

PRACTICE MARXISM NOT REVISIONISM

"...Party struggles lend a party strength and vitality; the greatest proof of the weakness of a party is diffuseness and the blurring of clearly defined boundaries; a party becomes strong by purging itself..."

(Quoted by Lenin in What Is To Be Done? From a letter by Lasalle to Marx, 1852)

The history of the international communist movement has taught us that the party of the proletariat can only be built in a fierce struggle against all forms of opportunism. The experiences of the new communist movement in the U.S. confirms this without a doubt.

In this last period, there has been heated struggle in the new communist movement around a number of key questions, but centering primarily around party building--what kind of party must we build, and how do we build a Bolshevik party in the present conditions of the U.S.? As part of the communist movement, the struggles in our organization have also reflected this.

BOLSHEVIZATION AND THE PETTY BOURGEOISIE

The PRRWO holds that for the most part there is no organization which at this time can claim real ties with the multi-national U.S. working class. As we said in a recent internal document:

"In fact, the material basis of most of these organizations (most especially those that fall in the opportunist wing--RU, OL, Guardian, PSP, IWK, for example) is mainly petty-bourgeois. To a lesser degree this holds true in the genuine wing of the communist movement. We must closely study and grasp this fact. The Bolshevization of communist organizations and parties in the capitalist countries is a deep problem, one which the Comintern addressed itself to in specific principles and guidelines directly aimed at these parties. The Comintern called upon them to base their work on the factory nuclei as the basic unit of the party, to wage a persistent struggle against the traditions of the Second International, which they still held, by expelling opportunist elements from their ranks and intensifying the study of Marxism-Leninism and its application to concrete conditions."

Building off this, we understand that the communist movement based primarily on the petty bourgeoisie is going out of being--what's coming into being is workers joining the communist movement. We must examine how to accelerate this process, what bolshevization means, and what it has meant that the communist movement was basing itself on the petty bourgeoisie. In doing this, we will unfold

some recent line struggles that have led to the resignations of some members of our organization.

People join communist organizations voluntarily. They come from different class backgrounds--primarily the working class and the petty bourgeoisie--and bring with them varying degrees of non-proletarian baggage. This is unavoidable, since we live in a bourgeois society. Communist organizations, therefore, must stress a process of class transformation in the heat of the class struggle. To build up proletarian ideology, we must eliminate non-proletarian ideology. To develop a proletarian, hard-working style, we have to get rid of slackness, complacency and laziness. And to develop the dialectical materialist world outlook, we have to repudiate idealism and metaphysics. This is a protracted and arduous struggle.

We must stress again that remoulding one's world outlook cannot be detached from revolutionary practice. As Chairman Mao says:

"The working class remoulds the whole of society in class struggle and in the struggle against nature, and at the same time remoulds itself."

It is in the process of struggling to change the world that we ourselves change, breaking with all traditional bourgeois ideology. This is in opposition to those idealists, like Yoruba and Iris Guzman, who whine: "I've got to leave to get my head together." These idealists want to go off, avoid the class struggle, and self-cultivate; they deny the Marxist truth that correct ideas come only from social practice.

The process of remoulding one's class outlook is a key part of bolshevization, as is strengthening our roots among the working class, deepening our study and application of Marxism-Leninism and intensifying the struggle against opportunism. In this regard, communist organizations place great importance on discipline. A member of a communist organization accepts the obligation to follow all organizational rules and decisions. Without democratic centralism--without the subordination of the individual to the collective, the minority to the majority, the lower levels to the higher levels, and the entire organization to the Central Committee--we would have anarchy.

The petty bourgeoisie as a class has no future. It is going out of being. Standing between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, it vacillates, often trying to reconcile the antagonistic interests of these 2 warring classes. Oppressed by capital, and forced into the ranks of the proletariat,

whose discipline and consistency it also rejects, the petty bourgeoisie are often driven into frenzy. Lacking consistency, they rush from scheme to scheme; one day, confident that revolution is around the corner--the next day, demoralized, because their dream of an easy way out of oppression was shattered by reality. As a class, they are unable to be steadfast in the twists and turns of the revolution.

