

sense up—nothing can justify it. Our movement, if it is serious, can tolerate almost anything but this.

Of course, one should take into account the intensity applied in pursuing criticism, or differences. Not every matter is a question of life or death. A member should always be prepared to compromise on matters of secondary importance. Not every difference is a matter of principle. On matters of fundamental questions one should pursue things to the end so to speak. For example, if the party or a member was opposed to the principle of the dictatorship of the proletariat, this a fundamental proposition. Fight for it all the way. Whether to have this picket line or that one, would not be a question to go all out on. Don't turn the party into a perpetual battle field over every question. In many cases the other fellow's judgment is as valid as yours. If, in the event, things prove you right, the party will have another chance to do it that way.

We have been a flexible movement till now. This has been good. We still must be flexible, but we must tighten up. We must demand more from one another. We are under attack. People face long jail sentences. Can we continue to accept slovenly political work or attitudes? Can we slide over or shy away from criticisms? Do we not have to be more disciplined; spread our influence among the masses; raise, through consistent study, our ideological level? Can anyone of us be satisfied with ourselves or with one another? This is not the signal for a ruthless purge, etc. But it is a call to put into practice a rational, scientific method of work; to do in a healthy way what most of us already believe.

In our short existence we have had virtually no organizational expulsions or punitive actions. *This is good!* Our people in general have grown, but not enough. We will be ruthless with agents within our ranks. We will save our ruthlessness for them. With one another, we will, in a patient, constructive way, demand higher and higher levels of participation and devotion, until we justify the term "vanguard." We will not become automatons, unable to consider personal problems, etc., but we will try and give every consideration to the party. The party is and must become first and foremost in our lives.

We have picked up the banner of patriotism and revolution. It is we who are acting in accordance with the desires of the U.S. workers. But we have no allegiance to a corrupt dying system, led by a ruthless, vicious class.

Road to Revolution—I

MARCH 1963

U.S. Workers Require Revolutionary Theory

Two paths are open to the workers of any given country. One is the path of resolute class struggle; the other is the path of accommodation, collaboration. The first leads to state power for the workers, which will end exploitation. The other means rule by a small ruling class which continues oppression, wide-scale poverty, cultural and moral decay and war.

The task of Marxist-Leninists is to lead the working class in its conflict with the oppressor class; to destroy capitalism's grip on the people—ideologically, politically, economically; to defeat it. In order for a vanguard to accomplish this, it must be free of the ideology of the ruling class. It must have a strategy, based on the science of Marxism-Leninism, that takes into account the general development of the science and understands the particular circumstances of any given situation.

Marxism-Leninism has always been under sharp attack by the entire international capitalist class. They have always sought to undermine the ability of the science and its practitioners to win the working class and other key sectors of the population. Yet, despite every conceivable obstacle placed in the path of Marxist-Leninists by the ruling class, one billion people are now in the process of creating their socialist societies.

Fear of Revolution Sparks an Imperialist Counteroffensive

The decline of the world capitalist system has been so rapid that imperialism has renewed and invigorated an all-out drive against Marxism-Leninism, hoping to keep the rest of the world from revolution and socialism; and to subvert, roll back, crush and destroy countries that have moved to socialism or that have won independence from colonial rule.

The imperialists of the United States have for the past twenty years assumed the leadership of this drive. They hope to accomplish what Hitler and company failed to do: establish their political and economic hegemony over the capitalist world, then use this powerful base to dominate the entire world.

When applying intense pressure, intimidation, confusion or plain corruption in the past, imperialism has been able to win adherents from the Marxist movement to its side. Now the situation is more desperate than ever for imperialism. There is a powerful socialist and anti-colonial system in the world which has the potential power to crush imperialism.

In order to reverse the historical trend to national revolution and socialism, U.S. imperialism has mounted a significant counter-offensive. This counter-offensive has many components, including: a mighty military build-up of nuclear and conventional armaments in the United States; a determined effort to subvert, take over and contain colonial and national freedom movements around the world; an active policy of counter-revolution in regard to the socialist countries; support for fascist forces all over the world (most notably the rearming of West Germany with nuclear weapons); a consistent attempt to compel "allies" to follow blindly U.S. imperialism's policies; and finally, a massive ideological campaign directed against the people of the world in general and the socialist camp in particular. The content of this campaign is that: U.S. imperialism is a force for peace, a force for freedom, a force for people's welfare; if imperialism has shortcomings, they can and will be overcome; that U.S. imperialism is itself the most progressive social system in the world. But the key force of the argument imperialism uses to "convince" the world of its new "beautiful" nature is the force of its nuclear weapons and its threat to use them.

Fear of Imperialism Sparks Revisionism

Confronted by this offensive many important elements in the international Marxist movement have resurrected revisionist political positions that were buried many times in the past. Some of the main premises of the classic revisionism of Bernstein and the Second International are presently reappearing in transparent disguises, namely: that the state in a bourgeois society is above

classes and mediates the class struggle, and that revolution is no longer desirable or necessary, especially in the advanced countries where parliamentary democracy provides the vehicle for an evolutionary and gradual transfer of power to the working class.

