

In Defense of DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM

Part 2

December, 1976

We realize there is a keen interest in the question of democratic centralism in our movement. Many forces have had bad, and even nightmarish experiences with gross violations of democratic centralism by various organizations in the Communist movement. Yet open polemics, or even summing-up of experiences on this question are very rare. So taking a scientific approach to such important questions as defining the Marxist-Leninist principle of democratic centralism, and applying it, is something many in our ranks have been thirsting for. The distortions of democratic centralism in the PRRWO, for example, especially in waging line struggle, were a contributing factor in the split of the original BWC. But this has never been summed up. While verbally explaining the two-line struggle on democratic centralism in the WC, we have encountered a somewhat unexpected eagerness to deal with these questions. We are convinced that our experiences can contribute to the development of a correct line on democratic centralism, which will aid the genuine forces in our movement, since organization is a component part of party-building. We also hope to encourage other people to sum up their own experiences in this area. Rather than merely repeating or summarizing Marxist-Leninist teachings on democratic centralism, we can best contribute to the development of a correct line by showing how our line developed, on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, in opposition to the incorrect line of the present WC leadership.

One of the main questions in the struggle in the old BWC was the question of organization. The forces that formed the Workers' Congress vowed to put an end to the amateurishness and primitiveness in organization that so greatly hampered our ability to carry out our tasks. Lenin's great work ONE STEP FORWARD, TWO STEPS BACK (OSF, TSB) was upheld as putting forth the organizational principles of a Marxist-Leninist party, and it was proudly declared that democratic centralism was to be the organizational principle of the WC. To emphasize the necessity to bolshevize our ranks, the timely slogan, "Organization is Key", was raised, much to the chagrin of all the amateurs and tailists in our movement who scoffed at it and tried to play on their own cadres' lack of ideological training by confusing the word "key" with the question of tactical leadership "key link." The motion of the WC was, at least on paper, a good beginning.

But whether or not the WC would adhere to Marxist-Leninist principles of organization in practice was another matter. The actual tasks of bolshevizing the organization remained to be done. Just as the Iskra plan had been upheld in words but obstructed and finally scrapped by the present opportunist leadership of the WC, proletarian principles of organization were resisted at every step by these same opportunists.

The WC opens a polemic in the October 10, 1976 COMMUNIST against the former New York district by informing us, "It is an elementary lesson of struggle that to declare a battle is not to win it." They

then go on to present what on the surface appears to be a dialectical and historical link between the struggle against the right wing of the BWC and various struggles in the WC that have led to a number of resignations and expulsions from the organization. And, as is to be expected, they characterize all the lines opposed to theirs as mere variants of the right line in the old BWC, and all of their struggles against these lines as continuations of the struggle against right opportunism, including the struggle of the present leadership of the WC against the New York district. In fact, we are even branded as the "best example" of local circle autonomy!

Perhaps this literary trick is impressive to those who know little or nothing of the history, line, and practice of the WC. And certainly the WC leadership is relying on the ignorance of much of the communist movement about the WC in order to get over with this stuff. But for those who have either been in or around the organization, what is at first most striking about this article is its absolute distortion of the history and content of the two-line struggle in the WC, both by leaving out huge chunks of it, and by outright lying about what it preferred not to ignore. Any honest revolutionary who wanted to take up the struggle against revisionism in a principled and open and aboveboard way would have to present the various stages and development of the struggle, run down the two lines at each key point, and draw conclusions based on this analysis. This is precisely the method Lenin used in OSF, TSB, where he proceeded from a detailed and careful evaluation of the minutes of the 2nd congress of the Russian party in order to fully expose the bankruptcy of the Menshevik line on organization. In fact, Lenin even attacked the Mensheviks' fear of analyzing these minutes and directly addressing their contents because this would openly expose them. He said that the Menshevik "Martov now finds

the facts of our struggle at the Congress so unpleasant that he tries to slur over them altogether." (OSF, TSB, p.14 *) It would not be stretching the analogy between the present opportunist leadership of the WC and the Russian Mensheviks too far to point out that the WC opportunists likewise dread laying out the real history and content of the two-line struggle on democratic centralism lest they, too, would be unmasked as the petty-bourgeois democrats they really are. Moreover, their article against us is a consciously dishonest hack job which even includes the lying accusation that "the former N.Y. district attacks the line of the Chinese Communist Party" on the international situation, a cheap attempt to pass off the bankrupt WC line as that of the C.P.C. This kind of two-sentence analysis of major issues and lines is similar to the unprincipled method of polemics employed by the WC's opportunist allies in the OL. Further, by slinging the charge of "circle spirit" at us for persisting in our struggle against right opportunism and putting out our views clearly, the WC merely echoes the charge made by Martov of "circle politics" against Lenin and the Bolsheviks for attempting to clearly demarcate the various lines and groupings at their 2nd congress. (OSF, TSB, p.14)

Well, then, just what are the facts? In order to understand the two lines on democratic centralism, in order to see just who stands guilty of circle spirit, we must lay out in some detail the content and history of the various struggles in the WC around democratic centralism. This article shall summarize the three major struggles around democratic centralism that took place in

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the WC, show how the right opportunist line was victorious in each of these struggles (including the struggle of the NY district, around the May Day directive) and show how the opportunists in the WC were merely continuing the same old rightism that characterized the opportunists of the old BWC. It should become clear from this article that in practice the WC was never established on the basis of democratic centralism, and that from day one of the organization the opportunist in leadership opposed any attempt to begin bolshevizing our ranks and implementing democratic centralism. By laying out the main lines of the three major struggles around democratic centralism, we shall show that, at each step, the present leaders of the WC turned Chairman Mao's teachings on party discipline on their head and actually advocated subordinating the organization to the individual, subordinating the majority to the minority, subordinating the higher level to the lower level, and subordinating the Central Committee to a section of the membership.

In ONE STEP FORWARD, TWO STEPS BACK, Lenin described the main feature of the opportunist line on organization held by the Mensheviks this way, "The important thing here is to note the undoubted tendency to defend autonomism against centralism, which is a fundamental characteristic of opportunism in matters of organization." (p.192) Beyond all shadow of doubt, this characterization fully applies to the opportunists in the WC. As we shall show, they promoted, defended, and supported autonomism on virtually all aspects of organization. Both autonomism "from below" -- individual cadre, districts, lower levels, minorities of cadre, working as they pleased, not bound to follow the line and discipline of the organization, not given unified and centralized leadership, and even forming factions;-- and autonomism "from above" -- leading bodies and heads of committees also not abiding by the line and discipline of the organization, acting in a bureaucratic and commandist way by issuing orders that were not based on the concentration of correct ideas and reliance on the initiative of the cadres and the masses, and actually behaving like a faction at the top rather than leaders of an organization -- marked the organizational work of the WC and helped cripple it from fulfilling its tasks successfully. Both forms of autonomism, from above and from below, while different in form, are in their essence the same, and reflect the individualism and hatred of discipline of the petty bourgeoisie, both among the cadre and the leadership. We shall emphasize the unity of these two types of errors and their common features, since both stem from the same source. The blame for these errors, of course, lies with those who gave incorrect guidance to the organization, and those who spun theoretical justifications to glamorize and defend the most backward state of affairs carried over from the BWC into the WC. Amateurishness and autonomism are inevitable to a certain extent in a new and developing organization. But what differentiates honest errors from outright opportunism is a prolonged defense of these errors and consolidation around their justification. This is precisely what happened in the leadership of the WC.

We have been accused by the WC leadership of "local circle spirit" for not carrying out the May Day directive. Yet we will show that it was, in fact, the present leadership of the WC who actually opposed democratic centralism in every struggle on organizational questions, and that the May Day directive was itself a violation of democratic centralism -- a continuation of the flouting of every basic tenet and Marxist-Leninist principle on organization. Since the struggle around

May Day was a component part of the sharp two-line struggle on organizational matters that existed since the WC was formed, we can only properly show its essence and significance by placing it in the context of the degeneration of the WC.

We have said quite a lot already in our introduction to this section, and there is still much more to say. Let us now turn to the task of actually summarizing the three major struggles on democratic centralism in the WC, showing clearly to all just who had the real opportunist line.

FIRST MAJOR STRUGGLE

The first major struggle in the WC around democratic centralism was initiated and led by comrades from Detroit. This struggle was of particular importance because it took place right at the birth of the organization, and its outcome played a key role in the shaping of events to come. The issues involved in this struggle included a wide range. We shall summarize the two lines on the most important of these -- organizational rules and constitution, relation of various levels to the Central Committee and congress, division of labor between higher and lower levels, and the question of the discipline of members. Its wide scope, including every principle of democratic centralism, gives it even more importance.

The rightist line scored a number of important victories right from the outset of the WC's history. This was primarily due to the depth of opportunism that remained in the WC leadership, held over from the old BWC, but also, secondarily, because of certain errors made in the struggle against that opportunism. The victory of opportunism led to the resignation of almost the entire Detroit district from the WC. And while we do not agree with everything these comrades have done or said, in the main the points they raised were correct, and we shall uphold and defend these points.

Organizational Rules and Constitution

After the split in the BWC and the establishment of the WC, two lines broke out on the question of the need for rules and a constitution to lay out a guiding policy on organization questions. One line, fought for by the comrades from Detroit, who have since left the WC, said that rules and a constitution were needed because the WC was united that democratic centralism is a "weapon to build a party and is the guiding principle for communist organization," and we need such rules to take "a step toward ending our uneven, scattered and disunited existence as a collection of circles and individuals." (p.3 of an unpublished document by Detroit comrades on their resignation from the WC) One would think that such a view would be readily accepted without much fuss in an organization which had as one of its major distinguishing features the struggle against the kind of organizational anarchy that helped wreck the BWC. But quite the contrary was the case. When this line was raised inside the Editorial Board before the Unity Conference, and in subsequent meetings, it was openly fought against by an alliance of the then chair of the center, now expelled, and the present chair of the organization. The opposing line held that we didn't need rules since Lenin had said that before the 2nd party congress in Russia they didn't have enough experience to draw up rules, and that the WC should deal with organizational problems as they came up. Some of the same people who had played a leading role in the struggle against the rightist defense of amateurishness and autonomy in the BWC emerged at the Unity Conference as the opposition against such basic tools of bolshevizing our ranks as rules and a

constitution. After further summing up our own experience in the WC and doing further investigation into the split in the BWC, we have concluded that while the WC leaders were more correct in their presentation of the different political tendencies in the BWC, and in their analysis of our tasks, they, in fact, didn't succeed in winning the other comrades in the organization to their position because of their own opportunism. They could not prevent the total destruction of the BWC because this opportunism led them into an unprincipled factional struggle, a result of their petty-bourgeois careerist ambition.

While our opponents of rules tried to cover themselves by saying that the constitution of the Chinese CP should be our "model" the essence of their line was opposition to concrete steps being taken to develop rules to guide the discipline and structure the WC needed, given its concrete situation which was so obviously not the same as that of the CPC. In fact, their appeal to Lenin for justification actually shows their opposition to Leninist principles of organization. The reason Lenin said that rules were not needed at one point was:

"because the Party consisted of separate circles without any organizational ties between them. Any individual could pass from one circle to another at his own "sweet will," for he was not faced with any formulated expression of the will of the whole. Disputes within the circles were not settled according to Rules, 'but by struggle and threats to resign,' as I put it in A Letter to a Comrade, summarizing the experience of a number of circles in general and of our own editorial board of six in particular." (OSF, TSB, p.188. emphasis original)

This, of course, was during the well-known scattered period of the Bolshevik Party when circle spirit reigned and the party did not yet exist as a unified, national organization, but only as a collection of more or less autonomous circles. Lenin continues,

"In the era of circles, this was natural and inevitable, but it never occurred to anybody to extol it, to regard it as ideal; everyone complained of the disunity, everyone was distressed by it and eager to see the isolated circles fused into a formally consolidated party organization. And now that this fusion has taken place, we are being dragged back and, under the guise of higher organizational views, treated to anarchist phrase-mongering." (p.188. emphasis added)

Well! Is it not fair to say that the appeal to Lenin to justify opposition to rules on the grounds of the similarity between the era of circles in Russia and our situation now is actually an attempt to "extol" such a scattered state, "to regard it as ideal"? And wasn't the WC born in the struggle precisely to put an end to such a wretched state of organizational affairs? The opposition to rules by the alliance of the former and present chairs of the WC actually is a confession to their opposition to ending the primitive state of the WC and bolshevizing its ranks.

