

**Combating Wrong
Tendencies Is A
Marxist Principle**

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We are publishing these two articles – one from Vanguard and the other from the Australian Communist – by request so that they can be studied together and used to expose and overcome wrong tendencies.

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Struggle Against Bad Practices Is Mass Question

Lin Piao came forward within the Chinese Communist Party to attack the correct Marxist-Leninist stand of that great Party.

He turned out to be nothing but a cheap lick-spittle for US imperialism and Soviet revisionism doing from within what they could never do from without.

Lin Piao represented an international trend, a trend that appears in all revolutionary movements, the trend promoted by the bourgeoisie.

Within all Communist Parties this trend appears. In the former Communist Party of Australia Aarons, Dixon, Sharkey ended up serving the bourgeoisie.

Within circles of the Party little Lin Piao's arise. If these little Lin Piao's have some cunning, they can deceive people, or people go along with them. That is they go with the tide.

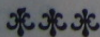
Sometimes this or that bad policy or bad practice appears within a Party circle. Some people go along with it without raising their voice against it. But to go against a wrong tendency is a Marxist principle.

The struggle against revisionism in Australia would have got nowhere if some people had not been prepared to go against the stream. The harm done by revisionism would have been much greater.

Today, so-called detente and apparently easier conditions of revolutionary work lead some into wrong conduct and it is easy to go along. To swim against the tide then becomes very important.

The struggle against bad practices is a mass question; it is the concern of everyone. Good practice, good style of work emerges in the struggle against bad practices.

Revisionism, opportunism in any shape or form must be smashed. All revolutionary history is rich in lessons on the need to persist in struggle. Never forget class struggle.



A Communist Comment On The Recent ACTU Congress

Lenin spoke of the difficulty of making "a determined break with all the traditions of the bourgeois world conception in general and the bourgeois-democratic world conception in particular." (Differences in the European Labour Movement" December 1910 – Sel. Works, 12 Vol Edition Vol 11, p. 738).

In Australia, one of the most difficult problems that has faced Marxist-Leninists is to break from the circle that the bourgeoisie puts around all its institutions. For example, the bourgeoisie spreads the idea that the whole of politics is parliamentary politics when the truth is that politics is the politics of class struggle of which parliamentarism is but a fragment and a bourgeois fragment at that.

To break from the hold that parliamentary politics have is very difficult. Day in and day out, the bourgeoisie speaks of politics solely in parliamentary terms. They do so as naturally as drawing breath. The influence of this idea is very deep. The bourgeoisie is greatly assisted in

this by the Labor Party (which in the name of the workers practises parliamentary politics) and by the revisionists (who in the name of Communism practise parliamentary politics.)

The maintenance of the idea that parliamentary politics cover the whole field of politics and are the be all and end all of politics is extremely important for the bourgeoisie. So long as this idea goes unchallenged, bourgeois rule is safe. The challenge to it is not merely a matter of words. One can repudiate it in words and yet be victim to it. Its hold is both crude and subtle. It affects people even unwittingly and against their will and even when they think they repudiate it. The making of a "determined break" from such ideas in Australia is a matter of life and death to the revolutionary movement. It is critical to understand and uphold the truth that "politics whether revolutionary or counter-revolutionary, is the struggle of class against class". Understanding in Australia that parliamentarism is part of counter revolutionary politics enables us to develop revolutionary anti-imperialist, people's democratic struggle for independence and real democracy.

Just as important, and in a sense more important, is understanding that trade union politics are counter revolutionary. In Australia, the bourgeoisie assiduously fosters and cultivates the idea that the whole of working class politics is covered by the trade unions. There are several parts of this idea. Within the national sphere, this bourgeois idea goes that the A.C.T.U. biennial congresses

are the whole field of working class affairs. This idea goes that within the states the various labour councils and then the various individual trade unions are the whole field of working class affairs. Insofar as political parties are concerned, then the political party of the working class is the A.L.P. So this idea runs that the A.C.T.U. Congress and A.L.P. Federal conference are the supreme bodies for all working class activities; sometimes they speak of the A.C.T.U. looking after the industrial interests of the workers and the A.L.P. their political interests. But it is an essential part of the counter revolutionary politics of the bourgeoisie to nurture and build up the idea that all working class politics are embraced in the A.C.T.U. and the A.L.P. The task of revolutionary politics to borrow Lenin's words again is to make a **determined break** from this.

