

DETROIT REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT RECORDS

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THE NEWS DEC 1973

QUESTIONS AND PANEL RESPONSE

Q. I'M SORRY IF THE QUESTION I'M ABOUT TO ASK IS A LITTLE BIT THEORETICAL. IT SEEMS TO ME, IN CONSIDERING THE PROCESS, IN MY LIMITED KNOWLEDGE, WE LOOKED AT THE PRACTICE AND THEN WE HAD AN ANALYSIS AND THEN WE WERE ASKED TO REFLECT TOGETHER ON BOTH THE ANALYSIS AND THE PRACTICE. IN THEORY, WE COME TO A NEW IDEA TOGETHER, OR SEPARATELY, I GUESS. AND THEN, MAKE A KIND OF QUALITATIVE LEAP TO AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE THEORY. NOW, I GUESS MY QUESTION IS: WHAT ARE THE COMPONENTS OF ANALYSIS? I THINK I'D LIKE TO ADDRESS THAT TO THE ANALYZER. WHAT ARE THE COMPONENTS OF MARXIST ANALYSIS? (SO I CAN GO AND DO IT BETTER --AT HOME, ALL BY MYSELF, IF I HAVE TO.)

A We would like to make it very clear, in our perspective, there is no "analyzer", this is a collective process that we've been through in order to make this presentation. People on this panel will attempt to answer questions.

A. I'm not sure I understand the question. I have a response to at least the last part, the way it was formulated-- which is that I don't think you can go home and do it by yourself. I think you can go home and do it with Marx and Lenin, by reading, and by applying what you read to your own experience, knowledge, fact, etc., and I think it can be done with other people, who also have read, have practiced, and who also have theory. But that seems in a way to address itself to the component, although as I said, I'm not sure I understand the question. The primary component, I suppose, is the premise that society is divided into two classes, and that its motion, its development, is a result of the conflict between the two. That is an oversimplification, to say the least, but from that premise, it is possible to look at the things that happened. We were, I think, merely analyzing the practice of the League in what we attempted to say tonight, but to extract from the manifestation that the film, and to some degree the writing that the League of Revolutionary Black Workers did, what its theory was and what its practice was. We tried to direct ourselves to what we thought some components of that were--anarcho-syndicalism, opportunism, and so on; (perhaps other people would like to speak), but I would find it helpful to have more clarification of what is meant by components.

Q. WELL, I GUESS WHAT I MEAN BY COMPONENTS IS THAT IN ANY THEORY THERE ARE PARTS THAT MAKE UP THE WHOLE, JUST LIKE IN THE PROCESS OF DIALECTICS, O.K.? NOW WITHIN THE PARTS OF JUST THE ONE ASPECT OF ANALYSIS--JUST THAT ONE ASPECT ON THE TOTAL DIALECTICS--WHAT ARE THE COMPONENTS----WHEN YOU SEE THE FILM THERE ARE CERTAIN THINGS THAT JAR YOU, BECAUSE YOU HAVE THE BROAD BACKGROUND. BUT THAT DOESN'T SATISFY MY HEAD OF THE TOTAL COMPONENTS OF A METAPHYSICAL ANALYSIS -I'M SORRY TO USE THAT WORD, SORRY ABOUT THAT. I GUESS IT'S TIME TO LEAVE.

A. I don't know if people can understand me; I have laryngitis. I just want to make a brief response and go on to the next person. There is no alternative to the studying of people who have made revolution, or have developed revolutionary theory. You cannot practice your way into a revolution; there has to be study. You have to study Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao, Ho Chi Minh; those are the people who have been able to make revolution, study it, synthesize our knowledge, and therefore provide information. There is also no alternative to practice, that is, class struggle. We don't have any choice about that. But only through the combination of the two and the synthesizing of the class struggle we participate in every day, are we going to be able, in fact, develop ourselves as Marxist-Leninists and develop the movement as a revolutionary socialist movement.

A. Let me try one more way to respond to that because there's some things I assume about the word "components" and what that means you're asking about, although I also am confused on the question. Theory or analysis isn't something in and of itself, even in the process of acquiring it. It is a combination, just very briefly, of direct data, direct personal, collective, historical experience, practice, observation, indirect data, which is the accumulated, written-down theory--the accumulated, written-down practice and ideas of others who you may not be directly involved with, such as this study of Marx, etc., indirect data; the combining of those two things--direct and indirect data, perception, knowledge, and into it a synthesized set of ideas and analysis, which then only becomes real and useful. It is only proven--when it, in turn, is applied. So, even if you did the first two parts and develop an analysis from that, you're only sure that your analysis is in any way correct or--what's wrong about it and what isn't useful about it when it's applied again, which creates new data which you can then bounce off of other indirect data and other studies which refines an analysis. For a Marxist, analysis isn't as it's applied to the class struggle and only if it's that brings the class struggle closer to victory. I don't know if that's useful in breaking down the component parts of that, if that was what was meant by the question.

