

Dear Comrade :

THIRD PARTY PAPER from  
Boston LC

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We see the Boston area LC of the OCIC making serious mistakes. Many of these mistakes were excellently spoken to in Comrade Liz McCrahy's recent paper. Due to the seriousness of these errors within the LSC and the LC at large, we think that it is necessary for the struggle against the current ultra-leftism to be an organized, collective one. To this end, we submit this paper.

It is clear that the OCIC nationally, and our own LC are composed overwhelmingly of white comrades and that this situation is intolerable. But how do we change it? Criticism of our white chauvinist attitudes is necessary but insufficient, and not even primary in changing the OCIC's composition and ending our isolation from actual or potential national minority members of our tendency.

We need to make a careful analysis of the individuals and groups of national minority comrades who might be won over to the OCIC. Then we should delegate responsibility to various LC members for beginning and deepening the process of achieving political unity with these comrades.

We should also do study of the CPUSA and of the new communist movement,

as well as of the progressive movements of the last twenty years, in order to understand better the ways in which racism has been manifested in or struggled against in these movements, and how they have taken up the struggle against racism. Then we must find out how all this affected the views national minority people have of these movements. This study would help us understand some of the historical causes of the isolation of the new communist movement and, in particular, of the OCIC from the advanced fighters from the national liberation movements in the US.

In the context of assessing how the delegated work is going and in analysing past mistakes, we could do useful criticism of our racist attitudes that impede these processes; but if the criticism is not done in the context of our collectively agreed-on work, it becomes idealist. It is idealist because it assumes that it is primarily our bad attitudes that keep national minority candidates from joining the OC. In reality, the history of racism on the left, segregation in the society at large, as well as our attitudes have frustrated our efforts at overcoming our isolation.

Another left error emerges in the LSC's method of struggle against white chauvinism. The LSC and many members of the LC tend to raise all weaknesses and errors to the ideological level: In particular, most errors are now attributed to white chauvinism. This is a classic error of dogmatism, known as reductionism -- reducing a many-sided phenomenon to a single-sided one.

This approach negates the reality of a whole range of causes for comrades' weaknesses such as sexist oppression, lack of confidence, intimidation by erroneous leadership, inexperience. This approach also narrows the range of ideological errors, forgetting about such deviations as liberalism, dogmatism, nationalism, male chauvinism, etc.

WHAT ARE THE RESULTS OF THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST WHITE CHAUVINISM ?

The principal result of the current campaign against white chauvinism is intimidation of anyone who disagrees with the LSC's line or who is even

uncertain about the correct path for our LC. Disagreements are instantly labelled as defensive or racist thinking. The fear of heavy criticism causes many comrades to refrain from raising their objections or questions: uncertainty or hesitation leads to an onslaught of criticism all out of proportion to the presumed error. All in the name of honest, direct criticism. Real political struggle becomes impossible when comradely, rational discussion and criticism is replaced by labeling those who disagree as 'racist' or 'opportunist'. Racist-baiting becomes the order of the day: as with red-baiting, intimidation is the result.

Organizational means of deflecting political struggle have also been used. Comrade McCrary's paper's criticisms of the LSC were never discussed, much less deepened. This is especially dangerous in a theoretical center.

In addition, useful criticism or self-criticism of our white chauvinist attitudes is intimidated as well: Many members who would like the LC's help with their racist attitudes are reluctant to bring them out for fear of the barrage that may follow in front of a large group in which they do not know everyone. Perhaps we should not be this way, but as comrade McCrary said, it is idealist to pretend that we are not.

WHY SO MUCH NEGATIVISM ?

The idea that we will rid ourselves of racist attitudes and other errors by proclaiming how foul and disgusting our attitudes (ourselves ?) are, is wrong. It can only result in a one-sided focus on our weaknesses, a focus that will likely lead to defeatism -- just the ideology we need to avoid. Are we going to use this method with future working class or national minority recruits ? Not to do so would be elitist; to do so would be destructive.

We had an opportunity at the first LC meeting to do a better job of criticising our racist attitudes. We should have built on the report from the Mid-west by referring to local experiences. When criticizing individuals, we should take a comradely approach understanding that their errors are ones

that most all of us have made. The criticism of the individual should be seen as an educational example of the racism within us all. It should draw out the ways in which our racism presents an obstacle to what we really want to accomplish. It should not be an exercise in scapegoating, venting self-righteous hostility, grovelling or guilt-tripping. Let's remember, we are Marxist-Leninists, not members of Synanon.

#### FEMINISM -- THE ENEMY WITHIN ?

The paper criticizing feminism inside and out of the LC is a prime example of ultra-left dogmatism. The critique of the women's movement is reminiscent of Progressive Labor's attack on Black Nationalism -- a fervent broadside against the errors of a reform movement, and its lack of adherence to a M-L ideology. The main result is isolation of the M-L's from the people.

The women's liberation movement does contain bourgeois trends within it. It is also a diverse movement, much of which could be won over to a working class perspective with patient work and struggle by Marxist-Leninists. Such polemics as the LSC's make that day more distant.

The LSC paper lumps the entire non-M-L women's movement in one ideological basket -- bourgeois feminism. This line drives those women who have broken with some aspects of bourgeois thinking into the arms of the most "feminist" and anti-communist elements of the women's movement and creates a deep gulf between them and the tendency. This is the standard result of an ultra-left line on a reform movement. This result is happening in Boston right now!

We also think that feminism is hardly the main prop ( or even a major one ) of white chauvinism within the LC. To say that, is to substitute ideological scapegoating and reductionism for concrete analysis of our actual situation and its history, and serves as a way for the LSC to avoid self-criticism for its haphazard planning of the first meetings agenda. Criticizing feminism is an easy way out of understanding and changing our racism.