THE PARTISAN

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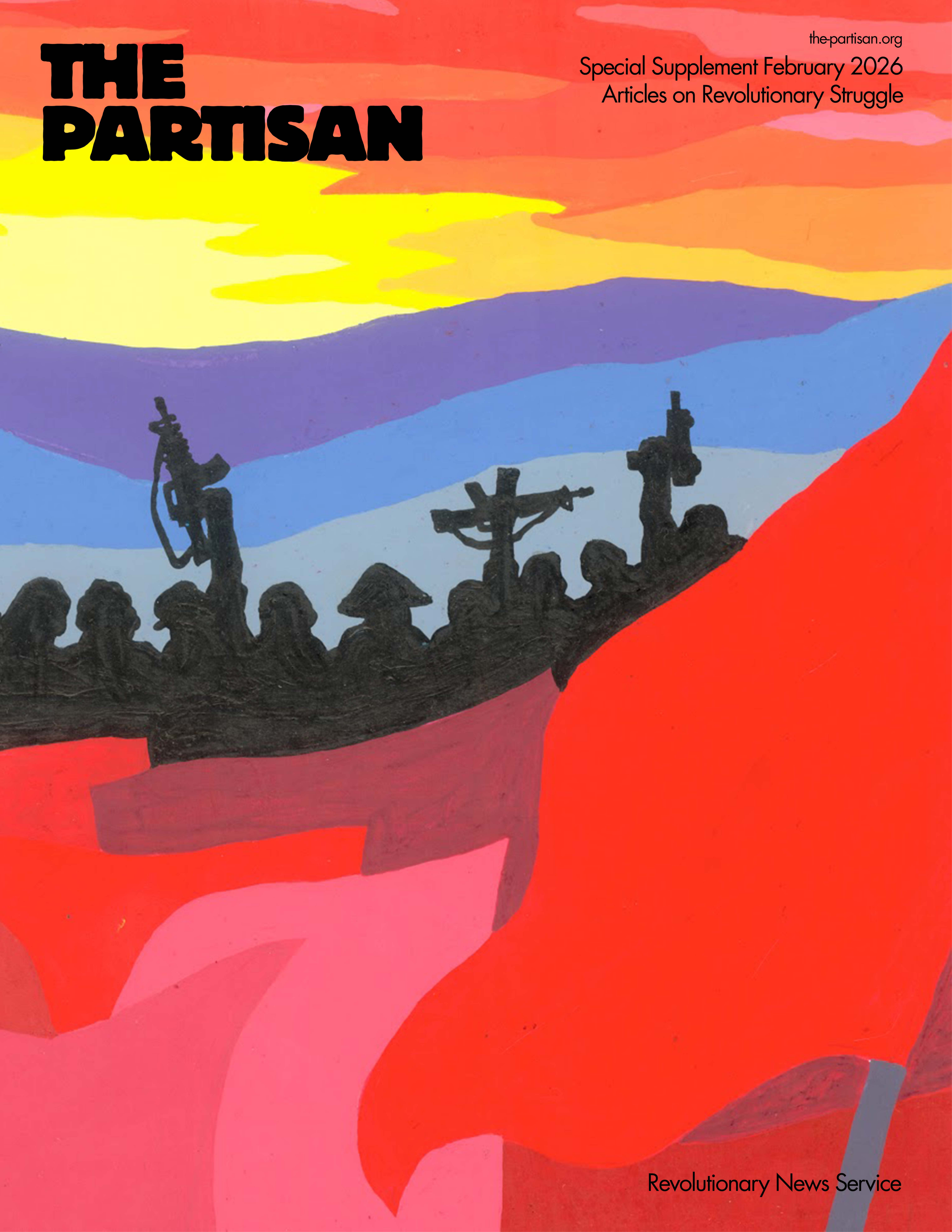
Articles on Revolutionary Struggle



Revolutionary News Service

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Introduction

To commemorate the 1st anniversary of *The Partisan*, we are issuing this special supplement that gathers together excerpts from some of the most relevant and vital to understand theoretical works that have come out of the revolutionary movement in the last few years. The articles cover important topics such as party reconstitution, the common errors of our work in the current period and some preliminary outline of our socialist perspective.

These articles are gathered from our own publication and fraternal publications, *New Labor Press* and *The Crusader*. We hope revolutionaries in formation and mass activists interested in studying more about the revolutionary line in the United States revolutionary movement finds this supplementary edition useful.

For revolution in our lifetimes!

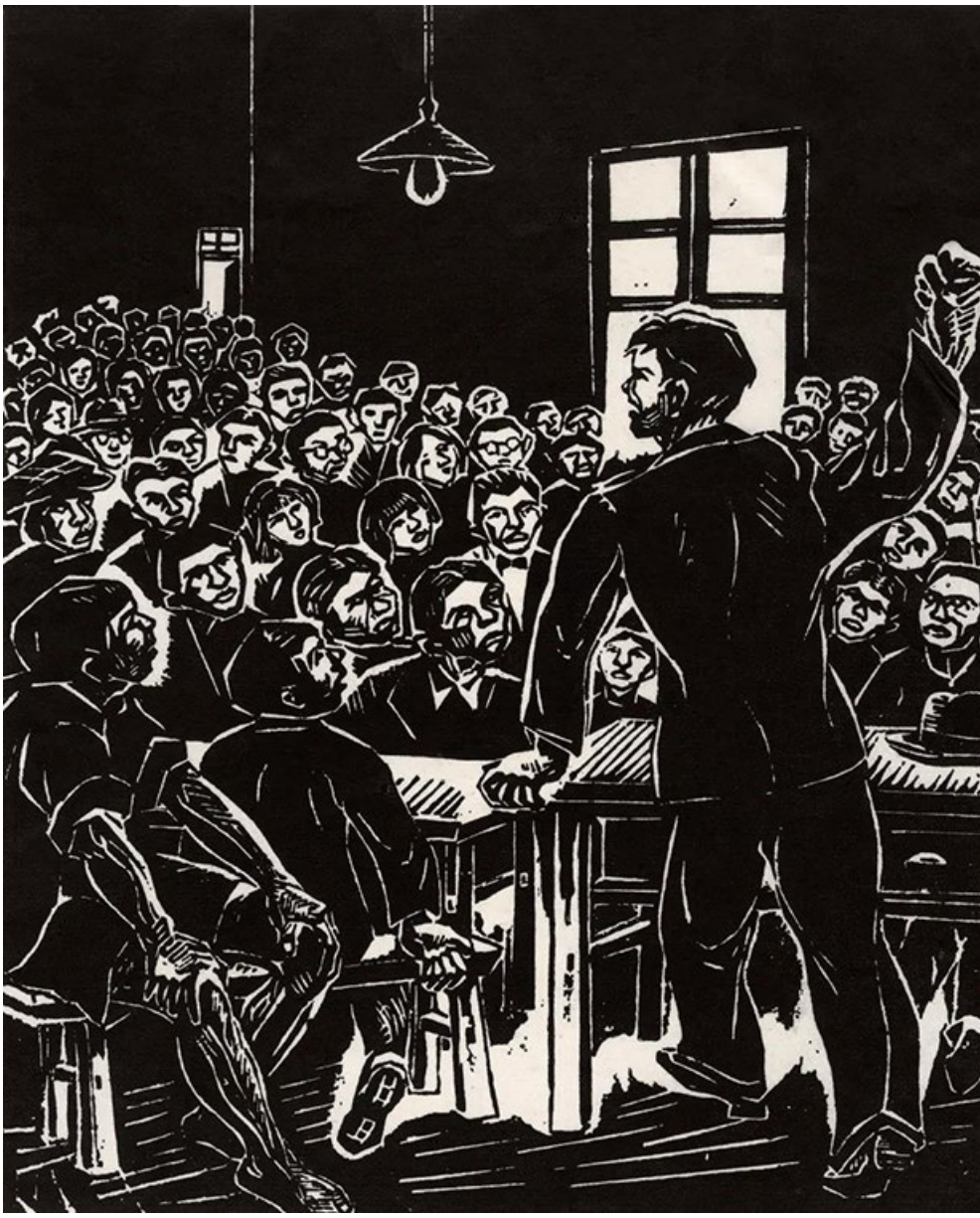
Long live the socialist revolution!

The Partisan

The Partisan

Basics for Revolutionaries-in-Formation: Reconstitution

July 28, 2025



"*If there is to be revolution, there must be a revolutionary party. Without a revolutionary party, without a party built on the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary theory and in the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary style, it is impossible to lead the working class and the broad masses of the people in defeating imperialism and its running dogs.*" – Chairman Mao, *Revolutionary Forces of the World Unite, Fight Against Imperialist Aggression!*

The goal of re-establishing a vanguard party of the workers, a new Communist Party in the United States, is a goal which is shared by many different groups, trends and comrades in our country. It's easy to understand why: since the Communist Party (USA) was dissolved by its own Central Committee and Secretary in 1944, the infamous revisionist Earl Browder, the revolutionary movement in the United States has remained split and divided. Even the newest activist realizes almost immediately how this fragmentation weakens our revolution, and works to the detriment of the workers and oppressed nations within the territory of the United States. In this way, because this problem that plagues our class is obvious (the lack of a single vanguard political party), there are ironically a million different competing solutions and formulas that try and resolve the issue.

If we look to the history and ideology of the International Communist Movement as a guide, what we find is that this problem is actually very common and has a term associated with it: "reconstitution." The basic concept is that in countries where there was originally a Communist Party which had formed and then degenerated because of the combined blows of revisionism and reaction, there is a need to reconstitute those Communist parties which had already once been constituted, but have now fallen apart. This thesis was famously and correctly described by Chairman Gonzalo and the Communist Party of Peru, who first raised the slogan "Let us Retake Mariategui and Reconstitute his Party" in order to lead their own reconstitution process after the original Peruvian Communist Party had degenerated by the 1940s. Chairman Gonzalo then raised the thesis that the task of "constituting or reconstituting" Communist Parties around the world was universal, and the main task for revolutionaries in the current period.

While Chairman Gonzalo and the Communist Party of Peru defined the process of reconstitution theoretically, practically it is a process which has played out time and time again throughout the history of the International Communist Movement. All of the most well-known and active Communist Parties worldwide that are actually waging revolution are, in fact, reconstituted Parties. For example, the original Communist Party of India had degenerated by the 1950s, was briefly refounded under the leadership of Charu Majumdar as the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) in 1969, felt apart again after his death in 1972 following internal factionalism and fierce State repression, and was once again re-established as the Communist Party of India (Maoist) in 2004. This process of constitution, degeneration, and reconstitution has played out elsewhere in countries such as Turkey, Nepal, and the Philippines, and is playing out now around the world. Each time there is an intense process of two-line struggle and class struggle, which serves as the preparatory work leading up to the reconstitution of a Communist Party, thus giving that term real concrete meaning and not letting it become some empty declaration or proclamation.

Although reconstitution may seem very straightforward, obviously there are a lot of potential errors and challenges associated with carrying out this process, as otherwise it would have been accomplished already. For the purpose of this Basics article, we are going to cover three very common errors that comrades almost certainly will encounter in their daily work within the US revolutionary movement: the so-called base-building trend, the study-is-primary trend, and the trend we will refer to as the "conventionist" trend. Like with many errors of our movement, these three incorrect trends all ultimately originate from the world outlooks, methods, and class stands of the many non-proletarian activists, intellectuals and students who populate our organizations and leadership bodies. Furthermore, the error of each of the three trends comes from taking one aspect or contradiction present in the reconstitution process, and making a fetish of it; one-sidedly focusing all efforts on it to the neglect of other necessary, reciprocal, and simultaneous tasks. In this sense, all of these trends are incorrect answers to that most famous of questions: what is to be done? In analyzing these trends, we will also explore how reconstitution contrasts with them, and what it proposes to be done in their place.

The conventionist trend is one of the most common shortcuts to party reconstitution presented by different groups in the revolutionary movement. The basic idea is simple: to reconstitute some kind of center in the United States, why don't as many revolutionary activists as possible just get in the same room and hammer things out?

The immediate problem with this approach is that it is based on an unacceptable hypothesis. Specifically, that the State's security forces and repressive apparatus are simply not paying attention to the revolutionary movement, and are either not capable of or are not willing to actively infiltrate, suppress, compromise or surveil US revolutionaries-in-formation. In contrast to this hypothesis, the verdict is clear: a Party Organization is either clandestine or it is not a true Party Organization. Closed bodies can never be formed correctly out of open bodies. The conventionist trend takes reconstitution, which must be a closed process, and makes it a functionally open process.

One cannot take all the random spontaneous sects, groupings, and organizations nationally who self-identify as "revolutionary," "communist," or "Maoist," invite them to some conference space, and have themselves a principled or "closed" process at the end of the day. The State couldn't hope for a better honey pot in their wildest dreams! We don't even need to imagine what the fruits of such a reconstitution method would be, as this was tried before in our own country in the 1960s and 1970s, and resulted in many of the major "parties" of that time having police infiltrators, literal spies, and turncoats in their central committees, their political bureaus, and their internal communication channels.

Notoriously, the Revolutionary Union (RU), the predecessor of the Revolutionary Communist Party (USA) already had two informants sending reports directly to FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover on the positions, membership and proceedings of the RU's Executive Committee in 1968, the same year the organization was founded via meetings between different Mao Zedong Thought inspired collectives in California.

The conventionists tend not to understand the real meaning of clandestinity, which is an essential principle of Party construction. If you are identifying as a member of a "Communist" organization in calls, emails or direct messages, if you are laying out your lines and proposals on Party formation on a blog or in a room full of unvetted strangers, if you say your organization is "closed" or made of "cadre" but its leadership, membership, and structures are known by non-members, you are not calling for or participating in a Party reconstitution process. You are calling for the revolutionary version of a pyramid scheme, a house of cards that will blow over when confronted with the inevitable winds of reaction and revisionism.

The conventionist trend is very US-appropriate insofar as it desires a short-term easy solution to what is a long-term difficult problem. Our capitalist system teaches us to desire shortcuts and fast results over strategic patience and quality construction methods. Such mentalities and attitudes must be combated by emphasizing the need for work based on common principles, tried and true secure methods, in addition to a long-term and far-sighted strategic approach that avoid hastiness and shortcuts when it comes to the most important task before our movement.

The base-building trend is a political expression of the narrow-minded pragmatic and localist attitudes present among many middle-class "revolutionaries" and activists. The base-builders look at the questions posed by a lack of an organized proletarian vanguard, and answer that to reconstitute the Communist Party, we must first organize the class around its local and sectoral demands, typically by engaging in local tenant and labor work. They take this approach because in their view, there is not yet the class material for a new vanguard organization because the masses in the United States are relatively de-mobilized, de-politicized, and disorganized.

The idea is that this localized mass work will "build" a revolutionary "base" among the working class and poor in different cities, towns, or rural areas, and that these bases will then serve as the raw material for a future revolutionary process or organization. In the words of the base-building manifesto From Tide to Wave: "Our base building work should be seen as means by which we can engage in mass action and make militant action possible. Our base building efforts if successful should be able to open up new avenues and possibilities in social struggle and allow us to meaningfully engage social movements." Positions like these demonstrate how base-building practices avoid and postpone uniting and leading the class-conscious movement of the masses into some far-off future point in time, and view processes such as party reconstitution similarly premature, all pending the development of their "bases" and localized mass organizations.

The base-building trend thus over-emphasizes certain political-organizational problems facing our movement, while downplaying the problems posed by the lack of a center, and the lack of an application of revolutionary ideology to our national conditions. This trend has a linear, mechanical mentality when it comes to reconstitution that avoids the type of dialectical all-sided thinking that sees the interconnectedness of our different tasks and our problems. Base-builders also avoid ideological questions, and in fact tend to view most political ideologies as obsolete. Instead they like to mix and match contradictory ideologies and their own scattered ideas into the theoretical equivalents of Frankenstein's monster.

The revolutionary movement and the class-conscious movement of the masses must be constructed from the center outwards. This does not ignore the problem of building up local work or the isolation of revolutionary leadership from many concrete class struggles nationally, but rather holds that the development of such work should fall under the authority of one center rather than dozens of small fragmented circles. The problem is straightforward: many different local groups have begun to build their "base" or to take leadership in a struggle only to then fall apart, taking their mass work and "base" with them, because of this or that internal issue.

The base does not build the center, but rather the center builds the base. Collapse can also happen to aspiring centers, but relying on little local groups to develop and slowly evolve themselves into a center is fundamentally a losing strategy. It relies on a kind of narrow "practice-only" approach that ignores the defining role a revolutionary center's political line and positions can play in ideologically and politically consolidating and uniting movements and struggles. It also flips the local-national contradiction on its head, and tries to make the fragmented local circles the axis on which on our movement is built. Like all of the three erroneous trends we are covering in this article, in the final instance base-building is a reflection of the class instincts of non-workers, who desire their own little local kingdoms and fiefdoms where they get to play as if they were Lenin, rather than submit themselves to a national movement which would force them to become disciplined and prove their revolutionary character in practice.

If the base-builders commit the error of a "practice-only" approach devoid of common theory or politics, the study-is-primary trend is their opposite. The study-is-primary trend thinks that when approaching the question of reconstituting a new Communist Party in the current period, reading the works of historic Communist leaders is more important than leading and organizing the struggles of our class. They hold that studying and spreading Marxist texts is primary over revolutionary

practice in carrying out the tasks of our modern US movement. The problems with this approach are again very obvious, which is why this trend reflects the dogmatic book-worshipping and idealist tendencies of many non-proletarian activists, in particular those who are professionals, graduate students, professors, etc., or those who come from that class background. While there are many justifications given for turning Party reconstitution into a process lead by book clubs, they all fall flat under basic scrutiny.

The first justification is the "substitution" argument. It takes the truth that in Marxism knowledge and theory come from collective social practice, specifically in class struggle, production, or scientific experimentation, and turns that truth on its head. Those who use this justification proclaim that "if theory comes from practice, that means our theory already comes from historical and international practice and we don't need to focus on practice of our own!" This is yet another shortcut given by brilliant middle-class "revolutionaries"; why do the hard work of leading class struggles when Mao and Lenin already did it for you?