Q. YEAH, THE PURPOSE OF LOOKING OVER THE LEAGUE AND ANALYZING IT IS TO SEE WHAT LESSONS WE CAN DRAW FOR THE FUTURE. IT SEEMS TO ME ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSONS THAT THE SPEAKER DREW WAS THE IDEA THAT THE SEPARATE ORGANIZATION OF BLACKS IN THE LEAGUE WAS WRONG; AND I DISAGREE WITH THAT. I BELIEVE THAT ONE OF THE THINGS NECESSARY TO REMEMBER IS THAT WHAT THE LEAGUE CAME OUT OF WAS THE WHOLE BLACK POWER AND THEN THE DETROIT REBELLION DEVELOPMENT IN WHICH BLACKS WERE MOVING AWAY FROM THE INTEGRATED ORGANIZATIONS WITH WHITES WHERE THEY'D BEEN CONFINED TO WHAT WHITES WERE WILLING TO ACCEPT. I THINK IT'S NO ACCIDENT, THEREFORE, THAT THE LEAGUE AND OTHER ALL-BLACK ORGANIZATIONS WERE THE ONLY ORGANIZATIONS

THAT WERE ABLE TO TAP THE REVOLUTIONARY FEELINGS OF THE BLACK WORKERS, BLACK MASSES. IF MCLL AND CCC DISAGREE, I'D LIKE TO KNOW, AND IF THEY THINK THE WHOLE BLACK POWER DEVELOPMENT IN THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT WAS REACTIONARY; AND ALSO IF THEY THINK THE LEAGUE WOULD HAVE BEEN STRONGER AND BETTER CAPABLE OF CARRYING OUT A STRUGGLE AND MAKING A SOUND BASE IF THERE HAD BEEN WHITES IN THE LEAGUE. I WANT TO MAKE CLEAR THAT THIS QUESTION IS QUITE SEPARATE FROM THE QUESTION OF THE LEAGUE'S WORKING WITH WHITES WHERE I THINK THEY DID NOT WORK CLOSELY ENOUGH WITH WHITES. THEIR REFUSAL TO PASS OUT LEAFLETS TO WHITES WAS WRONG, BUT I THINK THAT THEY WERE RIGHT IN THEIR MAINTAINING A SEPARATE ORGANIZATION FOR THE BLACK WORKERS TO MAINTAIN THE CONFIDENCE OF THEIR BASE.

A. At the table where I was sitting, a criticism was made of the presentation in which it was said that the presentation said the nationalism of the League was a response to white chauvinism, particularly of the left. And the statement was that bourgeoisie-nationalism is an aspect of imperialism and it is the reflection, or the attempt, to the extent of its capacity of the bourgeoisie to instill nationalism within the working class and not merely respond to white chauvinism of the left. I think that's a fair criticism of the paper, in the sense that it is true that bourgeoisie-like nationalism is one attempt of the bourgeoisie to prevent struggle from reaching a class struggle. Now to say that, is, to say that yes, it is true, had the League more successfully combatted nationalism, reached, achieved a class struggle perspective, which includes all working people in this country, then it would have been a more successful organization. That is only one aspect of the League; it also had anarcho-syndicalism. Had the League been more successful in training cadre in basic science of Marxism-Leninism, it would have been more successful in achieving class struggle.

A. I think that there are two, in some way different, aspects that we're talking about. One of the things that we thought was positive about the development of the League was its concentration and its raising of the question of the industrial proletariat, particularly black workers in the industrial proletariat. I think in the context of this historical period that that was in fact, progressive about the League, that much of the bourgeois-nationalism of the period had no perspective about class. I think, however, that the speech in the film where it -- I don't take this as a personal statement on his part at all, but the speech in the film where Ron March is sitting in the office and discussing the factory organization -- and says quite clearly that when they organized, white workers came to them and wanted to support that effort, and then says no, you cannot become a part of that effort. You must grow separately and organize separately, and the conclusion of that, as he said in the speech, it's all quite clearly laid out -- was that there was no progressive white organization in the shop.

So there is one level in which, in the general sense, there is a political thrust in an historical context where bourgeois-nationalism was very strong, yet the League was progressive in that proletariat aspect. But in the context of shop work, I think a lot of the decisions that the League made later on were not progressive. I think that the speech itself in the film states that quite clearly.

A. I want to make my response fairly short; I think it has to be clear that the major contradiction is between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. It is not between blacks and whites, and the contradiction that is present between black and white is not necessarily an antagonistic contradiction, while the contradiction between the working class and the ruling class is, by necessity, an antagonistic contradiction. It is to the benefit of the bourgeoisie, to the benefit of the ruling class, to continue the division within the class. It is to the benefit of the working class to attempt to unify the working class, to attempt to do away with those divisions. Through historical realities, they have come about--many of them brought about by the bourgeoisie in the attempt to create divisions, and therefore see to it that the proletariat is not united and cannot overcome the bourgeoisie. In that regard, I believe that bourgeois-nationalism, on the part of the League, was a backward, reactionary step, not progressive. The movement away from multinational organizing was, in fact, hampering the development of unity in the plant and within the community. We have to understand who that benefits, and who that harms.

