

## Statement to the Committee of Correspondence DELIVERED AT PUBLIC FORUM — MARCH 29, 1992

---

BROTHERS AND SISTERS  
COMRADES AND FRIENDS

This is a critical moment in our history, for daily we rush to the news fully expecting revolutionary conditions to define the times. More often these days it is the gloating of imperialists, chest beating as they celebrate what they consider the defeat of socialism and the dis proof of Marxism-Leninism. This forum has a responsibility to respond to these capitalist illusions.

I am pleased that we are holding this very important forum here at the Luis Belvis Center, especially since within our overall movement Black-Latino unity is key! 500 years of Eurocentrism is being celebrated and challenged as a result of the anniversary of the infamous invasion of the new world by Christopher Columbus. The righteous value of our protest is that the lies and distortions embedded in history, that is the memory of society, must be corrected as this is the framework for justifying present policies that will determine the future. Therefore, this campaign will fall short of its potential unless protesting lies about past injustices is linked to fighting against current policies and is designed to build higher levels of multi national unity. Again, I'm glad to be here and hopeful for greater unity in the immediate future.

The world crisis today reflects the juncture of an end and a beginning. My concern is that we must be clear about all of the various endings to grasp the necessity and possibility of a new beginning. We are drawn here to this forum by the dramatic end of a stage of the revolutionary process in the Soviet Union, and related realignments out of the CPUSA and among revolutionary forces in general, and whether we can find the basis for a new beginning.

My comments in this forum are based on two main points:

1. Our new beginning should be rooted in a critical affirmation of the revolutionary theory of Marxism. Further this means:

(a) Our strategic line is for world revolution.

(b) Our strategic task is for a theory of the American Revolution.

2. Our immediate task is to revolutionize the consciousness and political culture of the working class as we shape a revolutionary army of the dispossessed who have nothing to loose and everything to fight for.

### NEW BEGINNINGS

One of the weaknesses of 20th century revolutionary motion is that the existence of the Soviet Union in the first instance but other countries as well (China, Cuba, Albania at least) led some revolutionary organizations to accept junior brother status,

receive legitimacy from being a franchise of what they considered world revolution's center, and then to belittle the necessity for independence and initiative in theory and practice. While fighting for a general revolutionary world outlook and cooperation in campaigns against world imperialism, there was great weakness in relying on the theoretical work of others.

Now the umbilical cords have been severed and many of us have been thrown into a crisis, we face the challenge of finding our own bearings, we face the challenge of finding a new beginning. In the former Soviet Union, ex party members are openly repudiating Marxism and become capitalist collaborators of the worst ilk. Ideological and political capitulationism is there for all to see. The line on the soviet experience being put forward by Gorbachev and Yeltsin turns out to be only slightly different from Bush and Bresinski.

Inside the USA we find a "crisis of Marxism" and an upsurge of social Democracy, a retreat into a pragmatic populism in which there is no tolerance for revolution which is regarded as an "ultra left romantic illusion. The criminal leadership of the former Soviet Union will soon fully move to repudiate Lenin and regard the 20th Century as a set back. Our social Democratic reformists have long since taken this position. My position is that we have to go back to the basics, go back to the ABC's of our theoretical foundation. In this regard I have four points for our theoretical focus.

1. CLASS STRUGGLE: This is the central feature of our analysis, this is the anchor of our conception of the material foundation of society. Class struggle is an irreconcilable life and death conflict in all class society, although it is not always expressed at an extreme level. However, in this crisis, for the first time since the great depression, class polarization has become the main dynamic of all societies in the world. Everyone sees this, but not everyone is clear on why -- the re affirmation of Marxism as a revolutionary theory requires that we grasp the material dialectics of this class conflict as a qualitatively new stage of class polarization.

In the realm of production forces we have to answer the question of whether there has been a revolution, whether the change has been merely quantitative or has made a qualitative leap. The evidence seems fairly clear -- this is a new time, the industrial organization of society is being replaced by the new technologies especially the micro processing computer chip, the new materials like fiber optics and the bio-technological innovations of genetic engineering. The main point here is that there has been a fundamental shift in the paradigm of society and this will impact all social relations as well.

In the realm of production relations we have to map the occupational organization of the proletariat based upon the changes in the technical division of labor produced by the aforementioned changes in the production forces. On this basis we have to analyze the convergence of economic interests into potential power blocs

that make up the structural contours for the political expression of the class struggle, the fight for power. The critical section of the proletariat seem to be those most under attack whose very lives are at stake. They most directly experience the necessity of a revolutionary struggle.

The revolutionary transformation of the production forces has resulted in new ruling class policies, draconian measures of social control, including forms of depopulation for sectors of the working class that have been rendered redundant, and a domestic "strategic hamlet" policy for containing and isolating Black proletarian communities by turning inner city areas into FORBIDDEN ZONES. In sum, the crisis we face is a fight for survival by a fast increasing sector of the working class: all of us Black, Latino, and white face this, we might put out T shirts, "Its a class struggle thang, you should understand!" This fight for survival is fast extending to all nationalities to the extent they are located at the bottom, at the margins, in the basic proletarian masses.

The root features of the dangerous ideological confusion that we face at this critical time fit here, on the one hand a failure to grasp the necessity of revolution based on qualitatively new production forces, and on the other a failure to grasp the possibility of revolution based on the possibilities of the increasing proletarianized mass of the truly disadvantaged . The main danger here is from the right, not accepting the necessity or the possibility of revolution, not breaking through the limitations of reformism.

2. NATIONAL QUESTION: This is as important as class struggle because it is inseparable from it. The non-European peoples who have been victimized since 1492 need to be both understood, respected, and empowered. The practical solution for oppressed nationalities in the US has to do with the relationship between national oppression and class exploitation on the one hand and the social organization of the community and state power on the other. Of course the main point is that people of African, Puerto Rican, Mexican or Native American descent are overwhelmingly in the working class, so even though we have been spatially segregated and have experienced different forms of racist repression, our demands are usually national forms of general class demands. The danger is that with the spontaneous emergence of national forms of class struggle rooted in ideological confusion that the revolutionary forces will miss the key link for influencing the next generation of grass roots revolutionary forces. The key link is the class content of demands made for Black liberation.

3. THE STATE: This is the terrain of ruling class power, and as revolutionaries it raises the issue of fighting for a revolutionary seizure of power as the decisive struggle we fight for. The historical question is to discuss the limits and meaning of capitalist democracy, as well as the question of how force (the police and military) is used to play the leading role in the social control of the oppressed. Malcolm posed the central question, the ballot or the bullet, change to be fought for within and/or outside

of the parameters of bourgeois law.

This is the context for organizational considerations. We have to repudiate bourgeois law and become the outlaws we are forced to be. As revolutionaries we have to work on two levels, then, including both the vanguard level of cadre and responsible leadership able to fight the political police but also in mass forms that can initiate the dialectics of dual power – we attack their legitimacy and build our own, bourgeois state power versus insurgent institutions of workers and people power.

4. PHILOSOPHY: I am referring here mainly to the issue of method, epistemology, how we learn, which involves understanding the relationship of our consciousness to the world around us. In this context philosophy deals with how we learn from our experience and the experience of others, to have a knowledge base for our views on the class struggle, the national question, and the state and revolution. This focus is on the most basic theoretical tools we use meaning the fundamentals of historical and dialectical materialism. Therefore a philosophical dimension has to be an integral aspect of all reports and summations, discussion and study, agitation and propaganda. This is the moment for open public discussion of the potential for revolution, for a decisive fight to reorganize society in our interests. The reconstitution of revolutionary leadership has to be a public process in open struggle with the class enemy, and in this struggle we have to put forward a philosophy that confirms our march to socialism. We have to be up front to distinguish ourselves from and to defeat reformist collaborators, as well as to arm the masses of people with a revolutionary line to lead them into battle.

We have battle fronts of struggle, the critical points of antagonism whereby the ruling class is exploiting or liquidating the working class, and our main agit-prop work has to be directed toward the people most directly or indirectly involved in these battle fronts. The main task comes from the fact that this battlefield only has one army on it. So we have to put more troops in the field.

The experience that most readily validates revolutionary Marxism is within the forbidden zones, the areas most isolated and exploited, the areas with the most direct police control, the areas where people live who are targeted for genocide. The rebirth of a Revolutionary Marxism in the United States must come from the wretched of the earth found in our midst, the proletariat who truly has nothing to lose but the prospect of poverty, disease, violence, and finally, genocide.

Of course the key point is here, building a strategy for revolutionary in our country is our greatest responsibility. This is what distinguishes a revolutionary from a reformist, because while they both join with the masses in fighting for reforms, the revolutionary has to develop and openly propagate a conception of an American revolution, while the reformist doesn't see the possibility, has no conception of how the leap takes place from a quantitative to a qualitative struggle. Let us take to heart the

immortal words used to end the Communist Manifesto:

"The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.

WORKING MEN OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

This is A moment for open public discussion of the potential for revolution. The economic crisis can't be fixed for everybody, the conditions for a class truce have been destroyed and this seems the moment when a discussion of revolution is essential. The theoretical issues are clear:

a. what are the strategic features of the class struggle: who are the basic proletarian forces? Who are our friends and who are our enemies?

b. what is the class nature of the fight for Black liberation and the liberation of all other oppressed nations and colonies?

c. what is the class nature of the US government and the main political parties, and what organizational forms of struggle are required to carry out the American revolution, by mobilizing the proletariat to defeat the Bourgeoisie (intellectually, morally, politically, and physically).

WE ARE NOT YET IN THE DUST BIN OF HISTORY - The capitalists have wanted this but they themselves are as endangered as are the masses. Our army is in the streets - if Marxism is alive we will demonstrate it by joining the troops and building its officer corps in the battles. Many who have been in the struggle will drop out and others will accept the degenerative limitations of social democracy and reformism. I speak as an appeal to reject these forms of liquidationism. I speak for the masses in the tent cities in Michigan, the masses being cut off general assistance this week in Illinois and Ohio, the women about to lose the right to an abortion, and those being locked down under martial law in the public housing projects. Their only hope is revolution, with or without us. Be there or be square!