Further, the appeal to "lack of experience" is another phony argument. Lenin's writings on democratic centralism marked, for the first time in the history of the international communist movement, the complete and clear formulation of proletarian principles on party organization. These theories concentrated the historical experience of the international communist movement, and continue to guide our organizational practice today. To appeal merely to our own limited, direct experience on organizational matters is a

classic economist belittling of theory and a retreat from orthodox Marxism-Leninism to narrow empiricism. Now, it might seem almost silly to repeat these points for the millionth time, which so much of our movement has claimed to uphold since the 1973-4 struggle against RU's economism, but repeat it we must. The appeal to our "own experience" as a cover for not integrating the universal Marxist-Leninist laws on organization with our own concrete practice glorifies our scattered state and opposes taking concrete steps to change it. Moreover, it shows how the idealist world view of empiricism has still not been overcome in our movement, how errors in organizational line are reflections of errors in ideological and political line, and how the erroneous line that an ideological break with revisionism has in the main been completed in the communist movement both underestimates the still-strong bourgeois ideology in our own ranks, and disarms us from getting to the roots of opportunism by declaring that the struggle against "revisionist bourgeois ideology" is now secondary.

it is primary??

Lenin further explained why there were no rules in the era of circles this way: "It was unnecessary and impossible to give formal shape to the internal ties of a circle or the ties between circles, for these ties rested on personal friendship or on an instinctive 'confidence' for which no reason was given." (p.189) For the party, he concluded, this situation is impermissible. Circle spirit must be overcome before the party was formed and in order to form the party. Yet to oppose formal rules and a constitution is actually to rob the organization of the means to enforce democratic centralism and overcome autonomism in its ranks. Remember that when Lenin said that rules were not needed, neither was democratic centralism. Rules help both formally and in practice to centralize and make uniform the activity of the previously scattered circles. Rules are the way of enforcing and carrying out democratic centralism, and are inseparably connected with it. A loose coalition of circles does not need rules, but a national organization attempting to centralize its activity cannot do so without them. To argue, then, against rules for a national organization like the WC is, in reality, to argue against establishing democratic centralism, against unified and centralized leadership and centralized activity. How else can the duties and responsibilities of the cadres, the qualifications for new members, the relation of higher and lower levels, the apparatus for developing a common, the means of discipline and democratic discussion, etc., be spelled out and enforced but by rules and a constitution?

NB

And let us hear no more about the CPC constitution as "our model." Certainly this document is an excellent one and can serve as a guide. But, aside from the fact that we must integrate the general laws with our concrete situation, (the CPC and the Albanian party do not have the same constitution, nor are theirs the same as the old Bolsheviks', although they all apply the same general laws to their specific conditions), the CPC constitution was not even required reading for new members of the WC, much less a guide to action. It is all too often that opportunists in our movement have spewed out tons of meaningless phrases about how great the CPC is in order to try to get over with a position they are incapable of defending on their own.

In short, the opposition to rules and a constitution actually meant opposition to overcoming the chaotic, anarchistic state of affairs and the local-circle autonomy held over from the BWC. It is a self-exposure of how the opportunists really conceived of the WC -- as another coalition of circles where rules were not essential. It is also noteworthy that since the opportunist line held sway on this question, there was now a basis, a precedent, an opening for the petty-bourgeois democratic line on organization to be consolidated throughout the organization and a green light for the opportunists to continue doing whatever the hell they wanted. This struggle was perhaps the most important one in the WC on organization since this early victory for opportunism meant that the autonomism and chaos of the WC would only get worse and not be rooted out at the beginning. Further appeals to continue this struggle were ignored by the leadership, and thus they avoided an organization-wide confrontation on this issue by squashing it in Detroit. After that, the issue became "lost in the shuffle" of the ensuing chaos, one of the million-and-one agenda items at CC and PSC meetings that never seemed to be gotten to.

The significance of the victory of opportunism on this question cannot be overestimated. It represented a glorification of local-circle autonomy, of the "aristocratic anarchism," as Lenin called it, of the petty-bourgeois academic stratum resulting from its relation to the means of production. Now the door was open to all varieties of autonomism to grow and prosper, for the individualist position to spread and corrode the proletariat's sole weapon in the struggle for emancipation -- organization.

Relation of various levels to the CC and Congress

Fresh from its first victory in reversing the verdicts of the struggle in the BWC, the opportunists in the WC wasted little time in moving forward in their defense of autonomism. The focus of this two-line struggle was to shift at the first CC meeting to the question of the congress, the CC, and the PSC. The question of their relation was made immediate because the original chair of the WC had been suspended from that post because of a secret, adulterous sexual relationship he had initiated with a woman also on the CC, behind the backs of the organization and his wife -- also a CC member at that time. (More on this later.)

The question of the authority and role of the new chair and the PSC was debated at the first CC meeting. And, as on the question of rules, a two-line struggle again broke out between the comrades from Detroit and the present opportunist leaders of the WC. On the question of the authority of the PSC, the comrades from Detroit said they would only accept binding directives from the PSC if the PSC continued the ideological struggle against revisionism, economism, national chauvinism, and right opportunism within its ranks; if these directives were consistent with the line of the CC; and if the PSC acted within the authority delegated to it by the CC. And, again, while these points might have been better formulated, they are still nothing for any genuine Marxist-Leninists to raise their eyebrows at. But not so for our defenders of autonomism. These points were ridiculed as "some kind of bourgeois system of checks and balances" and vigorously opposed. Instead, what we got, as our Detroit comrades put it, was "a defense of the PSC's autonomism in relation to the CC" (p.6, unpublished paper), and, we might add,

in relation to the organization as a whole.

Let us start with the question of the ideological struggle against revisionism and all bourgeois ideology in the PSC. The CPC constitution -- which is so lavishly praised by the WC opportunists, but so totally ignored when it comes to applying its principles to our own organization -- states in Chapter 2, Article 3 that every member of the party must "Conscientiously study Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought and criticize revisionism." This is the first of five qualifications given for party membership, and applies at all levels. Why would the PSC not agree to this qualification for its leadership? Was it more immune to revisionism than every member of the CPC? The present opportunist leadership of the WC claimed that they would of course struggle against revisionism, but that these restrictions were really "compromising the principles of Marxism-Leninism." (Minutes of 1st CC mtg, p.6) In fact it has been they, as we have shown many times, who actually belittled the importance of the ideological struggle against revisionism and compromised Marxism-Leninism in a justification of, and return to, all sorts of economist methods on such key questions of party building as propaganda, program, polemics, and organization. Thus, their rejection of this first point reflected a justification of all the opportunism that was to come. And it reflected a defense of revisionism in ideological and political line that lay at the basis of their wrong organizational line.

The next points, the relation of the PSC to the CC and the Congress, further revealed how their belief of vigilance in the struggle against revisionism was tied to a wrong organizational line. In addition, the outcome of this struggle had a great bearing on the later struggle around May Day. Throughout the first CC meeting, the present WC chair on several occasions referred to the PSC as the supreme body of the WC. And on those occasions he was corrected and informed that, according to every other genuine M-L party and all the positive historical experience of the international communist movement, the supreme body was the congress. Lenin made this very clear in ONE STEP FORWARD (page 192), and the CPC also upholds this in Article 6 of their constitution as one of their organizational principles. In the WC, this would refer to the Unity Conference -- although the lack of rules and a constitution would leave even this in doubt, since nowhere is it laid out that a congress must be called, how to call it, under which conditions, etc. Now, faced with such an open exposure of his wrong line on democratic centralism, the chair soon had to abandon his original line that the PSC was the supreme body. But he had not at all abandoned his defense of the autonomy of the PSC to the CC and the Congress or the relation of these bodies.

The Congress is the supreme body. That is agreed. When the Congress is not in session, the CC elected by it becomes the highest leading body. But the CC is elected by the Congress, and not the other way around. While the CC is charged with, naturally, preparing for and leading the Congress, it is the Congress, which represents directly the will of the party membership, that has the final say as to who makes up the CC. The

minority is subordinate to the majority. The CC, thus, must carry out the line and resolutions of the Congress, applying them to the conditions as they develop between Congress sessions, including, of course, the further development of the party's basic line. When the CC is not in plenary session, the Political Bureau and the Standing Committee (in the case of the WC, the Political Standing Committee), elected by the CC, exercises the functions and powers of the CC. Thus, the PSC is responsible to the CC, and elected by it, and, again, not vice versa. So the PSC is therefore bound ("Oh, what a terrible word!" our opportunists wince) to carry out the line of the CC, and cannot reverse either the CC's line or the line of the Congress. Further, one of the rules laid down by Chairman Mao is that the entire membership is subordinate to the CC. Notice he doesn't say the Political Bureau or the Standing Committee. And Mao was Chairman of the CC, not of the Political Bureau. Thus the PSC of the WC should be viewed, likewise, as required to carry out the line of the CC and the Congress.

But only one class in human society has an ideology that does not shudder at being bound and acting according to iron discipline. And this class, the proletariat, whose name is invoked so often in vain, cannot achieve victory unless its vanguard organization either transforms or rids itself of all those whose individualism, vacillation, selfishness, and other variants of petty-bourgeois ideology wrecks the fighting unity of the party and the working class. All this is elementary. So how should we characterize political leaders who refuse to be bound by the Congress, subordinated to the majority? And what term would be appropriate to label those who refuse to be subordinate to the CC? Why else would they ridicule the attempt at developing organizational rules as "some kind of bourgeois system of checks and balances"? Would it be unfair to conclude that there is a connection between the individualist opposition to rules and the autonomist opposition to binding the PSC to follow the dictates of the Congress and the CC? Certainly we distinguish between those on the CC who opposed the proposals from the Detroit comrades for honest, if wrong, reasons, and who generally uphold Marxist-Leninist principles and line, from the present opportunist leaders of the WC who opposed these resolutions so the PSC could act autonomously and discard the line of the Unity Conference (especially the Iskra plan) when it pleased, and carry out an all-round reversal of the direction of the WC. But it would not at all be wrong to characterize this struggle as one between a defense by the Detroit comrades of Marxist-Leninist principles regarding the relation of various bodies and a defense by the present opportunist leaders of the WC of the autonomism of the PSC.

Defending the autonomy of one committee of an organization, even if it is as high as the PSC, is still a defense of autonomy against centralism. It still subordinates the majority to the minority, and the CC to a section of the membership, no matter which way you slice it. It is totally consistent with the opposition to rules, since both the opposition to rules and opposition to restrictions on the powers of the PSC defend anarchy and chaos in the organization, and leave the petty-bourgeois individualists "free" to "do their own thing". It is to the credit of the Detroit comrades that they raised this question and pointed out the relation between both forms of autonomism.

It is not beyond reason at all for someone to ask just how or if the PSC in practice used this to justify exceeding their authority and, in effect, functioning as a faction. After all, we mainly judge political organizations by their deeds. The clearest example was laid out in the first part of this statement-- the abandonment of the Iskra plan. What the opportunists were fighting for was the leeway to junk the Iskra plan when they felt like it and return to all the discredited, opportunist methods of the past. Their economism and

tailism in ideological and political line, as seen in their abandonment of the Iskra plan, was reflected in their opportunist organizational line, their defense of autonomy. Further, since they could not openly win the organization to their economism, they had to function as a faction at the top. And this is precisely what they tried to justify with their opposition to the Detroit proposals. This point is very important when we examine the issues around May Day.

A word must be added about the comrades from Detroit. They must be criticized for not exposing at this first CC meeting the treacherous history of the present WC chair, with whom they had worked for some time, and with whom many other CC members had little or no direct experiences. Some comrades have since estimated that if the Detroit comrades had spoken up strongly against him, he would not have been selected chair. This same criticism applies to their hesitation in circulating their paper even after they left the WC. Their justification, that they did not want to violate the democratic centralism of the WC, is absolutely ridiculous, since they had just finished exposing how there was no democratic centralism at all in the WC and how the WC stood opposed to the interests of the masses. If they believed their own analysis, then violating the discipline of a bankrupt and worthless organization should have been no barrier. While it is understandable that the agony of having to put up with such an alliance of opportunists created big difficulties for them, they should not have given up so fast on the rest of the WC membership and should have persisted in their struggle. Communists can never be "autonomous" from the struggle against opportunism, from whatever quarter it may come. It is our life-long duty to persist in class struggle, whatever the cost. While we understand the obstacles placed in their way, and understand how they were literally driven out of the WC, it would not be unfair to say that they showed a tendency to withdraw into their own circle and not rely on or trust other comrades.

How could there be d-c with no rules + constitution?

Finally, we must draw attention to the distortions of the issues of this struggle by the present WC leaders. The issue, of course, was not whether the PSC's directives were at all binding, but whether or not the PSC itself was bound by the line of the Unity Conference and the CC. No one questioned that the PSC had all the powers of the CC when the CC was not in session. But our opportunists seemed to obey the saying "when the cat's away, the mouse will play", far more than Marxist-Leninist principles of organization. Further, they resume their distortions in their attack on the former New York district by labeling their own view of the role of the PSC as "centralized leadership", when, in fact, all along they have done everything possible to undermine the development of unified and centralized leadership by undermining the line and powers of the Unity Conference and the CC.