The ideology of the proletariat, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, does indeed come from a great chain of historical social practice. None of that truth negates our own need to learn that ideology mainly through practice, and to verify whether or not our application of our ideology to our modern national conditions is true or not, based on the results of our practice. We might take the ideas of Chairman Gonzalo as our guide, but to paraphrase Chairman Mao, you can't learn the taste of a peach by reading about it, you must eat it. Thus, in order to determine the correctness of a specific application of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism to our conditions, we must practice and apply it. The second justification provided for the study-is-primary trend is usually some bad interpretation of Lenin's quote "without revolutionary theory, there is no revolutionary movement." This justification then begs the question: how is it determined which group in a country has the most revolutionary theory? Is it based on verbal or written "adherence," the Marxist version of "I say so, and thus it is"? In contrast to this, whether or not someone upholds or truly grasps revolutionary theory is determined by things like their success in practice, and by their world outlook, their class stand, and their methods of work. One class-conscious worker is worth one hundred "Marxist" graduate students, who view themselves as the arbiters of the most pure and sacred "revolutionary ideas." According to those who use this type of justification, whether or not one has read all of *What Is To Be Done?* or the *General Political Line of the Communist Party of Peru* is more important than if someone has a proletarian world view and has correctly lead fellow members of their class in struggle. Whatever quotes these people mine from something they found online, serious revolutionaries-in-formation know this trend they goes against the most basic truths our movement and (ironically!) its theory are founded on.

Finally, the most erroneous justification of the study-is-primary trend is a variety of eclectic or contradictory justifications. This is especially a problem considering that the study-is-primary trend is mostly prominent among those who have failed in their own practice in the class struggle. The idea that reading and sharing Marxist works is "principal" in determining who is and is not a leader is for many just a convenient way to cover up past failures of organization and practice. Their own repeated and constant failures in actually leading revolutionary practice doesn't matter so much to them if practice in the class struggle is itself reduced in importance. They will endlessly go to extreme lengths of inconsistent rhetoric to justify holding theory as primary over practice. Whether or not the cover is correct is less important than the establishment of the cover itself. This can be seen in our own country in the notable history of groups such as the Revolutionary Communist Party or the Committee to Reconstitute the Communist Party (USA). Groups like these begin with attempts to practically organize the masses and elaborate class lines for their work, but quickly their own failure to lead the masses and establish stable revolutionary bodies inevitably meant that they began to close themselves off practically, and retreat to the comfortable role of book and newspaper purveyors. Thus, in an ultimate sense this trend represents where Party reconstitution efforts go to die once they exhaust any revolutionary potential they once had.

While these are some of the main incorrect trends present among those who desire Party reconstitution, they are by no means the only trends. Similarly, while they all present in different forms, in essence all of these trends represent ideas of the old decrepit ruling class that filter into our movement from both newer local amateurish activist circles, as well as different revisionist sects that stick around year after year. In contrasts to the erroneous trends enumerated in the article above, revolutionaries-in-formation must raise the following set of correct and essential principles regarding the reconstitution of a Communist Party in the United States:

1. In contrast to the conventionist trend, the process to reconstitute the Communist Party must either be closed, or it is not a true reconstitution process.

2. In contrast to the base-building trend, the process to reconstitute the Communist Party must be lead from a national center outward, not from the local circles or mass organizations inwards.

3. In contrast to the study-is-primary trend, the process to reconstitute the Communist Party must take revolutionary practice among the US multinational proletariat and its allies as its primary criteria for truth and verification, and not the study of Marxist classics, which is an important but secondary criteria.

The Partisan

On Rising Fascism in the United States

October 1, 2025

In all capitalist societies there exists a contradiction within the ruling class itself, between the forces of liberal bourgeois democracy and the forces of "the open terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinistic and most imperialist elements of finance capital."[i] This second type of capitalist government is what the Communist International defined as ***fascism***.

Fascism was a product of two historical events: firstly the development of capitalism into imperialism or 'monopoly capitalism,' which is it highest and most destructive stage of development, and secondly the victorious workers' revolution in Russia—the October Revolution—and the establishment of the first socialist state in history. These two events produced a wave of fascist governments in Europe beginning in the 1920s.

Fascism first arose in Italy, and then famously reached its most reactionary and murderous iteration in Germany under the National Socialist party and Adolf Hitler. This first iteration of fascism was only defeated through the immense efforts and sacrifices of the multinational working class, in particular that of the Soviet Union, at the end of World War 2. However the defeat of the Nazi party did not mark the end of fascism. In fact the methods and structures of fascism have spread across the globe and are increasingly a central part of capitalist governance, due to a process revolutionaries variably refer to as either "fascistization," "reactionization," or "corporatization" of capitalist democracies worldwide. This process continues the trend of implementing a fascist dictatorship not as a swift *coup d'état* but rather as a protracted process chipping away at the old liberal democracy. To understand this process, we must first turn our attention to understanding fascism itself.

What is Fascism?

As Bulgarian Communist Georgi Dimitrov described in The Fascist Offensive and the Tasks of the Communist International in the Struggle of the Working Class against Fascism:

The accession to power of fascism is not an ordinary succession of one bourgeois government by another, but a substitution of one state form of class domination of the bourgeoisie — bourgeois democracy – by another form – open terrorist dictatorship. It would be a serious mistake to ignore this distinction, a mistake liable to prevent the revolutionary proletariat from mobilizing the widest strata of the working people of town and country for the struggle against the menace of the seizure of power by the fascists, and from taking advantage of the contradictions which exist in the camp of the bourgeoisie itself. But it is a mistake, no less serious and dangerous, to underrate the importance, for the establishment of fascist dictatorship, of the reactionary measures of the bourgeoisie at present increasingly developing in bourgeois-democratic countries — measures which suppress the democratic liberties of the working people, falsify and curtail the rights of parliament and intensify the repression of the revolutionary movement.

[…]

The development of fascism, and the fascist dictatorship itself, assume different forms in different countries, according to historical, social and economic conditions and to the national peculiarities, and the international position of the given country. In certain countries, principally those in which fascism has no broad mass basis and in which the struggle of the various groups within the camp of the fascist bourgeoisie itself is rather acute, fascism does not immediately venture to abolish parliament, but allows the other bourgeois parties, as well as the Social-Democratic Parties, to retain a modicum of legality. In other countries, where the ruling bourgeoisie fears an early outbreak of revolution, fascism establishes its unrestricted political monopoly, either immediately or by intensifying its reign of terror against and persecution of all rival parties and groups. This does not prevent fascism, when its position becomes particularly acute, from trying to extend its basis and, without altering its class nature, trying to combine open terrorist dictatorship with a crude sham of parliamentarism.

In this way, we understand fascism as the opposite side of the same coin as the democratic republic, the traditional form of bourgeois rule. In *Origins of the Family, Private Property, and the State* Engels outlined the basic manner of class dictatorship bourgeois democracy represents:

The highest form of the state, the democratic republic, which in our modern social conditions becomes more and more an unavoidable necessity and is the form of state in which alone the last decisive battle between proletariat and bourgeoisie can be fought out – the democratic republic no longer officially recognizes differences of property. Wealth here employs its power indirectly, but all the more surely. It does this in two ways: by plain corruption of officials, of which America is the classic example, and by an alliance between the government and the stock exchange, which is effected all the more easily the higher the state debt mounts and the more the joint-stock companies concentrate in their hands not only transport but also production itself, and themselves have their own center in the stock exchange.

On the other hand, Chairman Gonzalo, more than forty years after Dimitrov described how the capitalist class was increasingly laying the groundwork for fascist dictatorships in the capitalist "democracies," synthesized fascism as:

What do we understand by fascist and corporativist? For us fascism is the negation of liberal-democratic principles, the negation of the bourgeois-democratic principles which were born and developed in the eighteenth century in France. These principles are being abandoned by reactionaries, by the bourgeoisie worldwide. So it was that the First World War that made us

see the crisis of the bourgeois democratic order, that's why later fascism emerged. So, in APRA what is going on is this negation of the principles of the bourgeois-democratic order and we see daily proof of the negation of all the constitutionally established rights and liberties. We see fascism also on the ideological plane as an eclectic system without a defined philosophy. It is a philosophical position made up of fragments chosen from here and there according to what's most useful. This is clearly expressed in García Pérez. When he goes to Harare in Africa he's an African and he salutes the Africans, salutes Kenneth Kaunda. When he goes to India he salutes Gandhi, he's a Gandhian. When he goes to Mexico he hails Zapata, he's a Zapatista. When he goes to the Soviet Union, if he ever does, he'll be the champion of Perestroika. He's like that because this is the ideological and philosophical training of fascism, it does not have a defined stand, it is eclectic and it takes what is at hand.

With regard to its corporativism. We understand corporativism as the setting up of the state based on corporations, which implies the negation of parliamentarism. This is an essential point that Mariátegui gave emphasis to in "Historia de la crisis mundial". He said that the crisis of bourgeois democracy expresses itself clearly in the crisis of parliamentarism. Looking at the parliament here, while it is true that in the last decades it has been the executive branch that has produced the most important laws in this country, it is during this APRA government that the executive has monopolized the creation of all the fundamental laws for its own purposes. No important laws have come from the parliament. This is a fact, and everything has been aimed at giving powers to the executive so that it can do and undo as it pleases. Everything is a negation of parliamentarism.

The analysis from Chairman Gonzalo, Dimitrov, and the Communist International provide us with a basic framework for characterizing fascism versus bourgeois democracy:

1. Fascism rises to power and gains strength during periods of profound crisis in the capitalist system.
2. Fascism is just another form of class rule by the bourgeoisie, and can be established and dismantled by the capitalists according to their needs.
3. Economically, fascism is characterized by institutionalized class collaboration via the reorganization and creation of firms, systems, and institutions based on the corporatist "tripartite" model where the State, State-endorsed workers' associations, and capitalists collaborate to govern and control the economic, political and social life of the country.
4. Politically, fascism implies a move towards centralized rule by a powerful executive, and away from a capitalist country's established legislative and judicial democratic systems and norms (national reorganization).
5. While bourgeois democracy also engages in terror, repression, and reactionary oppression, fascism often carries out this terror more "openly" and dramatically, both as a reflection and to enforce the open merger between monopoly capital and the State. Fascism replaces the traditional indirect relationship between capital and State with direct and open rule of capital.
6. In the field of ideology, fascism uses philosophical eclecticism to justify corporatization of the economy and society, pushing for contradictory positions and using "whatever is at hand" to hide the reality of class struggle and the bourgeoisie's "open" dictatorship.
7. The particular form of fascism in a given country, and its path toward power, are determined by the "historical, social and economic conditions and to the national peculiarities, and the international position of the given country."

Fascism is not limited to these seven characteristics, however all fascist dictatorships have met these minimum conditions. When considering these conditions, it becomes clear that the United States is currently in a period of rising fascism. The second Trump administration is laying the groundwork for the development of a fascist dictatorship in the United States, even if fascism itself cannot be said to have yet seized power and done away with the old "Constitutional" order in the United States.

The second Trump administration walks in the foot steps of its predecessor administrations, who also participated in the active fascistization of the US Imperialist State and the US society and economy. Nevertheless, it is also apparent to even the most casual observer that the fascistization of the United States has intensified and become more open under the current administration. All of which begs the question: why is fascism rising in the United States, and how is the ground being laid for the Imperialist State and the US society and economy to be transitioned from a bourgeois-democratic mode of government to a plainly fascist one?

Basis for US Fascism

United States imperialism finds itself in profound crisis, beset on all sides by decay, stagnation and, increasingly, outright collapse in its existing institutions and systems. This particular crisis of US imperialism occurs within the broader context of a generalized crisis for the international imperialist system, whose internal contradictions intensify and worsen daily. The conditions produced by universal crisis of the world imperialist system and the particular crisis of US imperialism, are the basis for the intensifying rise of US fascism.

Marx and Engels, founders of the scientific ideology of the working class, pointed out that capitalism will inevitably fall and socialism will inevitably triumph. The logic of this stems from historical materialism and the "First Law" of scientific socialism: productive forces primarily determine relations of production, and the economic base primarily determines the superstructure. In the contradictory movement between the forces of production and the relations of production, there arises a protract class struggle between labor and capital which necessitates the establishment of the working class' own political organization. Through struggle, this Party of the modern working class will transform the "specter" of communism into reality. Capitalism's ever-accumulating contradictions and crises make the working class its own gravedigger.

In the era of imperialism, a massive contradiction emerges between the ever growing socialization and monopolization of production with the chaotic and anarchistic system of free markets and private property that defined early industrial capitalism. Vladimir Lenin, leader of the Russian revolution, pointed out that even if imperialism continues to exist, it has become rotten, moribund and outdated as it cannot reconcile this central contradiction. Thus, imperialism will continue to rot and sink in its own decomposition, until its eventual demise. With each cyclical crisis of imperialism, its situation will continue to worsen, as the crises grow more severe with each manifestation. It is under this theoretical premise that we begin our analysis on the process of fascistization in the United States.

Economically, US Imperialism find itself increasingly unprofitable, unproductive, and uneven. This can be seen in even the most cursory look at the state of the economy. Take public and corporate debt for instance. As of September 2025, US government debt reached $37.4 trillion dollars,[ii] which is over 119% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). That means that each year the government spends around $880 billion just to service the interest on that debt, much less pay it off.[iii] In addition to federal debt, combined state and local government debt in turn has come to an all-time peak of $3.6 trillion this year.[iv] Corporate and private debt has also ballooned, with corporate bankruptcies reaching a 15-year high in July, 2025,[v] and non-financial corporate business liabilities reaching an all time high in 2025, according to the St. Louis Federal Reserve Office.[vi]

This evolving debt crisis affecting US imperialism is just one of the more obvious symptoms of a much deeper and profound economic crisis raging under the surface. Because of the tendency for the rate of profit to decline under capitalism, as established by Marx, each year the big US imperialist corporations find it more and more difficult to maintain or increase their profit margins. The United States' declining technological advantage, crumpling infrastructure, out-dated production methods, pool of available labor that is increasingly older,[vii] less qualified,[viii] less educated,[ix] and less healthy,[x] and chaotically managed State and economy means that not only is the United States unable to compete with rising powers like social-imperialist China, but its unable to even out produce weaker imperialist power like the Russian Federation when it comes to essential military goods.[xi] While one could go on and on about the other major economic ills facing the world's current premier imperialist super-power, such as the rising cost of living, wage stagnation, declining living standards, etc., taken as a whole we can see how the current economic crisis provides the bourgeoisie with major incentives to centrally reorganize and corporatize the economy under the auspices of a new fascist dictatorship which will replace the old decaying liberal-democratic order.

Just as it is on the economic plane, socially the United States is similarly beset by crises on almost every level. People living in the United States are increasingly dying earlier, are over-worked, alienated, addicted, homeless, unemployed or under-employed, and frustrated with the conditions and direction of the country. US workers are unable to afford basic needs, such as housing, transportation, or healthcare, much less luxuries. Car loan delinquency rates have reached levels not seen since 2009, immediately following the 2008 economic collapse.[xii] Around 1 in 3 adults aged 18-34 are now living with their parents rather than renting or owning homes.[xiii] At least 770,000 people are currently homeless, a multi-generation high.[xiv] The imperialist military is unable to recruit because public distrust towards the military has grown so high, and the remaining pool of recruits is often too unhealthy for military service.[xv]

The contradiction between the anti-people policies and needs of capitalist-imperialism—the desire to keep workers as exploited and oppressed as possible—and the need for US imperialism to sustain and reproduce itself through a competent and capable pool of labor has reached a breaking point. The so-called "competency crisis," or other vogue phrases like the "health" crisis, are just non-Marxist ways to describe how capitalism has left masses with the United States generally dysfunctional and devastated after more than a century of decay, corruption, exploitation, and oppression. The United States is a failing, aging superpower, and our society reflects that reality, which is why revanchist calls typical of fascism to "revitalize" the country, "Build Back Better," or "Make America Great Again," have become so popular among both the Democratic and Republican parties.

In reality, the growing economic and social crisis has its roots in the fundamental contradiction of capitalism, between the socialized manner of production and the private system of ownership. This contradiction manifests in the contradiction between the massive growth of the capacity of production and the diminishing of purchasing power of the working people, as well as the contradiction between the anarchist state of economy and society on one hand and the organized state of production at points of production on the other hand. As overproduction continues, it will inevitably result in

an economic crisis, no matter how long imperialism is able to delay the outward manifestations of such a crisis with speculation and stock manipulations.

The decadent nature of imperialism also manifests itself first in the way monopolies severely hinder the development of productive forces, artificially limiting technological progress and leading to a tendency toward stagnation in production and technology except in certain fields which relate to the growth of financial capital and militarization/reactionization, such as artificial intelligence. Since the late 20th century, and especially since the beginning of the 21st, the financial sector has expanded relative to the real economy, with profits increasingly coming primarily from speculation and the stock market. Financial capital has come to dominate both micro and macro levels. Fixed capital continues to be renewed, as the capitalists increasingly use the State machinery to exploit the workers' surplus value and to transform them into capital, which resulted in more general impoverishment of the people and spend more on the militarization and reactionization of the State.

The growth of productive forces and capital accumulation leads to the increase of the organic composition of capital and the faster growth of capital in general. At the same time, this absolute increase of the volume of profit has led to a tendency for the rate of the profit to fall. Marx said: "For an absolutely increased variable capital to be employed in a capital of higher composition, or one in which the constant capital has increased relatively more, the total capital must not only grow proportionately to its higher composition, but still more rapidly. It follows, then, that as the capitalist mode of production develops, an ever larger quantity of capital is required to employ the same, let alone an increased, amount of labor-power. Thus, on a capitalist foundation, the increasing productiveness of labor necessarily and permanently creates a seeming over-population of laboring people." In turn, this led to more economic crises and more measures towards fascistization in order to resolve this crisis.

Despite their coincidence on many fundamental issues however, the intensification of disagreement on major questions of policy among factions of US capitalism has manifested a political crisis. This political crisis is a function of the already raging social and economic crises, as at the core of the political infighting is the question of how US imperialism should be readjusted and reorganized, and what particular path of fascistization should be taken. In this sense, just because the Democratic Party is in opposition during this period, and there is worsening infighting and factional warfare among the capitalist class, does not mean the Democratic Party is "anti-fascist" or "progressive" in any sense. The question before both parties is ***how*** to strengthen US imperialism and develop the basis for fascism in the United States, not whether that should happen.