The petty bourgeoisie also has a disdain for discipline and ridicules the iron discipline necessary for proletarian revolution. They say it represents the "suppression of the free individual." They attack leadership, democratic centralism, and "formal, mechanistic discipline" in order to mask their opposition to all subordination of the individual. They penetrate the communist organizations and parties with the views, sentiments, morals, and the waverings of the petty bourgeoisie.

Not only the petty bourgeoisie carries this ideology and commits these errors, but the problem is intensified tremendously when comrades have a material petty-bourgeois class base. To attack the problem head on, we must conscientiously carry out the tasks of "struggle-criticism-transformation" and "practice marxism, not revisionism."

With these brief points in mind, let us examine the recent line struggles in the PRRWO.

LEFT ERRORS ON THE KEY LINK TO PARTY BUILDING REPUDIATED

As we pointed out in the last Palante, two erroneous left lines on the key link to party building have recently been defeated in our organization. The first of these lines calls for the merger now of various organizations, idealistically claiming that sufficient levels of ideological and political unity have already been reached--and now it's time to unite organizationally. After much debate over this question, David Perez, the main promoter of this line in our organization, resigned from the Central Committee and has since left the organization --after his efforts to win cadre support for this line failed.

Convinced that he alone was correct and saying that he could not subordinate himself to the Central Committee or to the line of the organization, David Perez provided a clear example of the petty bourgeois individualist, who pays lip service to Marxism, but practices idealism, undermines discipline, and struggles against democratic centralism by practicing anarchy.

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Just as the merger line is a left line that outstrips the given stage of the period in party building that we're actually in--so too is the line that the "key link to party building is factory nuclei." Repudiating this line, we said in the last Palante:

"We believe we must fight today for the establishment of the basic unit of the party, the factory nuclei, especially in capitalist countries where the factory nuclei is essential for the Bolshevization of the C.P.--this being a most key aspect of the work which must be done in the organizational sphere of the Party. However, to say that it is the key link presupposes that unity on line has been reached, thus winding up in unity with the merger line."

We hold that the key link to party building is the fight for the application of Marxism-Leninism to our concrete conditions (See last Palante). And we have seen how in the struggle for application of line, assorted opportunists and vascillating elements who hid behind some Marxist-Leninist phrases have been flushed out.

HISTORY OF TWO OPPORTUNISTS WHO COULD HIDE NO LONGER

As many comrades know, Pablo "Yoruba" Guzmán and Iris Guzmán have left the PRRWO. Neither of the two were principled and laid out to the organization their real reasons for leaving--but since then their line has become apparent. (In this article, we focus primarily on Yoruba, since of the two, he has spoken out most--but they have both made it clear that they are totally united on line.)

Yoruba, was one of the founding members of the YLO, and we recognize contributions he has made in the past. At the same time, it becomes clear now, that throughout his history, he has not been open and aboveboard, but continuously tried to promote himself and his achievements.

As the organization developed from a lower to a higher level, the struggle against Yoruba's individualism and ego also moved to a higher level. Coming from a petty-bourgeois class base Yoruba was an idealist and a romantic--longing for the "good old days" of the YLP. Romanticizing the past and glorifying his own role, he denies that the YLP, progressive as it was for its time, had been characterized by the worshipping of spontaneity, the belittling of theory and the conscious element. Instead, he claims that we had a dialectical relationship between theory and practice and that he was one of the people who represented this position all along.

Historically, Yoruba has been a social pacifist. By his own admission, he believed in evolution not revolution. He said he didn't feel antagonistic contra-

dictions with the bourgeoisie and was concerned about "living better," and "having something to fall back on"--like a college diploma. From this line of evolution--the theory of peaceful transition to socialism--flowed everything else. If you don't have antagonistic contradictions with the bourgeoisie, you will unite with them and even see some of them as part of the United Front. Yoruba, in fact, said the Black bourgeoisie was in the United Front and that small capitalists were in another class--not part of the bourgeoisie. In these points, his line remains very similar to that of the RU. Although Yoruba claimed to have repudiated this revisionist line on evolution after struggle, today it is clear that he has not.