The defeat of these false concepts in the past removed an important stumbling block and made possible the triumph of the Russian Revolution.

Four other revisionist ideas that must be dealt with today by Marxist-Leninists are:

(1) that U.S. imperialism will not wage war because of the catastrophic effects of nuclear weapons; that the "sober circles" dominating bourgeois society are "rational"—meaning they are not guided by class interests and not subject to the objective economic laws of society as outlined by Marx and Lenin;

(2) that all wars, no matter what their size or character are bad, since any one may escalate into a nuclear war;

(3) that in time the USSR will have such material wealth that underdeveloped countries will be irresistibly attracted by its example, and this will be the primary reason for their moving into the socialist camp; that the USSR, by extending large-scale aid to bourgeois nationalists, can use this aid to win them to a socialist outlook; that the tremendous success of socialism will capture the imagination of the workers in advanced capitalist countries to such a degree as to guarantee a socialist transformation there;

(4) that since U.S. imperialism can prevent economic crises it has no need to expand and can disarm of its own free will; that armaments are not a necessary part of imperialism but hurt its profit position and therefore that a welfare state can be established in the U.S., mitigating the class struggle at home.

Such revisionist fallacies have the effect of sapping the revolutionary will of the people to struggle in the face of imperialism's mounting aggression.

Which Path—Revolution or Revisionism?

A great debate has broken out in the international movement. The outcome of this decisive debate will determine to a great degree the character of the class struggle in every country in the world.

The nature of the class struggle in our country is a very im-

portant factor for the workers of our country and also for the workers of the entire world. If the workers in our country can defeat or weaken their own ruling class then the path to freedom and peace will be easier for all other workers. The more workers that defeat imperialism in their own countries the easier it will be to defeat the U.S. ruling class at home. Therefore the line that prevails internationally will affect the class struggle in every country, including our own.

Obviously, if the international working class takes the line of collaboration with U.S. imperialism the U.S. ruling class will be greatly strengthened. It will be better able to conduct class war against its workers. U.S. workers are more and more paying a stiff penalty for the class collaborationist policies that have been carried out at home by their union leaders and by the leaders of the Communist Party for the last twenty years.

Consequently, the dispute in the international movement is not merely a political debate but a matter of life and death for millions of people. The fundamental question is whether a revolutionary line is to be adhered to and strengthened or weakened and abandoned. Revisionism, which always describes itself as a "creative development of Marx and Lenin based on new circumstances," has always been the first step in the abandonment of revolution itself.

Origins and Results of Class Collaboration in the United States

To build a serious Leninist movement in our country it is necessary to understand what has been the dominant weakness of the U.S. communist movement.

From the earliest days of the communist movement in the United States to the present, revisionism and its political manifestation, class collaboration, has been the chronic weakness.

Revisionism has usually been identified with individual leaders: Lovestone, Browder, Gates. But revisionism, which permeated the entire fabric of the Party, could not be uprooted by the mere removal of its chief spokesman. The C.P., still led today by many who led that party together with Lovestone, Browder and Gates, stands as a fitting memorial to their ideas.

Revisionism always came forward in this country based on the theory of "American exceptionalism," that the development of capitalism in the U.S. was different than in other countries; that a revolutionary outlook was not necessary: for the U.S. imperialists, it was claimed, were different from other imperialists, as they did not follow an expansionist policy. Enlightened capitalists, they could make automatic concessions to their own workers. Therefore, there could be an evolutionary path to socialism rather than a revolutionary one.

These illusions were fostered by the rapid development of American imperialism after World War I—from 1920 to 1929 it exported the then unheard of amount of \$20 billion capital. This unprecedented expansion gave the U.S. ruling class the maneuverability to buy off sections of its working class. And this, despite some resort to violence, was the policy followed even in the most severe times of depression.

After the expulsion of Lovestone, the Party developed a militant pragmatic approach which appealed to workers during the Depression and produced a mass base for the C.P. But even at that time there was no long range revolutionary strategy developed which could sustain the Party when the objective conditions of the Depression changed.

Nonetheless, by utilizing its militant pragmatic approach the C.P. was able to recruit tens of thousands because of its hard-hitting fight for reforms. The C.P. fought for social security, industrial unionism, unemployment insurance, wage and hour laws, public welfare and all the other gains credited to the New Deal. And, of course, the Party, standing on the side of bourgeois democracy, was in the forefront of the anti-fascist struggle.

The CPUSA played a heroic role in this period among American workers, defending the Russian Revolution and its gains. As such, it was the sole group in this country that opposed the attempts of U.S. imperialism to "strangle the baby in its cradle."

Of special significance, in its defense of Negro victims of white ruling class oppression and its writings on this matter, the C.P. heightened the social consciousness of the country as a whole to a level unknown since the Civil War era.

On balance, despite thousands of devoted revolutionary-minded members, the C.P. was a party of reform not revolution. Earl Browder, who led the C.P. in its most influential period, later aptly characterized the Party's revisionism:

