

POLITICAL COMMITTEE POSITION ON UNITY WITH THE RMG

NOTE: The following is a synopsis of the report to the United Secretariat meeting of Sept. 10-11 by Art Young on the question of relations between the Canadian section and the Revolutionary Marxist Group. Comrade Young made the report on behalf of the Political Committee of the Canadian section.

The Revolutionary Marxist Group is a recently-founded group in Canada which incorporates the members of two smaller groups, the Red Circle and Old Hole, which had engaged in a unity manoeuvre with the Canadian section. It also includes a group of persons who split from the Canadian section and its youth group in June.

When the RC and OM forces first approached the section affirming their acceptance of the program and traditions of the Fourth International, and their willingness to abide by the section's discipline, the Canadian section greeted their initiative warmly. Comrade Grandall reported on this development to the United Secretariat one year ago, and expressed the hope that unity would prove possible.

To explore this possibility, the LSA/LSO entered into political discussion with them in order to clarify their views. From the beginning it insisted on the importance of developing collaboration in areas of common activity, and it made a number of suggestions of how this could be done.

But the RC and OM were not heading towards the section; in fact, their evolution was in the opposite direction. Major political disagreements with them became apparent very early. These did not mean that unity was impossible. But they made the test of practical work the crucial determinant. The section and the RC/OM proved unable to work together for any period in any significant field of activity. In fact, the work of the two forces more and more diverged, and even led to several public confrontations, notably in the struggle against the Vietnam war and in the fight against the leadership of the social-democratic labor party, the New Democratic Party. The different suggestions for collaboration made by the section were either turned down outright, or did not work out in practice.

A peculiar situation had developed. Common work had proven impossible between the two groups. Instead, different political lines were sharply counterposed in action in every major field of activity. If there was not a single area in which the section and the RC/OM could collaborate, how could they work together in a common democratic-centralist organization active in all areas? Unification was obviously premature; what was necessary was increased efforts to find ways to work together in order to lay the basis for unity.

Yet the RC/OM did not agree. It insisted that it be immediately admitted into the section.

The reason for this odd attitude soon became clear when some minority members split from the section and its youth group in June. A few days earlier, the RC and OM had formally fused to form the Revolutionary Marxist Group. The splitters declared they were leaving the section in order to build the RMG.

This split from the Canadian Trotskyist movement was a blow to the unity of the entire Fourth International and was condemned by the July meeting of the United Secretariat. But the RMG hailed the split, blaming the leadership of the LSA/LSO, and announced its intention to recruit the splitters to its ranks.

This revealed the real intentions of the RMG towards the section, and showed why it continued to pursue in action a course hostile to the section while all the while stating verbally its desire for unity. The LSA/LSO stated:

"This attitude on the part of the RMG to those who have struck a blow against the Canadian Trotskyist movement, placing themselves outside and in opposition to it, is a hostile act against the LSA/LSO....(The RMG has) sponsored a split in the Trotskyist movement. Far from promoting the 'unity' of the Trotskyist movement, they have conducted a raid on the Canadian section of the Fourth International and its youth organization." (Labor Challenge, July 9, 1973)

Thus, within days of its founding, the RMG had a new component -- those who had split from the Trotskyist movement. The RMG continued to say that its members would function as a loyal part of the LSA/LSO if accepted, and obey discipline. Yet half of the organization was composed of people who found themselves unable to accept that discipline, concluding that the section was no longer a viable instrument to carry out revolutionary work.

The experience of the LSA/LSO demonstrates that the RMG is not interested in the unity of Trotskyist forces, but rather in splitting the Canadian section. The RMG's letter to the Secretariat, written two weeks after it announced its support of the split in Canada, clearly aims to provide cover for the splitting operation.

When the question of unifications and splits arises, the United Secretariat always seeks to act in such a manner as to reaffirm the authority of the section. It indicates by its comportment that the only way for revolutionaries to enter the world party is by joining one of its component parts, the national sections.

The LSA/LSO continues to strive for unity with the RMG on a principled basis. But in order for this to be possible, it is necessary for the RMG to take a clear stand in favor of the unity of the Canadian section and its youth group, and against splits. In addition, ways must be found for the organizations to come together in common work against the common enemy. This is the only road leading towards the RMG's entry into the section and the building of a united organization.