

# O.L.'s "NEW" PROPOSAL

"When we speak of fighting opportunism, we must never forget a characteristic feature of present-day opportunism in every sphere, namely, its vagueness, amorphousness, elusiveness. An opportunist, by his very nature, will always evade taking a clear and decisive stand, he will always seek a middle course, he will always wriggle like a snake between two mutually exclusive points of view and try to "agree" with both and reduce his differences of opinion to petty amendments, doubts, innocent and pious suggestions, and so on and so forth "

V.I. Lenin, One Step Forward, Two Steps Back, Progress Publishers, Moscow, p 200

This characterization of opportunism fits the October League (O.L.) perfectly. Vagueness, diffuseness and elusiveness are the outstanding qualities of the line of this organization. Thus, it is on the most important question facing the communists in this country, the building of a genuine Marxist-Leninist communist party of a new type, that their opportunism is felt most strongly. Proof of this are the two calls to immediately build a party made by the O.L. in the last eight months.

O.L. made its first call in November of last year. In it, they speak of building a party without a program, of electing temporary leading bodies and having the first congress a year after the party has been established. They also stated that they supported the right of the Afro-American nation to self-determination, however, they opposed its right to secession, which, in effect, denied the Afro-American nation the right to self-determination, they called for the creation of an anti-imperialist front, which was called the "vehicle for revolution"; they spoke of "moving labor unions to the left"; they said that "ultra-leftism" was the main danger in the communist movement, that agitation was the chief form of activity. Nothing was said about the role of propaganda, nor of the necessity of concentrating on winning the advanced in this period. Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought was nowhere to be seen.

Criticisms of O.L.'s Menshevik plan rained from all sides. In the following months PRRWO, RWL, WVO, CAP, IWK, MLOC, WC, ATM,

RP among other drew lines of demarcation between themselves and that plan in one way or another. It isn't our intention here to establish the differences which existed - and continue to exist - between the organizations mentioned and ourselves, either in our appraisal of the O.L. proposal or any number of other fundamental questions. Those differences have been raised consistently in this paper. What we wish to point out is the fact that the O.L.'s call was severely criticised by a majority of the organizations in the communist movement at that time. On some questions, such as the absence of a program, the postponement of the Congress, etc. there was unanimity in the criticism. While these polemics were being waged the O.L. maintained virtual silence. It never engaged in the struggle and later on simply announced some changes in their line without any type of explanations. And so now they come up with a "new" call.

In judging O.L.'s new call, we cannot use what is written as a sole basis. After all, one can write anything on paper. To reduce an organization's political line merely to its written formulations may be very intellectual, but not Marxist-Leninist at all. Opportunists, and the O.L. is a consolidated right opportunist group, are experts at reducing differences to "mere doubts, small amendments, and innocent, good intentions," etc. This is what has happened in this case. There have been many changes in the form or letter of the new call, but the essence remains the same Menshevism.

In the "new" call, they put forward the need to formulate a program prior to the party and to hold a founding party congress. They now uphold the right of secession of the Afro-American nation, however, this right is viewed as the only form that self-determination can be expressed. They speak of "replacing the union leadership." The vehicle of the united front has been elevated to the level of strategy. They now hold that right opportunism and not "ultra-leftism" is the main danger. To make this call more attractive, they have added that the need for the party to be built should be based on "the factory nuclei," that it

continued on page 3

continued from page 1

### OL'S "NEW" CALL

should "combine open and secret forms of struggle" that "it practice democratic centralism," that the "emphasis should be to win the advanced," that "propaganda is the chief form of activity in this period," and while you may not believe it, they say that "one should be open and above board in making criticism and self-criticism."

Comrades, all these changes - these mutations in line, omission of previous positions, etc., appear without any explanation of the reasons for the change, without any self-criticism or repudiation of positions which were changed or abandoned. What kind of Marxism is this? What kind of "open and above-board" criticism and self-criticism is this? Changes as drastic as these made by O.L. in its "new" call would, according to Marxism-Leninism, result from one of two possibilities; either 1) the objective and subjective conditions have changed so drastically since last November, in which case the change of positions would be a direct result of the change in the over-all situation, that is to say, "a concrete analysis of concrete conditions," or 2) the previous position must have been incorrect; thus, after a new analysis they would arrive at new conclusions and after a thorough self-criticism and repudiation of previous positions, new ones would be established. However, O.L. does not do one nor the other.