Q.. (VERY FAINT) ..I WAS NOT SAYING THAT NATIONALISM, OR THAT WHOLE IDEA OF A SEPARATE STATE FOR BLACKS WAS WHAT WAS RIGHT ABOUT THE LEAGUE. SEE, I AGREE WITH THE SPEAKER THAT THE WHOLE QUESTION IS UNIFYING THE WORKING CLASS. BUT I BELIEVE IN ORDER TO UNIFY THE WORKING CLASS, IT WAS NECESSARY TO HAVE THIS STRUGGLE ON SOME KIND OF BASIS OF ALLIANCE AND PRECISELY WHAT I THINK ABOUT INDEPENDENT BLACK ORGANIZATIONS TODAY IS THAT BECAUSE BLACKS HAVE LEARNED OVER AND OVER AGAIN THAT THEY HAVE BEEN BETRAYED AND SOLD OUT BY WHITES THAT NOW THE BLACK PEOPLE WILL NOT FOLLOW AT THIS POINT IN HISTORY AN INTEGRATED ORGANIZATION BECAUSE THEY WILL NOT TRUST IT. THEY WILL EXPECT TO BE BETRAYED BY IT, AND THE PRECONDITIONS FOR ACTUAL UNITY IS ACTSOF LEADERSHIP AND CLASS STRUGGLE WHERE BLACKS AND WHITES CAN LEARN TO TRUST EACH OTHER BY WORKING TOGETHER ON THE BASIS OF ORGANIZATIONS THAT THEY CAN TRUST; NOT ON THE BASIS OF DEMANDING UNITY WHICH THEN, IN FACT, LEADS TO THE KIND OF UNITY WHICH EXISTED BEFORE THE BLACK POWER MOVEMENT, WHICH LED TO THE WHOLE UNITY BASED ON THE SUBORDINATION OF BLACKS. THAT IS WHAT I WAS CONCERNED WITH AND IT IS NOT A QUESTION OF DEVELOPING UNITY BUT WHETHER, ISN'T IT THE CASE, AND A FACT, THAT SEPARATE ORGANIZATIONS IS A PRECONDITION AND NECESSITY IN ORDER TO DEVELOP THE STRUGGLE THAT CREATES UNITY?

A. Well, the simplest answer to the question and probably the best one is that if that's a precondition, where is the condition? That is to say, where is the black organization, let alone black and white, that is joined every day by masses and masses of black people that are shutting down plants every day? It isn't there and we maintain it is no accident that it isn't there and one of the reasons it isn't there is that people in plants do understand that in fact everyone, black, white, Arab, or whatever, does have a role to play and even exerting power on the shop floor let alone anything beyond that. The point made before, I think, was an important one and can be possibly stressed with another fact. On the one hand, the League says there's no such thing as a white proletariat, but what actually crystallized the formation of the first walkout which led to DRUM was a walkout by white women workers at Dodge Main. What happened, as we understand it, is that some people who later came to be members of DRUM were involved in supporting the women's walkout. That attracted the attention of Chrysler Management who singled out the blacks then, as a matter of fact at that time. The point of adding that to what's been said already about Ron March's speech is that we see as a result at this time, as a direct result, a long delay in which there was a period after the end of the League in which struggle by blacks or whites was dormant and which doesn't appear, although there certainly has been a resurgence in this last summer of militancy across the board. It doesn't appear to be because of any precondition which was established by the League. In fact, just the opposite might be true; the League was a precondition to a reduction in struggle by blacks and whites.

Q. TWO QUESTIONS: WHAT WAS THE EFFECT OF THE COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY REVISIONISM OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY ON THE LEFT AS A WHOLE AND IN PARTICULAR THE LEAGUE? IT WAS THOUGHT THAT THIS CRITICISM WAS NOT MADE. DID THE LEAGUE WORK TO TAKE OVER THE UNION FROM WITHIN OR DID IT WORK TO BUILD ALTERNATIVE UNIONS?

A. Let me answer the first one. The League attempted to do everything, including creating a black Marxist-Leninist party. One of the things it did accomplish was the election of a number of blacks to leadership, particularly the local leadership in certain Chrysler plants. That leadership, however, at least in its initial stages, was very conservative, while it had changed some levels of that, that is, blacks taking over some aspects of the UAW; it did not then move the UAW to being a class struggle union.

Secondly, as to the right opportunism of the Communist Party, I think we have in one of the drafts of the presentation an indication that it was the bowing to spontaneity which is an aspect of right opportunism, which the Communist Party was particularly concerned about around the anti-war movement, which allows it the kind of anarchism, particularly within the white left. I think we have to say that

if we're going to have a revolution in this country, we have to have a Communist Party which adheres to Marxism-Leninism. There has been a serious question to say the least, whether the Communist Party as it is presently constituted in this country, does that and to the extent that it fails to, it contributes to the reaction that is the other side of that; one thing it contributes to is anarcho-syndicalism.