Roughly speaking, to the so-called "MAGA" wing of the Republican party, the reorganization of the US society and economy on should occur roughly on reactionary "Christian nationalist" lines, whereas to the Democratic Party reorganization should occur on traditional technocratic "welfare state" lines reminiscent of FDR's New Deal, which was itself inspired by the policies and methods of the original Fascist wave of the 1920s and 30s. This divergence on the path towards fascistization is at the crux of the political crises, and is also why both parties are parties of the monopoly big bourgeoisie and have similar social bases (the labor aristocracy and petty bourgeoisie) despite their differences on certain technical or social issues. In fact, convergence on questions of economic policy between the two main parties has been a striking feature of the last decade, despite the increasingly confrontational rhetoric and political warfare between the two parties.

The significance of the rise of social-imperialist China cannot be ignored when discussing the presently accelerating rise of fascism in the United States. Chairman Mao, leader of the Chinese Revolution, in accordance to the Marxist understanding of fascism, held that the both the government of the Soviet Union following the reversal of socialism and Khrushchev's capitalist restoration, and a future counter-revolutionary government in China following any capitalist restoration there, would be specifically *fascist* dictatorships due to specifically the change in the systems of ownership and for the repression of the revolutionary working class. Thus, it is easy to see how the rise of fascist social-imperialist China as the United States' main competitor, and even potential replacement as leader of the world imperialist system, would increase the prestige, consideration, and influence of fascism among the US capitalists and their supporters. China's continuing State control over the commanding heights of the economy, its massive repressive surveillance apparatus, its class-collaborationist structures and ever-present corporatism, all meant to achieve "social harmony" and class peace; all of these are widely envied by US capitalists, and how they can be reproduced or mimicked domestically is constantly discussed in imperialist conferences and policy forums.

Discussions like these help illustrate why historically the main basis of support for fascism can be found among the large monopolistic corporations and the institutions of international finance capital, as is the case in the United States as well. As Lenin laid out all the way back in *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, the monopoly capitalists desire increased concentration and coordination of capital and production, which a fascist dictatorship greatly facilitates. To the monopoly capitalists the policies of social peace, a supposed end to class struggle, which fascism seeks to enact are a major draw, as State control over and manipulation of the labor movement allows for the capitalists to in turn have greater control over production and the class itself.

Fascism also typically relies on reactionary nationalism, something which is all too abundant among both sides of the US two-party system. The Democratic and Republican parties converge on their subjugation of Puerto Rico and the Pacific Island colonies, on their domination of the mainland Indigenous, New Afrikan, and Chicano nations and national minorities, and on their marginalization of immigrant groups from the Third World. For example, both Democrats and Republicans agree that undocumented immigrants, primarily from Latin America, Africa, and Asia, should be kept in ultra-exploitative working conditions with little to no pay, the question for them is instead simply how much of such labor should be officially sanctioned within US domestic enterprises. In this sense, the Republican Party attempts to use reactionary nationalism to rally/distract their base with crude exclusionary policies, while the Democratic Party seeks to use reactionary nationalism to instead deepen the integration of these same groups into the projects and plans of US imperialism.

In this way, in any case the main social base for fascism is the American oppressor nation's labor aristocracy and reactionary segments of the petty-bourgeoisie, because to these class forces fascistization promises a better cut of the profits and spoils that are concentrated under the new dictatorship. It promises a formalization of the patronage they currently receive under the international imperialist system, and more permanent support for their higher class positions in relation to the majority of workers and masses in the country. To the reactionary segments of the so-called "middle classes," fascism represents increased stability and resolution to the crises affecting them, at the expense of terror and oppression for the lower workers and doubly-oppressed segments of the masses like women or the oppressed nations and national minorities.

Symptoms of Rising Fascism

In describing the death throes of imperialism, Chairman Gonzalo said: "reaction is militarizing itself more and more, militarizing the old States, their economies, developing wars of aggression, trafficking with the struggles of the peoples and aiming toward a world war." Both the Democratic and Republican parties have launched themselves down the path of greater and greater fascistization, although the particular symptoms and manifestations of those paths differ. One of the clearest manifestations of fascistization has been the increasing negation of parliamentarianism in the United States, which in the American constitutional system implies the negation of the legislative and judicial branches favor of the rule of the executive branch (i.e., the President). Rather than pass legislation through Congress, the US State has relied more and more on Presidential executive orders, memoranda, and other policy tools vested in the executive branch rather than the legislative branch. Furthermore, not only has American bourgeois government trended towards a system dominated by the executive branch, it has progressively centralized executive authority in the office of the President itself. This emerging bourgeois legal theory holds that all executive power is vested in the person of the President,[xvi] and thus the president has direct control and oversight over all parts of government involved in administration and executive function.

There are many major instances of this centralization under the executive, particularly by Trump. His assertion of his right to personally hire and fire members of previous "independent" capitalist regulatory bodies or offices like the National Labor Relations Bureau (NLRB), the Merit System Protection Board, and departmental inspector generals. His dismissal of a member of the Federal Reserve's Board of Governors, or making himself the chairman of the Kennedy Center for Performing Art. His shuttering of USAID, his defunding of the State media agencies like the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (the parent corporation of PBS) or the U.S. Agency for Global Media (the parent company for overseas propaganda outlet Voice of America). His persistent employment of previously little-used mechanisms to "claw-back" funding that Congress had already previously appropriated or approved, in order to assert control over the Imperialist State's budget appropriations and spending. His military strikes on Venezuelan vessels in international waters without notice or authorization from Congress.

All of these examples are just snapshots of the broader fascistic move toward negating parliamentarianism in order to strengthen a single powerful executive that has direct dictatorial control over the State apparatus. When Trump defunds *Voice of America*, or undermines the so-called "independence" of a body like the NLRB, it is not because he is a confused "populist" trying to undermine US imperialism's control over propaganda output or the workers movement. Rather, it is because Trump wants to wrest control over the state unions or state media from Congress or civil service bureaucrats, and monopolize executive jurisdiction over these tasks of the modern Imperialist State. In the process of fascistization, the power structures, coalitions, and institutions of the Old State are adjusted, reformed, or reconfigured in order to facilitate the transition from bourgeois democracy to open fascist dictatorship.

This is why the Biden and Trump administrations have also attempted to assert greater control over the commanding heights of the US economy, particularly in terms of industry, manufacturing, exports, and imports. Fascistization allows for a reconfiguration of the economic sphere by the capitalists in order to temporarily resolve or delay crises and preserve their rule. Biden's CHIPS Act, the Build Back Better initiative, the bipartisan tariff push, Trump's 10% share in Intel or his 15% cut for Nvidia chips sold to China, his attempt to strengthen the Presidents influence over monetary policy via asserting control over the Federal Reserve: all of these are a snapshot of how the fascistization of the US economy is manifesting. Employing the boogeyman of "national security" and great power competition, the Imperialist State is centralizing control over key strategic sectors and firms, and thus preparing the

groundwork for future measures aimed at the corporatization of society and the economy. The recent wave of sweeping tariffs are another example of the executive asserting control over the Congress' ability to tax. The tariffs are an outstanding example of the rising reactionary philosophical eclecticism: xenophobia, economic nationalism, and the idea of reinvigorating the nation. At the same time, the tariffs represented a heavier attack on the oppressed countries which are import-dependent and export-oriented for the purpose of subtracting superprofit for US imperialism.

These attempts to secure greater State control over key strategic industries are in turn part of a broader push to militarize the US economy and society. The federal deployment of National Guard, or Marines in the case of LA, contingents in cities across the country in order to combat "crime," "chaos," and "disorder." The targeting of activists and plans to broadly designate whatever organization reactionaries view as linked to "antifa" as "terrorists." The restriction and undermining of basic democratic rights, such as freedom of assembly, freedom of speech, and freedom of the press; the mass deportations and employment of ICE as a force for State terror against national minorities and working-class immigrant communities; the restrictions on abortion and transgender rights; the creation of a vast web of cameras and digital/AI surveillance aimed at facilitating repression and anti-people measures. Clearly the militarization of US society and the attacks on the democratic rights of the workers and nationally oppressed masses serve its role in propelling the reactionary fascistization of US imperialism and its State.

Reactionary nationalism, that is, American "patriotism," is increasingly employed to ensure a base for fascism among the masses. The bourgeoisie encourages the most reactionary, most ultra-nationalist sectors of US society and through its machineries funds and arms them: a fascist force has been developed as the shock troop of capital ready to faithfully carry out tasks assigned to it. The growing ideological offensive against immigrants, women, LGBT people and the oppressed nations, with violent rhetoric being employed by members of the Trump administration and mainstream Republican leaders, is serving to muddle the water of the deepening economic crisis and justify the incorporation of more fascist elements within the liberal-democratic framework. This is especially alarming considering the blood debt US imperialism has inflicted on the oppressed nations and people since the date of its foundation. Left unchecked, US fascists and the State which backs them will only proliferate, and their attacks on the masses will only become more common. All of this highlights the necessity of bringing our principles to class struggle, in particular waging the mass line to isolate the backwards reactionary elements and ensure that the masses are won over to class-conscious politics.

To combat fascism in this sense means to fight the counter-revolutionary mass work of the State with revolutionary mass work. This was the formula applied by Chairman Gonzalo and the Communist Party of Peru in their struggle against Peruvian fascism, first under General Velasco, and then under Presidents Alan Garcia and Alberto Fujimori. It was this approach which lead to the Initiation of Armed Struggle and the heroic People's War in Peru. With fascistization, the Old State and the imperialists hope to co-opt and suppress the rebellious energy of the masses so as to sustain US imperialism and maintain their class rule. We must contend with the class enemy's interventions among the masses in the labor movement, among the poor and nationally oppressed masses in the neighborhoods, among the auxiliary and allied masses, such as the student movement. To avoid, delay or shirk such work is to cede ground to fascistization and the maneuvers of US Imperialism.

Conclusion

The intensifying march away from bourgeois democracy and towards the formal fascistization and corporatization of the United States means that the question of developing a true revolutionary anti-fascism can no longer be put off. For too long in the US, the anti-fascist movement has been theoretically and practically dominated by revisionism, opportunism, and reformism. In particular, US anti-fascism over the last decade has been controlled almost entirely by elements of the "left-liberal" wing of the Democratic Party coalition, by amorphous anarchist collectives, and by revisionist groups tailing both or either of these trends. This directly plays into the hands of the reactionaries who are leading the drive towards fascism.

By tailing liberal anti-fascism, revolutionaries ignore the Democratic Party and "Never Trump Republicans" own culpability and participation in US Imperialism and its fascistization. This amounts to picking sides in a factional struggle among reactionaries. In this way, tailing the false liberal anti-fascism of the "left" Democrats, Bernie Sanders, and the DSA is an entirely self-defeating affair, something which revolutionaries should be all too familiar with given how the so-called "resistance" played out during Trump's first term.

By tailing anarchist "anti-fascism" revolutionaries condemn themselves to perpetual habitation in the swamp of disorganization and chaos. Strong security policy, centralized team-based structures, constant discipline, a willingness to sacrifice for the cause of the people, a proletarian political line; all of these things must be standardized and enforced for an anti-fascist movement to be effective. The unity necessary for such a front cannot be based on the disunity and disorganization that anarchism implies. While united front work can and should be done on the basis of common principles when possible with anarchist or anarchist adjacent groups, fundamentally the class line running through this new revolutionary anti-fascist movement cannot be based on anarchism nor any other ideology of the ruling class or middle classes. Only a working-class anti-fascist movement can answer the call of the current moment.

This revolutionary anti-fascism must be based in the masses, and thus should be focused on class struggle. It must avoid the performative anti-fascism of the present, which has already proven itself time and time again as a dead end, and instead be an anti-fascism that defends the masses against the Imperialist State, the emboldened reactionary street militias, and finds its support among the proletarian and nationally oppressed neighborhoods and communities. This revolutionary anti-fascism takes aim at so-called "Americanism" as a whole, and upholds the struggle of the oppressed nations and national minorities within the United States for self-determination.

The new revolutionary anti-fascism is embedded in the ongoing work against ICE, against the police, against anti-women measures or anti-LGBT measures, against the slumlords, the reactionary politicians, and is a competent part of the proletarian united front, which is lead by the workers' movement and is supported by the class-conscious student and youth movements. The work of neighborhood-based class struggle groups like the People's Defense Committee is vital to the development of the New Anti-fascism, which is still very much embryonic and nascent in the broader work of the revolutionary mass organizations and their supporters. Similarly the work of revolutionary labor, embodied in organizations like the New Labor Organizing Committee, attacks at fascistization moves to hem in and repress the US multinational working class, and thus also defeat its attempt at consolidating control over the economy, society, and production. In total, the New Anti-fascism strikes at militarization and corporatization by fighting for socialist revolution, for the overthrow of the entire US Imperialist system, not by fighting for bourgeois democracy which is decrepit and dying.

While the US fascist dictatorship is not yet established, the task of constructing a new anti-fascist movement is pressing and cannot be ignored. The process of fascistization must be exposed before the masses and explained to them in common language in the pages and slogans of our propaganda at the shop, street, and campus level. The agents and members of local, regional, and national fascist organizations, especially reactionary fascist militias, must be identified, exposed, monitored, and prevented from entering the popular neighborhoods. The work being done to combat and defend against the agents of the Imperialist State, in particular its police and ICE agents, must be redoubled, and the participation of the masses in this work expanded. The failed trends of liberal and anarchistic "anti-fascism" must also be exposed and struggled against, and the masses educated in the errors of those trends and in the correct path of class struggle anti-fascism.

The process of fascistization is unpredictable and unstable, with many uncertain factors that must be illuminated and scientifically analyzed. Nevertheless, we can be certain that in any case, over the coming years the revolutionaries and masses will spill much blood, sweat, and tears in the struggle against our common class enemy. Marx and Engels said: "Capitalist production seeks continually to overcome these immanent barriers, but overcomes them only by means which again place these barriers in its way and on a more formidable scale." These sacrifices will be written in the pages of the glorious history of our class, because for the revolutionary there is no better enemy than US Imperialism, and no more worthy target than the forces and agents of that Imperialism. The increasing fascistization of US imperialism is a material inevitability, but the work we carry out today as the subjective factor—the conscious element—of the revolutionary movement is up to us.

Down with US Imperialism!

Fight for Socialist Revolution!

Defeat Fascistization By Building a Class Conscious Mass Movement!

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Center for the Study of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism

Field Surgery: The Avakianite Organizational Line in Our Movement

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Revolutionaries in our country have time and time again been lead into dead ends, having struggled to lead or generate effective and stable organizations in the mass movement for decades. In particular, the history of this failure has been marked by the lack of permanent and consistent organizations that have a true mass character and are able to effectively combat and resist imperialism. Although this is an organizational problem, fundamentally it has an ideological and political root. Much of this failure is due to the form of modern revisionism

common to the US, Avakianism, which pushes to create "intermediate organizations" within the mass movement. While this may sound like an obscure theoretical problem, in actual fact Avakianism's influence and legacy in the mass movement is something every mass activist in the United States encounters in their work, even if they don't know it.

Avakianism takes its name from its chief architect, Bob Avakian, leader of the Revolutionary Communist Party USA (RCP-USA), which is one of the largest and only remaining organizations emerging from the New Communist Movement of the 1960s–1970s in the US, and itself has a certain degree of influence among Marxist organizations globally. Avakianism has taken certain wrong practices from the 1960s–1970s student radical movement, and certain wrong practices from theTrotskyist movement, and melded them together, along with their own peculiar version of "Maoism," to create a new and consequential revisionist trend in the international revolutionary movement, especially here in the United States. As one of the most formally developed and widely influential ideological deviations arising out of the US New Communist Movement, many groups in the mass movement end up applying some of its ideas, traditions, and associated methods even if they are not consciously aware of it. Although Avakianism systematically revises the basic philosophical and political economic contents of Marxism, for the aims of this article we will analyze how it has propagated a dangerous organizational line within the mass movement that isolates aspiring revolutionaries from the masses and their struggles, turning the revolutionary principle of construction on its head.

One version of how the Avakianite organizational line manifests in our movement is as follows: a group of amateurish but revolutionary-minded students create their own local "collective" that is focused on "party-building" and "cadre development." They often don't explicitly call themselves the "Party," but also consider themselves something higher than a simple daily-demands-based mass struggle organization. Some hold that study and propaganda are sufficient political work; some others will engage in haphazard mass work, often marked by reformism and amateurishness, as a secondary component to their studies. Regardless, these practices are heavily influenced by the early stage of Avakianism. These revolution-minded individuals unite on the narrow criterion of Marxism while simultaneously attempting to be broad mass organizations facing the "masses."

As a circle like this continues to develop and its limitations begin to show through practice, it often moves to a different model that seems at first glance similar to an actual revolutionary Party but without changing the underlying logic. In this case, the small sect of self-proclaimed "communists" wants to organize the masses, but doesn't have the skills or experience necessary to actually lead this mass organization either through organizational principles or through example. Alternatively, they don't trust that they could maintain that political leadership long term, and thus lack faith that they could actually convince the masses of their political line or train them up in political theory. Because of the political conditions in the US, combined with their own amateurism, they also can't rely on Party or underground organizations to take up the task of leadership either. Instead they take a shortcut. First, they make two mass organizations, one which is purportedly (according to themselves) more red, more advanced, and more theory-oriented, and another which is purportedly lower and more practice-oriented. Second, they name the more "red" mass organization as the leader, coordinator, or generator of the "lower" mass organizations. Both organizations are public, including often having social media accounts, but in spite of that fact the "higher" mass organization tells local people it is more "selective" and "clandestine."

The above-outlined situation, a hallmark of Avakianite methods and practice in organizational construction of mass organizations throughout the US revolutionary movement, is a tactic imported from Trotskyism, something that should be alien to Maoism. This is a more a direct example of what is called the "intermediate organization" model of construction. To fully understand the root of the issue, we need to first discuss the concept of the three instruments of revolution. According to the rich experience of the Russian, Chinese, and other revolutions across the world, the various organizations and bodies of a revolutionary movement can be delineated into three broad categories, or instruments, as they relate to the process of growing the revolution with the organized detachment of Communists at its helm known as the Communist Party. Chairman Mao all the way in 1949 summed up importance of the three instruments as follows: "A well-disciplined Party armed with the theory of Marxism-Leninism, using the method of self-criticism and linked with the masses of the people, an army under the leadership of such a Party; a united front of all revolutionary classes and all revolutionary groups under the leadership of such a Party – these are the three main weapons with which we have defeated the enemy."