Like a typical petty-bourgeois centrist, Yoruba has also tried to reconcile the interests of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Rather than dealing with the Marxist-Leninist responsibility of sharpening the antagonistic contradictions between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, he has tried, and continues to try to blunt these contradictions--to combine the two antagonistic world outlooks and interests into one. Centrism is opportunism.

For example, while in the organization, he argued that only the monopoly capitalists are expropriated by the proletarian revolution--that the smaller, non-monopoly capitalists are not expropriated. Marxism-Leninism teaches us that proletarian revolution means the expropriation of all the exploiters by the toiling masses led by the working class. Yoruba's position objectively mirrors that of the "CP"USA (R) which calls for unity with the small capitalists and the "good bourgeoisie" in the struggle against the monopolies.

Today, Yoruba continues to expose his own class interests by defending the small capitalists and petty-bourgeoisie of the Latin music industry, saying that the Latin music industry must be seen as "not a cold-blooded business" like the big capitalists, but as "the fellows from the block."

A staunch individualist and departmentalist, he promoted autonomy of lower bodies in the organization, promoting the anarchist idea that leadership had no say in the life of the lower bodies. In an attempt to weaken centralized leadership, he also promoted the idea that the Central Committee should all be involved in giving leadership to the spontaneous movement directly--rather than seeing the task of leadership as primarily to train the cadres to give leadership to the advanced among the masses--and in that way, the communists would give direction to the spontaneous struggles of the masses.

These attempts to weaken democratic centralism, discipline, and centralized leadership also coincide with Yoruba's line that here in the U.S. we would have to build a "party of mensheviks and Bolsheviks." Marxist-Leninists understand that you cannot build

a "pure" party, but that the utmost attention must be given to sharpening the struggle against opportunism to severely limit the number of opportunists who sneak into our ranks. Yoruba did not want to wage an intense struggle against opportunism. In fact, what he wanted our own organization to be was a loose-knit organization where he could do his own thing.

A die-hard in the struggle to defeat right opportunism, (This was the main danger in our organization following our Congress in 1972 and during our alliance with the RU. Yoruba denies reality, claiming that the "left" has been the main danger since 1972.)--he and Iris continued to worship spontaneity and resist efforts to correct this error long past the point that the organization had begun to give death blows to right opportunism.

Under the guise of "popularizing Marxism," Yoruba also tried to justify watering down Marxism-Leninism into a hodge-podge of slang, characteristic more of the anarchistic petty bourgeoisie and the lumpen proletariat than of the working class. Popularizing Marxism means to use Marxism to make a concrete analysis of a situation, to apply it to solve problems. It does not mean watering it down until every single person--advanced, intermediate and backward--can understand it.

When the YLP and PRRWO were worshipping spontaneity, Yoruba was happy. He flourished during the old period. His class ideas were challenged, but he was able to temporarily hide behind some phrasemongering. As we advanced, fighting to bolshevize our ranks, fighting to apply the science, it became clear that although he had paid lip service to the many criticisms he had received over the years--his class stand remained unchanged. He wanted to return to the old period.

The history of struggle with Yoruba is a long one. At many important points, he opposed Marxism-Leninism and was struggled with as a comrade who has incorrect ideas, in the spirit of "unity, struggle, unity."

Unlike other comrades who are helped to move forward by ideological struggle and criticism, however, all these struggles did not change his class stance. He just backed off and hid out. You can't "cure the sickness to save the patient" if the patient refuses to take the medicine. Yoruba talked Marxism and even pretended to be a "Marxist theoretician," but only to bluff and fool people, especially the youth who he tried to impress with his "revolutionary slickness." But he himself never intended to act in accordance with Marxism, disguised his own position, and did not repudiate his own incorrect class ideas. Until finally, like the coward, he is, he just slinked away in the night.

THE "MARXIST" DISC JOCKEY

Soon after leaving the organization, Yoruba reappeared as

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co-editor and writer for "Latin NY" and a disc jockey on an f.m. radio show. Clearly, prior to leaving the PRRWO, he had made his plans and contacts for this rapid transition to a "media figure."