In order to understand the struggle over May Day against the autonomy of the PSC, it is necessary to understand the history of the two lines, something the WC opportunists fear doing. Nowhere in their presentation of this question in their public polemic against us do they even hint at these past struggles, lest their lie -i.e., that our struggle really amounted to one renegade district running its own line and violating discipline, versus the whole CC -be shot to bits. While we must continue with the history of the defense of all forms of autonomism by the opportunists, the reader is advised to note well some of the particularities of this question when we take up the issue of May Day.

Division of Labor Between Higher and Lower Levels

It is history now that the BWC was never organized according to Marxist-Leninist principles. This has all been struggled out many times before,]

especially in the split in the BWC that gave birth to the WC. Among the organizational defects of the BWC was the failure to establish a leading national center. As our Detroit comrades have pointed out, "The CC remained, throughout the period of James Forman's revisionism and after, simply 'representatives' of the local organization and not members of a unified CC." (p. 18). Often it reduced its own role to that of a local body, actually decentralizing the work at a local level and acting in practice as a second local center. All this, of course, conflicted with its task of giving national leadership. Thus the national leadership's activity was often lowered and narrowed to serve the local spontaneous movement. This incorrect division of labor resulted from the BWC's predominant tailism and economism. Bolshevization of the WC would have had to have included a rectification of this state of affairs and an instituting of a correct division of labor between higher and lower levels. But, as with all other questions, the WC failed to correct the errors of the past, and instead continued blindly to trail behind the mass movement in organizational affairs.

Soon after the WC was formed, a struggle broke out over the tasks of the higher and lower levels. Specifically, the present WC chair and others were criticized for maintaining personal contact and individual political work with Marxist-Leninist groups and individuals after the WC was formed. Again, the work was not being centralized, and as had often happened in the BWC, the maintaining of individual ties and political work independent of the plan of the local committee and often contradicting that plan was, as our Detroit comrades characterized it, "plain ultra-democracy." (p. 21) This was a clear violation of Lenin's teaching in "Letter to a Comrade" that there should be only one leading center at each local level. "The committee should, therefore," Lenin said, "include, as far as possible, all the principal leaders of the working class movement from among the workers themselves; it should direct all aspects of the local movement and take charge of all local institutions, forces, and means of the party." (Collected Works, vol.6, p.235, emphasis original.) Clear enough. After a period of struggle, the WC chair claimed he accepted the criticism, although the right was reserved in "exceptional cases" for such independent contact and study to go on. Just what this "acceptance" of the criticism with the option of pursuing independent work in "exceptional cases" meant soon became clear.

The practice of the WC chair never changed on this question, except that the local organization was told about the results of this work. The contradictions again came to a head when a set of questions written by a comrade with whom the WC chair had maintained independent work was printed, with a reply, in The Communist, against the wishes of this comrade and before consulting him, because of a "mix-up" in who had responsibility for overseeing this work. The confusion over the article resulted from the failure to follow a strict division of labor as part of a common plan of work -- specifically in the PSC chair bypassing the local district in this work and pursuing another, different plan of action. The result of this affair was that the contradictions between the comrade who had written the list of questions and the local district were heightened, and the work hurt.

This incorrect division of labor was mainly a lowering of the activity of the higher levels. It violated the Marxist-Leninist teaching that the lower levels are subordinate, not equal to, the higher levels, and that the higher levels must guide and lead, not compete with, the the lower levels. And not only was this ultra-democratic error further pursued in the events outlined by the Detroit comrades, but, as we have shown in the first part of this statement, it was also the basis of the PSC's erroneous plan for separate reporting for the "Friends of The Communist" group, with a separate plan issued by the PSC chair to a contact of the organization, with the New York district bypassed and not even informed of this new plan directly. All this undermining of the local organization and disruption of the formation of a network of agents under

unified and centralized leadership reflects the inability of the opportunists in the WC to resist "doing their own thing" and to abide by a disciplined, planned division of labor. Such division of labor is necessary both to build unified, centralized leadership at the top that leads all the work, concentrates correct ideas, and develops a guiding policy; and to develop strong local organization with unified, centralized leadership at the local level. But this proletarian line on organization, that insists that the lower level is subordinate to the higher level, was always resisted and opposed in practice by the present opportunist leadership of the WC.

Discipline of Members

The final major issue involved in this first major struggle around democratic centralism was that of the discipline of members, specifically, the case of Don Williams. It would not serve any useful purpose for us to more than note that Williams's many degenerate sexual affairs, alcoholism, and other forms of decadence and extreme individualism greatly disrupted and hampered the work of the WC, both during the struggle in the BWC, and after the WC was formed. When his secret, adulterous affair was uncovered, no liberalism could solve this problem. Strict adherence to the principle that the individual is subordinate to the organization was required. And that this question involved the then-chair of the WC made it even more important for a proper precedent to be set in the WC. Yet, although Williams was supposedly disciplined by the CC and prohibited from drinking any liquor, he openly flouted the CC and continued to drink -- among other things. The discipline was not enforced. The present opportunist WC leaders showed themselves to be tolerant of such individualism, revealing their defense of individual autonomy in the organization. Not only was violation of proletarian morality tolerated, but erosion of the iron discipline necessary if we are to succeed in overthrowing the imperialists was also allowed. Thus, again, individualism was permitted to triumph over Marxism-Leninism, and autonomism and anarchy over democratic centralism.

Finally, it should surprise no one that Williams's deceitfulness and individualism, aided and abetted by the other opportunists in the WC, led to severe contradictions with the comrades from Detroit, including his former wife. These contradictions, improperly dealt with by the WC leadership, became antagonistic, but since the WC opportunists had their own brand of individualism and autonomism to sell, they directed their main fire at the Detroit comrades. These circumstances forced these comrades out of the WC.

The lessons we can draw from this first major struggle are obvious. We have shown that right from the beginning of the WC, the present opportunist leaders of the WC opposed every Marxist-Leninist principle of organization. Victories for opportunism were won on many fronts. At first, these victories had to be somewhat concealed. For example, the WC opportunists originally agreed that the Detroit comrades were indeed forced out of the WC, and that the errors were not mainly their fault. This was the verdict of the CC. Later on, however, they began to sneak in their own line that the Detroit comrades never struggled for their views, that they were opportunists, etc. With this they put out their philistine explanation of the struggles in the WC, trying to cover up the fierce struggle against right opportunism that had taken place. By labelling everyone who fought against them as supporters of circle spirit, accusing them of "capitulating to difficulties," and lumping them together with those who had just quit the WC to exit from making revolution, the WC opportunists began an ideological offensive to promote their overall rightist line that resulted in the scrapping of the Iskra plan.

Still, there were errors that the Detroit comrades made. While they

struggled under very difficult conditions, they had a responsibility to the organization, especially to the CC, to expose the opportunist history of the present WC leaders, since many other CC members had had little or no direct experience with them before. This was not done adequately. Further, even after they left the WC, they should have widely publicized their views to help contribute to the struggle to build a party. Their rich experience has many lessons valuable to all oppressed people. They should have relied more on the cadre in the WC and organized to win them over to their line. Failure to persist enough in the struggle, including not distributing their document until many months after they left the WC, only let the right opportunists off the hook and deprived genuine revolutionaries of more ammunition in the battle against revisionism. While the Detroit comrades made many important contributions to the struggle against opportunism, even with the many obstacles that were placed in their way, the errors they made although they were secondary, made the struggle against opportunism in the WC more difficult and hindered the rallying of all serious revolutionaries in the WC in a united effort to defeat the opportunists and set the organization straight.

Could the opportunists have been routed if the struggle had been carried out in a more thorough and protracted way? Most likely yes, since the features of the WC were still being consolidated when this struggle went on, and the vigilance of the cadre was highest then against right opportunism. That these struggles took place so soon after the BWC split created favorable subjective conditions for exposing and defeating right opportunism. Nevertheless, it is academic to dwell on what might have been. The first major struggle on democratic centralism ended in a big victory for opportunism and a defeat for those who really wanted to break with the economism and tailism of the past.

SECOND MAJOR STRUGGLE

The second major struggle around democratic centralism also took place among those who had extensive day-to-day contact with the present opportunist leaders of the WC -- right in the PSC itself. It is a struggle most embarrassing to the opportunists because those with whom they had worked so closely ended up condemning them as right opportunists, with so much evidence to expose them and on such important questions as the internal life of the PSC itself. Of course, the issues in this struggle were not dealt with in their public hack job against "circle spirit" in the October, 1976 COMMUNIST. This struggle was a direct continuation of the previous struggles, involving both similar and different issues, with right opportunism again winning out. As we shall see, it directly involves the question of May Day and why it was the present opportunist leaders of the WC and not the NY district that actually violated democratic centralism around May Day. And, again, its lessons further show how the WC was rotting alive and the pitiful results of how the abandonment of democratic centralism rips an organization apart.

The comrades who waged this struggle were both members of the PSC at the time they resigned from the WC. They opposed the right opportunists on a wide variety of questions, including the bourgeois democratic scheme of a "common editorial policy" (see page 68, NEVER FORGET CLASS STRUGGLE!). For now, however, we will focus only on the two lines on democratic centralism, and on two major questions -- the continuation of the struggle around the Don Williams situation and the internal life of the PSC, including the question of May Day.

The Situation with Don Williams

As time went on, Don Williams continued along the path of degeneration. In addition, he was more and more staunchly defended by Kathy, the woman with whom he had had the secret affair. While Williams' individualism and gross violation of discipline would have been hard to be equaled by Kathy, both were guilty of major violations of organizational discipline and the general requirements for being Communists. Further, the significance of their individualist activity went far beyond their violations of proletarian morality. As a component part of their unrepentant belittling of their errors and refusal to mend their ways, they began to promote an all-around right opportunist program for the WC. They claimed we were "sectarian" to OL and RU-RCP because of the even feeble attempts of the WC to oppose revisionism. They said there were only tactical differences between the different groups that said they followed China and Albania, that virtually no differences of principle existed, and that we should all unite to build a united front against fascism and war, as the 7th Congress of the Comintern did in 1935. By negating the depth and consolidation of revisionism in the communist movement and by belittling the strength of the people and the irreversible trend to independence, liberation, and revolution that differentiates today's world situation from that of 1935, they put forward a plan to liquidate both the struggle for a revolutionary line against revisionism in the communist movement, and the preparation of the masses for revolution. Clearly, then, the relationship of Don Williams and Kathy was not a mere personal one, but a political alliance based on right opportunism.

The further backsliding of these two individuals heightened the struggle between the two lines through dealing with their violations of proletarian morality and discipline. In fact, as the comrades from Chicago pointed out, the struggle over how to deal with the two of them became the major focus of the work of the PSC and helped to prevent the PSC from carrying out its main tasks of building the center and providing direction for the WC on a regular basis. What emerged was a full-blown two-line struggle over whether or not the WC was to be a disciplined, Bolshevik organization, or a loose, useless Menshevik-style group.

As for Williams, he had declared he would refuse to carry out his political work. After submitting an inadequate self-criticism, he failed to meet the deadline for a new self-criticism. The comrades from Chicago held that this open flaunting of discipline and failure to do self-criticism should result in his suspension from the WC. In fact, they even said Williams and Kathy should have been purged or at least suspended immediately after their secret affair was uncovered, because of the years of dishonesty, arrogance, and bourgeois degeneracy that characterized their behavior. But the opportunists who presently head the WC disagreed and came up with a whole series of excuses for not suspending Williams. They claimed that the CC had to be prepared first if Williams was going to be suspended. Now, remember, these were the same people who insisted so strongly on the autonomy of the PSC in relation to the CC. Now, however, they wanted to hold up on a suspension, which would have been well within the authority of the PSC, which assumes the powers of the CC when it is not in session. Here their petty bourgeois individualistic hatred for discipline and love of ultra-democracy and autonomism was again clearly revealed.

The advocating of the PSC's autonomy was a defense of autonomy in general. Thus, when the PSC should have rightly acted to stamp out autonomism and purge the main defenders and unrepentant examples of autonomism from the ranks of the organization, our "only weapon," the opportunists got faint-hearted and cried out in opposition. When it came time to defeat autonomism, which was entirely in line with everything the WC was founded upon and had always stood for, they somehow could not find all that authority they had so fiercely insisted the PSC had. And when it came time to give leadership to the struggle against right opportunism, the WC opportunists displayed a miserable tailism in matters of organization, actually liquidating the authority of the PSC and weakening the role of the organization's center.