Speaking at the most general level, we can see here that each instrument answers a particular question in the process of the revolution, and each (from third to first) gets more and more restrictive in its basis of unity while also being more politically advanced. The Party is made up of the "best children of the class," the best "fighters and administrators" emerging and proven in the crucible of class struggle—it is the vanguard detachment that leads the creation of a new society. The Army is the main instrument in the revolution, because it is tasked with the highest form and main form of class struggle which is able to destroy the old relations of production and construct a new one. And finally, the United Front is an alliance between Communists and the masses, both within the working class and other classes, in the fight for their demands and a new society.

How do these instruments relate to each other in a revolution? The third instrument, the United Front, serves as the basis for building the New State under socialism. It is comprised of the broadest masses and their organizations. Specifically, organizations of the masses have the task of politicizing, mobilizing, and organizing the masses in different fronts of their daily life, serving as the closest link to the masses, linking and raising their day-to-day struggles to the revolution that resolves their fundamental problems and therefore aligns with their interest. The second instrument, as the "main form of organization," is the revolutionary army. It has a higher basis of unity than the third instrument, comprised of masses trained into clandestine and armed revolutionary fighters, who carry out the struggle to destroy and disarticulate the old social and productive relations, providing leadership for the mass movement and serving as its most reliable defense. As such, they must be clandestine in nature. And finally, the Party, being the ideological-political leader of the revolution, lays down the path forward and leads other two instruments as its two powerful weapons. Under this framework, broad-based alliance-type organizations, known as "mass organizations ," are part of the United Front, as they are led by the Party for its work among the masses. Chairman Gonzalo, leader of the Communist Party of Peru and the Peruvian Revolution, succinctly summarized this method of construction using the formulation: "taking the Party as the axis of everything, build the Army around it and with these instruments, with the masses in the People's War, build the new State around both." This method is also referred to in the ideology of the proletariat as the "concentric construction of the three instruments" because the Party is at the center, with the Army built around it, and the United front in turn built around the Party.

Going back to the question of intermediate organizations and Avakianism, the Communist Party of Brazil identifies Avakianism as negating this correct form of construction, and in particular attacking the role of the second instrument, that is, the underground organizations and the Army:

Where does the new revisionism point as the central question of the party? Where do Avakian and Prachanda-Bathhatarai and ROL-MOVADEF in Peru concentrate their attacks? Against the theory and practice of the militarized party and concentric construction of the instruments of revolution. In politics, Avakian separates and denies the military line as the center of the general political line, and soon wants to deny the party as the axis of everything, as the axis of the revolutionary army and the new state, against which he theorizes its "solid nuclei with much elasticity". The same as the renegade and traitor Prachanda with his "fusion theory," "multi-party competition," and "socialism of the twenty-first century."

It is clear that the fundamental error of Avakianism is the liquidating of the second instrument—the clandestine Revolutionary Army—and in its place creating a set of "intermediate" organizations which simultaneously mix aspects of all three instruments according to what the minuscule local sect leaders think is best at the moment. This typically results in purported mass organizations that also try to take up tasks, forms of leadership, or unity of a Party type organization, whether by calling themselves a "collective," a "cadre org," a "pre-party org," an "incubator," a "revolutionary mass organization," etc. This is a simple solution to a complex problem, the lack of correct organizational structures and the forces to make them up: it is a solution that sacrifices principles for convenience.

After all, to be able to truly build a Party or a Revolutionary Army would require giving up the petty-bourgeois way of life that many activists have been used to. A real Party organization would be that "axis of everything" where the few, the true Communists proven in practice, converge to unite and lead at the highest level for the most serious task: the violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie and its Old State, and the establishment of socialism. This is not something to be done in the open nor by anyone not tested in years of harsh class struggle and two-line struggle. And it goes without saying that it cannot be done on the phone or in public mass organizations. Doing so will lead to a failure to weather repression when (not if) the State decides it wishes to focus itself so; in the heart of imperialism in its general decomposition that launches attacks on the workers and people of the world like a rabid dog for its self-preservation, any amateurish mistake, even coming from a place of good intentions, will cost the people unnecessary sacrifices.

In practice, an intermediate organization destroys the basis for democratic centralism in mass organizations generally, as such an organization sees itself as the highest form of class leadership. Thus, rather than seeing real broad mass organizations as their equals, they see them as organizations to be entered into as if they were members of a Party. Yet they are not: membership in such an intermediate organization is more often than not based on how someone is versed in a given revolutionary ideology, rather than any actual class criteria tested in the fire of class struggle and proven by concrete victories against the class enemy. What this means is that members of an intermediate organization practice a form of parasitic or parallel democratic centralism whereby they form an unprincipled faction within a real mass organization, against those "unenlightened masses," who despite maybe having more experience in their own day-to-day struggle, are not self-identified Marxists like those intermediate organization members. The most important part must be emphasized: as these intermediate organizations are based on subjective criteria, they are categorically isolated from the working class and its struggle. Not only will they fail to generate revolutionaries and Communists, they will quickly lose the however few advanced working class masses they gained in one way or another, and return to being a part of the "activist scene" that exists divorced from the masses.

Again, while this might seem very abstract or obscure, it is something even the newest activists among us will have noticed on their own, or by observing the broader local or regional revolutionary movement. Intermediate organizations are a widespread phenomenon around the country and are one of the major products of the failure to build the mass movement in the last five decades. There are scores of petty-bourgeois activists who put this line into practice day in and day out, and continue to not only fail to attract the masses to their organizations, but also drive the masses away from them.

Despite supposedly being more advanced, these "Marxist" cliques and their leaders always end up being the main source of the local misleaders, sex pests, and unreliable but self-important so-called leaders who cause endless crises, splits, and issues for our work and organizations. In this model there is no solid Party organization to apply a class criteria to them, no underground organizations to test them, and as a result the leadership of the proletariat is functionally liquidated and the petty-bourgeois intellectuals are allowed to run rampant. Such trends or methods existed, prior to the establishment of Avakianism, typically in the Trotskyist movement, but Avakian's RCP-USA and the New Communist Movement which birthed them, have elevated them into a formal ideological trend and spread their influence.

These methods also serve to destroy the correct basis of unity of mass organizations. By acting as if they were operating under the basis of unity of a Party, they switch out the broad sectoral class-struggle-based unity of a mass organization for a high-level unity along general Ideological-Political grounds. Thus, to join an intermediate organization one generally does not have to simply unite to engage in principled class struggle in a particular sector, but rather must unite with a stale ideological line divorced from concrete practice. Such an organization is at a low level of development and eschews political struggle. To unite on ideas alone, and operate under subjective criteria as we have seen intermediate organizations do time and time again, is the principal error resulting from this Avakianite line of building organizations. Time and time again practitioners of this line will turn their backs on social practice, uphold abstract study as primary, and build organizations that self-assuredly and subjectively deem themselves to be Communists. It is one thing to think, but it is another thing to act, and even more so to act correctly in carrying out Marxist principles in practical application and with an objective and all-round focus. Intermediate organizations will never be able to carry such a thing out in practice.

A recent example of intermediate organizations in practice is in the Tribune of the People support committees (which are now succeeded by those of The Worker) whereby all mass contacts and mass activists were prohibited from sectoral mass work and direct practical intervention in the class struggle. Rather than organize class struggle, they turn their paper(s) into pithy bases of study, ideological unity, and theoretical production purposefully isolated from practice. This was a continuation of a newspaper-oriented form of intermediate organizations pioneered by the RCP-USA itself, which in its own words claimed that: "[c]entering the Party's work now around its newspaper is not mere paperwork or aimless educational activity, it is the most concrete and practical plan for accumulating revolutionary strength—political, ideological and organizational—for the onslaught." In both cases, this is in actual fact a smuggling of the organizational line of Trotskyism into our movement under the banner of a false "Maoism," waving the red flag to oppose the red flag. They thought very highly of their newspaper, seeing it as a collective organizer as Lenin had described in What Is To Be Done. Yet this is a clear misapplication of what Lenin had outlined, holding that the main pathway to building those three instruments was mainly through work in an open publication. In reality, it is clear even from the historical facts of the Russian revolution that the "all-Russia newspaper" was not the principal method of achieving victory.8 Thus we can see how this specific form of an intermediate organization, of the newspaper-first method, is a clear revision of Marxist principles. While a newspaper can and should serve as an ideological leader and provide guidance, mass work is primarily done by mass organizations, practice is primary, and the readers and people who support such a newspaper are already doing work among the class, not working separate from it.

In a similar case of intermediate organizations applying subjective criteria and pushing for ideology over practice, the Revolutionary Study Groups and Revolutionary Maoist Coalition also suffered from the same issue until they themselves quite recently rectified. They previously upheld an intermediate-organization-type practice of uniting on ideas alone, although neither fell into the trap of upholding a newspaper as principal. These groups have now rectified themselves towards upholding correct principles of mass organizations and towards building up the movement of the masses in various sites of struggle. It is now and will continue to be apparent that those who continue to uphold and practice the various Avakianite methods of intermediate organizations will not be able to mobilize the masses, to build up organizations in the mass movement, and will ultimately fail time and time again.

At this point readers can surely see what is so damaging about the method of constructing intermediate organizations: they attack the Party and its reconstitution process, they attack the second instrument and the principle of clandestinity, and they attack our ability to construct effective organizations of struggle in the mass movement, organizations with a real mass character and which are deeply embedded as part of the class. As a result, they apply subjective criteria, self-declare themselves as advanced as they think themselves to be, and uphold ideas over practice in the political struggle. Their organizations reject correct democratic centralism and leadership, and become

parasites on real organizations of the masses. Their muddling of correct organizational construction leaves them at risk of failing to weather repression.

This is a line that must be resolutely struggled against, as it is a firm necessity to struggle against revisionism. It is abundantly clear that even today we continue to face the issues of Avakianite revisionism, in particular its line of construction, as practiced through intermediate organizations.

Revolutionaries-in-formation must break with erroneous methods originating in Trotskyism and the 1960s–1970s student movement, deepen and broaden the two-line struggle against them, and rectify their organizations towards transforming them into ones intimately linked to the masses in the various sectors and fronts of class struggle. This is the only way we can course correct and begin the arduous but necessary work of building up a powerful mass movement based on correct principles, remolding and rectifying from the petty-bourgeois style of work and life, practicing the "three withs" of living with, working with, and struggling with the masses, as the basis of our development as revolutionaries and all of our studies. Every day lost to revisionism is a day lost to the class enemy, and thus every day we do not rectify is a day we waste as revolutionaries-in-formation. As we devote ourselves into revolutionary social practice, remolding ourselves and transforming the world through class struggle, we must push for this to be the beginning of a new chapter for the US revolutionary movement

State Unionism in the United States (Excerpts)

Southern New England Labor Council

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The US labor aristocracy and the origins of the "boring from within" strategy

What do Mary Kay Henry, Service Employees International Union (SEIU) president, Terence O'Sullivan, Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA) president, and every AFL-CIO president since 1979 have in common, beyond being opportunistic bourgeois misleaders of their respective unions? Interestingly enough, none of them have actually spent any real amount of time working in the fields and sectors their unions claim to lead and represent. While it might sound strange or contradictory for an accountant, lawyer, economist, or business administrator by trade to lead a union that is supposed to represent proletarians, semi-proletarians, or the lower petty-bourgeoisie (teachers, nurses, etc.), it's actually more common than you might think. At most, many modern union presidents have only worked in the sectors they supposedly represent for brief periods in high school, undergraduate, or right after graduation, and even then that is not always the case.

The examples go on and on. Terence O'Sullivan was a high school teacher and then owned an information technology company before becoming part of the professional organizing staff of the Laborers' Union. Richard Trumka, leader of the United Mine Workers and AFL-CIO before his death, was a lawyer. Lee Saunders, president of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), is an economist. Many, like Marc Perrone, president of the United Food and Commercial Workers, Liz Shuler, current president of the AFL-CIO, Randi Weingarten, president of the American Federation of Teachers, or Teresa Romero, president of the United Farm Workers (UFW), are lifelong professional labor organizers who began working as staff in their respective unions straight out of college, without ever actually working in the sectors they claim to represent the interests of.

Traditionally, the establishment unions, like one of the predecessors of the AFL-CIO the American Federation of Labor (AFL), were characterized by revolutionaries as being led by what Lenin and Engels called the "labor aristocracy". In Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism, Lenin described how because of the "superprofits" generated by imperialist monopoly capitalism through its exploitation of the colonial and semi-colonial nations:

"[…] it is possible to bribe the labor leaders and the upper stratum of the labor aristocracy. And that is just what the capitalists of the "advanced" countries are doing: they are bribing them in a thousand different ways, direct and indirect, overt and covert.

This stratum of workers-turned-bourgeois, or the labor aristocracy, who are quite philistine in their mode of life, in the size of their earnings and in their entire outlook, is the principal prop of the Second International, and in our days, the principal social (not military) prop of the bourgeoisie. For they are the real agents of the bourgeoisie in the working-class movement, the labor lieutenants of the capitalist class, real vehicles of reformism and chauvinism. In the civil war between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie they inevitably, and in no small numbers. take the side of the bourgeoisie, the "Versaillese" against the "Communards".

Unless the economic roots of this phenomenon are understood and its political and social significance is appreciated, not a step can be taken toward the solution of the practical problem of the communist movement and of the impending social revolution."

In this way, Lenin (and Engels before him) argued that a section of the proletariat had been, in essence, "bribed" by the respective capitalist classes of the imperialist nations to function as agents of the bourgeoisie within the labor movement itself. This labor aristocracy then set about creating a large strata of officials and bureaucrats within the major labor unions, the fate of which we will touch on later, and worked to limit the revolutionary consciousness of the workers, expel and isolate socialist and communist elements, and keep the labor movement focused on "bread-and-butter" economic goals rather than political goals that had to do with seizing state power for the working class. The complicated questions that arose from how to deal with this new section of "bourgeosified" workers, and the reformist social fascist political parties they were associated with, defined a great deal of revolutionary strategy and debate in the imperialist core throughout the twentieth century.

In contrast to the "dual unionism" of the anarcho-syndicalists of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), after the October Revolution, the original strategy of American Communists within the US labor movement was to "bore from within" the establishment business unions rather than create their own independent "red" unions. The goal of this work was to slowly develop influence within the AFL, and eventually CIO, unions, consolidate their militant left-wing-opposition through the use of extra- union organizations like the Trade Union Educational League (TUEL), and eventually overthrow the labor aristocrats and "misleaders" at the top of the main business unions. Once the labor aristocrats and their bureaucratic officials were purged from the labor movement, the unions' proletarian class leadership would be restored and they could once again become as Marx called "schools of war" in the struggle against capitalism.

In a brief summary that came with every pamphlet they printed, the TUEL described itself as:

"[…] a system of informal committees throughout the entire union movement, organized to infuse the mass with proletarian understanding and spirit. It is working

for the closer affiliation and solidification of our existing craft unions until they have been developed into industrial unions. Believing that all workers should stand together regardless of their social or other opinions, it is opposed to the common policy of radical and progressive-minded workers quitting the trade unions and starting rival organizations based upon ideal principles. That policy is one of the chief reasons why the American labor movement is not further advanced. Its principal effects are to destroy all radical organization in the old unions and to leave the reactionaries in undisputed control, The Trade Union Educational League is in no sense a dual union, nor is it affiliated with any such organization. It is purely an educational body of militants within existing mass unions, who are seeking through the application of modern methods to bring the policies and structure of the labor movement into harmony with present day economic conditions. It bespeaks the active cooperation of all militant union workers"

Not every member of the Comintern adhered to this strategy, as evidenced by the split between the Christian democratic and socialist/communist labor unions in imperialist countries like Italy, Spain and France. Indeed eventually, during the Third Period, the CPUSA was pushed by the Red International of Labor Unions (Profintern/RILU) to abandon the "boring from within" strategy given its lack of results, despite nearly a decade of work, and form independent "red" unions under the umbrella of the new Trade Union Unity League (TUUL). Even before the strategic shift of the Third Period, there had been opposition to the CPUSA's policy of mainly limiting itself to work within the AFL.

From his exile in the Soviet Union, famous former IWW leader and Communist "Big" Bill Haywood wrote in a letter:

"The remedy for Bankruptcy is not the TUEL confining itself to the AFL or part of the Working Class. If so, what becomes of the revolutionary slogan "To the Masses! To the Masses!" Where are the unorganized? What about the colored race … In the national trades what has become of the great basic industries, agriculture and oil? Agriculture is primal [sic]. Are they to be lumped in the miscellaneous trades, with the unions of feather strippers and coconut crackers?"

Haywood's reference to the "colored race" comes from the fact that the AFL unions were as a rule segregated or prohibited non-white membership outright. It is not a coincidence that the CPUSA formed their famous Sharecroppers Union in the US South during the TUUL period, when by breaking with the AFL they also fully broke with racial segregationism. Furthermore, the TUUL's largest section was always its Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union, whose mostly female textile and garment workers had also struggled under the misogynist leadership of Samuel Gompers' AFL.

In an early echo of the rank-and-file caucus strategy to come, during the "boring from within" TUEL period the CPUSA had run a series of left-wing opposition candidates in opposition to the reactionary labor aristocratic leaders who controlled the establishment business unions. After their "Save the Union" slate failed to win against arch-opportunist leader of the United Mine Workers John Lewis despite a number of serious defeats the UMW had recently suffered under his leadership, secretary of the RILU and veteran Bolshevik A. Lozovsky wrote to CPUSA chairman William Z. Foster:

"THE QUESTION OF SETTING UP AN INDEPENDENT UNION MUST BE RAISED,

otherwise you will never escape from this vicious circle. You may have 99 percent of the votes but if the secretaries under Lewis [tear] up your ballot-slips, make fictitious ones, bring hirelings to the Congress, you will have to remain in the power of Lewis to the end of time."

It is worth noting this letter was sent in 1927, a year before the Comintern officially adopted the resolutions of the Third Period against social fascism which produced the turn towards independent "red" unionism in the US.

In the US context, the pre-WW1 Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) and 1928-1933 Trade Union Unity League mark the only times where independent "red" unionism would be the dominant tactic among the US revolutionary left. Except for the small five year TUUL period, from the end of the end of World War 1 until now the American Left has basically pursued different variations of William Foster's original "boring from within" strategy.