Attempting to justify his actions, he has approached some cadres and supporters of the organization and told them: that he held a correct line but the "ultra-left bloc" in the leadership beat him down at every point; that he is now dealing with the simultaneity of the tasks of communists by "organizing the upper, middle, and lower petty bourgeoisie"; that the leadership consciously tries to confuse the cadres by summing up and opening struggles against opportunism every few months--this keeps the cadres "paranoid" about left and right opportunism; that the leadership keeps study away from the cadres. He says further: that he is "organizing" and will turn "Latin NY" into a "socialist" magazine; that "Latin NY" has a proletarian base, is read primarily by proletarian youth.*

WHAT IS THE TRUTH?

During the last year, the PRRWO has made important advances, sunk deeper roots among the working class, repudiated dangerous errors, and contributed to the struggle against opportunism in our movement, as well as giving leadership and participating in many struggles of the working class, students and youth. More than ever before, our cadres are armed with the science of Marxism-Leninism. It was exactly this fact that enabled us to grow and make these advances, that enabled cadres to take an even greater part in the ideological struggle in the organization and learn in the heat of the class struggle how to distinguish between a proletarian, revolutionary line and a bourgeois, reactionary line. It was the cadres, for instance, that zeroed in on the bankrupt line and practice of "popularizing Marxism" as seen in Yoruba's article, "Why Inflation," Palante, Vol. 1, #2.

As a matter of fact, Yoruba only paid lip service to the development of cadres and learning from the masses. As the PRRWO developed, and the limelight-seekers couldn't get over on their "personality" alone--Yoruba's relationship to the cadre was characterized by arrogance and his being self-centered. In his analysis of cadre, he was struggled against for sectarianism, emphasizing weaknesses over strengths and calling advanced comrades "backward."

Yes, the class struggle in our organization has been and will continue to be sharp. This is the life of a communist organization. Only a hidden opportunist should get "paranoid" about an ever-increasing vigilance against opportunism. Dialectical materialists understand that the truth can only develop in the struggle against falsehood and for this reason welcome the uncovering

of errors. In the final analysis, only the hidden scabs are thrown into disorder by sharpening class struggle--and on the other hand, the honest forces are steeled in this struggle.

But even granted that Yoruba incorrectly felt that errors were being covered and that he was being "beaten down," this was raised in none of his reports. From his reports we read instead:

"Each meeting has been significant. I can feel the progress and strength. This includes sharp criticism of my negative attitude, outright individualism. It was good for me and us all that the collective jumped on this shit right quick." (report, Oct. 1974)

"The criticism given me at the last meeting, based on weaknesses of my last report and the petty-bourgeois; self-righteous attitude I copped at the previous meeting were right on target. New Year's Day, Iris continued criticizing deeply, exposing much baggage. At this time, I must guard against self-cultivation which would continue not rectifying the problem, but that's secondary to the thing itself, which is individualism in various forms, particularly ego and laziness. The laziness being resistance to personal bolshevization, to work and transformation. Comrades have laid it out; I did not see that at the last meeting, shit was being nipped in the bud, and reacted personally, causing subjectivity. This shit has gone on too long; work watchfulness by other comrades, a self-critical attitude are needed." (report, December 1974)

DIVERTING THE YOUTH

The last point we would like to discuss is the question of Yoruba's "organizing" at "Latin NY." This is a magazine whose primary aspect is bourgeois ideology and degeneracy. It is supported financially by the record companies and dance promoters. Its role, in this period of crisis, increased militancy, and increased dissemination of Marxism-Leninism among the youth, is to divert young people from the militant and revolutionary road.

It encourages, and here we see Yoruba's unity with it, the spread of all kinds of anarchist, do-your-own-thing, sexist, self-cultivating, self-gratifying tendencies to disorient and disrupt the youth movement. It promotes the "consumer mentality" and "consumer society" of the bourgeoisie that supposedly has created well-being and an abundance of things for everyone. Yoruba upholds this vision of the bourgeois society by constantly saluting the "miracles of space-age technology" that bring his radio show to the masses.