This is an essential part of what Lenin said: "... in every country the bourgeoisie inevitably works out two systems of rule, two methods of fighting for its interests — of retaining its rule, and these methods at times succeed each other and at times they are interwoven with each other in various combinations. They are firstly, the method of force, the method which rejects all concessions to the labour movement the second method is the method of liberalism which takes steps towards the development of political rights, towards reforms, concessions and so forth." (Differences in the European Labour Movement.) It is with the latter that we are for the moment concerned.

Not so long ago the A.L.P., the Liberal Party and the A.C.T.U. held important national conferences (in the case of the A.C.T.U. a Congress). These gatherings got much attention. The press, radio and television were full of them. Interviews occurred with leaders of them and other personalities at them. Reviews and news items appeared in the press. It all gave the idea that here at these gatherings, important questions were being determined. From a revolutionary standpoint, there was a common thread to these gatherings and that was that each of them served counter revolutionary politics. "Counter revolutionary" often has an emotional turning to its meaning, but we use it here in the sense of anti-revolutionary, against working class and people's revolution.

In the A.C.T.U. Congress, the press spoke of a left, a right and a centre. They spoke of the left to embrace those with "radical" opinions (it embraced revisionists, "left" labor Party, trade union militants); the right as conservative trade union leaders, D.L.P. adherents, right-wing leaders and the centre as those between these two; they spoke of Marxist-Leninists as the extreme left. All this is to give the idea that the A.C.T.U. Congress is the forum in which different working class ideologies are fought out. The end decision of the A.C.T.U. is that of the working class as a whole and that Mr. Hawke is the representative of the whole working class. But all this is sheer deception. It is the attempt of the bourgeoisie to maintain their own circle around the working class and its politics.

Within the Congress, there were undoubtedly divisions and from within it is perhaps fair enough to speak of a "left", a "right" and a "centre". But this has nothing in common with the correct working class conception of a true left, a true right and a true centre. (In fact this characterisation of left, right and centre is the creation of the bourgeoisie for purpose of deception. Why should the workers accept it?) In genuine revolutionary political conceptions there is indeed a genuine left; it is composed of revolutionaries and their supporters. There is a genuine right; it is composed of imperialists, comprador capitalists and the supporters of these. There is a genuine centre; it is composed of the people who waver between these two and within it there are many divisions. Of course, this is reflected in the A.C.T.U. Congress and in all other political gatherings.

Broadly from the standpoint of the genuine left it is more accurate to describe what the press calls the "left" in the A.C.T.U. Congress as the right, the "centre" as more to the right and the right as the extreme right. How otherwise could one designate Carmichael, Halfpenny, Clancy and Co. (who all fall within the "left" characterisation of the press) than as right. They are what Lenin called the bourgeois within the working class. They are undoubtedly rightwing political opponents of the working class. To present them as the left is part of the deception of capitalism, for revolutionaries to accept them as of the left is treachery to the working class. Revisionism is the main danger in the working class movement. These people

are more dangerous than the outright A.C.T.U. spokesmen against the workers such as people like Ducker because the workers know the Duckers and other such people. Then of Hawke — could it ever seriously be claimed that he really has anything in common with the working class? Yet he is presented as being of the left.

One can readily see that this use of terms like “left”, “right” and “centre” in such circumstances, as though they cover the divisions in the working class, goes to feed the deception that the A.C.T.U. Congresses are working class. The fact is that they are assemblies largely of trade union bureaucrats who from one standpoint or another serve capitalism. They cater for all trends “left”, “right” and “centre” within the working class in service to capitalism but they do not cater for the genuine left working class and its movement, the dominant trend Lenin calls it. The “left” is supposed to accommodate the left workers to capitalism, the “centre” to satisfy the centre elements in the working class and the “right” to represent the backward. They gather together in one A.C.T.U. Congress the purpose of which is to serve capitalism.