Although inspired by workers organizations outside the establishment business unions, like the Revolutionary Union Movement organizations and League of Revolutionary Black Workers, the militants of the 1970s New Communist Movement in the US generally embraced the Fosterite strategy of developing forces within the establishment unions in order to take them over. For example, in response to a letter questioning why they don't "take the lead in forming an entirely new labor movement" the pro-Deng Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist), which was the second largest so-called Communist Party in the US at the time after the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), wrote:

"The CPML is opposed to the idea of abandoning the existing trade unions and instead of building new, independent or "pure" union organizations.

It is true as you say that the trade unions today are completely under the domination of reactionary misleaders who employ a powerful bureaucratic machine to suppress the rank and file. The Meanys, McBrides and Frasers are bought-and-paid-for agents of the bosses within the workers' movement, whose job it is to preach narrow reforms while keeping the system of exploitation and wage-slavery intact.

But, on the other hand, there are nearly 20 million workers in US trade unions, and these workers are concentrated in the most basic industries. Their struggles set the pace for the whole working class.

The importance of the trade unions lies in the fact that they are the most basic and accessible mass organizations of the working class. All workers, regardless of their level of political consciousness, can and do unite in unions to wage common struggles against the bosses.

Under class conscious rather than class-collaborationist leadership, unions could organize the 80 million unorganized workers and be an even more powerful force against the capitalists.

"It is the task of the Party," states the Program of the CPML, "to win the broad masses of workers in the trade unions to socialist revolution and communist leadership." We can't do this standing on the sidelines of the workers' existing organizations.

Our policy is to work within the unions and mobilize the masses to drive out the corrupt labor bureaucrats. We direct our main blow politically at these reformist and revisionist traitors, exposing them to the workers on the basis of their own experiences."

From the perspective of the CPML, and their NCM descendants like FRSO, despite their reactionary leadership and the ideological, political and organizational dominance of the labor aristocracy within them, the unions remained "the most basic, comprehensive organizations of the workers. We build them, defend them from capitalist attack and fight to transform them into organizations of class struggle. In the course of organizing in the shops and unions, we strive to win the broad masses of workers to see the need for socialist revolution and communist leadership." This line was generally referred to as the "class struggle unionism" line, and in many ways remains the default line among American "revolutionaries", anti-revisionist and revisionist alike, to this day.

The RCP of the time pursued a similar route, seeking to form a new TUEL-like organization called the National Workers Organization. While accused by groups like the CPML of practicing "dual unionism" by forming a national "intermediate workers organization", the NWO was very clear in its founding document that:

"The general problem with the unions today is not that the unions are no good and the working class needs new ones in their place. The problem with the unions is that the top

leadership is hopelessly reactionary and wedded to the owning class. These jackanapes need to be cleared out and replaced by officials who are going to lead the workers in fighting the companies. The national workers organization sets this as one of its tasks and not the destruction of the existing unions."

Ironically, once the strike waves and spontaneous labor militancy of the 1970s ebbed and ended, almost right after they created the NWO, the RCP would exit the labor movement and trade union struggle almost entirely in the 1980s, and looking back claim that most of their 70s labor work was economistic, rightist and "workerist". Those NCM militants who remained in the labor movement either ended up joining the very labor aristocracy they had once condemned, and played a major role in Jesse Jackson's 1984 and 1988 Democratic presidential primary campaigns, or slowly faded into irrelevance.

Despite the collapse of the NCM, Trotskyist labor organizer Kim Moody would keep the "boring from within" strategy alive, although it was now called the "Rank and File Strategy", and fell under the umbrella of a new organization/publication called Labor Notes. With Labor Notes, Moody and his co- founders wanted to create a new TUEL, but without the explicit connection to revolution or a proletarian vanguard party that the original TUEL or the RCP's National Workers Organization had had. Instead of further revolutionizing an already spontaneously militant and insurgent labor movement, Labor Notes would seek to "revitalize" a now stagnant and declining US labor movement by organizationally linking a network of various "rank and file opposition" caucuses within the establishment unions and supporting their slates during union officer elections. The publication and its associated network of labor activists, which still exist to this day, has become the preeminent "progressive" labor organization in the country, in particular among the DSA and other "left" Democrats.

Thus, the American revolutionary left has pursued a "boring from within" strategy within the labor movement for, with the exception of a brief break during the Third Period, now more than a century. In a never-ending saga, like Sisyphus, would-be US revolutionary workers and labor activists have been attempting to drive out the reactionary labor aristocratic leadership from the establishment trade and industrial unions in an almost unbroken line from 1921 until now.

Why have these efforts failed to produce anything meaningful, outside of a few formerly "red" unions of the old 1930s CIO like the UE and ILWU who pride themselves on their "militant radical past"?

Why have the programs of even the "left-wing oppositional caucuses" devolved from supporting World Proletarian Revolution, to supporting any union officer, no matter their political beliefs, who will promise to not concede "too much" during the next round of contract negotiations?

While the answers to these questions are obviously complicated, and generally tied to broader questions about revolutionary struggle in our context and why generations of communists in the imperial core have failed to make progress towards the conquest of political power, they are in any case fundamentally tied to the question of the character of the establishment unions. Specifically what their class character is, what our relationship to them should be, and thus what our strategy and tactics for work should be within the labor movement.

The US left's relationship with state unionism

Despite the great effort by many of the so-called "socialist Left" in the United States to defend the "revolutionary potential" and "key role" of the establishment unions, the character of the establishment unions as a major component in the current bourgeois monopoly capitalist system is something the people who actually lead and influence these unions are happy to admit. In a position paper that has come to define much of the establishment unions' strategy and tactics since it was published in 2013, influential professional labor organizer Rich Yeselson speaks candidly from a perspective where the establishment unions are slaves to the wants and demands of the bourgeois state, and where somehow the interests of "labor" and the working class itself are now completely divorced from one another:

"*[…] Taft-Hartley isn't going anywhere. Its land mines still detonate. And it still defines the legal and political context in which labor must operate as it tries to map out a strategy for the future.* ***An aggressive organizing strategy,*** *of the sort labor attempted when John Sweeney took the helm of the AFL-CIO,* ***just doesn't work because the smart union strategists can't compensate for a mostly (though not entirely) uninterested working class.*** *But labor can, without undertaking lengthy and expensive campaigns to organize new sectors, work to buttress the areas in which it is already strong, extend its alliances with other progressive groups, and even train the worker leaders of tomorrow. I call this "Fortress Unionism," and* ***I believe it's labor's best play until the day arrives, if it ever does, when the workers themselves militantly signal that they want unions****." (emphasis ours)*

Yeselson goes on to argue, as we have already explained, that the interventions by the bourgeoisie state into the labor movement from the 1930s – 1940s:

"*… bureaucratized labor unions. Unions required more and more lawyers—and more and more union stewards adept at labor law—to untangle the welter of laws, board decisions, judicial decisions, and contractual obligations that now ensnared the modern labor organization. This pervasive legalistic framework made the labor titans increasingly cautious, and it drained the energy and creativity out of the members and their rank-and-file leadership—the idea was to wait for the lawyers to tell them what would fly before the NLRB or the courts."* This now dominant legalistic framework, in Yeselson's eyes, means that establishment labor's best strategy for the foreseeable future is to defend the current contracts and sectors they still have:

"*And then…wait. Wait for the workers to say they've had enough.* ***When they demand in vast numbers collective solutions to their problems, seize upon that energy and institutionalize it****.*

That is how massive union growth occurs—workers take matters into their own hands ***and then unions capture that energy like lightning in a bottle.***

[…]

As the San Francisco Chronicle editorialized in opposition to the 1946 Oakland general strike, sustained worker activism disrupts "the orderly process of daily life." This may sound melodramatic, but there is no substitute for it. And when the workers do signal, the existing unions and their memberships should stand ready to help. ***Unions were invented at the same time as modern capitalism. The system generates problems for employees that only collective representation (or the threat of it) can mitigate. An ostensibly democratic capitalism without unions is barely more thinkable than it would be without capitalists.*** *The workers are willful when they want unions. Keep your eye on them.* ***The unions will follow.*****" (emphasis ours)**

There is a lot that can be analyzed and dissected in this position paper: how it openly embraces (like most contemporary "labor" leaders) unions as a class-collaborationist counterbalance which makes capitalism "ostensibly democratic", how it claims modern establishment unions' key purpose is to "institutionalize" the spontaneous demands of the workers for "collective solutions" within the framework of the bourgeois state, how even from the perspective of the professionalized organizing strata modern labor is basically dead in the water strategically. It is worth considering how we have gotten to the point where, with a very serious and sober tone, high-ranking labor organizers/strategists like Yeselson can take as one of their fundamental conditions that "the working-class" is "uninterested" in "labor".

Can soldiers and generals be "mostly uninterested" in the military? Can doctors and nurses be "mostly uninterested" in medicine? Do carpenters need to be reconvinced of their interest in wood? It is a statement which makes no rational sense on its own, unless you accept the reality, already evident to the leaders of the contemporary labor movement, that modern establishment "labor" is divorced from and no longer synonymous with the "workers themselves". That "labor" is now composed of legalistic institutions, state-sanctioned associations of employees, that are led by an alliance of petty-bourgeois professionals and working-class sell-outs tied at the hip with and regulated by the courts and state welfare apparatus.

Of course, the workers are still interested in their own spontaneous struggles and labor politics abstractly. Even mainstream opinion polling shows that a majority of the US population has a positive view of the idea of labor unions. The question is whether the working masses are interested in the current state-sanctioned labor centers represented by the AFL-CIO, Change To Win, the IBT, and the other establishment unions.

The social democratic and left-Democratic press has done a thorough job analyzing and documenting the

very real employer repression and anti-union propagandizing in the multiple recent failed attempts unionize Amazon centers in Bessemer, Alabama, upstate New York, and California, as well as the intentionally difficult and protracted NLRB union certification process. What the contemporary "socialist press" has failed to do on the other hand is interrogate the material conditions and internal contradictions, which as Marxists we understand are primary, behind the seemingly endless retreat of the labor movement from the working class that the failure of attempts to unionize Amazon encapsulates. The labor movement has always faced fierce repression, and suffered many bitter defeats, but now seems unable to even organize a single medium-sized or small-sized enterprise, much less a whole sector or major industrial conglomerate. Through a rightist misuse of the slogans "solidarity" and "unity", seemingly basic questions afflicting modern labor work remain unanswered or under- analyzed.

If the unions are so weak, why do they have more resources at their disposal than they have ever had in their entire history? If the state is so hostile to contemporary unions, why do public sector unionization rates dwarf private sector membership rates and bourgeois politicians feel safe appointing current and former "labor leaders" to high-ranking government offices, committees, boards and positions? If the problem is simply who's at the top, then why do waves of victories of 'progressive" candidates from "rank-and-file" caucuses in union elections seem to change nothing? If contemporary establishment unions are fundamentally working-class organizations, why have they not experienced dramatically higher activity or renewed growth during recent peaks of working-class militancy like they did in the past, but instead increasingly rely on legislative processes, new regulations, and changes in bourgeois officialdom to meet their demands? And if the Labor Department constantly monitors and regulates the internal function of establishment unions, and has shown its willingness to formally seize control of the unions or retract collective bargaining rights when necessary, why do revolutionaries expect the bourgeois to allow them to peacefully take power and transform these same unions?

The more you begin to look beyond the mindless sloganeering of both the left and the right, the objective and scientific reality of the modern labor movement becomes undeniably clear. The establishment labor unions, or American state unions, are state-sanctioned collective bargaining units, nothing more, nothing less. They are punished when they step out of that role, and the modern collective bargaining system is designed to make state union officialdom a "partner" and ally of the bosses and capitalists when it comes to disciplining their employees and enforcing the terms of the contract. The state unions then become one of the primary enforcers of a thousand of policies, tiers, and categories created by the bourgeoisie to divide the workers, divisions the old industrial unionists once sought to destroy.

Given this reality, why then do so many self-proclaimed revolutionaries continue to advocate for confining our work within the AFL-CIO and other establishment unions? Why are they so loyal to institutions which so many everyday workers already view with either ambivalence, suspicion or disappointment?

One basic reason for this unprincipled and unproductive "united front" has to do with the class character of the contemporary American "left", which is primarily composed of the lower and downwardly mobile petty-bourgeoisie rather than the proletariat itself. These radicals of petty bourgeois origin and occupation can easily sympathize with and relate to the strata of similarly petty bourgeois professionals which run and control the establishment unions. Indeed many "would-be" radicals are, formerly were, or aspire to be professional "full-time" organizers, or are friends with and in the same social circles as these "labor" professionals.

A second, interconnected reason for this alliance is that the US "left" has proven itself broadly unable to break with the bourgeois state in a variety of sectors, not just in the sphere of labor work. Many would-be American radicals are caught up as pawns in the struggle between different factions of the bourgeoisie, as represented by the Democratic and Republican party. The struggle of class against class, of proletariat against bourgeoisie, is put aside in favor of the struggle between the "socially progressive" and "social conservative" wings of US imperialist capitalism. Placed perpetually on tailist footing, under the banner of "harm reduction" these "revolutionaries" primarily work to defend the few-remaining social reforms and organs of the ailing welfare apparatus of the New Deal and Civil-Rights era, the establishment unions among them.

A third, and perhaps more understandable reason, argues that because there are still millions of workers who are members of the state unions the best way to win political leadership over them is by winning leadership positions within the structure of these institutions, and leveraging our forces within the establishment unions to "make them more militant" and "push them left". These comrades fail to understand that the Marxist position has always been that we do work and seek to lead the workers and masses wherever they are located, not that we seek to capture and reform every organization the workers are a part of. For example, while the Italian and the German Communist parties infiltrated and did work among the workers within the state unions created by their respective fascist governments, they never abandoned the principle of independent proletarian initiative, organizational structures, and political lines when doing work within these institutions and never fooled themselves that the Fascist state would somehow allow the Communists to take over and peacefully transform structures the fascists themselves had regulated and controlled.

Towards a revolutionary position on state unions

As Marxists we understand that dialectically, over time, things can transform into their opposite. Everything is a unity of opposites, and what might have began as an organization where the proletarian aspect was dominant over the bourgeois aspect can, in the twists and turns of class struggle, become an organization where the bourgeois aspect is dominant over the proletarian aspect. While this process also leaves open the possibility of the opposite occurring, as proletarian revolutionaries we understand that such a process will be inherently violent, combining destruction and construction in the same way the New State supplants and replaces the Old State in the course of people's war.

Relevant to this point is the CPUSA's line on the pre-NLRB phenomena of "company unions", described in their TUEL pamphlet entitled simply "Company Unions". Authored through a collaboration of Robert William Dunn and previously mentioned TUEL leader William Z. Foster,1 the pamphlet explains how, in order to increase production, fight the influence of both the independent red and non-red unions, and enforce labor peace during the First World War, many capitalist enterprises began forming their own "councils", "shop committees", "associations", and even "unions" as employer-sponsored rivals to the existing trade unions of the time. These organizations, created on the initiative of the capitalists themselves, were recognized as legitimate by the newly created "National War Labor Board" (sound familiar?!), developed by the state to manage the economy during wartime. The TUEL correctly identified the "company unions" as inherently class-collaborationist institutions, tools of the state and capitalist classes that had to be broken with and combated. It's worth understanding though that between 1,000,000 and 1,500,000 workers were members of these organizations during the late 1910s and most of the 1920s, making them the second largest "labor" conglomeration outside of the AFL.

In an incredible conclusion section that foresees the rise of state unionism, the original and greatest American champion of the "boring from within" line himself, William Z. Foster, writes:

"An especially menacing feature of the company union movement is the pronounced tendency of the trade union bureaucracy to accept its principles and practices and to transform the trade unions into company unions. This tendency expresses itself through the so-called B. & O. Plan and the "new wage policy" adopted by the American Federation of Labor at its recent convention. Refusing to militantly fight against the employers, the trade union bureaucrats are surrendering to them, by entering into agreements with them to raise production and to abolish strikes. The adoption of the B. & O Plan was a long step in the direction of company unionism and class collaboration generally. Already sections of the employers and the trade union bureaucrats foresee a practical merging of the trade union and company union movement. In such a consolidation the demands of the reactionary bureaucracy would be comparatively simple. Neglecting the interests of the workers as usual, their principal demand would be for the maintenance of some sort of a dues-paying organization which would serve to pay their fat salaries and to finance their labor banks and other trade union capitalist schemes. In return for this concession, they would defend the interests of the employers even more militantly than now against the insistent demands of the masses in general and the 'left wing in particular. The occasional outcries of the bureaucrats against the company unions cannot hide the fact that these same bureaucrats are tending strongly in the direction of accepting company unionism." (emphasis ours)

The B & O Plan (Baltimore and Ohio Cooperation Plan), was a "union-management cooperation plan" proposed by the B&O Railroad Company to "improve morale" and increase "incentives to efficiency" among their workers by formally recognizing and regularly meeting with their union in exchange for the union's commitment to reduced militancy and perpetual "cooperation" with the company on all issues related to wages and working conditions (once again, sound familiar?!). The analysis presented in the pamphlet shows how TUEL activists, even while at the time still working within the AFL business unions, were able to see and address the increasingly likely possibility that the trade unions led by the labor aristocracy could turn into their opposite and fully embrace company unionism through the creation of collective agreements with the employers, mediated by the state apparatus, that contained no strike clauses and wedded the establishment unions and employers together in joint management of the workers.

While generations of would-be labor radicals have used the Trade Union Education League period as justification for the never ending struggle to wrest control of the establishment unions from their current leadership, the TUEL's line on what to do with the company unions shows it's not exactly clear any TUEL leader, even Foster, would endorse their approach given the character and structure of the major modern unions:

"The fight against company unionism must be made a special point of business by the trade union movement. To destroy the company unions is an essential part of the great task of organizing the unorganized millions in the industry. The slogan must be, "Destroy the Company Unions and form Trade Unions." If necessary we must penetrate the company unions when they have a mass following and disintegrate them from within, utilizing the resultant movements among the workers for the inauguration of wage and organizing campaigns. The experience during the movement of the steel workers in 1918-19, as well as among other groups of workers, shows clearly that the workers will not only demolish the company unions, but also use them as starting points for the formation of real trade unions. But the fight against company unionism must be accompanied by a militant struggle in the unions against its first

cousins, the B. & O. Plan and the various forms of trade union capitalism, such as labor banking, trade union life insurance, etc. The Trade Union Educational League, embracing the most conscious and progressive elements among the workers, must carry on an unremitting campaign against the B. & O. Plan and every other manifestation of class collaboration. It must play a leading part in the consolidation of the unorganized masses, in the development of a new leadership for the unions, in the mobilization of the working class for a policy of real struggle against the employers. Company unionism, including its trade union phase, the B. & O. Plan, is a menacing barrier to the progress of the workers. The road to working class emancipation lies through its shattered fragments." (emphasis ours)

We can see from this pamphlet that while the Trade Union Education League was willing to do work within the reactionary business unions of the AFL, and attempt to transform them into "class struggle unions" from the inside out, even they were unwilling to accept openly class collaborationist institutions like the National War Labor Board, the company unions, and anti-strike contracts like the B&O Plan as part of any real and authentic trade union movement. When the CPUSA did eventually work within the NLRB-sanctioned CIO union center during the late 1930s and 1940s, it's important to remember this occurred in the context of the CPUSA rightist Browderite interpretation of the Comintern's Popular Front line wherein the party openly sought a "united front against fascism" with the FDR administration and "progressive-wing" of the Democratic Party. With the opening of the Cold War following World War 2, it would be the very NLRB-mechanisms that the CIO opportunistically utilized so heavily that allowed for the bourgeois state to turn around and intervene in the labor movement to repress and purge revolutionary workers as never before.