A. I think another specific example might be around. It was not very long ago that "The Journey" printed an editorial written by the MCLL on the Communist Party's relationship to the wildcat struggles this late summer and early fall, but in particular the relationship to the Mack Stamping Plant shutdown, in which officials of the Communist Party stood with officials of the UAW and condemned the shutdown of the plant. That was a clear practice on the part of the Communist Party in conjunction with, not the rank and file of the UAW but the international opportunist bureaucracy of the UAW. When the Communist Party stands with that international bureaucracy, then it, of course, alienates rank and file workers from itself and begins to create a sense in which if that's the only kind of clear and public Communist policy which is understood, it's no large wonder to my mind that groups would tend to move toward non-Communist or anarcho-syndicalist, in this case, expressions about trade unionism, with that particular kind of leadership.

Q. SINCE THERE WAS AN ANALYSIS ON THE LEAGUE OF REVOLUTIONARY BLACK WORKERS AND ON THE BLACK PEOPLES STRUGGLE, WHAT IS THE CCC POSITION ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION HERE IN THE UNITED STATES, IN PARTICULAR, ON THE NEGRO PEOPLES MOVEMENT?

A. It probably would have been better to make it more explicit as we did around the question of the Party; but that question is another which is under discussion within the MCLL at this point, which as people here know, is not a simple question. If it were, we'd be farther along than we are in many respects and although it is a relatively simpler matter to make an analysis of some errors, and from what we know from our level of theoretical development at this point, or from what we know from our level of the practice and what has resulted from it from the League, it is not so simple to take a position on what the correct line, what the correct resolution of those questions are and we are not prepared to do so at this point. That doesn't mean that we won't be, and it certainly doesn't mean that once we are, we won't attempt to communicate it as widely and as clearly as possible.

COMMENT: I would like to go back to an earlier question that was raised about the parts that make up the whole of Marxism. If I understand the question in the way that I think that I teach it, that is, dialectical materialism and historical materialism and the four basic principles of

dialectical materialism. There is continuous thought to the change in all things; that there's an interrelation and inter-connection of all things; that changes go through quantitative and qualitative changes, that is, small changes; and then we have leap forward, and then you have the unity of struggle of opposites which are contradictions--and all those make up dialectical materialism which is the whole. And then you want to come to understand those component parts, you begin to apply them and learn how to apply them to historical situations and that becomes historical materialism. But that's just a very simple statement and is more difficult to learn how to apply it.

Q. MY QUESTION BEARS VERY HEAVILY ON THE FIRST REMARK MADE BY THE PREVIOUS QUESTIONER, IN WHICH HE SUGGESTS THAT A BASIC ELEMENT OF DIALECTICS IS THE CONSTANT CHANGEABILITY OF CATEGORIES AND THE LACK OF STATIC APPROACH WHICH, IN TERMS, IS THE DIALECTIC APPROACH. RECENTLY I WAS ENGAGED IN QUITE A STUDY OF THE DETROIT LABOR HISTORY, AND AS A RESULT, I HAD QUITE A BIT OF CONTACT WITH SOME OF THE ELEMENTS OF THE SO-CALLED OLD LEFT THAT WE COULD SAY HAD MADE QUITE A DEBACLE OUT OF THE POSSIBILITY OF REVOLUTION DURING THE THIRTIES AND FORTIES. BUT SOMETHING THAT DISTURBS ME, AND ITS NOT CLEAR WHETHER I MISUNDERSTAND IT OR IT IS, IN FACT, REAL, AND THAT IS THE CONCEPT THAT I SAW IN THE OLD LEFT; THE KIND OF STATIC APPROACH TO THINGS OR SECTARIANISM IMPLICIT IN ANALYZING THINGS, AND PARTICULARLY LOOKING AT LENIN'S WORK WHAT IS TO BE DONE AS LENIN'S DEFINITIVE STATEMENT ON THE PARTY. WHEN WE LOOK AT THE SITUATION IN MORE DETAIL WE DISCOVER THAT THE WORK WHAT IS TO BE DONE WAS WRITTEN IN 1903 AND WAS KIND OF LENIN'S FIRST WORD ON THE PARTY. HIS PRINCIPLES THAT HE PUTS FORWARD FOR ORGANIZATION OF THE PARTY IS WITHIN A CONTEXT OF DEALING WITH AN AUTOCRATIC STATE IN RUSSIA AND SO FORTH AND AS HE PROGRESSES AND IS FACED WITH THE REVOLUTION OF 1905 AND SO FORTH, HE CHANGES HIS POSITION QUITE DRASTICALLY TO THE POINT WHERE, AT THE TIME OF HIS DEATH IN '23, IT IS QUITE A BIT DIFFERENT IN TERMS OF HIS APPROACH TO THE ORGANIZATION OF THE PARTY. THE CONCEPT OF CENTRALISM AND SO FORTH AND HOW DOES IT CHANGE THE ORGANIZING THE WORKING CLASS, PARTICULARLY AS IT PERTAINS TO HIS CONCEPT THAT THE WORKING CLASS IS UNABLE TO DEVELOP BY ITSELF ANYTHING OTHER THAN A TRADE UNION CONSCIOUSNESS AND AN EXTERNAL PARTY IS NECESSARY. IN 1905, HE IS FACED WITH THE PROBLEMS THAT HE HAS TO REASSESS THAT POSITION. SO I WAS WONDERING HOW THAT PERTAINS TO YOUR ANALYSIS AND YOUR CONCEPT OF A PRE-PARTY FORMATION AND YOUR INTERPRETATION OF WHAT IS TO BE DONE AS IT WAS PRESENTED AS A CRITIQUE OF THE ORGANIZATION?

