

# DETROIT REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT RECORDS

BOX 14 OF 16

FOLDER 13

CLP EDUCATION REPORT

## General Existing Situation in Education

We are aware of the history of the CPUSA in terms of its program in education. We are also aware of Stalin's remark that "The Party, and especially its leading elements, must thoroughly master the revolutionary theory of Marxism, which is inseparably connected with revolutionary practice." The revolutionary decay of the CPUSA is partially attributable to its reliance on a handful of cadre becoming educated in the Marxist-Leninist classics, leaving the rest to do practical work only. It is clear that practical work, in itself, will not build a revolutionary party. Practical work must be grounded in theory which links each struggle to the forward motion of the working class and the deterioration of the bourgeoisie. Only through education, in its various forms, can we win the working class to the ideas of socialism and the vanguard to communism.

The Class is presently engaged in numerous practical struggles on many fronts. As events unfold and as capitalism continues to decay, the Class increasingly will turn to political struggle. Our Party must be ready to recruit the vanguard elements that emerge from the struggles. But these elements are generally ignorant of the historic role and responsibility of the working class in leading society toward socialism. The Class must be helped to understand the the bases for its struggles: the philosophy and economic science of Marxism and the Lenin-Stalin clarifications and extensions of Marxism. This understanding can only come from Marxism-Leninism study. Theoretical training for the advanced elements of the Class helps consolidate gains from struggle and helps raise morale. Theoretical training helps the Class locate itself in the historic motion and helps understand the ebbs and flows of struggle.

Formal, seminar-type education in the classics along with struggle-oriented practical education are needed by the Class. The Class is ready for political and ideological leadership.

## Problems or Deviations/Political Struggles

Area education, through the John Brown Center, is responsible to develop educational programs both for cadre and the class. The Congress Documents and Party Organizers clearly set forth this responsibility. To a certain extent we have succeeded in our responsibility, but we must do more and consolidate what we have begun. John Brown has considerably tightened up its work. Greater discipline and leadership exists. The Center has been consolidated much better organizationally and politically. Better understanding of the role of education exists. These advances have come out of political struggle and political consolidation.

There is always a tendency to lapse back into old ways, easier ways, when gains are made. The pressure of other Party work sometimes is used as an excuse to do lazy work. But it is clear that a major responsibility of the party is education. Those of us who are responsible for implementation of this responsibility have only partially succeeded.

The gains of becoming financially better off, of obtaining Atkinson House, of organizational consolidation, of becoming a viable fraction, are sometimes offset by a relaxation of vigil and not striking out toward the development of new, creative educational programs. There is occasional liberalism in the work of area education. When comrades don't sign up for classes, don't pay the class fees, don't attend classes, etc., area education has been lax in criticising the comrades. We have yet to find efficient ways to communicate with units in terms of education. Politically we have attempted to revamp the courses to meet the needs as we feel necessary, but there has been little or no input or feedback from the sections or district. This must be rectified or we are bound to not adequately meet the actual needs of the developing party within the area. We must find ways to criticize constructively and ensure educational participation.

### FUTURE WORK

The only successful way to rectify deviations or liberalism in the area of education is to provide creative, useful programs which attract comrades and leading sectors of the class. If the programs are suitable and useful, people will want to come to school. Thus, much of our effort must be geared to developing new educational techniques such as films, slide shows, etc. Comrade Bob is beginning to develop slide shows to attempt to bring to life the concepts of Marxian economics. Efforts such as this must continue. They are especially needed for new recruits, leading sectors of the class and for general classroom use wherever possible.

Our earlier concept of having education locations in different neighborhoods has been replaced by a two-factor approach. The first is that our basic curriculum, consisting of philosophy, political economy, Leninism and certain classes such as the Negro and Women questions, will be offered in the John Brown Center, wherever it is located. We are not reaching the class with the ideas and classes that we have to offer. We are presently attempting to develop issue oriented classes dealing with the area and presenting them with a M-L analysis. The second concept is that we undertake an "outreach" to those of the class who are engaged in specific struggles. Examples of the second factor surround the

struggles at Local 600, focusing on the history of the CPUSA and the political lessons to be learned from that history; the struggles around the tenant strike, focusing on a short term, possibly a weekend, analysis and history of housing and housing struggles. Another current possibility surrounds the struggle at Detroit General Hospital. We may also wish to put together a short course surrounding the CLP electoral campaign, focusing on the concept, limitations and possibilities of electoral politics. These will hopefully help us to fill the felt needs of the people we need to reach and provide us with real avenues to spread the ideas of socialism to the class.

But we have not been able to break out of a front operation. We have probably been guilty of sectarianism in our approach to others. Even when we reach out to other people we have not been up front about the party participation and people know that this does not come from no where. Also, the way we responded to the S. Tappes dinner needs to be looked at with a critical eye. How are we to look at people who come toward the formations that we are developing, and that we feel meet real needs of the class? We had sought and received the support of Tappes and he was going to help us both financially and with his name and experiences within the union movement. Upon finding out his very negative experiences in the '50's, we dumped him and lost various opportunities. I believe we need to examine more carefully how we evaluate people and their relationships to us both from the perspective of the party and of the formations that we are part of. What have been his actions over the last 25 years and how do they relate to us now? We need to discuss this very quickly and decide what our motion is going to be toward both him and Art and others who we could get much good history from but who might be affected by this.