What the O.L. has done is to simply disguise their November call with a little rouge and lipstick, they have painted themselves red. They have made the decision to change their name to that of a party this year, and they are bent on doing it one way or another. Their "new" call is an attempt to stop defection from their ranks. For we must not forget that since November many organizations, collectives and individuals have broken with O.L. and their move to form a party. This is why they have "painted themselves red."

"The dialectics of history were such that the theoretical victory of Marxism compelled its enemies to disguise themselves as Marxists. Liberalism, rotten within, tried to revive itself in the form of socialist opportunism."

The Historical Destiny of the Doctrine of Karl Marx, V.I. Lenin, p. 77 - Marx, Engels, Marxism, Moscow edition

We call upon all honest Marxist-Leninists to wage a relentless struggle against the Menshevik plan of O.L. This struggle must not be limited to an article here and there or a series of forums. These things are important, but they are not enough. Opportunism must be defeated in theory as well as in practice. We must not fall into the petty-bourgeois idealist error of believing that because we know O.L. to be revisionist and have repeated this many times, this will end matters and liquidate the O.L. and its opportunist line. This is pure idealism. The O.L. is alive and kicking. Its presence can be felt in many of the spontaneous struggles of the masses - strikes, protests, demonstrations, pickets etc., in the national movements, especially in the Afro-American movement, and to a lesser degree, the Chicano and Puerto Rican movements. It is in the factory and other workplaces, in the communities, the schools, within the national movements that we must expose and defeat the O.L. if we really are to destroy right opportunism, which is the principal danger we face, the principal obstacle we must overcome in the long and tortuous process of building a communist party of a new type, making a proletarian revolution, destroying the bourgeois state, establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat and building socialism.

"Actions speak louder than words." Let us show in practice that we are anti-revisionist, that we are willing to struggle resolutely against all types of opportunism. Let us not allow that our inactivity aid the O.L. to maintain under its influence honest but confused individuals who sincerely believe that Marxism-Leninism and the O.L. are the same. Let us remember the teaching of Stalin, who said:

"Some people imagine that it is quite sufficient to map out a correct party line, to proclaim it so as to bring it to everyone's attention, to set it forth in general thesis and resolutions and to vote it unanimously, and victory will come by itself, so to say of its own accord. This is a big illusion. Only incorrigible bureaucrats are capable of such reasoning. Fine resolutions and declarations in favour of the general policy of the party are just the beginning, because they only indicate a desire for victory, not victory itself."

G. Dimitrov, On United Front

## O. L.'S NATIONAL CHAUVINISM

The unity of the multi-national working class of the U S can only be possible on the basis of a correct policy in relation to the National Question. A policy based on proletarian internationalism, on the inalienable right of oppressed nations to self-determination including secession, on the struggle for democratic rights of oppressed minorities, on a relentless struggle against national chauvinism and narrow nationalism. In a multi-national state like the U.S., it is the duty of the communists of the oppressor nation to fight incessantly for the right of self-determination and democratic rights of nations and oppressed nationalities, while it is the duty of the communists of the oppressed nations and nationalities to consistently raise the banner of the unity of the working class above all national interests.

On this question, Lenin teaches us that is oppressed nations the internationalist education of workers has to emphasize on the need to advocate the right of secession of oppressed nations. He also teaches us that communist of oppressed nations must emphasize on the second aspect of the question, the voluntary union of nations. Without this there can be no internationalism.

The OL attempts to camouflage its national chauvinism by pretending to be the champions in the defense of the Afroamerican nation as well as of the democratic rights, especially of the equality of language, of the national minorities. But if we scratch a little beyond the surface of the high-sounding phrases of the OL, we find out that in practice they still have a chauvinist position on both questions. Their opportunist stand does not, in any way, aid in forging the unity of the multi-national proletariat, but on the contrary, it reinforces divisions among the proletariat on the basis of national origin, cultural manifestations, etc. A specific example will help make this point clear.

### OL AND THE EQUALITY OF LANGUAGES

The OL brags that:

"The October League publishes its newspaper, The Call/El Clarin in two languages. This fact is an example of a basic Marxist-Leninist principle -upholding the equality of languages. Revolutionaries attach such great importance to this question because of the close link between imperialist oppression of languages and nations."

The Call - 6/7/1976 page 6.

In this issue the OL declares itself the defender of the "equality of languages." But in practice in that same paper, this equality expresses itself in this peculiar way. The Call usually consists of 12 pages, 8 in English and 4 in Spanish. It seems that to the OL all languages are equal, except that some are more equal than others. To the lack of proportion between the number of pages in English and Spanish, one has to point, the selection of articles the OL chooses to translate. In Spanish, the most economist of the economist articles that appear. Also, those dealing with some of the national movements. In fact, the series that was recently published on the State and Revolution does not appear in Spanish.