A. I'm not sure I understand the question. There's nothing contradictory to the notion of dialectical materialism; quite the contrary; in Lenin's having different positions in 1923 than he did in 1905; that he had a different position on how to build the Party after it was built than he did before...

Q. LET ME CLARIFY THAT. ESSENTIALLY ONE OF THE PRINCIPLE REASONS FOR BUILDING THE PARTY IS THE NOTION THAT THE WORKING CLASS IS INCAPABLE OF DEVELOPING REVOLUTIONARY CONSCIOUSNESS INTERNALLY. WHAT IS NEEDED IS AN EXTERNAL VANGUARD TO GUIDE AND DIRECT THAT. HOWEVER, IN 1905 LENIN IS FACED WITH THE SITUATION AND AGAIN IN 1917 HE'S FACED WITH THE SITUATION WHERE THE RUSSIAN PROLETARIAT CREATES A REVOLUTIONARY SITUATION WITHOUT THE INFLUENCE OF THIS VANGUARD PARTY AND THEY SPONTANEOUSLY ARE SETTING UP SOVIETS IN 1917, PARTICULARLY THE PETROGRAD SOVIET, AND SO FORTH. IT SEEMS TO ME HIS DEVELOPMENT IN ASSESSMENT OF WHAT THE WORKING CLASS IS INHERENTLY CAPABLE OF DOING, CHANGED AS A RESULT OF THAT MATERIAL SITUATION. I WAS WONDERING HOW THAT PERTAINS TO YOUR ANALYSIS OF THE VANGUARD PARTY?

A. The thing that changed was that the Bolshovik party took power, the Soviets didn't take power. The Bolshovik party took power. I don't understand how anything follows from that about what Lenin's changed view of the party was-- is precisely the view that the reason you needed a party was that the spontaneous development of anarcho-syndicalism of the Soviets had sprung up spontaneously, for example, wouldn't be sufficient to seize state power and they weren't.

A. I have a couple of comments. First, I'm not aware of the change between 1903 and 1923. I think from my understanding, you have some misconceptions as to what the external (questioner speaks: You'll find that in the *Collected Works*, Vol. 39) Let me try to respond. I think we'll have to view external force from a historical perspective. What Lenin was speaking about was that Marxism-Leninism came from bourgeois intelligensia. Marx and Engels both were members of that class. What he's saying is that the day to day struggles that the working class carries on to have food to eat, the clothing, the home, etc. does not bring one to a class-conscious Marxist-Leninist position. One develops trade union consciousness; that's different than class-conscious, revolutionary consciousness. Now, that perspective, as far as I know, didn't change. However, we have to begin to understand that Marxism-Leninism is a theory that is among us that needs to be further developed as concrete conditions warrant an understanding of the changes within material conditions within the guidelines within the postulates and laws set by Marxism-Leninism. But it's among the working class--it doesn't come simply from ones work in a plant, but I'm a member of the working class and I go into an office or a plant and I bring Marxism-Leninism with me. It is no longer residing simply in the intelligensia because in fact, there have been changes within the class structure.

Those changes come from the proletarianization of the grouping that used to not be among the working class, but which are now what would be described as technical workers, or workers who have, in fact, more educational opportunities,

etc. which brings a change in the very nature, the very composition of the working class. Marxism-Leninism is among the working class; it derives from originally the bourgeois intelligensia, but is now among the working class.

Lenin's perspective of party was not that the party was made up of, not members of the working class, although there were members of the bourgeoisie intelligensia and petty bourgeois although it was a working class party. The point is, that as far as I understand, from 1903 to 1923 there was a development of a Marxist-Leninist party, and there was the advance of class struggle because of that Marxist-Leninist party which was grounded within the masses, had its roots within the masses, and brought to the masses the science of Marxism-Leninism which the masses of people working did not simply perceive by their job situation.

A. I'd like to respond here in a different way. I'm concerned that we try to end this. I'd prefer to respond in our own history; the fact is that the League of Revolutionary Black Workers was not a Marxist-Leninist organization; it spouted Marxist-Leninist terminology. They did not become Marxist-Leninists by participating in DRUM, ELRUM, or any other activity at the place of work or in the community. People become Marxist-Leninists by study, intense study, and applying it to day to day class struggle; without doing that, there is no known way that we're going to have Marxist-Leninists who can lead revolutionary struggles in this country. To the extent of what you say, that is that somehow workers can become Marxist-Leninists by repeated strikes, then of course I disagree with that. I have no knowledge if Lenin revised that, but if he did, everystudy we've had so far is that that's incorrect.

We did not become Marxist-Leninists by simply the corrected, practical work at this table includes every damn thing in the world; it includes anti-war work, welfare work, rent strike work, food co-ops, but that does not give us the scientific knowledge of how to make a revolution in this country. That comes through intense study and applying it to the class struggle which we're a part of.

Q. THE AUDACITY OF THE MOTOR CITY LABOR LEAGUE AND A DEFENSE OF THE LEAGUE OF REVOLUTIONARY BLACK WORKERS WAS HOW WE STARTED, BUT A STRUGGLE ENSUED AND I THINK THAT IT WOULD BE VERY HELPFUL, AND ADVANCING THAT POLITICAL STRUGGLE THAT WE HAD AT OUR TABLE IF MEMBERS OF THE PANEL COULD COMMENT MORE SPECIFICALLY ON HOW THE LEAGUE WAS ANARCHO-SYNDICALIST. THE PARTICULAR REFERENCE THAT WAS USED IN THE PRESENTATION THAT WAS SOMETHING THAT SOMEONE SAID, SOMETHING THAT WAS IN THE FILM THAT SOMEONE SAID, BUT IF SOME MORE SPECIFICS COULD BE GIVEN ON HOW THE LEAGUE WAS ANARCHO-SYNDICALIST, I THINK IT WOULD ADVANCE THAT STRUGGLE THAT GOT STARTED AT OUR TABLE.

A. Specifically, DRUM, ELRUM, FRUM, CHRYRUM were syndicalist organizations at the place of work, which essentially said that the attempt is to have workers' power, particularly black workers' power, at the place of work. That is precisely within a syndicalist definition. Secondly, as I understand anarcho-syndicalism, it is a petty bourgeois ideology that is taken to the workplace and involves the combination of petty bourgeois elements with workplace struggle. That can be the definition of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers. There were petty bourgeois elements in the leadership and workers organizing at the place of work that resulted in a certain ideology which was not Marxist-Leninist. It also resulted in the glorification of work place action and the downgrading of theoretical and ideological study. As we said in the presentation, bourgeois-nationalism is reflected in those terms because it promoted bourgeois-nationalism at the place of work. It also didn't even allow for cadre to do theoretical and ideological study.

A. I want to refer back to part of what I said before, which was to read just one sentence from the definition of anarcho-syndicalism. "Its fighting organization is the trade union, its basic method of class warfare is the strike, with the general strike as the revolutionary weapon." Now, to read again just an excerpt from the General Policy Statement and Labor program of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers which says: "A union of workers is power. They can, if they so decide, control the economy of a country as large and powerful as the USA simply by calling a general strike." It does not speak to the state, it does not speak to a socialist revolution, and the overthrowing of the capitalist state and the creation of a proletarian, socialist state. That's one very important characteristic of syndicalism and one very important thing missing in terms of an understanding of socialist revolution.

A. Let me briefly give another example because anarcho-syndicalism is a general political line like any general political line, and applies to organizational structure. The internal organizational structure of the League as an organization itself was not democratic centralist. It was more a federation of various components: a factory component, a community schools component, a resources component, Black Star Productions and resources component, Black Star Films, and a quasi-autonomous central staff which was supposedly the leadership of the body, but was never elected; it was self-appointed and self-generating. To the extent that the internal structure itself was a loose federation of groups calling itself an organization of revolutionary organizations rather than a tightly organized democratic and centralist form with open criticism, self-criticism, etc. The structure itself reflects the tendency of anarcho-syndicalism to be a combination of semi-autonomous parts federating to create a loosely knit, or sometimes

attemptedly tightly-knit, whole; but that the line itself, that kind of political line that it projected externally also reflected itself in the organizational structure.