The bourgeoisie's attacks on the cultural front are not new; decadent literature and art, films, radio and t.v., advertising of goods, promotion of "Black capitalism," cultural nationalism, etc. Felipe Luciano has been serving the bourgeoisie in this

way for many years now--on the radio, in writing and in films. But just as the people's consciousness and struggle goes to higher levels, so too must the opportunist lackies of the bourgeoisie. Now Yoruba will be performing this function--only this time, to meet the growing consciousness of the youth especially, he will do Felipe one better--he will disguise the bourgeois ideology he is promoting as "Marxism-Leninism." Whereas Felipe never claimed to be a Marxist-Leninist and could go no further then to dish up some "militant" cultural nationalism and reformism, Yoruba will talk about class struggle and the working class--just like the "legal Marxists" of Lenin's time, who believed in a peaceful evolution to socialism, negated the nature of the bourgeois state, and never mentioned what was necessary to achieve the dictatorship of the proletariat.

"POPULARIZING MARXISM"

We would like to list just a few statements that Yoruba has made on the radio to illustrate whose interests he is really serving and how he is nothing but a bankrupt, egotistical opportunist trying to disguise himself:

1. "Actually, I started out in writing and then I went into radio. I'm a multi-media threat to be modest. I get into films, t.v., writing." (WKCR, April 9, 1975)

2. Regarding the struggle against opportunism within the Latin music industry, he interviewed Larry Harlow, who on returning from Africa had said, "I found the African people were friendly, but dumb." How did Yoruba struggle with this racism and sum it up?

"He (Harlow) was very articulate, very good... Larry has a bit of a reputation, you know for having come back from Africa and said certain derogatory statements." (WKCR April 9, 1975--our emphasis)

3. When asked about his show, Yoruba said:

"We are going to be doing a commentary, but not in the kind of way that most people are accustomed to expecting it: sarcastically, with some humor, with some irony. There is alot that is happening in the news; there is alot that is happening that has to be questioned. For example, the Vietnam war which has picked up and Indochina's in the news, and people are hearing about it, but the way we get it, we hear (lower voice) "the tragedy of Indochina," but we should say whoa, whoa, whoa, the tragedy for whom, right? Because in North Vietnam and in Vietnam, for the Vietnamese it's no tragedy. It's a tragedy for the U.S. that has to get out. But when you check that out and when you dig that, you just got to ask... Now you can't come across and say (deep voice) "and then the next sermon in psalm 42", because people know they are being preached to. You got to do it with a little.... so we're going to to and our whole news department is geared that way. So I'll be

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doing, really kind of slipping in the news into the music." (WKCR, April 9, 1975)

"Last week as you know, we talked a bit about Indochina and you see what is happening now. Three cheers in the background, you know, horns and trumpets, the country's been liberated." (WQIV, April 20, 1975)

"It should be made clear that we have a public service announcement from Ho Chi Minh City. The public service announcement is that we have finally won, the presidential palace is ours, the whole country is ours, the next stop is Laos." Another person asked him, "So when do you move?" (meaning, into Laos). He answered, "As soon as they open a salsa bar." (WKCR, April 30, 1975)

This is nothing more than a replay of the Abbie Hoffman-Jerry Rubin, hippie-yippie approach to the class struggle, a belittling of the masses and an attempt to render the class struggle acceptable to the bourgeoisie--to make it a "joke." Obviously, this is what Yoruba means by "popularizing Marxism."

CONCLUSION

The proletarian concept of happiness is struggle, revolution, work and serving the people. But those people who have their heads full of bourgeois individualism, who are obsessed by selfishness can never have their desires satisfied and can never be happy. They resist the

process of remoulding themselves to be Bolsheviks. Yoruba is such a person. He does not live life to better the lives of others, to serve the proletariat, the goal of communists. He lives to better his own life and will serve the bourgeoisie and attack the interests of the proletariat to achieve this.

Since he left the organization, we have been able to check him out further. This is the same Yoruba that we have been dealing with, except that now he is more exposed. If he were just a comrade who was not able to meet the demands of a communist organization and admitted that, it would be understood. But he is not an honest comrade. He is a political swindler. He has been dishonest within our ranks and now goes around running his mouth about internal organizational matters, even discussing with the police the health of our membership. Unable to attack the organization's line, both Yoruba and his class-collaborationist wife, have been spreading rumors, gossip and slander. This is not the work of honest comrades.

As he consciously goes down the capitalist road today, Yoruba continues to teach us much--by negative example. Like all opportunists he stands with the dying classes and therefore has no future.

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