Our future work must further consolidate leadership in the form of department heads, find mechanisms through the various units to ensure proper educational participation of all comrades and draw out the creative abilities of comrades to make greater inputs into the John Brown program and curriculum. The Education Commission has not been truly consolidated as a Commission. We are still functioning as a JBC fraction with that as our only active concern. The JBC fraction must make use of all existing resources including other comrades' abilities, the skills and energy of close contacts and educational techniques presently existing in bourgeois institutions.

Classes must be developed to meet the new thrust of the party into those sectors of the class that have less formal and little M-L education.

The role of the Commission within the district must be clarified and consolidated. The differences between the Commission and the fraction must be clarified to facilitate the work of both cadre and non-cadre.

Political education and mobilization of the fraction and the Commission themselves is essential to give direction, organization and motivation to both.



MEMO: To All Comrades  
FROM: Education Committee  
REGARDING: Direction of Education in this Period

As was brought out in the Local Report a few weeks ago, the dominant task of comrades is changing. Before the Congress we raised the slogan "Struggle for Education;" we did struggle and we emerged from the Congress a strong, but small, and unified party. This unity of will and scientific understanding must now be directed outward; the objective conditions in the USNA make this mandatory if the class is not to be trampled by capitalists desperate to save their corporate skins at any cost.

"The task we face both from the standpoint of the general direction of the Party embodied in the present campaign, as well as the burning objective conditions around us, demands that we immediately move to seize the leadership of the unemployed movement..." (Local Report)

What, then, is the function of education as we move to "seize the leadership of the unemployed movement"? The function is the same: to arm comrades with their greatest weapon--the science of Marxism-Leninism. With this weapon it is possible to find one's bearings in the most intense struggles. The intensity of the class struggle is increasing, and our science is of little use unless we are in the forefront of that struggle, exposing the misleadership of the sell-outs and providing correct leadership at all times. Education must not be, then, as it has been in the last few weeks, something of a hindrance rather than a guide in carrying out the task at hand.

Education, as the City Committee pointed out, will be undertaken in the units. The decision as to which individuals receive what kinds of education rests with their particular units. In this period education must meet the specific needs of specific conditions and specific struggles. The Education Committee can do the legwork on getting suitable materials and information to the units; it is the responsibility of comrades to make known to the Committee what they will need to study. This not only means study of the masters, but also the development of skills essential for getting on with contacts and friendly organizations. We must remember that the priority of the party is cadre building and contacts must develop into cadre. (Winning the vanguard of the proletariat may require the knowledge of many and diverse things: language, and foreign language skills, labor law, parliamentary procedure, other 'rules of the game,' mechanics, etc., etc.)

The truly effective education program is the most flexible: matching the needs of comrades with resources available. What is needed to carry out such a program is a thorough understanding of what each of us has to offer. We are not a bourgeois university --we will learn from each other what we can. We ask you to give up this information:

1. What you need to focus on now and in the foreseeable future
2. What abilities you have to share with other comrades

With this, the Education Committee can begin to hook up people to learn from one another and provide materials particularly suited to the struggles at hand.

The developing education program can be executed in various ways: in the present educational setting, in special (weekend) seminars, in units.

A further word about "present educational setting." As you know, in the future, this setting will be mainly for our friends and contacts who are working to ground themselves in the science. The content of the classes to be presented will be as it is now (political economy, philosophy, introduction to M-L) with some additions. The process by which this content is explored will be changed. We are most anxious to receive feedback on ways by which the content can be put out and treated less academically and less like a catechism. We are studying a science, not a theology. Our friends and contacts are turned off by the way in which we approach the science, not in the science itself; we must not lose people because we did not know how to communicate with them.

WIN THE VANGUARD OF THE PROLETARIAT!  
WORKERS AND OPPRESSED PEOPLE OF THE WORLD, UNITE!

STRUGGLE FOR EDUCATION!

QUESTIONNAIRE FROM THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE \_\_\_\_\_ EVERYONE SHOULD FILL THIS OUT

There are three parts to this questionnaire. Please fill out all parts -- if your answer is "no" or "nothing", please indicate that.

PART I

Comrades, we need to know what types of education and skills that we all have. We need to know both the extent of your Marxist-Leninist education AND what skills and knowledge you may have in other useful areas (photography, legal skills, art, lay-out, typing, se~~i~~nee, sciences, child care techniques, etc. etc.)

Please indicate below the extent of your Marxist-Leninist education, including courses taken and areas in which you feel strong (include the major works you have studied). Also indicate whether you have been to school. (Use the back of this form if necessary).

Please indicate below the skills and knowledge that you have in other areas. Include level of competency (can you do it? Can you teach it? etc.) Use the back of this form if necessary.

Part I (Continued)

What other people do you know who have any useful knowledge and skills?



Part II.

Comrades, the education committee needs to know what the individual comrades' and the units need in terms of education. We are willing to develop that education but need to know what the needs are. If you know particular materials that would be useful, please be sure to indicate that. If you do not know what material would be useful, but know you need education in a certain area, please describe that to us. (Use the back of this form if necessary.)

Part III. The Education committee needs comrades to help with printing -- our education is only possible with its material base -- reproducing and printing the material. We also need help with typing. If you have any periods of time that might be used to help, please put down those times -- also whether you could type. Also please put down your phone number. If you have unplanned spare time and would like to help, please call Bonnie at 872-1190.

Comradely, your education committee.