With this historical background in mind, we can characterize US state unionism as the state- sanctioned and state-promoted merger of the preceding trends of company unionism on the one hand, and the right-wing of the business union leadership, which advanced what the Trade Union Educational League called "trade union capitalism", on the other. Labor law, the New Deal, and the resulting bourgeois democratic welfare apparatus institutionalized class-collaborationist company unionism as the only acceptable form of "unionism" the establishment unions could take, and created the set of "labor institutions" which now dominate the US labor movement even though they are alienated from the working-class itself. With the "left" of the labor movement destroyed and scattered during the Second Red Scare period, by the time the militants of the NCM attempted to "bring communism home to the workers" by taking over and transforming the establishment unions, they were dealing with an entirely different type of labor organization than the revolutionaries of the 1800s and the first half of the 1900s had.

This new state unionist "labor organization" was the main organ of the national-level "union- management cooperation plan" implemented by the FDR administration and expanded under subsequent presidents, and was the basic organization of a state bureaucrat-labor aristocratic alliance, not a basic organization of the "workers themselves". In 2023, the "practical merging of the trade union and company union movement" the Trade Union Educational League warned about and foresaw in 1926 has been long since achieved.

But if state unionism dominates the modern labor movement and establishment labor structures, what then is to be done?

The first corrective that recognizing the modern labor movement as dominated by state unionism obliges us to make is that the vast trash heap currently masquerading as "labor strategy" or "labor mass work" on the US "revolutionary" left must be cast aside. Calls to "build a fighting labor movement", push the major unions to be "more militant", build links with "organized labor", "support labor", and "stand in solidarity" with the workers are meaningless without, as the Brazilian comrades describe, a decisive break with American state unionism. All revolutionaries in the labor movement must strive to construct "a class-based, combative and independent unionism" in the United States without exception.

By not rejecting state unionism, the slogans of the US left become at worst blatant tailism of the "progressive"-wing of the bourgeois state apparatus, and at best a call to reconstitute the establishment unions as AFL-style business unions rather than modern state unions (AFL-style business unions which merged with the state apparatus and company unionist structures to get us into this mess in the first place). That second call is how we end up with "left-wing rank-and-file caucus" Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU) supporting Sean O'Brien for IBT president, despite the fact that O'Brien is a well-known reactionary "good old boy" with a mobbed-up Teamsters official father and had been temporarily suspended from the Teamsters less than a decade prior for openly threatening TDU members who challenged a buddy of his. O'Brien and most of the candidates of the so-called "rank-and file caucuses" and "union reform" slates represent a "progressive" state unionism that emulates the bread-and-butter establishment unions of the 1950s and 1960s while Hoffa Jr, a lawyer who never worked a real job in his life, represented a continuation of a conservative state unionism even most Democrats found unpalatable. Where Lenin once criticized the call to "lend the economic struggle a political character" as rightist and fundamentally anti-revolutionary, the call of most of the current US left has devolved into "revive the economic struggle" without even a passing mention of politics or the revolutionary political struggle.

By not breaking with state unionism, the "strike support" and "labor solidarity" work of the DSA, PSL, ISG and assorted American socialist alphabet soup becomes a united front between a predominately petty-bourgeois left and the professionalized organizing staff of the

establishment unions, that is, a united front of the "progressive" petty-bourgeoisie with itself. It's worth noting how the DSA and other supposedly "left-wing" organizations describe their labor work. An article from In These Times describing the DSA's recent labor campaigns quotes a DSA-linked organizer as stating there "is a war on the working class in this country and the only way we are going to win is by building an army of organizers" and goes onto describe the DSA-initiated Emergency Workplace Organizing Committee as: "involved in 186 active campaigns and has assisted in union wins at Trader Joe's, a Manhattan theater and a hospital in Austin, Texas, among others." Here even a DSA-friendly article describes the dark reality we have explained above, where instead of educating the workers in class struggle and forging the advanced workers into the bones of an independent and class-conscious workers movement, we build an "army" of petty-bourgeois professional organizers and have them go among and organize the workers and attempt to expand the reach of the establishment state unions. And even they must admit they have only had success organizing at "Trader Joe's, a Manhattan theater and a hospital in Austin, Texas." Hell, our organization has had some "success" organizing among workers at a handful of UPS hubs and public schools, but you don't see us parading the most basic work building links and leading small sections of the masses as successes worthy of applause.

The PSL and other so-called "Leninist" groups are no better, with the PSL's most recent article on the IBT-UPS TA debacle claiming: "A contract victory at UPS shows the power that workers have when they are organized in a fighting union. The task now is to spread this organization to the nonunion corporations in the shipping and logistics industry. Sean O'Brien and the rest of the Teamsters leadership have spoken on many occasions about the importance of organizing Amazon." Here the supposedly "communist" PSL tails even the bland social democrats of the Amazon Labor Union by claiming that somehow the Teamsters' leadership's betrayal of their promise to strike to win major concessions from UPS means they are a "fighting union" (which backed down from fighting) and that revolutionaries should work to expand their influence and reach spread to non-Teamsters organized corporations in the logistics industry. The absolute dominance of state unionism in the United States means establishment unions can do the absolute minimum, i.e. threaten a strike, and be applauded as heralds of a new "fighting" labor movement worth harassing an otherwise disinterested working class into supporting.

The second corrective is that revolutionaries in the US must soberly reckon with the reality that the path to revolution in our country lies through either splitting or outright destroying most, if not all, of the establishment state unions, and constructing a new powerful, combative, independent and class- conscious alternative union center in their place. It is a reality that, even if we stick our heads in the sand and refuse to recognize, will be forced upon us in the course of any serious revolutionary struggle in the United States. If we were to pursue the route of most mainstream "Left" organizations and confine our labor work to expanding and attempting become the leadership of and transform the state unions, and then act as socialists with even the most minor fidelity, the bourgeois state would inevitably seize control of and attempt to purge us from the state unions we legitimately threaten to take over, thus forcing an organizational split upon us on their terms. Such a split was forced upon the ILWU, UE and other Communist-controlled CIO locals during the Second Red Scare and it will certainly happen again if revolutionary workers ever pose a serious threat to the American capitalist order.

This recognition of the state unionist reality of the modern labor movement should not be confused with a call to completely abandon the state unions, as Lenin criticized in "Left Wing" Communism: An Infantile Disorder. US revolutionaries must continue to agitate, penetrate, and organize within the employer and state-sanctioned collective bargaining units (i.e. state unions) as the CPUSA did within the company unions and the Communists of the 1930s and 40s did within the fascist state unions. In doing this revolutionary workers and labor activists can avoid isolation from the sections of the working-class and lower-petty bourgeoisie organized within the state unions, and utilize these state-sanctioned bargaining units to intervene in and lead the struggle for revindications and reforms. The role of revolutionaries within the state-controlled bargaining units must be to expose and undermine the state unionist center, the harmful role of state interventions and the NLRB-system, and agitate among the workers for an independent class-conscious unionist current. The role of revolutionaries within the state unions is not to do as almost every "left-wing" group has done following the recent last-minute UPS-IBT Tentative Agreement and proclaim "solidarity" and "unity" with every betrayal of the workers by the state unionist structures and bully/pressure the workers into accepting every wretched compromise and concession.

This is also not to be confused with a call to dogmatically view all currently existing unions as equals. For example, even during the TUUL Red Union period the CPUSA continued to pursue a "boring from within" strategy within the American Federation of Teachers due to the widespread militancy and relatively advanced political consciousness of the members of that particular business union. The vast majority of the major establishment unions (AFSCME, IBT, UAW, NEA, SEIU, etc.) are, however, part of the state unionist current within the labor movement and must be dealt with and understood as such.

As the TUEL wrote regarding company unionism, "the road to working class emancipation lies through [the] shattered fragments" of state unionism. This is inevitable because one of the key tasks of proletarian revolutionaries within the labor movement is to develop the class consciousness and organic organization of the

masses by carrying "on an unremitting campaign against" all "manifestations of class collaboration" in the process of revolutionary class struggle. The term "organic" is important here because a basic characteristic of any true unionist current is that its bodies and organisms derive their legitimacy and support from the workers themselves, not from the state, employer, or any other body alien to the masses. The revolutionary tactic of developing cadre and "professional revolutionaries" cannot be distorted into a call for petty bourgeois professionals, lawyers, and other varied "union staffers" to dominate and control the spontaneous workers' movement.

The third corrective is that revolutionary workers must begin developing and implementing our decisive break with state unionism now, not at some prophesied ideal point in the future. Because they are currently largely foreign to the workers and base themselves in the machinery of a weak and feeble American welfare apparatus, the state unions already are essentially irrelevant as a real and powerful organizing force outside of the public sector and a few isolated "union cities" and unionized industries and enterprises. In the mostly unorganized sectors and enterprises, where the large majority of America's working masses are located, we must begin preparing the basis for the independent class- conscious unionist current that is necessary if we ever which to achieve revolution in the United States. As part of this long-term goal we must begin to seriously grapple with the task of collectively organizing workplaces and leading workers without the state unions and with only the most minimal necessary contact with the state labor regulatory apparatus. It is in the unorganized sectors that we must start to explore in earnest with all available energy the possibilities and potential for red unions and independent unions.

In the service, restaurant, agricultural, light industry, and many other sectors the state unions meant to represent the workers within those industries are quite literally almost non-existent. For example, according to a recent bourgeois press report the United Farm Workers' "membership is so low that UC Merced researchers say farmworker union membership is now statistically zero. Today the UFW focuses its efforts on political advocacy, hoping for better election outcomes by making accommodations such as at-home voting." In the unorganized sectors, many state unions have essentially given up the pretense of being traditional trade or industrial unions, and have explicitly made the jump entirely from trade union to NGO. Why revolutionaries would tie themselves to institutions which are not only thoroughly corrupt and reactionary, but also have "statistically zero" active support among the workers they supposedly "organize and represent" defies all logic.

Revolutionary organizations that work within these sectors should focus on consolidating the advanced and bringing up the intermediate masses within independent union or proto-union structures that allow not only for political and ideological autonomy, but are also made up of and based within the workers themselves rather than university campuses and the American domestic NGO-complex.

The originally independent Amazon Labor Union and Starbucks Workers United campaigns, which state unionism increasingly subsumes and ties to its failing machinery, are examples of the potential independent unionism has even now, when many so-called "leftists" continue to tail the workers and demand they enter into weak and compromised state unions rather then organize independent worker- led unions the masses are more willing to trust. It is within Amazon, Starbucks, or other enterprises organized under similar "independent" unions that the famed "boring from within" strategy becomes more legitimate or possible, as these supposedly "novel and new" independent unions are much more equivalent to the historical business unions of the pre-state unionism era than the current establishment labor centers. Such a tactic is however still complicated by the fact that state unionism is so prevalent, and has such a strong hold on the labor movement, that even these independent unions can quickly morph into their opposite. This can be seen most readily by the rapid stagnation of the ALU and recent formation of the ALU Democratic Reform Caucus, which (correctly) alleges ALU is so already dysfunctional it needs new leadership and a thorough reformation of its current structure and method.

In the sectors and enterprises already organized by the state unions, our primary task is to undermine state unionism and encourage independent worker initiative by constructing a political organizational apparatus and system of support separate from and opposed to the professionalized petty bourgeois state union centers within the state-sanctioned bargaining units. Given the inevitable split and expulsion that will be forced upon us by the bourgeois state if we are to have even moderate success regionally or nationally, we must never liquidate our forces within the state union apparatus itself. Instead revolutionary workers should utilize shop papers, clandestine activist networks, and independent shop floor or building-level organizing committees to mobilize the workers within the state-sanctioned bargaining units to struggle for their daily demands and agitate among them to raise their political consciousness and educate them in the theory and practice of class struggle. These independent red labor organizations should form the basis of the red fractions within the state unions that will eventually split and as Dunn and Foster wrote of the company unions, use the old establishment state unions "as starting points for the formation of real trade unions.

New Labor Press

A Worker's Guide To: Shop Organizing (Excerpts)

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A correct approach to shop floor organizing is the cornerstone of the class-conscious labor movement. That is because fundamentally the basis of our movement is in the workplaces, on the shop floor, in the factories and warehouses, on the farms and in the mines, wherever labor is exploited by capital. The success or failure of our movement will be determined by our ability to mobilize, organize and politicize our fellow workers for the political and economic demands of our class, serving the eventual establishment of a workers' state via socialist revolution.

These fundamentals imply a correct approach to the creation and leadership of shop organizations, whether they be the most basic shop organizations like shop committees, or the most broad, like a class-conscious union center. In theoretically outlining, and practically implementing, this type of work we apply some of the most fundamental principles of the modern working class, like industrial unionism and class struggle. A shop floor organization is an organization of the workers within a single workplace. It is the smallest body in the labor movement capable of making decisions and carrying them out collectively. On a literal level, it is simply two or more workers who have united on the basis of shared political-economic objectives. Political, because at a fundamental level all of our problems as workers come back to the capitalist mode of production and the capitalist government, and economic because many of our day-to-day problems have to do with pay, bad bosses, overwork, the isolation/robotic nature of our work, etc. Political struggle means challenging the political rule of the capitalists, or their representatives in the workplace, and economic struggle means challenging the particular rate of exploitation in the workplace through an improvement in working conditions, pay, slowdown in the work rate, etc. It is unthinkable that one struggle could take place without the other and so all labor organizations must unite on the basis of both.

The purpose of a shop organization is to organize a particular workplace, raise the political level of the workers there, and struggle for their immediate concrete demands. What this looks like will be different at every place of work. Nevertheless, there are certain ideological, political, and organizational features that are common across all shop floor organizations, and it must be this way if we are to achieve broader mobilization and organization on an industrial level without degenerating into the divisive, weak, reactionary organizations that characterize the state-dominated labor movement. Due to the potential for repercussions, shop organizations must be organized semi-clandestinely. This means that on an organizational level things like the personal information of the workers in the shop organization and the specific details and extent of their work must be known only by those people contributing to the shop organization. This is practical necessity due to the presence of snitches and traitors in all workplaces, and to protect against the use of the capitalist legal system and its police to crush workplace organizing. Politically however the goals of the shop organization should be known among all the advanced and intermediate workers, and in the run-up to and during the course of actions like walk-outs, strikes, mass meetings, rallies, stand-outs etc., the organizational aims and plans of the shop floor organizations must be propagated, taught to, and grasped by the workers in a given workplace as appropriate.

To some shop organization members, their day-to-day tasks might seem very administrative, routine, or basic, like trying to regularly talk and listen to their co-workers, or consistently distribute a certain number of shop papers. While the day-to-day tasks of the shop organizations could superficially resemble routine administrative work, these tasks allow us to build up the capacity to successfully mobilize our co-workers and carry out much larger and more powerful actions like rallies, slowdowns, walkouts and strikes. Because of this unique capacity, politically and economically shop organizations are absolutely fundamental organizations of the working class. This makes a correct ideological and political orientation an important and permanent necessity in them. Reactionary ideas of any kind, whether it is something "casual" like homophobia or something more "professional" and "educated" like support for capitalist politicians, state unionism, opportunism or revisionism must be relentlessly criticized and its proponents corrected. The effect of these ideas in the long-term is to strengthen the capitalists, politicians, and corporate management by dividing us and pitting sections of the workers against each other. While the ideological-political basis of unity of shop organizations is class-conscious trade unionism (for a concrete example of this see the New Labor Organizing Committee's objectives and principles), that doesn't negate the need for the shop organizations to combat opportunism and revisionism in the labor movement or the need to study, learn from, and appropriately/correctly apply Marxist theory. The shop organization cannot tolerate opportunism, chauvinism or revisionism in any form within its ranks and must pursue the correct political line no matter the short-term costs. Otherwise it ceases to be a true shop organization and becomes little more than a gang for advancing the factional interests of a narrow minority of workers.

Part 3) The Leap from Shop Organization to Trade Union

A) In an Unorganized Shop

In the non-organized shops, the task of the shop organizations is to begin preparing the basis for the formation of class-conscious trade union organizations. These independent trade union organizations have their own unique characteristics and differ from the way state unions are organized in a number of very important ways. In particular, a correct approach to creating independent, class-conscious and combative trade unions means applying three key principles: industrial unionism, unions as class organizations, and "it is right to rebel". Unions Must Be Organizations of Our Class. To class-conscious workers and revolutionaries, unions are supposed to be the basic economic organizations of the working class. They are supposed to be class organizations of the proletariat; organizations that belong to and are created by the workers of the world, and not anyone else. The legitimacy, structure, membership, and activity of unions is supposed to be derived exclusively from the workers, their representatives, and their leading organizations. In the modern day however, most supposed trade unions are not actually unions in this sense because their legitimacy, structure, membership, and activity is derived from the law, the courts, and from the recognition and support of the capitalist state. These organizations are not real unions, but rather state unions. Whether or not the workers actually like these unions, their leaders, their rules, or what they do doesn't matter. The boss or the law says this union is the union that represents your workplace, and any workers who want a change in union are going to have to go through a long and complicated court process run by the capitalist state, which will inevitably go nowhere, because the only type of organization that could lead the workers collectively to overthrow corrupt union leadership is an actual trade union, leading many workers back to square one.