It will be said that there are genuine leftwing elements in these Congresses, even Marxist-Leninists. This is true. The fact is that such people have genuine left support in the working class. They represent the genuine left trend in the working class. At such a gathering as the A.C.T.U., they only serve the working class insofar as by their actions they reveal the bankruptcy of trade unionism, the deception of A.C.T.U.’s, Labor Councils, Hawkes,

revisionists and other such rightwing elements (we will use the term in its correct sense); insofar as they lead the workers in revolutionary rebellion against all this. If they channel or are in any way party to channelling the struggle of the workers into the A.C.T.U. or into conventional trade unionism, then they cease to be of the genuine left. Certainly they must take advantage of differences in the so-called “left”, “right” and “centre”. Tactically Communists do recognise that trade unionism and reactionary trade unions do have a hold on the workers. Their task in assisting the workers to revolutionary consciousness and a revolutionary path must take into account the existence of trade unions. But their participation in these A.C.T.U. activities can only be an incident of revolutionary activity. It carries with it the danger of creating the illusion that Marxist-Leninists believe the A.C.T.U. holds hope for the workers or can offer a revolutionary path. In our opinion it holds no hope for the workers and does not and never will offer a revolutionary path. If it did, it would not be the A.C.T.U.

Marx said that instead of the conservative motto “A fair day’s wage for a fair day’s work, the workers ought to inscribe on their banner the revolutionary watchword ‘Abolition of the wages system’.” It is that fundamental idea that revolutionaries uphold. The workers are the sole source of profit. They are the useful people who by the mechanism of society are compelled to overthrow capitalism.

The revolutionary left (Marxist-Leninist) undoubtedly is gaining mass support. Its refusal to be diverted or to be caught up in parliamentary or trade union politics has gained great respect amongst the masses. Today the masses turn away increasingly from parliamentarism and trade unionism. But the bourgeoisie never loses its own vigilance. It is well aware that the masses are breaking from its circles. It is continuously on the alert to subvert the revolutionary movement. One of its tactics is to adapt the Communist Party of Australia (M-L) to itself (just as it did with Sharkey's Party); to adapt the Communist leaders to itself, to adapt the Communist workers to itself. It adopts many and varying tactics to do this. So it offers television appearances, press write-ups, (big sums for "reminiscences") radio interviews, flattery, meeting "important" people, nice pictures in the press. (One can see how this works out with certain revisionist "Communist" leaders such as Munday, Aarons, Clancy, who are put forward as Communists - another tactic in this never ceasing struggle.) Part of this tactic is the promotion of genuine left trade union leaders both in an effort personally to adapt such people to capitalism and to enable the bourgeoisie to say to the workers (or with out saying, to represent to the workers) that even the genuine left accepts the A.C.T.U. as a working class weapon. There has been experience of this in the past. Such people as Thornton and others (and at the present time Elliott, Clancy and others), were used to disarm the workers. As "revolutionaries" they fed the illusion that the A.C.T.U. served the working class - a position quite

contrary to the fact and in complete contradiction to a revolutionary stand. Had they accomplished the difficult task of using their positions to advance the revolutionary consciousness and organisation of the workers, to assist them in finding the revolutionary path and exposing the political service to the ruling class of the A.C.T.U. and orthodox trade unionism, then something might be said for them. They did not do any of this. On the contrary, they adapted workers to capitalism and bourgeois ideas into the revolutionary movement at the same time as they collected perks for themselves and became "respectable" men. It must never be allowed to happen again, no matter what the pressure.

In Australia all this is matter for very deep study and consideration. *The supreme task is the winning of the workers for revolutionary consciousness and the building of revolutionary organisation.* Everything else is subordinate to that. It is correct that it is impossible to skip over stages such as the existence of strong reactionary trade unions but the need not to skip over stages must never be used as justification for maintaining the status quo. The problem is how to get over the stages quickly. In getting over them, we must never fall victim to the tricks of the enemy or subordinate ourselves in any way to the enemy. In tactical manoeuvres, the A.L.P., the A.C.T.U., the Liberal Party, have a left, a right and a centre. They are important divisions but to accept them as things in themselves or as the bourgeoisie would like, is to fall victim to bourgeois tricks.

The A.L.P. has this "left", "right" and "centre". It is important to understand it. Understanding of it plays a part in the struggle to break its influence over the workers. Moreover genuine left workers often support the "left" in the Labor Party and within the "left" in the Labor Party are people who aspire to the genuine left. All this is important. Its importance however lies not in the manoeuvres within the A.L.P. but in the tactics of the struggle for revolutionary consciousness and organisation.

The revolutionary integrity and work of the Communist Party of Australia (M-L) is supremely important to the Australian working class and the international revolutionary movement.

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