Now we see what these tricksters had up their sleeves when they fought so hard for the autonomy of the PSC -- they really wanted the PSC to be "free" to violate the basic line of the organization, to be "free" to defend organizational chaos and anarchy and ignore the basic M-L principles on organization. These opportunists cherished the anarchistic state of affairs in the WC, which gave them room to carry out their own autonomous plans. Thus, they had to rise up as objective allies of the other main defenders of autonomism in order to protect their own narrow interests and be able to pursue their own bankrupt course. Further, they echoed the capitulationist line of Williams and Kathy that denied the existence of principled differences in the communist movement by claiming that whether or not to suspend Williams was a matter of tactics and "political judgment," and not a question of principle, or upholding the organizational principle of democratic centralism. Thus, by virtue of their common line on so many questions, an objective alliance developed between the two blocs of rightists -- the present opportunist leaders of the WC who were in the PSC, and Williams and Kathy. And clearly, this struggle against right opportunism in the PSC was a continuation of the previous struggles to uphold democratic centralism.

Regarding Kathy, she was accorded the same kind of liberalism and tolerance. Kathy supported Williams on almost every point of difference with the PSC. She made no attempt to carry out her assigned task of resolving the contradictions with the ex-wife of Williams. She dished up all sorts of revisionist lines, as pointed out before. She did not do the work assigned her by her district. She stated that 90% of the Black women in the WC did not trust her, trying in a chauvinist way to shift the blame on the Black cadre and raising up narrow nationalism, rather than white chauvinism, as the main danger to multinational unity. She also had been the main proponent of contact and alliance with the highly questionable "COUSM-L." Yet for all this she was rewarded by her opportunist allies. At the second CC meeting, the question of reinstating Kathy to the CC was taken up. The internal struggle against petty bourgeois democracy had now reached crisis proportions. Howard beat his breast in praise of Kathy, hailing her "great virtues," "broadness of view," etc. He was joined in by the other opportunist on the PSC, who had vacillated on this question before, but ended up finding a comfortable home in the rightest camp. Thus, rotten line and all, the CC, in another giant step backwards, followed the opportunists' baton and restored Kathy to the CC.

What is also significant here, aside from the capitulation to autonomism, is the view of the nature of the CC by the opportunists. To them, it was of no concern that Kathy had been so openly pushing a line even to the right of theirs, for the only issue they said mattered in deciding on her reinstatement was whether or not she had begun to mend her ways. What line she pushed, then, was not decisive. This flies in the face of M-L. Chairman Mao taught explicitly that "the correctness or incorrectness of the ideological and political line decides everything." We must suppose, then, that the present opportunist leaders of the WC, in their infinite wisdom, hold that when Chairman Mao said this and summed up the rich historical experience of the international communist movement, that line decides everything, he forgot to add that the word "everything" does not include requirements for a CC member! By belittling the importance of line, the WC opportunists belittle vigilance and struggle against revisionism and expose their social-democratic view of the CC as a bourgeois-democratic coalition of representatives of different lines, factions, and classes, rather than a committee of the best leaders.

Whether or not to purge the consolidated opportunists is a question of whether or not to uphold M-L principles on organization. We do not need or want a tea club where all the professors and bad elements can sit around and debate forever the products of their own individual "genius." Stalin, in FOUNDATION OF LENINISM, clearly opposed the "theory of 'overcoming' these elements within the confines of a single party." While opportunists like the residue of the "revolutionary wing" idiotically misinterpret this to mean that every difference of opinion in an organization reflects consolidated opportunism and should result in a purge, genuine M-L's must adhere to this principle, or else we will cripple the ability of the organization to function in a unified, strong, discipline, and revolutionary way. But the WC opportunists instead sought an alliance with those who should have been purged in order to fight the genuine left wing of the organization.

Today the opportunist leaders of the WC are trying to pass themselves off as the ones who "carried this struggle through to the end." True, in the end, they had to throw Don and Kathy out. But this occurred only after two other important events. The first was the months of open defiance of discipline and the virtual severing of connections with the WC by Williams, supported by Kathy. Williams was in practice no longer part of the WC when the opportunists got around to supporting his expulsion, again miserably tailing events. Second, his expulsion and Kathy's suspension coincided with the wholesale exits of any opposition on the CC to the dominant rightist line. Only after the resignation of the comrades from Chicago between the second and third CC meetings, and the removal of the one NY CC member at the third meeting, did they move at the third CC meeting. The alliance had served its purpose. The two opportunists remaining on the PSC had used their rightist allies against the left. They even kept Kathy on the CC long enough to vote at the third CC meeting to remove the NY CC member.

Now that the left was out, this alliance was no longer needed. The breakup of the alliance of these two blocs of rightists was a falling out of thieves and in no way represented a repudiation of autonomism. Instead, it represented the final phase of the seizure of the WC leadership by the present opportunist leaders and the wrecking of what once was a vibrant, growing group.

PSC's Internal Life -- The Truth About May Day

The struggle against opportunism in the PSC included a struggle against the smashing of its collective unity by the opportunists. This line struggle between the opportunists and the comrades who later resigned from the WC took place in the PSC on almost every important question. The opportunists tried to hush up this struggle against their revisionism by claiming that "fundamental unity of line" mainly characterized the PSC. In response, the comrades responded that disunity mainly characterized the PSC, and that this question could only be dealt with by examining one's deeds, not just one's words. The opportunists further exposed the bankruptcy of their own position by calling for the removal of the other comrades from the PSC, comrades with whom they supposedly had so much "fundamental unity."

The most useful example of many to show how rotten the internal life of the PSC had become and how the opportunists sought to split, not unite, and to intrigue and conspire, not be open and above-board (which flowed from their revisionism) is the example of how the PSC supposedly "approved" the May Day directive. This example will also provide us with the context in which the New York district later waged a struggle against this directive before it was issued to the organization, and that the PSC had thoroughly studied the questions around the directive before they sent it out. Both these statements are outright, conscious lies. We repeat: The May Day directive was not approved by the PSC before it was sent out (nor, as we shall show, did that body as a whole ever approve it), and it was never thoroughly discussed. It was a concoction and scheme of the opportunists in the PSC, represented only in their line, and reflected how they were in fact operating as a faction at the top that ignored the discipline of the PSC, the CC, the basic line of the organization, and anything else other than their own revisionist fancies.

A few weeks before May Day, the PSC set out to discuss a proposal for an activity for the organization. At the first session on May Day, there was to be both study and the discussion of a proposal. One of the opportunists laid out his line and proposal for discussion. The study part of the meeting was limited since one of the PSC members had been unable to get the assigned work since China Books was sold out of it, and another was too ill to attend the meeting. As the meeting went on, two general views started to emerge. The opportunists put out their line that we must "raise the banner of civil war" today and that May Day should focus on this. In opposition to this,

one of the comrades who later resigned said that May Day should be used to begin ideological preparation for a position on war and that what was needed was common study and an organization-wide follow-up. (It should be noted here that the views of these comrades on May Day were entirely in keeping with applying the Iskra plan to the question of war and very similar to our own views.) Since these were supposed to be preliminary discussions, no specific agreement was reached, and everyone agreed that the proposal should be finalized and considered again at the next meeting. Thus only some very general agreement was achieved at this first session, with important specific questions left unresolved until the next session.

At the second session, the final draft of the proposal was presented. At this meeting, one of the comrades who later resigned was unable to attend, by prior agreement of all of the PSC. The chair of the WC had added a long list of books to be read by the whole organization. Essentially, the same objections were raised, that just sending out a shopping list of books did not mean that real study and investigation would or could be done, especially with the short time allowed, and that May Day should be for ideological preparation. But when these objections were raised, the opportunists said that they did not matter, since the directive had already been sent out to the organization in the name of the PSC! Then, in a cheap display of bourgeois parliamentary maneuvering, a "vote" was taken of the proposal that passed by one vote, but wouldn't have if the absent member had been there. Thus the proposal was sent out behind the backs of the whole PSC in an attempt to fool the organization into thinking it had approved these shoddy wares.

If the opportunists were really so anxious to achieve or develop the so-called "fundamental unity on line" of the PSC, why did they lie to the other PSC members when they agreed to resolve the question at the next PSC session? Why did they claim that their position was the product of so much study, and that the comrades who soon after resigned went along with it? Did they expect anyone to believe that calling a vote only after the directive had been sent out and when a PSC member opposed to them was absent was done from the standpoint of achieving principled unity? And why did they try to fool the organization and now the whole communist movement by claiming that the NY district violated a directive approved by the PSC? The only response these dogs have given so far is to claim that all this is not true. But the facts speak for themselves. The opportunists have neither presented their version of the facts nor any documents to back them up, for they cannot rewrite history.

In exposing their little scheme to pull the wool over everyone's eyes, we must also point out how the opportunists made use of their alliance with Kathy Chandler. Although not on the PSC itself, she studied with them and found general unity with the May Day proposal. She helped develop the WC's wrong line on war. She was needed by the opportunists as a reliable ally against the left. This further shows how the opportunists cherished the existence of factions in the WC. Their faction could ally with another faction to out-manuever the left. Then, after the left of the organization was gone, these opportunists could dump their old allies, Kathy and Co., to usurp full control of the organization.

Thus, it was not a fiction of the NY district that the opportunists of the PSC behaved as a faction "from above". This bloc of rightists is guilty of willful, conscious factionalism and of intriguing and conspiring to try to deceive and split the organization. They are slimey opportunists who place their own petty-bourgeois careerist interests above that of any organization or of the exploited and oppressed. Further, it was correct not to follow this bogus May Day "directive" since it represented nothing more than the feeble wishes of a faction within the PSC that was unable to sway the majority to its views.

This particular incident of treachery and intrigue came after a long series of similar incidents and innumerable hours of struggle by these comrades against the opportunists. It came after countless letters to the WC from advanced workers and communists from all over the country seeking guidance and organization, (especially around "The Communist") had been ignored by the WC chair. It came after the opportunists proposed the "common editorial policy", opposed by these comrades, and after the opportunists tried to send a letter to the rightist OL asking for a "joint editorial board" in the name of the WC, to be stopped only at the last moment by these comrades. It came after a months-long battle royale on whether to practice Marxism or revisionism. Clearly the internal life of the PSC was in ruin. The opportunists had succeeded in restoring Kathy to the CC, and in dominating the leadership of the WC. Since there was no longer any point or even the means of continuing the struggle inside the WC, these comrades took the only route open to them to continue to make revolution -- they resigned from the WC.

The resolution of this struggle was another nail in the coffin for democratic centralism in the WC, and marked another victory for factionalism, individualistic aversion to discipline, and autonomism in general. The final victory of opportunism was to come a few weeks later in the third major struggle on democratic centralism, concerning May Day.

THIRD MAJOR STRUGGLE

The third major struggle around democratic centralism, carried out by the NY district, took place in the context of the previous victories for opportunism in the WC. Having won two important struggles that allowed their love of autonomism to twist the once-budding democratic centralism of the WC into a hollow mockery of itself, the opportunists sought to further consolidate their gains and complete their domination of the WC, even if it meant wrecking and crippling the organization. They had been fortunate in that they had escaped the fate of being confronted with a single, united, nation-wide opposition to their treachery. Thus, they had been able to take advantage of the temporary fragmentation of the left wing of the WC and the ideological weaknesses that prevented more cadre from rising up to oust them. Still, it was our duty to wage the best fight we could, because even though the odds were against us in the short run, the lessons we learned would help enable the genuine Marxist-Leninists in this country to form a firm, Bolshevik party.

Before going on to explain the struggle further, let us remind the reader of two key points. The first is that, as we have shown in the first part of this statement, the May Day directive was an

out-and-out abandonment of the Iskra plan -- the basic line of the WC on party-building, our central task. This abandonment was part of an overall reversal of the WC's generally correct line and its replacement by a revisionist, economist line. Second, the May Day directive was never approved by the PSC, and, therefore, was in no way binding on anyone since it only represented the views of a faction within the PSC. All the lying, scheming, and treachery that accompanied the defense of this "directive" cannot cover this up. Although this last point is very important in unmasking the double-dealing of the opportunists in the WC, we maintain that even if the PSC had approved the plan, that it was still a violation of democratic centralism, a scrapping of the organization's basic line, and was therefore not binding. Especially since we began our struggle without knowing that the PSC hadn't really approved the May Day directive, we are obliged to review here the main reasons that we did not carry out this directive.

Once Again On The Authority Of The PSC

We must thank the opportunists in the WC for publicly polemici- zing us in their October, 1976 issue of "The Communist", for all they have done is to publicly prove true every charge we have made against them. We are flattered that the main fire of this article was directed against the former NY district, and that we were branded as "the best example" of so-called "local circle autonomy". In order to have earned this honor, we must have really put their backs up against the wall. Few will be fooled by such a hack job, and even fewer will continue to raise doubts about the victory of revisionism in the WC once the whole truth is revealed.