This opportunist practice of trying to win over elements of oppressed minorities by appealing to their patriotism and nationalism is one of the characteristics of right opportunists. Notice also how WVO imitates the OL in publishing a small part of their paper in Spanish and of including in this part the most nationalist and economist articles. We see how in their last issue of "Workers Viewpoint" they include in the Spanish part two articles about the Chicanos and one article on the hospital strike, while in English, besides those articles there also appear a series of polemics with PRRWO-RWL and a whole supplement against the OL.

We need more than resolutions to fight opportunism; in order to put an end to it, we need revolutionary practice.

As usual, those who imitate try to surpass. WVO, in fact, surpasses the OL's opportunism when they put on the Spanish front cover, the two articles about the Chicanos, while in English front cover, they had the articles on the Miners' and Hospital strikes.

It is clear that we cannot accept flimsy excuses such as "we can't translate it all because the paper would have too many pages and would be too expensive" or "it's very hard to find somebody to translate." Those are superficial questions which are in effect putting technical and organizational questions over the question of line and principle.

It's important that we point out that the OL article we are referring to was one which was published in the edition to be distributed during the Puerto Rican Day Parade which took place in New York City this past June. It is obvious that this was published to attempt to attract Puerto Ricans to the OL base on the defense of the language not on the basis of Marxism-Leninism Mao Tsetung Thought. Notice that the OL marched in that parade with the revisionists of PSP and the "C" PUSA in the so-called "Peoples' Contingent". And they still insist that there's no unity with revisionist with them.

The demand for "equality of languages" is a demand that should be raised by all Marxist-Leninists and all advanced workers and revolutionaries in this country. We can correctly put this into practice by demanding that meetings take place in as many languages as necessary, that contracts be translated, that all jobs applications, complaints, etc. be made up in the languages spoken by the workers. We can also raise this demand in the area of education - bilingual, bicultural programs, and many other areas of our communist work where this demand becomes precisely and clearly in a way to foster the unity of the workers of different nationalities.

As for ourselves, we have for five years published RESISTENCIA in two languages and except for those articles from the classics of which no authorized translation exist (this is frequent in the case of articles by Stalin or articles taken from other publications such as the one taken from Claridad), we publish the same articles in both languages. The same has been true of our practice with other publications or reprints of Marxist-Leninist works.

**Marxist-Leninists,**

**Unite and**

**Win the advanced**

**to communism!**

# O.L. ON THE STATE

The O.L.'s liberal views on the bourgeois state have constituted a clear line of demarcation between the O.L. and the communist movement. Although the O.L. has desperately tried to cover for its right opposition, their justifications have been nothing but further deepening of those lines of demarcation. On the issue of bussing for example, after denying for more than a year that they called for the federal troops to protect the rights of Afro-Americans in Boston, they try to justify such actions by stating in their "theoretical" journal:

"What do you do when a fascist lynch mob is attacking Blacks? Do you promote armed self defense as the basic strategic line, while at the same time tactically taking advantage of contradictions in the enemy camp by demanding that the police break up the fascist gangs and provide effective legal protection (O.L.'s emphasis). Or do you rant and rave against "relying on federal troops" and do nothing whatsoever except distort the position of the Marxist-Leninists (who never called for "relying on the bourgeois state" in the first place)?"

CLASS STRUGGLE, # 4-5, p. 10

And the O.L. goes on to say that of course the answer to this is obvious, they called for the troops. And, of course, according to them, this is not "relying on" the bourgeois state! The O.L. thus justifies its calling for federal troops by saying that it is not relying on the bourgeois state, and by opposing its own right opportunist line with that of the "left" opposition as if those were the only alternatives.

We ask the O.L., what are federal troops, if not PART OF the repressive apparatus of the bourgeois state? Didn't they finish "studying" Lenin's The State and Revolution? Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung thought teaches us that the state is an organ of oppression of one class by another, that the state apparatus serves the interest of the ruling class. However, the O.L., by affirming that the police can "break up the fascist gangs and provide effective legal protection" is in effect saying that the state is not really an organ of oppression of the ruling class, that its repressive apparatus can serve the oppressed class also! Is this Marxism? No. This is reformism, petty bourgeois illusionism, and an outright betrayal of the interests of the working class by fomenting the bourgeois illusion that the racist attacks upon Afro-Americans are simply "excesses" of the bourgeoisie, or rather of sectors of the bourgeoisie. In the true Menshevik tradition, the O.L. does call for relying on the bourgeois state to give "effective legal protection" from the bourgeois state to the oppressed class.