Most workers understand that this situation is bad on all levels for ourselves, our fellow workers, and our chances of victory in the many battles and struggles we face. But state unionism has become so dominant that many workers and organizers don't even practically know how a real trade union should be structured anymore. To begin to answer this question, we can go back to how trade unions were organized before the National Labor Relations Act and Taft-Hartley Act, the two most important pieces of modern US state unionist legislation, were passed. Before this the unions, even conservative capitalist unions, were independent organizations created and run by workers. They played by their own rules, had their own structures and systems, struggled using economic and political action as they saw fit, and achieved concessions and contracts directly with the owners and employers, without the state acting as a mediator between the two sides making sure labor was "playing by the rules" of the system. This all came to an end when sell-outs and opportunists in the revolutionary movement and the workers movement decided it was better to give up most of their rights for some short term contract gains in the 1930s and 40s, which were quickly reversed in the following decades.

What this means practically now is that contemporary independent unions must still follow the basic systems and structure of the older independent industrial unions, while also creatively confronting the problem of modern labor law and state unionism. Independent unions will have to navigate and engage with the modern union certification system and contract bargaining system on their terms, in the same way shop committees in the state unionist-organized shops should engage in the grievance system on their own terms and for their own purposes. However, independent unions must avoid doing what the state unions do which is liquidate their whole union and shop forms into legalistic bargaining units. Indeed, the reverse should occur, where the bargaining committee should be a small specialized extension of a much larger non-legally recognized trade union machinery run by and based entirely on the workers themselves. Thus the union as a class organization of the proletariat must be self-reliant on the class itself, and in this way autonomous from the capitalist state, relying only on the workers themselves for its needs, producing only specialized shell organizations, representatives, or committees to engage in the modern bargaining/certification process that are all practically subordinate at all times to the larger independent union structure. For example, the members and leadership of an independent class-conscious union might decide, after a period of theoretical and practical work that allows them to sink deep roots in a workplace, it is necessary to conduct a formal union certification election as part of winning a written contract. After securing victory, the state unionist rules will require certain documents and representatives to be presented and recognized by the state for the certification to occur. The shop committees, the shop paper, the actual union leadership structures, the internal dues system, the internal and external support networks—all of this should and must remain independent in order for the union to preserve its self-reliance, in order for it engage with the bosses and owners on its terms and not the capitalist state's.

This way, even if the owners or state dangle threats like de-certification over the heads of the workers in order to make them submit, it will not matter. The actual trade union structure and workers' network is insulated, and if attacked, can simply adapt and re-emerge again to continue the fight. Labor law also prohibits many other principles of class-conscious trade unionism, like industrial unionism, which is essentially impossible if you are "playing by the rules" given the context of solidarity strike bans and company-specific collective bargaining agreements. This makes creative solutions to the problem of forming independent working-class unionism all the more vital at the current moment.

Industrial Unionism. The union organizations that the class-conscious workers and their shop apparatuses (shop committees, shop papers, worker circles) seek to form are fundamentally different in scope and jurisdiction than the old narrow craft unions or the modern legalistic state unions/labor NGOs. Simply put, craft

unionism means only organizing in the interests of small divided segments of workers. State unionism was built on the base of old capitalist craft unionism and was then combined with a huge bureaucratic legal apparatus which codified this system and tied it to the imperialist state. This is how we have ended up in a situation where within the same building, a company's maintenance workers and drivers might be organized by the Teamsters (in separate bargaining units of course!), the office staff by the Office and Professional Employees International Union, and the actual shop floor workers by whatever is the dominant union in their sector (UAW, SEIU, NEA, etc.). And all three unions don't work with each other on anything except keeping workers' militancy down and political lobbying. In contrast to this sorry state of affairs, the Trade Union Unity League, one of only two actual industrial union centers in our country's history (the other being the original Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), explained the purpose and background of industrial unionism in a very straightforward way:

"The great consolidation of the forces of capitalism makes industrial unionism imperative for a fighting labor movement. Craft unionism, born in the early stages of capitalism, is worthless in these days of monopoly capitalist organization. In trustified industries, where 90 per cent of the workers can learn their "trades" in a week, organization by craft is criminal betrayal of the workers. Even in those industries which are more competitive in character, such as textile, needle, mining, etc., the great banks exert the controlling force, and make necessary an all-inclusive, militant, industrial unionism, Only by great mass movements, drawing in all the workers, and capable of paralyzing whole industries and groups of industries, can the workers make headway against the powerful employers, who are aided by the state and their fascist labor leader allies. The A. F. of L. craft system of one or more "trades" striking while the rest remain at work is a crime against the working class. It must be utterly wiped out (The Trade Union Unity League: Its Program, Structure, Methods and History)." Thus the unionism the class-conscious workers build stretches across demographics, individual buildings, crafts, or other artificial divisions, encompasses the needs and demands of all workers in a given sector or large national enterprise, and keeps in mind the perspective and interests of the working class as a whole. In this way, industrial unionism also implied coordination between sectors and industries, making national coordinating bodies like the New Labor Organizing Committee a theoretical and practical necessity for all workers who desire a real independent and combative industrial unionism.

It is Right to Rebel. Another term historically for the class-conscious unionist movement was "class struggle unionism". That is because trade unionism is first and foremost about the struggle of the class of wage laborers (workers) against the class of owners (capitalists), as embodied in the slogan of our movement "class against class". The interests of the working class are diametrically opposed to the interests of the capitalist class, who have stolen and maintain control over the vast majority of the country's, and indeed the world's, wealth through vast systems of exploitation and oppression. On a day-to-day level, this means that the unions of our class mobilize, organize and politicize the workers on a shop-, company-, industry-, or nationwide scale to fight for their political and economic demands at the point of production, and in society at large. On a longer-term time scale, this means that the class-conscious trade union organizations have a different outlook than their state or business union counterparts. The class-conscious unions are patient, and take a long-term view on all of our actions and campaigns, understanding that the ultimate goal is the revolutionary seizure of political power for the workers, an establishment of a workers state (the dictatorship of the proletariat), and the construction of a classless society free of oppression and exploitation. This means that while we are not slow-moving, we also do not sacrifice the long-term interests of the workers for short-term gains (i.e. opportunism), and we do not justify such betrayals with false theories and incorrect analysis (i.e. revisionism). The class conscious workers and their unions manifest the principle of "it is right to rebel" in every sense: they rebel by fighting for the short-term demands of our class everyday, and they rebel by fighting to make revolution over the medium- and long-term, thus achieving the historic and essential demands of our class.

Now is a time for great experimentation, as the class-conscious union movement is finally getting off its feet and transitioning from a period of propaganda circles and disorganized practical work to actual trade union organizations and coordinated practical work. This transition is embodied in the emergence of New Labor, which seeks to reconstitute an independent, class-conscious and combative trade unionism in the United States. However this experimentation must occur within the principles of our class, as outlined above and throughout this guide as whole, in order for this our work to not become its opposite and for us to avoid tomorrow becoming the very sell-outs, traitors and opportunists that we fight against today. The greatest tool the class-conscious trade union organizations have in their arsenal is that of the strike. In the field of labor, on a fundamental level implementing the principle of "it is right to rebel" means being able to withhold the labor power wage-workers sell to the owners to survive, labor which is the basis of the profits, and thus the wealth, that the capitalists hoard and their imperialist governments protect. The capitalists and their state unionist agents have done everything in their power to weaken and limit the right of workers to strike because they know its power, and know that if used alongside other great tools and weapons of the working class, the strike can play a key role in not just achieving the economic demands of the workers, but also their political demands as well. In this way, class-conscious unionism must always look to find creative ways to leverage the labor power of the workers to carry out the goals and

aims of a given organizing campaign or sequence of mass work. Whether it be a traditional strike, a slowdown, work-to-rule, a secondary strike, a walkout, etc., the most powerful tool at the organized workers' disposal is their ability to collectively withhold and control their labor power, which if used wisely and strategically can be used again and again in diverse settings to rebel against exploitation and oppression and win the demands of the workers, as well as assist in achieving the aims of the working class as a whole.

B) In a State Union-Organized Shop

When organizing within an already existing state union collective bargaining unit, or within an already existing semi-independent union, class-conscious workers will find they have to engage in what is called "opposition work". Why "opposition"? Because the workers in the workplaces already "organized" by the state unions oppose the false union leadership these sell-outs represent, and reject their methods of work and their union with the capitalists and the capitalist state. The workers in these shops yearn for a class-conscious unionism, like that outlined above, and must be mobilized and organized around the tasks of re-constituting actual trade union machinery in their workplaces and breaking with the state union leadership, their dead-end plans, and their false structures.

When talking about the oppositional work of revolutionaries, which is referred to as fractional work, the comrades in the Communist Party of India (Maoist) write that: "[...] the important point in fractional work is the skillful exposure of the reactionaries and reformists leading or participating within these organizations. This exposure is essential to draw the masses away from their influence. This must however be done without exposing ourselves to the enemy. The forms of exposure will thus differ depending upon the concrete situation… There are two types of deviations in fractional work. One is to sink to the level of the reactionaries and reformists leading the organization and refuse to do any political work in the name of having a long-term approach and preventing exposure. The other is to get rapidly exposed due to our desire to achieve 'quick results'. Both deviations should be avoided [Urban Perspective]."

The two main types of deviations, or errors, our Indian comrades talk about can be seen all the time in what passes for modern-day "revolutionary labor organizing." Of the two deviations, the first is definitely the most common. Many "radical workers" think that by just doing normal organizing work for the state union, the same way a professional staffer would but unpaid, they are successfully doing oppositional work because the whole time they are expanding and organizing the state union they secretly have "revolutionary" beliefs in their head. While these comrades convince themselves they are somehow "outsmarting", "taking advantage of", or "transforming" the class-collaborationist state unions they work within, in reality they are being played by the corrupt and useless state union leadership which counts on new energetic "radical" workers to do their dirty work for them.

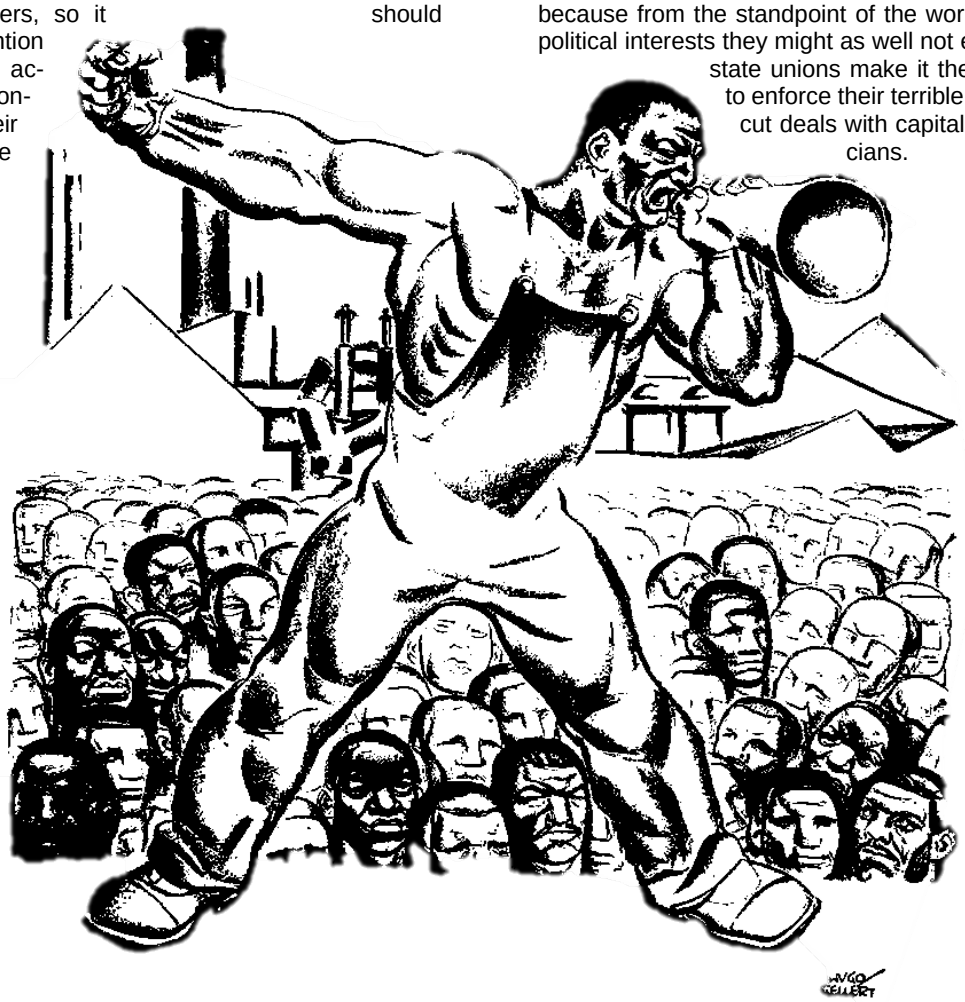
Reactionary sell-out labor leaders have already exposed this practice themselves a thousand times before, but still new revolutionary workers continue to make the same mistake over and over again. For example, in the 1930s, when the opportunist and corrupt leader of the United Mine Workers (UMW) John L. Lewis was asked by reporters why he was hiring openly communist workers to organize for his new union center the Committees of Industrial Organization (CIO), he famously responded: "Who gets the bird? The hunter or the dog?" In order to be "the hunter" and not "the dog" in this situation, class-conscious trade union organizations must always have a strong set of pre-established and agreed upon principles, plans, goals, and strategies when they engage in union opposition work. They must always take a stand against collaboration with the capitalists, their politicians, and their agents among the workers. They must make sure that their organization knows what it is doing, what it has to avoid, and is, to put it bluntly, in the drivers seat and not the other way around. For example, oppositional work does not look like having all your members run in union officer elections in order to "win leadership and decision-making power within the union." This is an electoralist and conspiratorial approach to oppositional work that stands in contrast to an authentic class-struggle and mobilization/politicization-based approach. As a basic rule, working-class leadership and decision-making power are always won on the shop floor, in the buildings and among the workers through struggle, raising consciousness, and trust, not by gaining titles and formal offices within the state unions.

The shop committees and shop papers which make up the union opposition should maintain their own separate collective leadership, and should always differentiate themselves from establishment union leadership and professional union organizers through their political line, their close relationship with their co-workers, their methods of work, their goals, vision, and their skillful exposure of the reactionaries and reformists leading or participating within these organization. In the state unions, shop committees should prepare the organizational basis for the future independent class-conscious proletarian-led unions that will come following the inevitable split with the state unionist centers. In the semi-independent and independent business unions, shop committees should consolidate, advance and expand the left-line within them in order to seize and transform these pseudo-independent unions into actual class-conscious revolutionary unions. In all contexts, through their oppositional work shop committees in these contexts should seek to build up and establish the embryo of what is called the "united proletarian front," which is essentially a united front of workers which will help defend, fight for, and advance the interests of the working class and her allies in all sectors of the economy and all parts of the country. To do this, shop committees must promote, prepare, expand and win leadership of

concrete actions of class struggle (strikes, slowdowns, walkouts, workplace rallies etc.), take those struggles to their conclusion without betraying the workers, and at the same time make effective use of their existing shop paper mechanisms to engage the workers politically and help consolidate the advanced among them which emerge over the course of struggle.

Because of the many complications and considerations of union oppositional work, the shop floor organizations operating in legally-recognized bargaining units have an added layer of complexity in their work. The problem these shop floor organizations face is that they must contend directly with the state unions for leadership of the workers in a way that does not cut them off from the bulk of the workers who may identify their privileges with the state union. The shop paper must not let itself be turned into an appendage of the state union through obsessively publicizing every internal development. The shop paper must be a master of differentiating between essential and unessential. The things that directly impact the workers, such as agreements made on their behalf, factionalism against them participating in union affairs, political donations and irresponsible use of dues money, lax contract enforcement, etc, are important. The shop paper is supposed to be an organ of the workers, so it should only mention state union actions in the context of their impact on the workers. At the same time, the shop committees in these contexts should not shy away from participating in the state union on its own terms. If the workers are filing grievances, try to give it specific direction, turn it into a mass grievance campaign, and expose the state union officials when they negate the grievances in favor of the company. Put forward contract proposals and expose those officials who put their own arbitrary standards above the interests of the workers. Explain the objective harm their agreements do to the workers and use this as a basis for organizing workers outside the state unions. Participation in the state unions should always be undertaken on the basis of independent workers' power with the intention of building it up further. The shop committee can never be an appendage of or a caucus within the state unions—this is the first step to outright liquidation of the workers' collective strength, which is based in the production process.