The tirade against us says that we were suspended from the WC for "failure to carry out a directive from the organization's leading body" around May Day (meaning the PSC's directive). We had given the opportunists too much credit when we thought they would attempt to mask their line of calling the PSC the "leading body", but here it is again in black and white. The old notion that the PSC is autonomous from the CC and the Congress is dragged out to justify their errors. This is still one of the main platforms of the opportunists on organization, and a key part of their erroneous line, without which their whole position could not even exist.

Their persistence in upholding the autonomy of the PSC (in this case even more ridiculous -- the autonomy of a faction of the PSC!) allows them to render as irrelevant any argument that the May Day directive was invalid because it violated the Iskra plan. To them, this is of no consequence, especially since they oppose propaganda as the chief form of activity. But to us, this is of crucial importance, since the PSC has no authority to overturn in practice the decision of the Unity Conference or the CC. It is duty-bound to carry them out, like it or not. But since the Iskra plan no longer captured the egos of these opportunists, they threw it out like it was diseased.

A meeting held after we had been kicked out, between a representative of the former NY district and the opportunists in the PSC who concocted the May Day directive, was very instructive in this regard. Although the opportunists were repeatedly asked to justify how the May Day directive was in keeping with the Iskra plan, they continuously refused to speak to this point straight up, preferring

to focus on countless numbers of secondary questions. They did not see that this was at the heart of the matter. Further, they even made no pretense of defending the directive on these grounds. To them, this question was one to be avoided like the plague. Now, as we have pointed out earlier, the paper "Leninism or Petty Bourgeois Democracy", probably the most important document that came out of the struggle in the BWC and that contributed to the formation of the WC (this has been conveniently left unpublished by the WC opportunists), explicitly points out that the newspaper should be a collective organizer and the main means by which the line should be consolidated, and that a newspaper is merely a "necessary evil" for the opportunists. But today this is a no-no for the WC, and they prefer to let the remaining xeroxed copies of this paper gather dust at the back of some closet rather than provide the communists and advanced workers with this powerful theoretical weapon. They want to hide and obscure just what the basic line was that the WC was founded upon, and just what they are bound to carry out. And check out their polemic against us--again they make no effort to even go through the motions of defending their line on the basis that May Day was an application of the Iskra plan. You got to be in serious trouble when you can't even fake a defense!

Instead of dealing with the basic question, the WC is trying to make it an open-and-shut case that we were bound to carry out any directive from a higher body whether we agreed with it or not. But this is not the issue at all. We never said or even implied that we would do only things we agreed with. This would be the height of individualism and a total social-democratic repudiation of democratic centralism. In fact, our district on many occasions worked long and hard on using "The Communist," even though we had reservations which were sent in bulk to the center but were usually ignored. And we find it amusing for the opportunists to raise this objection, since it is none other than they who went ahead with issuing the May Day directive before and without PSC approval. So much for the all-powerful authority of the "organization's leading body" when it doesn't back them up!

Basic M-L principles on organization teach us that the minority is subordinate to the majority, that the lower levels are subordinate to the higher levels, and that, once a decision is made after discussion, everyone is obliged to carry it out without further discussion. This is the only way to assure unity of will and unity of action. But to the opportunists, these laws mean that everyone is obliged to carry out any directive issued by any person at a higher level, whether or not this directive conforms to the line of the organization. There are also limits on what these directives can include, and if the directives overstep these limits, then they are not binding. Factionalism at the top is still factionalism, and its product in no way binds anyone to go along with it.

Certainly we must distinguish between a particular directive one may disagree with that is a misapplication of the basic line, in which case the directive is binding, and a directive that is an all-out reversal and violation of a correct basic line, which in no way can be binding. To be able to distinguish between these two is of great importance and requires cadre who are good at distinguishing genuine from sham Marxism. But to raise these points greatly upsets the WC opportunists. They claim that this means that every cadre has to decide for themselves whether or not to carry out every directive. What they are really advocating is slavishness, where cadre have a low ideological level and blindly follow the leadership, no matter what line they hold. We must always be vigilant against revisionism and always evaluate on our own whether or not an organization

is staying on the correct path. Otherwise, if we could not distinguish right from wrong on our own, we would be useless as revolutionary leaders. And this includes being able to distinguish between different types of errors in different directives. While this is often a complicated question and there is always the danger of ultra-democracy in this process, maintaining a high ideological and political level of all cadres best keeps the organization from making errors in this regard.

Finally, the last leg the opportunists in the WC have fallen back upon is the third CC meeting which "unanimously" endorsed their line and demanded a self-criticism from the NY district. Their polemic against us asks how they can be factionalists if the whole CC supports them. Here again they try to play on the ignorance of people by painting a picture of harmony and unity at the top, with the NY district bucking all authority on its own. But they dare not tell anyone that half of the PSC opposed them, that half of the PSC disapproved of their May Day directive, and that between the previous CC meeting and that vote, half the PSC and almost half of the CC had either resigned or were removed. What has happened was that the faction of opportunists in the PSC had won as allies several other CC members, while the left wing was either forced out or thrown out of the organization. Opportunist factions have won a majority in the CC and climbed to power before, most notably in the CPSU. Win, lose, or draw, a faction is still a faction. To try publicly to portray a picture of smooth sailing in the PSC or between the PSC and the CC is sheer deception aimed at covering up the real history of the continuous struggle against right opportunism in the PSC, the CC, and the whole organization, and the ultimate victory and consolidation of the rightest factionalist clique. Support for this clique was never unanimous until they split the organization (more later on the significance of the third CC meeting). If anyone was belittling the role of the PSC, it was the opportunists. Why did they not raise their May Day proposal at the second CC meeting, just a few weeks before they sent it out? There was no reason that such an important such as calling for a civil war should not have been approved by such an important body as the CC before it was sent out. But the opportunists by-passed the second CC waiting until the third CC, when all major opposition was off the CC, to "ratify" what they had already done. But no matter how you look at it, the opportunists can come up with no justification for this scrapping of the Iskra plan and their erroneous May Day directive.

It should not therefore surprise us that hand in hand with all this opportunism come the advocacy of a social-democratic method of work. The May Day activity, as we pointed out in the first part of this statement, was supposed to be carried out in workshops of all our contacts. The WC opportunists claimed that this need not violate security measures. Yet at an International Women's Day workshop, similar to the one advocated for May Day, these same opportunists showed their lack of concern for proletarian methods of organization. One person who was a closed communist at his job asked if he should attend since another person who worked at the same place might invite workers who would recognize him. The opportunists said there would be no problem. Nevertheless, the fears of this person came true when a worker showed up who knew him. Yet instead of popularizing this negative example in the organization and summing up its lessons, the opportunists proceeded to once again cheerily assure the organization that workshops would cause no problems.

Party-Building and Democratic Centralism

The WC has long put forward the correct formulation that in the relationship between proletarian democracy and proletarian centralism, centralism was absolute and democracy was relative. It is obviously the purpose of democracy to serve centralized thinking and activity, and not the other way around. As Chairman Mao said, "The Communist Party not only needs democracy, but needs centralization even

more." The defense of autonomy in all spheres of work by the opportunists in the WC violated these basic laws.

Related to their opposition to democratic centralism in addition is their incorrect view of the role of democracy and its relation to centralism. This question is one of the least understood in our movement, being rarely discussed or even referred to. The rampant amateurishness and social-democratic methods of work make these questions very embarrassing to the phony "leaders" of the proletariat--to the Avakians, Klonskys, Jerry Tungs, and the rest. If one has a wrong attitude to centralism and belittles its role, as the WC opportunists do, it follows that a wrong attitude will be taken to democracy and its relation to centralism.

What is the basis of centralism? What makes iron discipline and unity of action that a communist organization needs to fight the enemy possible? Chairman Mao answers it this way: "Without democracy there cannot be correct concentration because it is impossible to establish centralism when people have divergent views and don't have unity in thinking." (quoted in Peking Review #15, 1969) In other words, unity of action can only be based on unity of thinking. He goes on, "What is meant by concentration? First, there must be concentration of correct ideas. Unity in thinking, policy, plan, command and action is attained on the basis of concentrating correct ideas. This is unity through concentration." Thus, concentration of correct ideas makes possible centralism in thinking and action.

Stalin puts it in a similar fashion; "The Party must achieve iron proletarian discipline based on ideological solidarity, clarity concerning the aims of the movement, unity of practical action, and an understanding of the Party's tasks by the mass of the Party membership." ("The Prospects of the CP of Germany and the Question of Bolshevization," vol. 7, p. 40.)

Naturally, this question is of little concern to those who do not really want to achieve centralism--our "aristocratic anarchists." But to genuine M-L's, this is a most crucial question, since we must answer it properly both in theory and practice to assure the unity and discipline of the mighty weapon of the proletariat, the organization.

To understand the importance of concentration of correct ideas at this time, we must view it, and our organizational tasks in general, in the context of our present tasks. In fact, it is our central task that determines the nature of all our other tasks. In this period party building is our central task. We are in a period in which "without a revolutionary theory, there can be no revolutionary movement." At present, theory is primary over practice, propaganda is our main form of activity and primary over mass agitation, and winning the advanced workers to communism ideologically is primary over winning the broad masses politically to the side of revolution. Further, we still have no program. The completion of all these major tasks demands organizational forms and methods that correspond to the particular requirements of these tasks--forms and methods that would be entirely different if our central task was people's war, building a united front, etc. Today, to build a party, we need to defeat opportunism and unite all genuine M-L's. But, as Lenin said in the DECLARATION OF THE EDITORIAL BOARD OF ISKRA, "such unity cannot be brought about by simply giving orders." To achieve unity, he said, "In the first place, it is necessary to bring about unity of ideas which will remove the difference of opinion and confusion that--we will be frank--reign among Russian social democrats at the present time." (ISKRA PERIOD, BOOK 1, p. 40-41, emphasis added). He then went on to call for an organization to unite the various circles and build up Iskra. Thus, the organization's nature and activity were determined by what was needed "in the first place"--unity of ideas. And so

it is with our application of the organizational principle of democratic centralism today. Our emphasis must be on achieving unity of ideas, unity of thinking, and this means that our emphasis on democratic centralism today must be on concentrating and centralizing our ideas. To do otherwise would belittle our theoretical tasks and would mean rushing ahead blinding in our practical tasks before sufficient basis was laid in unified line. Such bureaucratic, mechanical shortcuts will actually only disrupt unity by not resolving the contradictions that stand in the way of unity.

And such was the case of the WC. The emphasis on developing unity of ideas was particularly important since the basic features of the WC were still being formed, since many important questions had never been taken up in a materialist manner before in our movement, and since revisionism on so many questions, especially in the form of American exceptionalism, was rampant in our movement. As Lenin, said, "The role of vanguard fighter can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by the most advanced theory." (WHAT IS TO BE DONE?, p. 29, Chinese ed., emphasis original.) Thus, in order to both develop a line on major questions (such as war) and to consolidate the organization, much attention had to be placed on our theoretical tasks. Without democratic debate and concentrating correct ideas, how could a correct line ever be developed? Good organization, especially on a nationwide scale, was of course required to carry this out, and a correct application of democratic centralism was required to enable the organization to be capable of fulfilling these tasks. So our emphasis had to be on centralization of ideas in order to facilitate the fulfilling of our central task.

The WC originally, at least in words, answered these questions correctly on how to achieve concentration of correct ideas, that ideological solidarity and common understanding that Stalin spoke of, through the carrying out of the Iskra plan by the WC and the Leninist trend of the communist movement. Although they never explicitly upheld the concept of concentrating ideas, they claimed to uphold Lenin's, Stalin's, and Mao's teachings on the party, and put forward a generally correct method for fulfilling our tasks. The newspaper was supposed to be a collective propagandist, agitator, and organizer. It was to embody the unity of theory and practice through pursuing propaganda work, which entailed study, investigation, line struggle, winning the advanced workers to communism, mass work, agitation, and organization. On this basis, correct ideas were to be concentrated, line and program were to be further developed and/or established, and an organization around the newspaper was to be erected. The leaders of the WC were supposed to use this method to lead in concentrating correct ideas from the masses and the cadre, and to lead in promoting a correct plan and policy on that basis. In other words, propaganda was our chief form of activity in party-building, including in developing line, plan, and policy.

Yet, at no time did the WC ever put this correct method into practice. The basic lessons on concentration were never studied, propagated, or referred to. Instead, the opportunists, like all their predecessors, preferred to base their thinking only on their own limited experience and understanding. The CPC described such people like Liu Shao-chi this way: "Having faith only in oneself but not in the masses and what 'I' think being the criterion for doing everything." (Peking Review #10, 1971, p.6.)