## ON STRATEGY AND TACTICS

To further justify itself, and further draw lines of demarcation, the O.L. implies that it was secretly calling for armed self defense as a strategy, but that tactically they called for the "effective legal protection". Again the O.L. rejects the teachings of MLMTT on the question of strategy and tactics. Comrade Stalin says "Tactics are a part of strategy, subordinated to and serving it." And further:

"A most important function of tactics is to determine the ways and means, the forms and methods of fighting that are most appropriate to the concrete situation at the given moment and are most certain to prepare the way for strategic success."

(Concerning the Question of Strategy and Tactics of the Russian Communists, Stalin, Vol. 4)

"On the one hand, the bourgeois and particularly the pettybourgeois ideologists, compelled under the weight of indisputable historical facts to admit that the state only exists where there are class antagonisms and the class struggle, "correct" Marx in such a way as to make it appear that the state is an organ for the reconciliation of classes. According to Marx, the state could neither arise nor maintain itself if it were possible to reconcile classes. According to the pettybourgeois and philistine professors and publicists it appears - very frequently they benignantly refer to Marx to prove this - that the state does reconcile classes. According to Marx, the state is an organ of class rule, an organ for the oppression of one class by another it is the creation of "order", which legalizes and perpetuates this oppression by moderating the conflict between the classes. In the opinion of the pettybourgeois politicians, order means precisely the reconciliation of classes, and not the oppression of one class by another, to moderate the conflict means reconciling classes and not depriving the oppressed classes of definite means and methods of struggle to overthrow the oppressors...

.. "That the state is an organ of the rule of a definite class which cannot be reconciled with its antipode (the class opposite to it), is something the petty-bourgeois democrats will never be able to understand. Their attitude towards the state is one of the most striking manifestations of the fact that our Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks are not Socialists at all (a point that we Bolsheviks have always maintained), but petty-bourgeois democrats with near-Socialist phraseology." The State and Revolution, Lenin, FLP Peking, pp8-9



It is clear that tactics cannot be divorced from strategy as the O.L. would have it. How can calling for federal troops fomenting the view that you can expect "effective legal protection" from the state, aid in the armed self-defense of Afro-Americans? Besides this inconsistency the O.L. muddles strategy and tactics. Armed self-defense is a form of struggle, a tactic itself.

So all the O.L. is doing is feeding the masses the bourgeois democratic illusions of reformism, constituting themselves into an obstacle to the proletarian revolution in this country while trying to cover this up with rethoric about strategy and tactics and raising the left' to justify its right opportunism.

In general, O.L.'s reformism has been repeatedly opposed in the communist movement so much so that O.L. has felt the need to conjure a way of appearing as Marxists on the question of the state. To do so they have chosen to run a series of articles in the Call on Lenin's The State and Revolution. They fool no one. The O.L. pays lip service to the principles of MLMTT on the question of the state. Although in words the O.L. talks of the dictatorship of the proletariat, in deeds it shows that it does not believe that the bourgeois state has to be completely abolished, and instead call for utilizing the state to protect our democratic rights, in the guise of "utilizing the contradictions in the enemy camp" relying on one part of the state against another.

## ON "OPEN AND SECRET WORK"

Finally, the O.L. in its "new" call for the party says that "The Party must combine both open and secret work." But the O.L. in words is not the same as the O.L. in deeds. Again flowing from its liberal views on the state, relying on the "good" side of the state which can provide "effective legal protection" for our democratic rights, relying on the part of the enemy camp which is in contradiction with the "bad" side of the state, the O.L. thinks nothing of illegal forms of struggle. Why should they, after all, if the state can protect them? So, they publish the names of workers which they interview in the course of strikes, publish pictures of cadre or sympathisers in ongoing work such as in workshops in their Fight Back Conference (the Call Vol. 4 #5 pp 4 and 5 and Class Struggle Vol 4 #5 p 70), as well as the names of their Central Committee members and other collaborators to their journal.

All of these examples are a manifestation of their social-democratic style of work which is in line with their views on the state as a liberal organism, an "above class" agency which can serve the oppressed class. This puts in danger the security of the members, sympathisers and any contacts of that organization. This social-democratic style of work is also an indication of O.L.'s halfhearted aim at revolution. One that endangers the security of its members, the possibility of serious Bolshevik work, and the very existence of the Party. They can in no way be said to have their real interest in the proletarian revolution, but can only be called Mensheviks, content with curbing the "excesses" of one of the sectors of the bourgeoisie, content with pushing reform, not revolution.