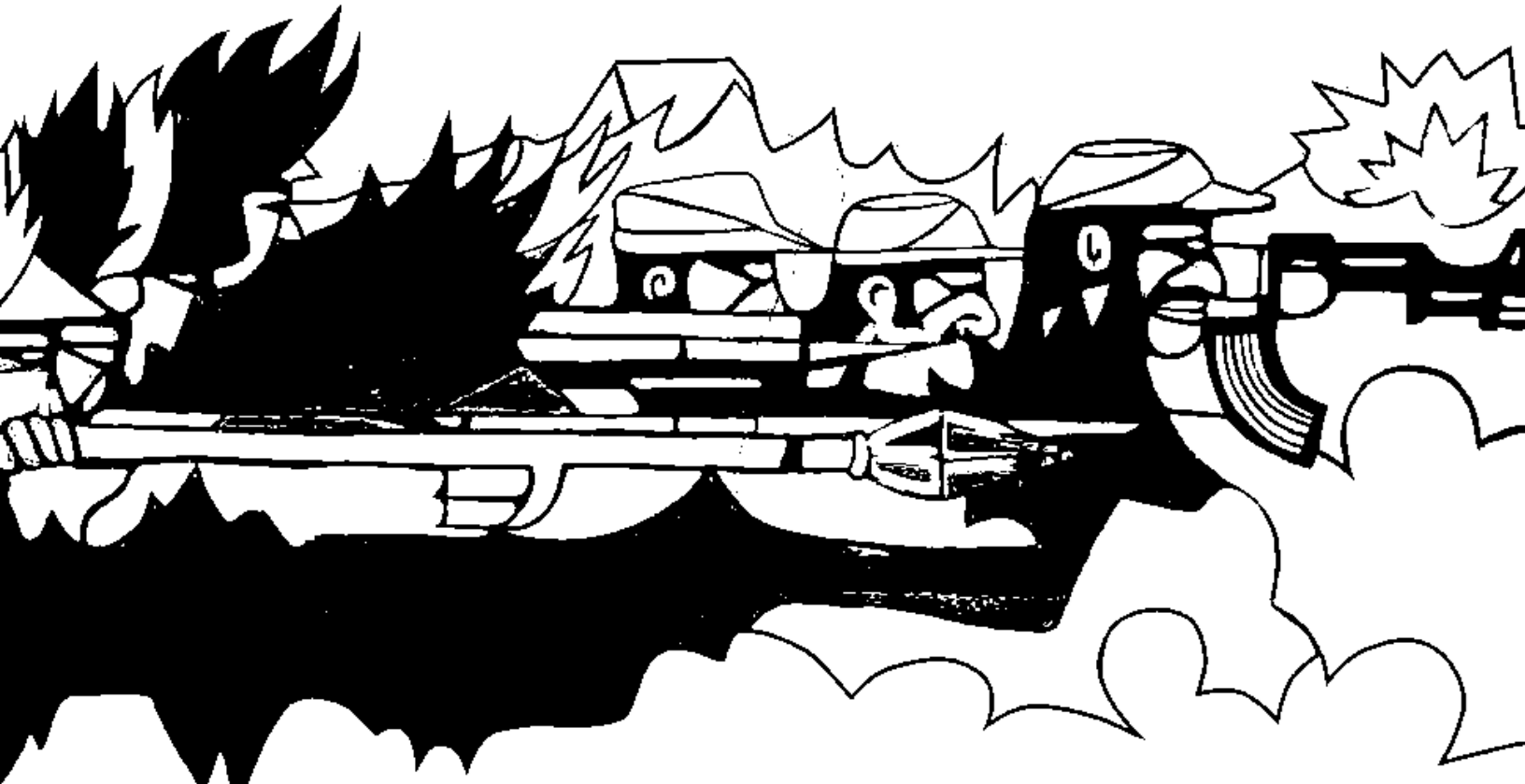
The basis of the state unions is integration into the bureaucratic state apparatus (not organizing) and they operate along bureaucratic (not democratic) lines. Consequently, shop committee activity within them and collaboration with them has a hard limit. The opposition's shop committees, in their day-to-day functioning, basically have to pretend the state unions do not exist, because from the standpoint of the workers and their political interests they might as well not exist when the state unions make it their primary job to enforce their terrible contracts and cut deals with capitalists and politicians.



The Crusader

The Comintern Resolution on Black Nationhood: A Century On

July 11, 2025



Today, just like in the 1920s, the US revolutionary movement grapples with the important question: what is the status of Black people in the United States, and what tasks are revolutionaries facing?

Some, like the modern revisionist CPUSA, argue that the Black nation either has never existed or has dissolved, due to one reason or another; that the only thing left to do is simply fight "racism" with no other fundamental tasks relating to the defense and development of Black national culture or economy, denying their right to self-determination. Others, influenced by a particular understanding of Pan-Africanism, abandon the Marxist definition of nation, and instead argue for a singular nation in both Africa and the African diasporas, subjecting revolutionary work among Black people under the banner of African revolution.

Amilcar Cabral, leader of the Bissau Guinean revolution, once famously said, "tell no lies. Expose lies whenever they are told. Mask no difficulties, mistakes, failures. Claim no easy victories." The discussion on the Black national question is not an empty intellectual pursuit. Instead, it must be situated in the concrete conditions of the present, without telling lies and claiming easy victories. While there undeniably exists, admirable work done here or there, in this sector or that area, neither of these approaches have been able to forge a united, class-conscious, and stable movement with a mass character among Black people in the United States for the past few decades.

Meanwhile, the militancy, explosivity and anger of the Black masses in the US has swept across the country in waves of popular uprisings, each wave larger and more intense than the last. From the 1992 LA uprisings to the George Floyd uprisings, the Black masses' spirit and experience has continued to grow exponentially in the soil of national oppression and exploitation. Despite this, what we continue to witness is the continuous isolation of the revolutionary movement from the broad masses of Black workers, as it fails to truly address their concrete demands with the right to self-determination at its center.

Without revolutionary theory, there cannot be a revolutionary movement. For too long, revolutionaries in this country have faced a general philosophical poverty alongside their poverty in revolutionary practice, leading to vicious cycles of subjectivism and revisionism and reducing concrete life-and-death questions to a matter of empty debate. The history of the Black nation and its struggle for freedom must be seen as a part of the history of the international proletariat and all oppressed nations in the world. To paraphrase Cabral, we must "return to the source;" back to what was produced by the height of revolutionary struggle both internationally and at home, without neglecting either. Especially, we must see ourselves as a part of the same historical process of the World Proletarian Revolution, which had its height in the universal contributions of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao, and Gonzalo.

With that being said, the importance to revisit and study the *1928 and 1930 Resolutions on the Negro Question* by the Communist International cannot be understated. These resolutions did not come from a place of empty intellectual debate but were produced by the most advanced social practice to shape the world at the time: those who were building the first socialist State in human history, alongside revolutionaries who led mass anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist struggles in both old Europe and Third World countries. Similarly, it was in light of these resolutions and under the guidance of the Comintern that the Communist Party reached its highest peak, organizing millions of Black sharecroppers, proletarians, semi-proletarians and urban poor in a militant, class-conscious movement able to challenge US imperialism.

What is self-determination? Lenin famously explained: *"**The right of nations to self-determination means only the right to independence in a political sense, the right to free, political secession from the oppressing nation. Concretely, this political, democratic demand implies complete freedom to carry on agitation in favour of secession, and freedom to settle the question of secession by means of a referendum of the nation that desires to secede.**"* To say that the Black nation has a right to self-determination implies something very clear-cut and simple: the Black nation, as an oppressed nation, has the right to secede its national territory: in the Black Belt of Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina. Without this right, to speak of any form of liberation from national oppression is useless, and there can never be trust and unity between the workers of the oppressed nation and the oppressor nation. The right of self-determination is a democratic demand: it is a demand that concerns the entire nation. At the same time, it is part of the socialist revolution: it must be a struggle led by the Black working class, as the Black nation finds itself a part of the capitalist relation of production with the working class being the overwhelming majority. Like Lenin taught, the socialist revolution is not a single action or a single fight; it is an entire historical period of class conflict that resolves democratic as well as socialist questions of the masses through expropriation of the bourgeoisie.

The right to self-determination is fundamentally different from the slogan of "racial equality" or other slogans proposed today by a variety of groups. The problems facing Black people today are not simply rooted in racist attitudes a few institutions and cannot be solved by combating white chauvinism. The problem must be seen from the perspective of national oppression: as the problem of a captive nation subjugated by America. Fundamentally, those who talk about the struggle for equality forget that a nation that oppresses another nation can never achieve liberation. It is on this basis that

we, following the example of the Comintern, reject "integrationism": we do not call for the simple merging of the struggle of Black and white workers. On the contrary, the true unity of the multinational proletariat can only be achieved by addressing the national question and standing for the right to self-determination.

To summarize, these two documents highlighted three basic principles central to the struggle for Black liberation:

1) Black people in the United States constitute a nation, having a national territory and the right of self-determination up to secession;

2) The resolution of the national question, and especially of the Black national question, is central to the question of socialist revolution in the United States; and

3) The Black national question has as its center its proletariat which forms the majority of the nation.

Nearly a century after these resolutions, the Black nation has witnessed a tremendous change in its situation. fundamentally, however, the existence of a Black nation and its status as a captive, oppressed nation has remained unchanged. The basic feature of US imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism, has remained unchanged, and the validity of these Marxist principles remain ever valid as before. Despite waves of migration, the Black nation continues to constitute a majority or a plurality in its national territory. Especially, the Black nation continues to maintain its economic cohesion and interconnection, even after the extinction of the semi-feudal system of sharecropping, a phenomenon already beginning to rise/appear during the 1920s and 30s and was succinctly addressed by the resolutions. The political, economic and cultural development of the Black nation continues to be dominated by US imperialism, as the Black workers face double exploitation, both as a part of the oppressed nation and as a part of the working class.

In 1951, W.E.B. Du Bois, along with numerous other prominent Black leaders, Communists and revolutionaries presented a paper titled *We Charge Genocide* to the United Nations meeting in Paris. It detailed the four centuries of crimes and oppression endured by Black people in the United States and concluded that there was an ongoing genocide against Black people by the US government. 26 years later, Black revolutionary Atiba Shanna (pen name of James Yaki Sayles), himself a prisoner, wrote another paper titled *We Still Charge Genocide.* He cited the worsening economic exploitation, drug use in Black communities as a weapon of the State, lack of quality living and health conditions, and the disproportional rate of incarceration and police violence.

Still, 48 years later, after a Black president, numerous Black officials in every level of the government, and the emergence of the NGO industrial complex, Black people comprise 37% of the prison population and 22% of the police killing victims; earn $28,000 less than the national median income and are expected to live 4.7 years less than white Americans. Black neighborhoods continue to be plagued with State-sanctioned crimes, drug use, and incarceration, as Black workers continue to face systematic obstacles to getting good jobs. Today, we still charge genocide, as this country, built on the labor and blood of the Black nation, continues to exist as the foremost enemy of the people of the world. It can only end through a socialist revolution with the National Question as its center – and this, today, is the importance of revisiting the Comintern resolutions, at the service of rebuilding a militant, class-conscious, and nationalist movement guided by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

Notes on the Economic Aspect of the National Question

When Claudia Jones states that the Black Bourgeoisie "…is not an industrial bourgeoisie. It is not a big bourgeoisie; the bourgeoisie of an oppressed nation never is; it is one of the results of national oppression that the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nations is retarded by the oppressors", this is important because it's part of the overall national oppression of Black Americans. The Black Bourgeoisie were restricted from developing industry by the American bourgeoisie at the transition from "free-market" capitalism to monopoly capitalism (Imperialism) in the 20th century, and were restricted to mostly service and light manufacturing industries.

The legal barriers were removed through the civil rights act but still exist in effect because the American bourgeoisie secured the monopoly on industry, meaning the smaller Black firms could not compete and accumulate capital. A lot of high-earning Black people can work in these companies and can be administrators or mid-level managers, but the Black Bourgeoisie as a class does not own these firms and are still restricted by the American bourgeoisie (for example, they face greater difficulty in taking out loans and securing finance capital), which is why they have must carry out their business primarily in the Black community with the Black proletariat and petite bourgeoisie.

The Black Bourgeoisie seeks to be just as expansionist and expand their market share as the US imperialist bourgeoisie, but they are unable to as they're restricted and nationally subjugated by US imperialism. That is why they either sell out and collaborate with US imperialism or push to reform it to make it more equitable.

This is why it is crucial and more immediate to compare the Black nation/Black belt to the indigenous nations of this continent. The First Nations went through a similar process where pre-capitalist relations of productions were destroyed and indigenous people were forced into the proletariat/reserve army of labor/lumpen (with

a small petite bourgeoisie), but the leaders of the First Nations received privileges in exchange for opening their lands to exploitation. There are indigenous capitalist enterprises and an indigenous bourgeoisie, but they are restricted from expanding by US imperialism. Some nations such as the Diné have developed several capitalist enterprises,[2] but this did not change their character as distinct nations.

When it comes to analyzing whether or not the economy within majority Black areas is the exclusive domain and relationship of the Black bourgeoisie to its proletariat, the indigenous comparison is notable again. The Black bourgeoisie was not able to develop in the same way as the bourgeoisie of the oppressor nations unrestricted by monopoly capitalism. Some indigenous capitalist enterprises also employ lots of non-indigenous people, but some of the surplus value generated is reinvested in the nation overall and social programs (similar to when the Black bourgeoisie tries to "give back to the community", albeit more formalized).

As a result in both cases, industry in both areas (reservations and majority-Black regions) remains underdeveloped or highly exploitative as American monopoly capital moves in to take advantage of the lower level of development.

When looking at the Top 100 list of Black Enterprise, and particularly at the industries by top employment, a lot of Black-owned firms exist as subsidiaries of larger American monopolies (conglomerate owners of several franchises, such as Jackmont Hospitality Inc. in Atlanta) or exist as feeder companies to larger American monopolies (automotive parts manufacturing, such as Global Automotive Alliance Corp. in Detroit).

The amount of industrial capital the Black bourgeoisie controls is minimal which is fundamentally at the root of self-determination. The Black and indigenous bourgeoisie are denied the means to be the exclusive exploiters of their respective proletariat and to retain a monopoly on exploitation within their nations.

Re-organizing production at monopolies which employ Black proletarians in large numbers (e.g. several companies in the logistics industry, or American monopolies in the Black Belt) on a socialist basis is concretely how we could exercise our self-determination.

The Partisan

Our Principles: Proletarian Internationalism

March 20, 2025

"*The Communists are further reproached with desiring to abolish countries and nationality.*

The working men have no country. We cannot take from them what they have not got."

– The Communist Manifesto

The most famous slogan of the International Communist Movement is almost certainly *Workers of the World Unite!* Likewise the word "international" can be found everywhere in revolutionary writings, from the previously mentioned **International** Communist Movement (ICM), to constant references to the "international proletariat" or the "oppressed nations of the world". Why is this? Why is it that Communists and revolutionaries for hundreds of years, in almost every possible context, always emphasize the global aspect of our class and our movement?

To answer this question we have to go back to the beginning, and remind ourselves what is the proletariat, the final class in history? The proletariat is that class of people who do not own the means of production (factories, warehouses, productive land, mines, offices, etc.) and instead rely on selling their ability to do work (labor power) to the capitalists, the class which only survives by exploiting the labor power of the proletarians they employ. Unlike the peasants before them, the modern working class (the proletariat) is not tied to any given piece of land or lord, but rather is forged by the global capitalist system. It is in this sense that the proletariat is a truly international class which stretches across borders, across nations, and which in its political aims seeks the liberation of all exploited workers and oppressed peoples, regardless of where they were born or what their nationality is.

Because the proletariat is a product of international capitalism (this is why Marx said the capitalists have produced their own gravediggers), by definition the modern working class and its political movement can only defeat international capitalism through a similarly international struggle that seeks to establish communism in every nation across the globe. This is why we raise the slogan of World Proletarian Revolution, and this is also why the principle of proletarian internationalism is so dear to our class and our movement and must be conscious upheld and practiced by anyone who considers themselves a revolutionary or class-conscious activist. For us proletarian internationalists, a crime committed against the workers in one country is a crime against all workers, and an attack on one nation's revolutionary movement is an attack on all revolutionaries. To the proletarian internationalist, the struggle for self-determination and liberation for all nations, especially the colonial and semi-colonial nations, is our common responsibility, particularly as revolutionaries in a country like the United States which is the primary oppressor of those nations.

Today the majority of the world's population reside in colonial or semi-colonial nations that are oppressed by imperialism, and the main contradiction in the whole world is between imperialism and the oppressed nations. The imperialists plunder the oppressed nations' resources, control their national economy, and brutally rule over them, either directly as a colony or indirectly as semi-colonies which are formally independent but in practice subjugated by the great imperialist powers. Because of the oppression and exploitation the Third World nations suffer, and because they serve as the "weakest link" of imperialist domination (compared to the imperialist powers' own countries), they are considered the "storm centers of imperialism", countries where the oppressed peoples constantly rise up against imperialism for their own self-determination and independence. In this way, it is the sworn duty of all proletarian internationalists to wholeheartedly support the revolutionary struggles of the oppressed nations around the globe and defeat exploitation and oppression at home or wherever it might be.

Having established a little bit on the background of why **proletarian internationalism** is an important principle for the modern revolutionary, it is worth exploring some basic ways this principle can and should be upheld and applied in practice.

The first and primary duty of a proletarian internationalist is to make revolution in their own country, and in this way expand and strengthen the World Proletarian Revolution. A second task of a proletarian internationalist is to understand how the ideology of the proletariat is also global and universal, and is the most powerful tool of the International Communist Movement that must be studied, propagated, and grasped within their particular national conditions. The third basic way we must practice proletarian internationalism is by attacking bourgeois nationalist and chauvinist tendencies in all sectors of our work, tendencies which undermine the solidarity between workers and divide our class and movement. A fourth task is to understand the contradictions that exist within the international imperialist system, and how they affect our work here in the sole hegemonic imperialist superpower, the United States, who by extracting super-profits from the colonial and semi-colonial nations has developed a large section of labor aristocrats and petty-bourgeoisie who benefit from these profits. And finally, a fifth duty for US proletarian internationalists is to provide aid to, raise awareness for, and coordinate with the forces of all genuinely revolutionary and anti-imperialist struggles and organizations internationally whenever possible, especially for those struggles and organizations which exist in the storm centers of the world revolution.

One of the best outlines of what correct and principled proletarian internationalism looks like can be found in

a quote from Chairman Gonzalo of the Communist Party of Peru, in his *Interview with El Diario*, which will also helps lead us into next week's principle of **self-reliance**:

"… in the International Communist Movement it became the habit to obey commands. Khrushchev was a champion at issuing commands, as is Gorbachev today, or that sinister character Deng. Independence, because each Communist Party must decide for itself since it is responsible for its own revolution, not in order to separate it from the world revolution, but precisely in order to serve it. This allows us to make our own decisions, to decide for ourselves. Chairman Mao said it like this: we were given a lot of advice, some good, some bad. We accepted the good and rejected the bad. But if we had accepted some erroneous principle, the responsibility would not have belonged to those who gave the advice, but to us. Why? Because we make our own decisions. That comes with independence, and it leads to self-sufficiency, to self-reliance.

Does this mean that we don't recognize proletarian internationalism? No, on the contrary, we are fervent and consistent practitioners of proletarian internationalism. And we are confident that we have the support of the international proletariat, the oppressed nations, the peoples of the world, the parties or organizations that remain loyal to Marxism whatever their degree of development, and we recognize that the first thing that they give us, their primary support, is their own struggle. The propaganda or celebrations that they carry out are a form of support that is creating favorable public opinion and this is an expression of proletarian internationalism. Proletarian internationalism also underlies the advice they give us and the opinions they express. But, I insist, we are the ones who must decide whether we accept these or not. If they are correct, we welcome them, obviously, because between Parties we have the obligation to help each other, especially in such difficult and complex times.

Then, to reiterate, all the struggles waged by the proletariat, the oppressed nations, the peoples of the world, the parties and organizations steadfast and loyal to Marxism – all that struggle is the primary concrete form of proletarian internationalist help. Nevertheless, the greatest assistance we have is undying Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, the ideology of the international proletariat, which has been generated by the working class through long decades and thousands of struggles all over the world."