Further, to the opportunists in the WC, somehow democratic centralism had nothing to do with concentration of ideas, with the taking of scattered and incomplete ideas and concentrating them into correct ideas. When Chairman Mao said that the party needs democracy but needs centralism more, he was also talking about centralization of ideas, and not only of action. The opportunists conception of democratic centralism counterposed our ideological and organizational tasks. They

saw democracy as referring to ideas and discussion, but centralism as referring only to centralized action. The link, concentration of correct ideas, was missing, as they did not grasp how organization serves and is used to carry out our ideological and political line. Whenever they praise themselves for overcoming "circle spirit," they never even bother to make a pretense of showing how they achieved this on the basis of unity of ideas. In fact, the rapid splintering of the WC is testimony to how their leadership has instead resulted in disunity of ideas. They also never refer to the concept of concentrating correct ideas, and only refer to centralism when they are talking about action, and not thinking. Further, the opportunists also counterposed democracy to centralism. Their practice showed that they did not really see how there can be no real centralism, especially of ideas, and particularly in the present period, without democracy. Thus, their whole conception of democratic centralism was not only extremely one-sided and superficial, but hopelessly incomplete. And all this both reflected and resulted in a miserable belittling of the immensity of our present theoretical tasks.

May Day is but a typical, classic example of this opportunism. Before May Day, there was only one article in "The Communist" on war. No organization-wide study had been undertaken, with only a long shopping list of books having been sent out two weeks before May Day, with no possibility of completion or real follow-up. Interestingly enough, the opportunists chose to circulate an internal paper and have at least some, although not adequate, internal debate before taking a position on ERA, but not on war, thus exposing their inconsistency and pragmatism on developing a line. On the war question, the opportunists were playing at concentration. How could this work be carried out if there was such an inadequate basis for it? We have already exposed the lack of study and investigation in the PSC, and shown in the first part of this statement how this wrong method led to the inevitable development of different lines in the pages of "The Communist", including on the international situation. It should be obvious that the lack of concentration of ideas crippled the unity and discipline of the WC, made it impossible for the leadership to overcome the situation of scattered collectives with their own separate views and activity, promoted the growth of different lines and activity in the organization, and led to the great fragmentation and decline of the WC so soon after it was formed.

The fiasco around May Day occurred precisely because the opportunists attempted to centralize the line and activity of the organization without basing that on concentration of correct ideas, both from among the masses and also the cadre. Further, they attempted to centralize the activity before the ideas were centralized and in practice placed their main attention on centralizing activity around war. They did not see how only on the basis of prior democratic discussion could ideological consolidation and preparation take place, and lead to centralized activity on war. This was bowing to spontaneity pure and simple, in this case bowing to the objectively sharpening contention for world hegemony between the two superpowers and the growing danger of world war. Instead of sticking to our basic line and using the newspaper to develop a line in a planned, conscious, and sober way, the opportunists, panic-stricken at the thought of a new world war, wanted to rush, ideologically and organizationally unprepared, into the mass movement to organize around war. They proved that they are not worthy of being leaders of anything, for they could not concentrate correct ideas. And while they scream that you need centralized activity to centralize ideas, an obvious truth, their practice shows that they actually abandoned the centralized activity previously agreed upon as the basis for developing a line---propaganda as our chief form of activity, the Iskra plan. The abandonment

of this process, of the Iskra plan, of the basic line of the WC on party-building, is the crux of our differences with the opportunists in the WC, and is our main difference with them on May Day, including on the two lines on democratic centralism.

In "Where Do Correct Ideas Come From?" Chairman Mao talks of idealists who do not understand the theory of knowledge. "When asked the source of their ideas, opinions, policies, methods, plans and conclusions, eloquent speeches and long articles, they consider the question strange and cannot answer it." (Four Essays on Philosophy, p. 136) How apt this lesson is to the WC! All the feeble attempts at justifying their abandonment of the Iskra plan and democratic centralism -- "we take our leadership from the line of the CPC," "the matter was studied, discussed, and the line unanimously adopted" by the PSC, etc, -- all these do not even make a pretense of involving concentration of correct ideas. They idealistically counterpose centralism to democracy, and thus to concentration of correct ideas. Instead of self-criticism, the opportunists try to pass the buck by blaming our district for not doing an assignment on war in January, 1976. When this was first made, the center was told we could not do it because we were already loaded down with work, including preparations for the second CC, the New York crisis series, and many other things. To have attempted it would have been rotten amateurishness, since it would not have been correctly done. At that time, there was agreement that we should not do it, although a statement by the chair now tries to make it look like it was we who did not do what we were supposed to.

Why do we make such a fuss about all this? Whether they realize it or not, the WC has actually put out a call for preparations for war to begin now, for the preparations for the actual launching of a civil war. This is, needless to say, a most serious matter. The strictest attention must be paid to the content of a line and to how it is put into effect on such major questions. Without any exaggeration, the fate of billions of people may lie in the balance. How could a civil war be carried out if there was no unity and centralization of thinking, no preparation of the organization? Either these opportunists are crazy or utterly irresponsible! Any revolutionary war, including a civil war, is primarily a mobilization of the masses, a political question. If wrong directives are put out, or if the organization is not ideologically and politically prepared enough to carry out such an important task, the criminal rule of imperialism may be allowed to last longer. There is enormous historical experience, as we know, to back this up. Thus our responsibility to the masses is that we be ever vigilant about just what we say and do, and how we say it and do it, lest the enemy, who at the outset of a struggle will have more resources (except people) than us, take advantage of weaknesses in our budding revolutionary struggle. And on any other major question such as this, failure to concentrate correct ideas and to prepare the organization ideologically can lead to disaster.

Even in their defense of autonomism and opposition to concentration as the basis of action, the WC opportunists do not oppose all centralized activity. There is a unity between their support of autonomy from below and autonomy from above. Autonomy from above means that the leadership bodies can do and advocate whatever they happen to feel like, as on May Day, with these plans not being based on concentration. The Comintern referred to this kind of centralization as "formal or mechanical centralization." (Principles of Party Organization, Third CI Congress, 1921, Calcutta edition, 1975, p. 7) In practice, what developed in the WC was not a genuine body of leaders, but an autonomous clique in the PSC -- a bureaucracy.

It is important to grasp the relationship between anarchism and bureaucracy. In one sense, they are opposites. But in essence, bureaucracy is the flip side of the same coin as anarchism. Both are cut from the same cloth and usually accompany each other. Witness any bourgeois party, like the Republicans or Democrats, where members can do whatever they please, even entirely opposing the main candidates, while a little bourgeois clique really pulls the strings behind closed doors, not responsible to the party membership. Factionalism, unprincipled maneuvering, hatred of discipline, individualism, careerism -- all these are features of both anarchism and bureaucracy. The link and unity between these two opposites is that they both rest on the same foundation of autonomy, of arbitrariness. They both oppose centralization of thinking and revolutionary activity, a reflection of rampant individualism. Thus it should not surprise us that the opponents of democratic centralism lean at one time to the side of anarchism and at another to the side of bureaucracy, for they are, in essence, different forms of the same thing -- autonomism. Further, the general chaotic conditions of the WC, the rampant autonomism and lack of rules, created favorable conditions for the autonomists at the top to try to mechanically lord over the rest of the organization. As Engels once said, anarchists are the worst megalomaniacs. And so it is, too, for our aristocratic anarchists.

Without concentration of correct ideas, it is impossible to develop a correct line. For example, it would have been absolutely impossible to write our New York crisis series if there was no participation in the struggle of the masses, scientific summing up, study, and line struggle. These articles were not the brainchild of some "genius," but a result of a correct integration of theory and practice, with propaganda as the chief form of activity. But the academicians who run the WC, who have studied in the "finest" universities in Europe and the United States, believe that they are above such mundane stuff. So the product of their thinking ends up being virtually worthless stuff, not based on reality or capable of guiding action. And the result of this idealism for the organization is not only a wrong line on war, but wrong lines on most other questions, too. Trying to avoid concentration through propaganda and developing a line "out of the blue" is idealist a priorism, and only leads to harmful results.

To cover their own defense of autonomy of the PSC and their opposition to concentration, the WC opportunist have raised the smokescreen of "ultra-democracy." But does what we have to say have anything to do with ultra-democracy? Certainly not. First of all, we do not even think that lack of democracy was the principal problem in the WC. Lack of centralism and defense of autonomy were. What we have pointed out is that you cannot undermine centralism without also undermining democracy. We have also pointed out how the bureaucratic errors of the PSC were rooted in the same source as their anarchist errors -- in defense of autonomism at all levels. If anything, it is the WC opportunists, with their opposition to rules, concentration, discipline, and the agreed upon line of the organization who were guilty of ultra-democracy.

We at no time advocated anything even remotely similar to "democratic centralism from the bottom to the top," or "let the lower levels discuss all problems first, and then let the higher levels decide." We firmly uphold that the minority must be subordinate to the majority, and the lower levels to the higher levels, carrying out directives, plans, etc. This has not been called into question by us at all. It was not us, but the opportunists, who wanted to make work around the newspaper, as on May Day, a secondary, subordinate task. If you say we did, then you must think that the Iskra plan and concentration of correct ideas are also ultra-democratic, for that is all that we have advocated. The differences between these two are clear. The Iskra plan does not mean that the leadership must wait until everything is discussed below first. But it does mean that the cadre have to be previously prepared ideologically and politically to carry out directives, and that these directives have to be the end result of concentration of correct ideas. On this basis, leadership is linked with the masses and the higher levels linked to

the lower levels. Directives should not come out of the blue. They should be based on concentration. Further, once a directive is put out on this basis, the lower levels are required to follow it. Ultra-democracy opposes this method. Since the WC opportunists didn't want their own activity to be based on the line of the organization, they were, in fact, the real advocates of ultra-democracy, by ignoring the line of the CC and Unity Conference. Ultra-democracy negates the role of leadership and of discipline. Concentration of correct ideas, on the other hand, emphasizes the leading ideological, political, and organizational role of higher bodies, while basing that leadership on the masses and the cadre.

We also fully unite with the line that the PSC has all the power of the CC when it is not in session. This is not the issue. Even in a situation where a quick, emergency decision is required, such as in a war, directives have to be based on prior preparations and concentration. If, for example, one of the superpowers launched a sneak attack on China, we could be expected to defend China adequately only if there was proper preparation beforehand in the ideological and political spheres. But in the case of May Day, there was not even an emergency. So why the big rush for a position on war, without unfolding democratic discussion and struggle and concentration? To counterpose concentration of ideas to centralized leadership and activity is absolutely absurd. Yet is it ultra-democratic to say that the WC was totally unprepared for such centralized activity around the question of war as was advocated on May Day because there was not sufficient preparation? And why was it correct in the eyes of the opportunist to discuss the Equal Rights Amendment internally first, but ultra-democratic to discuss war? Obviously, to this we have gotten no answer. Only those who had no real concern about the results of such an activity would answer in the affirmative that what we did was ultra-democratic.

The WC also tried to label us as ultra-democratic because we said that in the case of the question of war, the pages of The Communist could be used to present struggle between different lines in the organization. The opportunists said that this was permissible at certain times, but not in this case, and then proceeded to call us ultra-democratic for suggesting printing different lines! If it is ultra-democratic in this case, then why not in others? Open polemics under centralized guidance was more than once advocated by Lenin in Iskra. So why not in The Communist? And are the frequent wall-poster debates in China, carried out under the guidance of the CC of the CPC, also ultra-democratic? Wouldn't anyone serious about the international situation take the utmost care to consolidate a line through a series of articles in the newspaper and thus to encourage the cadre and the masses to speak out? In fact, when the opportunists did advocate polemics, they did not want it under centralized leadership or for the purpose of concentrating ideas, as in their advocacy of a "common editorial policy" (See "Never Forget Class Struggle" in this magazine). Again, the opportunists mechanically, idealistically, and one-sidedly counterpose democracy and centralism. They are two opposites of the same whole -- democratic centralism. They are interdependent and interrelated. One cannot exist without the other. But to raise the dialectical relationship between these two is somehow too complicated for the opportunists, who shout "centralism" when you talk about the aspect of democracy (as on May Day) and shout "democracy" when you talk about the aspect of centralized leadership (as with the "common editorial policy").

Another example of the counterposing of democracy to centralism is their opposition to our call for a new conference of the WC to solve the question of war. This particularly irked the opportunists, since they saw it as a challenge to their autonomy. Thus, they slapped the label of "ultra-democracy" on it. But why was a conference so terrible an idea? Wouldn't a conference have greatly aided line consolidation? Parties have even called congresses when needed during war-time and under fascism, having to do it underground or abroad. So what was the big obstacle for us calling a new conference? It should be obvious that anyone who really believed their line on war would want to commence a serious mobilization of the cadre and the masses. A new conference could have addressed the issues of war

and May Day straight up, and led to a consolidation of the organization around a well-thought-out correct line. But since this was a threat to the incorrect line of the leading clique, they squashed it.