Q. TWO QUESTIONS. FIRST OF ALL, IN TERMS OF THE PAPER PRESENTED BY THE COMMITTEE, NO ATTEMPT WAS MADE TO DIVIDE BETWEEN OBJECTIVE AND SUBJECTIVE PRACTICE, AND I THINK THAT WAS A FUNDAMENTAL ERROR IN TERMS OF ANALYSIS OF THE LEAGUE OF REVOLUTIONARY BLACK WORKERS. SOME THINGS THAT ARE OBJECTIVE, HAPPEN INDEPENDENT OF OUR WILL; THE SPONTANEOUS MOVEMENT IS PART OF THAT. THE OTHER THING IS THE SUBJECTIVE EXPRESSION OF THAT OBJECTIVE DEVELOPMENT. WITHOUT DIVIDING BETWEEN THE OBJECTIVE AND SUBJECTIVE FACTORS, I THINK A LOT OF THINGS ARE CONFUSED, ESPECIALLY ON THE QUESTION OF THE WHOLE NATIONAL QUESTION. I WANT TO ASK THE COMMITTEE IF THEY WOULD MAKE AN ATTEMPT TO TRY TO DO THAT, LIKE I KNOW IN THE BEGINNING YOU STARTED OFF BY GIVING AN INTERNATIONAL-NATIONAL REPORT THAT SPOKE CONCRETELY TO THE OBJECTIVE CONDITIONS, TO A DEGREE. BUT THAT WAS TAKEN IN STEP TO DEAL WITH THE QUESTION OF WHY BLACK WORKERS FOUND THEMSELVES WHERE THEY DID AND AT THE POINT OF PRODUCTION. ALL THAT IS SUBJECTIVE, INDEPENDENT OF OUR WILL AND I THINK A DIVISION SHOULD BE MADE BETWEEN THE OBJECTIVE AND THE SUBJECTIVE FACTORS BECAUSE THE CRITICISM OF THE OLD LEAGUE SHOULD BE A CRITICISM BASED ON ITS SUBJECTIVE EXPRESSION OF THIS OBJECTIVE DEVELOPMENT. I WANT TO ASK THE COMMITTEE WILL ANY ATTEMPT BE MADE TO DO THAT?

A. I think that's a good and accurate criticism in a lot of ways, and I think we do need to commit ourselves to make an attempt to do that. The presentation does probably need to be expanded somewhat in terms of that kind of thing. I want to raise a couple of other criticisms that are related to that same thing, which were raised at the table where I was, which is that part of that manifested itself in not placing the League directly enough in the history that surrounded it, vis a vis Detroit. That was a part of the objective conditions which we did not go into in terms of the first report in the section that I read. Secondly, another criticism that was made which I think is very useful is that the tendencies that we criticize within the League are not tendencies that are specific to the League alone. That anarcho-syndicalism, for instance, is one of the major problems that has been historically of the labor movement. Bourgeois-nationalism certainly is not something that has manifested itself spontaneously in the League, initially. I think those things do need to be brought out, that in terms of taking a specific example such as the League of Revolutionary Black Workers is most useful when we can apply that most concretely to our general situation, so I think those kinds of criticisms are useful and we do need to address them.

A. The same was true at my table in the sense that it's important to understand that we, the Motor City Labor League,

were a part of those mistakes and ought to be criticized in the same subjective manner. Secondly, the same problems continue today, the same tendencies.

Q. THERE WAS JUST ONE OTHER QUESTION. THE ONE ON, IN TERMS OF THE QUESTION OF BUILDING A NEW PARTY I WANT TO ASK ON THE QUESTION OF STRUGGLE AGAINST REVISIONISM BECAUSE THAT HASN'T BEEN SPOKEN TO CONCRETELY, LIKE IN THE PERIOD OF PARTY BUILDING BEFORE THE PARTY WAS BUILT EVEN DURING AND AFTER THE PARTY IS BUILT, WE CONSISTENTLY NEED THE STRUGGLE AGAINST REVISIONISM: AND I WANT TO UNDERSTAND THE CONCEPT ON THAT BECAUSE THAT HASN'T BEEN SPOKEN TO CONCRETELY.

A. Trying to be brief, there is no problem agreeing with that and it's fairly clear that if the struggle against revisionism weren't necessary, we would already have a party and we don't have one and therefore, it is necessary.

