the main interest the RWL has at this time is in building the RWL. This is what is principal, not building the party. This is nothing but small circle mentality, one of the most dangerous forms of opportunism in the period of party formation. This leads to placing the needs of the small circle above the needs of the party not-yet-born, above the interests of the proletariat. This is what RWL's assertion about having the "correct line on party building" amounts to. They prove nothing so much as the fact that just saying something doesn't make it so.

From discussing the Bolshevik line on party building and the two strategic tasks and fusion, we would like to pass to another aspect of their line, the relation of the party building efforts to the spontaneous working class movement and the role of political line.