The results of all this, naturally, have been disastrous to the WC. The reconciliation of the different lines never took place, even on the international situation. The Communist does not even come out regularly any more (formerly a monthly, now it is out roughly every two months), its size and quality have fallen off drastically, and its emphasis and orientation are inconsistent. By trying to substitute bureaucracy for combining democracy and centralism, the WC has been unable to either consolidate around a correct line or carry out the leadership's line on war. In fact, even the question of war is barely mentioned in The Communist anymore. Not basing their line on concentration, and not preparing the cadre has resulted in such a big failure for the opportunists on this question, that all their mighty talk of "raise the banner of civil war" has now been replaced by an empty silence. And on other questions, as we showed in the first part of this statement, they have been unable to escape the sorry fate of their paper containing conflicting lines and analyses and being reduced to a collective confuser. The degeneration of the WC and its organ is a direct result of the inability of the WC leadership to centralize the line and activity of the organization, and is a sad commentary on just what fate awaits all the other opportunists and amateurs who oppose democratic centralism.

Of course, as we have pointed out many times, these errors did not appear overnight. On the question of concentration, these errors go back to the struggle in the BWC. Take the example of the struggle over taking a position on busing. An article appeared in the December, 1974 issue of The Communist supporting busing in Boston. The right wing of the BWC, which generally did not support busing, took the autonomist line that they would not distribute the paper since they disagreed with that article. But those who later became the WC also held a wrong line. The article had appeared with no forewarning. The disagreements on it reflected the lack of ideological and political consolidation of the BWC on the Afro-American national question, including the Comintern resolutions. But instead of developing unity of thinking and concentrating correct ideas, the authors of the article just bureaucratically sprung their position on the organization. Because they carried such wrong methods over into the WC with all sorts of justifications, the WC was unable to deepen its position on busing. In the end, the issue has been almost entirely dropped, with only one short article on this burning issue in The Communist in well over a year. This is the sorry result of trying to substitute some shortcut for concentration of correct ideas.

Some people have the misconception that ultra-democracy is generally a right error and bureaucracy generally a "left" error. This is not so. Both can be either right or "left." For example, while social-democrats are generally ultra-democratic, so are many wild-eyed ultra-"left" anarchists. And who is more bureaucratic than the Soviet revisionists? In the case of the WC, both their anarchism and bureaucracy were generally right errors, since they were component parts of their overall right opportunist line.

The "remedy" offered by the opportunists for the lack of line consolidation is merely an organizational one, the issuance of a bulletin. As usual, they totally miss the mark. The CPC has written:

"The key to putting democratic centralism into practice is the ideological revolutionization of the Party committees.... Practice has proved that...when democratic centralism is not carried out well, the root cause is that bourgeois 'self' and metaphysics and idealism in one's mind are exerting their bad influence." (Peking Review #10, 1971, p. 7-8)

What the WC needed were strong leaders who could concentrate ideas and develop cadre

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who could distinguish genuine from sham Marxism-Leninism. But to establish democratic centralism, the ideological obstacles, especially the individualism that lay behind autonomism, had first to be cleared away. Not grasping that the ideological revolutionization is the key to practicing democratic centralism meant that the opportunists would only worsen the degeneration of the WC, and that a bulletin would be useless, since there would not be any concentration of correct ideas anyway. The sorry excuse for an organization that remains is proof positive of what happens when democratic centralism is abandoned.

3rd CC and Its Aftermath

The significance of the third CC meeting was that it adopted an all-round right opportunist program; it reversed the organization's basic line on party-building; and it was the final phase of the consolidation of power in the organization by the opportunists. Although honest revolutionaries remained in the organization (as there are in most once-revolutionary groups), the leadership and the line of the organization were now irreconcilably opportunist.

The 3rd CC made a number of important decisions. All of the major decisions at this meeting were steps backwards. It adopted the economist "deeper into the industrial masses" campaign and the capitulationist "common editorial policy" proposal (see first part of statement). Thus it formalized the scrapping of the Iskra plan as to both winning the advanced workers to communism and uniting the Leninist trend, resulting in the marked deterioration of "The Communist" since this meeting. It also ratified the wrong line on war and incorrectly supported the so-called ERA. On internal matters, it closed its ranks by condemning the resignations of the ex-PSC comrades, condemning the NY district's stand on May Day, and removing from the CC the leader of the NY district. In so doing, it not only consolidated power for the opportunists, but also justified and ratified the abandonment of democratic centralism. It also turned down the call for a new conference. Since the left wing was either out or on the way out of the organization, the opportunist leaders could end their bloc with the other rightists. Thus, it expelled Don Williams from the organization and suspended Kathy for not ending her relationship with Williams.

The decisions of the 3rd CC towards the NY district showed that any pretense of unity-criticism-unity was dropped. We were accused of being in a "panic" over the PSC resignations, when in fact we were calmly and consciously continuing the battle against right opportunism. After being unable to win us to their line, they ordered us to do a self-criticism, even if we didn't agree with that self-criticism! This was the kind of formalistic game-playing they were into. It also showed how they took away the right of members to reserve their own opinions internally on any question, since we were supposed to give this "self-criticism" at internal meetings and in internal documents. The district was given six weeks to prepare the "self criticism." When the WC chair met with us during that period, we were told that if we didn't do the "self-criticism," which we said we wouldn't, we would be kicked out. Thus, the 3rd CC decisions were a declaration of war on the NY district, a cheap set-up to kick out anyone who disagreed with the leadership. It was clear after the 3rd CC that the contradictions had become antagonistic and irreconcilable, and that an organizational split had become both inevitable and desirable.

Regarding the self-criticism, we said we would not do it because this would mean compromising on questions of principle and capitulating to the abandonment of democratic centralism and the Iskra plan. We could not compromise for any false "unity" that this might bring. To have done so would have been capitulationism and dishonesty on our parts and a gross underestimation of the degeneration of the WC. If upholding Marxism-Leninism meant that we had to be kicked out, then so be it. The only leg the WC has to stand on is that we violated a "unanimous" decision of the CC to do the self-criticism. All that this "unanimous" vote shows is the degree to which the CC had fallen prey to opportunism itself and how far down the road to revisionism it had gone. They try to cover over the fact that in order to gain this "unanimity" on the CC, over half of the CC and the PSC had to be kicked out or forced out of the organization in the less than one year from the Unity Conference to the 3rd CC. This "unanimous" capitulation to opportunism was really a sign of decay, not of strength. Further, the CC adopted a hypocritical double standard on discipline. When we attacked from the left, we were rapidly and sternly condemned. But when Williams and Kathy fought them from the right, they were allied with, pampered for months, and used until the last possible moment.

The opportunists also showed their fear of an open line struggle in the organization. During the crisis, the majority and minority views on these major questions should have been put out to the organization to settle these questions once and for all. Instead, the opportunists opposed a new conference and wanted to confine the line struggle, only bringing it up after the left wing was out of the WC. We are sure that because of such bourgeois maneuvering there are still members and supporters of the WC who have not yet heard the truth about these struggles. The inability of the opportunist WC leaders to rely on their own cadres and supporters is further evidence of their total bankruptcy.

It was in this context that the WC chair planned a trip to NY. Everyone knew that a split was just a matter of time. The chair wanted to meet with the district and the close contacts. The district requested that the trip be postponed about two weeks so that a statement could be prepared and so that the contacts should be prepared to decide for themselves which line was correct, since the chair intended to run the opportunist line. Yet the chair further revealed a great fear of the line struggle and wanted the contacts to make a decision without the facts or the documents on the two-line struggle and its history. Preparations would have been in the best interests of building strong revolutionary cadre and proletarian organization. Yet since the opportunists were not concerned with this, they decided to make the trip anyway, showing how they did not conduct themselves in a principled manner. The opportunists wanted us out of the WC while hoping to maintain contacts in the district before the struggle was unfolded. This was the purpose of their trip. They had no respect for the line and unity of these contacts, and wanted to maneuver into an unprincipled relationship with them based not on unity of line but on slavishness. This was a direct continuation of all the other bourgeois maneuvering and amateurishness, which is still justified by the opportunists. No one among the contacts wanted to meet with the chair under these conditions. The chair came anyway, although the meeting with the contacts never happened.

Another line of the opportunists is that we did not turn over the names of contacts to the center. Most of them were in direct contact with the center through work on the newspaper. People had even visited the center themselves, so all this is nonsense. But what the chair now wanted was a complete list of these people. Now, they never before wanted this or ever complained that we were keeping people from them. In fact, the opposite was true, with letters, reports and articles sent in by them often going unanswered for months at a time. The center kept themselves from the contacts. Only now, when the split was imminent, did they show such "concern" for these contacts. Those whose names they did have were often sent packages in the mail with the name "Workers Congress" written as the return address, giving the police open directions as to who did what. This was done even on correspondence to addresses we specifically said should be confidential! So we would have had to be totally out of our minds to give such a list to these irresponsible Mensheviks. Furthur, a similar lie was spread about us never doing reports. While we could have been more consistent and thorough in our reports, we did send in many reports. The reports we did do went generally unanswered. Finally, the chair even tried to lie that we refused to answer the phone when he came to NY when the phone went dead at the meeting place because of the cheapness of the phone company. He was told that if we intended to avoid him, we would have been able to do so very easily, would not have met with him at all, and would not have waited up until the early hours of the morning, as we first did.

The results of all this were obvious. We agreed to meet with the chair, and no progress was made, except that we all gained useful direct knowledge and got a good negative example of outright opportunism in the flesh. The contacts have long since agreed to meet with a WC representative, now that they have studied the two lines. But since they have all sided with the former NY district, the opportunists have lost their interest in meeting with them, even though they were told last summer that a meeting now would be acceptable.

As to the NY district, the position was taken that we would neither make a self-criticism nor resign. This was to show that we upheld the basic line of the WC, despite the justification of opportunism by the leadership. The WC further showed their amateurishness by not even sticking to its own six week limit, and waiting until August to "officially" kick us out. But for us, we considered ourselves out of the organization after the meeting with the chair in late June. We felt there was no reason to wait the extra few weeks and go through the motions of trying for "unity" when the result was a foregone conclusion anyway, and that the extra time was a farce and a charade to give the fake impression that honest line struggle was taking place and that there was a possibility of reconciliation.

Thus, the results of the 3rd CC and its aftermath saw a victory for the opportunists and the "indefinite suspension" of the NY district. It was unfortunate that the opportunists triumphed in this struggle, but their victory and the victory of all other rightists will surely be short-lived as genuine Marxist-Leninists around the country sum up the lessons of these and other struggles against opportunism.

CONCLUSION

The history of the Bolshevik Party tells us, "In its practical work, if it wants to preserve the unity of its ranks, the Party must impose a common proletarian discipline, equally binding on all Party members, both leaders and rank-and-file. Therefore there should be no division in the Party into the 'chosen few', on whom discipline is not binding, and the 'many', on whom discipline is binding. If this condition is not observed, the integrity of the Party and the unity of its ranks cannot be maintained." (HCPSU, p.50, emphasis original). This describes well what happened to the WC. The opportunists in leadership wanted to be "free" to issue directives indirect violation of the organization's basic line on party-building when it chose to, unbound by the decisions of the Unity conference and the CC. And the justifications for these errors reminds us of what Lenin said about the Mensheviks: "The mentality of the bourgeois intellectual, who regards himself as one of the 'chosen few' standing above mass organization and mass discipline, is expressed here with remarkable clarity." (HCPSU, p.50)

In fact, all the basic tenets of democratic centralism had been violated well in advance of May Day. What happened on May Day was merely a culmination of a long struggle and a series of splits against right opportunism, including the abandonment of democratic centralism. May Day was not isolated at all, but a reflection of the struggle between two lines in the WC, against the hatred of authority by the unremolded petty bourgeois intellectuals. These classical Mensheviks opposed all democratic centralism, and, as we have proved, set themselves up as a faction in the PSC and the CC, a faction directed against the Iskra plan and democratic centralism. It was sheer hypocrisy for these maneuverers to accuse us of "circle spirit" when it was they who all along had intrigued and conspired behind everyone's backs. They never developed a strong, unified and centralized leadership, or had a democratic style of work. They were unable to concentrate correct ideas and showed again how if you don't have a correct way of achieving unity of ideas, you will certainly end up achieving disunity and failure. They could not create a viable, leading center. In reality, the WC was never Bolshevized, never overcame the errors of the old BWC, and never centralized the line and activity of the organization, reflecting the abandonment of propaganda as the chief form of activity. And when they were called on their opportunism all they could do was justify the rotten, chaotic state of affairs and defend autonomism, both from below and from above, at every step and turn, getting worse at each successive CC meeting. Instead, they took the tailist course of blaming the cadre, rather than themselves, for the errors, accused everyone else of being in a panic, did no self-criticism, and abandoned the role that leadership was supposed to play. No, it was not the cadre or those who opposed the opportunists who were in a panic or who "capitulated to difficulty", but none other than the opportunists who changed the basic line of the organization because all the communist movement and advanced workers did not immediately jump into our laps after we put out the newspaper for a few months. Too unstable to undertake the long and patient work required to build a Bolshevik party, it was these petty bourgeois democrats, these Mensheviks who panicked and "capitulated to difficulty" by seeking unity with the opportu-

nist wing of our movement, by reverting to tailism and economism, and by standing in the way and opposing the struggle to once and for all Bolshevize our ranks and overcome autonomism and amateurishness.