Q. I'M FROM THE SPARTICIST LEAGUE AND WE HAVE THE PERSPECTIVE OF BUILDING A REVOLUTIONARY MARXIST PARTY THROUGH THE PROCESS OF THE REVISION OF EXISTING REVOLUTIONARY FORCES AROUND THE MARXIST PROGRAM AND ALSO THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN OPPOSITION, A FIGHTING OPPOSITION, WHICH IS AN ALTERNATIVE TO LABOR BUREAUCRACY THAT PRESENTLY EXISTS WITHIN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT. WE THINK THE LEAGUE WAS THE BEGINNING OF THE RUMBLINGS OF THE UPSURGE IN THE LABOR MOVEMENT AND REFLECTED PART OF THAT. AND THERE IS A CONTRADICTION AND MANY WEAKNESSES AS HAVE BEEN POINTED OUT HERE TONIGHT IN THE LEAGUE, ONE OF THOSE, THE FUNDAMENTAL APPEARANCE OF THE LEAGUE, TO THE NATIONALIST IDEOLOGY, WHICH WE CONSIDER THE BLACK QUESTION IN THE USA NOT TO BE A NATIONAL QUESTION. WE SEE BLACKS AS FUNDAMENTALLY A PART OF THE WORKING CLASS INTEGRATED INTO THE WORKING CLASS, WHICH WAS POINTED OUT IN THE FILM AS A KEY SECTOR OF THE INDUSTRIAL PROLETARIAT, BUT FORCIBLY SEGREGATED AT THE BOTTOM OF THE CLASS, AN ESPECIALLY OPPRESSED SECTOR OF THE CLASS. SO, IN THE TRADE UNION WORK THAT WE DO, DOES A PROGRAM HAVE TO ADDRESS THAT SPECIAL OPPRESSION THAT EXISTS FOR THE BLACK WORKERS? THE QUESTION I WANTED TO ASK IS : HOW DO YOU CONCRETELY SPEAK TO UNITE THE CLASS? FOR INSTANCE, WHEN QUESTIONS COME UP AROUND PREFERENTIAL HIRING, A DIVISION WHICH PITS SECTIONS OF THE CLASS AGAINST EACH OTHER WITH PROGRAMS SUCH AS THE AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROGRAM OF THE PHONE COMPANY, ETC. WHAT IS THE POSITION OF YOUR ORGANIZATION IN RELATION TO THOSE PROGRAMS WHICH SEEK TO DISUNITE THE CLASS WHEN THAT IS NOT OUR TASK IN THIS PERIOD. ALSO THE QUESTION CAME UP IN THE LEAGUE OF YOUR IMPATIENCE TOWARDS THE TRADE UNIONS THEMSELVES, WHICH WE CONSIDER TO BE BASIC DEFENSIVE ORGANIZATIONS OF THE WORKING CLASS. THE LEAGUE HAD A PERSPECTIVE OF BUILDING DUAL UNIONS...I HAVE A QUESTION THAT RELATED TO THAT. THEY HAD A PERSPECTIVE OF BUILDING DUAL UNIONS, THAT IS, TAKING THE REVOLUTIONARY ELEMENTS OUT OF THIS PRESENT TRADE UNION, NOT COUNTERPOSING THEM SO POLITICALLY TO THE LABOR BUREAUCRACY, SO THAT THEY WOULD ISOLATE THE MOST ADVANCED ELEMENTS FROM THE OTHER MASSES OF WORKERS.

SO I'D LIKE TO KNOW WHAT THE POSITION THE MCLL IS AROUND THAT, AND ALSO THE PROBLEM OF REPLACING THIS LABOR BUREAUCRACY, THERE IS A DANGER HERE OF REPLACING IT WITH SIMPLY A SLICKER, LEFT-SOUNDING BUREAUCRACY SUCH AS THOSE, YOU KNOW, ASPIRING BUREAUCRATS IN THE UNITED NATIONAL CAUCUS AND WHAT SHOULD HE KNOW, WHAT IS YOUR EVALUATION OF THAT.

A. I think we've already said some things we're prepared to respond to, and some questions we're not prepared to respond to, politically, not to mention the problems of the time, I take that primarily to have been a speech and statement of position which is fine, but I don't think we can respond to it at this time in any more substantive way.

Q. I DO NOT HAVE A QUESTION; I HAVE BASICALLY TWO CRITICISMS THAT COME FROM TABLE THREE. I'LL READ THEM OFF. FIRST, IT'S TRUE THAT THE LEAGUE WAS BOURGEOIS-NATIONALIST BUT THAT WAS THE REACTION TO THE WHITE CHAUVINISM, AND THAT WASN'T BROUGHT UP. SECOND, IF WE PROCLAIM TO BE MARXIST-LENINISTS, WE MUST ADHERE TO THE CORRECT METHODS OF STRUGGLE, WHICH IS SELF CRITICISM, CRITICISM, AND UNITY. OF COURSE, WE WANT TO LEARN FROM PAST MISTAKES IN ORDER TO AVOID FUTURE ONES, AND IT IS NECESSARY FOR THOSE WHO ARE CRITICIZING TO SELF CRITICIZE FIRST. MCLL CLEARLY STATED THAT IT AND MANY OTHER ORGANIZATIONS SPUN OFF THE LEAGUE, BUT IT DIDN'T ADMIT THAT THE SIX TENDENCIES HAD BEEN AND TO SOME EXTENT STILL ARE TODAY, A PART OF THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF MCLL.

A. There is some disagreement about the methodology implied in the latter point; we don't necessarily understand the method to be self-criticism, criticism, unity. However, we do agree that those six traits and tendencies have been present in the League, the Motor City Labor League, in the past, and certainly to a degree, still are. On the first point, I think that another speaker spoke to that; the fact of the matter is that bourgeois-nationalism does not, in fact, arise exclusively by any means as a response to white chauvinism in the white left. We indicated that white chauvinism existed that it co-existed with the formation of the League, but it would be a mistake to conclude that that was why the League was bourgeois-nationalist. But the purpose of criticism is not to articulate points for the sake of articulating points; it is to cause changes, to engage struggle, and I would criticize table three for raising the criticism this late in the night, had in fact, substantively been spoken to. That is not the purpose of criticism, self-criticism.

A. We thank everyone for coming. Good night.

END