We have now cleared up the history of these struggles. We have outlined the basic errors and the development of the struggle itself in much detail. We have responded to every charge and every lie hurled at us by the opportunists. Just let them try to deal with this struggle in a straight-up way! All we have now is their pitiful polemic in "The Communist". The WC will find itself in big trouble when it tries to consolidate people around the garbage they put out.

As Lenin pointed out: "Opportunism in programme is naturally connected with opportunism in tactics and opportunism in organization." (OSF, TSB, p. 193) Organizational errors flow from errors in ideological and political line. The abandonment of democratic centralism was thus inseparably connected to the abandonment of propaganda as the chief form of activity and the capitulationist stand taken towards opportunism in the communist movement. All this flowed from their corrupt, bourgeois world outlook, and could not be rectified unless their wrong world view also changed.

The Constitution of the CPC says, "It is essential to create a political situation in which there are both centralism and democracy, both discipline and freedom, both unity of will and personal ease of mind and liveliness." (Article 5) Obviously, the opportunists just ignored all this. The results of their opportunism was the wrecking and splitting of the WC. The opportunist leaders of the WC were fully responsible for the disunity that resulted from the abandonment of democratic centralism.

The decline and fall of the WC shows the adverse results of trying to establish an "artificial center." What was needed was a body of well-trained and experienced leaders, tested in the struggles against imperialism and opportunism, not the bunch of clowns we got. Instead, the WC pretended to build a center when it should have laid the basis for building a real one. Sooner or later, without a strong center and strong leaders, all other opportunists will perish, just as the WC did. Wasn't it true that the CPUSA once was growing and thriving, as once were PLP and RU? But where are they now? Driven into the ground, hated and despised by all true revolutionaries and advanced elements, and isolated from the masses. So we do not need another such phoney center which will fall to pieces when the first stiff wind comes along. We must make adequate preparations in all spheres so that the next venture we undertake will be a success.

The WC is dying and has already failed. The loss of the old BWC was a great blow to our movement, one perhaps not yet fully appreciated. The WC tried to make good on the promising start the BWC made. But these failures are now history and are by no means insurmountable. Our task now is to start anew and to work for the re-establishing of a national organization and to work for an Iskra-type newspaper. The WC is an utter disgrace to M-L and has actually made it harder to talk of an Iskra-type paper and bolshevizing organization by its association with these concepts. Today, the WC no longer has anything in common with these views, and is nothing but a minor hindrance to the genuine revolutionaries, useless to the working class and oppressed peoples.

Summing up this struggle is important not only to expose and defeat the WC opportunists, but, even more importantly, to contribute to the struggle to build a party. Deviations around democratic

!! self-contradictory

centralism are a problem for our movement as a whole. By summing up our experience, we think we have made a contribution to solving these problems. We hope others will likewise do so.

At present, the right opportunists have temporary hegemony in the communist movement. The genuine forces are still fragmented and scattered. But the days of the opportunists are numbered, as they are for all reactionaries. We know there are many solid revolutionaries and countless advanced workers out there, fed up with the rampant opportunism they see. Included among them are ex-WC members. It is time to once again re-assemble our forces and organize our ranks. It is time to begin to prepare for an assault on the old, dominant rotten elements who have crippled the communist movement. It is time for the honest revolutionaries to begin to gather our forces, to build a new Leninist trend, which will smash revisionism, economism, national chauvinism, tailism, and amateurishness. We can only do so if we make a determined and conscious effort to overcome the present state of affairs, to form a new organization in the course of struggle, and to tirelessly and ceaselessly dedicate ourselves to this end. If we do, we will find, just as all other revolutionaries have found, that we can sweep aside our enemies and achieve victory.

POSTSCRIPT

Since our statements on the split in the WC were written some time ago, a brief review of some of the more recent activities of the WC is required.

A survey of The Communist over the past year and a half verifies everything we said about how the WC has abandoned the Iskra plan. While they eventually got around to writing about some of the issues on which we criticized them for not writing, such as the presidential elections, they did so very late, when the exposures were no longer topical and timely, but had turned sour and stale. More importantly, they were often inadequate or wrong. Take, for example, the task of giving leadership to the ideological struggle in the communist movement. In the May 7, 1977 Communist, they purport to criticize OL's social chauvinism. In reality, their main quarrel with OL on the international situation is the formulation of "directing the main blow at Soviet social imperialism" and nothing more. They fail to tie this up to OL's overall analysis of world events.* They thus end up with the same social-chauvinist position of, for example, supporting the neo-colonialist Panama Canal treaties that have been forced on the Panamanian people by U.S. imperialism. The most recent edition of The Communist available as we go to press, dated March 8, 1978, calls this treaty "a significant forward step in the ongoing struggle of the Panamanian people for complete national sovereignty and independence." As usual, WC waited months after the treaty was drafted to even comment on it, again showing their miserable tailing of events. They also showed their abandonment of propaganda as the chief form of activity by making their first public comments on it at their recent public forums on the international situation.

This is also related to their general failure to break with the line of OL. While they have run some articles differing with some aspects of OL's line, what has characterized their attitude to OL is, first, their deep desire for unity with OL, and, second, their minimizing the depth of OL's opportunism and its danger to the communist and workers' movements. When OL began to mouth that propaganda was the chief form of activity, but in reality did not change their economist ways, The Communist said, "Although interpretation of this line is by no means uniform, consolidation on it represents a good step forward." (August 28, 1976) According to WC, the October League had now supposedly achieved "consolidation" on a correct line, with the difference being a mere matter of "interpretation." Following this,

* We will take this up in detail in our next issue.

the WC applied a few slaps on the wrist to the OL, saying that their Organizing Committee "has yet to take up the struggle of trends at all," (March 1, 1977) instead of identifying it as a key part of the economist, right-opportunist trend. In the same issue, they take back the gains in our movement in identifying various rightist lines, and, in describing the party-building activity of various groups, say:

"The task of winning hegemony over and uniting the scattered forces has not been genuinely posed. RU claimed it had all the 'genuine' forces mobilized, and OL, WVO, and the 'Leninist core' follow in succession. But none have gathered and organized with a vision to match the breadth of our movement. Lines of demarcation are drawn, not between Marxism-Leninism and opportunism, but between circle adherents and others. The network is established on that basis. Party-building tasks are reduced to circle size, rather than stretching our circles to meet the demands of our tasks."

Thus party building becomes a task of uniting all the groups, regardless of their line and what trend they represent, and, in essence, sectarianism becomes the main danger. This is the sad result of their "common editorial policy" line and their general bourgeois-democratic approach to party building.

The WC's denial that OL is part of the economist trend has led them to other heights of absurdity. Listen to this: "The OL/OC has failed to prepare the conditions for a party of professional revolutionaries and has failed to lead the struggle against backwardness and amateurishness in our movement. In short, they have not prepared the conditions for a decisive victory over the economist and social-democratic tendencies in our movement." (Communist, December 23, 1976) WC talks as if the economist and social-democratic tendencies were mainly outside of OL, and that they have not done enough to defeat them. But the problem with OL is that they themselves are one of the main proponents of these economist and social-democratic deviations. How can you complain that the right wing has not struggled against itself, unless you don't think it's the right wing? To ask that of the right will only build illusions, as if this were some bad policy of theirs, rather than a reflection of their essence. Instead, OL should be exposed as being completely incapable of preparing the conditions for a genuine party, and only capable of building an opportunist, economist, social-democratic party. But WC chooses to cover OL's opportunist nature.

Other slaps on the wrist include saying that OL "vacillates" between Marxism-Leninism and social-chauvinism, and that they show merely "confusion on fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism, leading necessarily to social-chauvinism," (Communist, May 7, 1977) as if they haven't already gotten there. But the clearest expression of the nature of their lover's quarrel with OL came soon after the attempts by the WC at patching up their differences with OL were met by laughter and arrogance by the bigger and better organized rightists led by Klonsky. Here is the complaint of the WC:

"A year ago OL spoke of a dozen Marxist-Leninist publications and the need to unite them into one. A year later, the OC has reached none of them. No national communist organization has joined the OC. They boast in The Call about the extra miles they are going to walk in pursuit of unity, but they do not take one step. When asked at a public forum why they have been unable to win any national communist organization to their unity trend, they mumble about being on with the WC. But the OC has taken no single initiative in this respect at any time. The only "on with" involved here is our initiative in setting up a pair of meetings with OL in the face of delay on the part of these mile-walkers. Yet while OL has consistently avoided principled discussion with national leadership for more than a year, they have actively maneuvered to seek our local contacts." (Communist, December 23, 1976)

Besides throwing out the original line of the WC that it was not our whole movement that needed to be unified, but the Leninist trend in opposition to the economist,

rightist trend, this passage is an admission of the history of the WC leaders kissing OL's ass "for more than a year," and of their burning desire to merge with OL and their absolute frustration when their love was spurned. To the WC, the problem with OL is that they will not unite with them. Otherwise, they are alright. Also, although they talk of OL trying to rip off local contacts, never in the pages of The Communist have they mentioned that a Central Committee member of the WC left to join OL. This would burn the last bridge to OL's "party," something the WC leaders desperately do not want to do. It would also embarrass the WC, since this person was more honest than the WC leaders and openly admitted there was no real difference between the lines of OL and WC, and no justification for the existence of the WC outside of OL, save small-circle needs.

So, the WC's soft-peddling of the criticism of OL reveals their common right deviations. Instead of summing this up and launching an ideological rectification campaign to root out the cause of their love affair with OL, the WC leaders still leave the door open for OL to pass through any time they wish. As a result, WC's own right opportunism has stopped it from becoming the ideological leaders of the struggle against right opportunism, and stopped The Communist from becoming the leading organ of the Leninist trend.

Another aspect of their bankruptcy is the continued jamming up of the pages of The Communist with easily available reprints, usually from Peking Review. This is a cheap substitute for doing the ideological work necessary to grasp the international situation, and a direct continuation of their anti-theory activities around May Day in 1976.

Still another feature of their activity has been the drifting from one campaign to another. After their "war is imminent" campaign fizzled when there was no world war, they quietly and quickly dropped that question and ran around with their "deeper into the masses" campaign. Now that appears to have been given a quiet funeral, too. Of course, our criticism of this economist deviation recognized that it was doomed to failure like all other opportunist schemes. Now the WC seems to have embarked upon still another campaign, this time on the polemic on the international situation. Chairman Howard has been giving forums in various cities defending the three worlds theory and their version of it. This is still another get-rich-quick scheme that avoids the serious study and analysis necessary to take a position on the present debate in the international communist movement. His presentations and the similar article in The Communist have mainly been rehashes of Peking Review #45 of 1977, which lays out the position of the Communist Party of China extensively. We will comment more on this debate in the next and future issues of the Red Dawn. For now, we want to emphasize the drifting from one campaign to another by the WC, a reflection of their bowing to spontaneity. Instead of giving their work a planned and conscious character, they tail events and blow with the wind.

The sad result of this is that The Communist has even further deteriorated. It is published irregularly, usually late, and is of mediocre quality. The only thing constant about it is that it is consistently lagging behind events. It is just another run-of-the-mill paper of another run-of-the-mill opportunist group, rather than the scaffolding around which a party can be built. The WC has failed to create an ideological and theoretical center for the Leninist trend. Its inability to use the paper for the ideological work necessary to develop a common line has also prevented it from using the paper as a collective organizer and developing a network of agents around it. They have miserably failed in using the newspaper to build an organization.

Certainly many opportunists will delight in the failures of the Workers' Congress and see this as proof of their economist line that a newspaper cannot build an organization, but only an organization can build a newspaper. But the truth is that the opportunist clique that orchestrated the ruin of the WC never had any intention of carrying out the Iskra plan. It is not as simple as we first thought, and said in our statement, that these forces upheld a correct line only to later abandon it. As we find out more about what really happened in the split in the

