

Letter to the Editor

Any Way the Wind Blows

25 May 1987
San Francisco
To the editor:

I enjoyed the excellent analysis of the impasse of the Nicaraguan revolution and the role of the organizations to the left of the Sandinistas (1917 No. 3). The article discussed the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores [PRT—affiliated with the International Workers League], but did not mention the IWL's (sometime) advocacy of the Cuban road for Nicaragua.

The Morenoites [followers of Nahuel Moreno, the recently deceased founder-leader of the IWL] have a deservedly bad reputation throughout the Latin American left for capricious line changes and generally unprincipled behavior. Their attitude toward the character of the Cuban Revolution, which has been a key question for the international Trotskyist movement for decades, is a case in point. Here are a selection of IWL zigzags on Cuba which have appeared in *Working Class Opposition* [WCO—the IWL's American press] over the past couple of years:

"Socialism is the revolutionary solution to the crisis, it is not the terrorism and pro-NATO stands of Mitterrand, or the Mitterrandized Euro-Communists. It is not the police states of Gorbachev, Castro, Jaruzelski, or Deng Xiaopeng."

—"Rambo, the Rainbow and Revolution," *WCO*,
October 1985

"There is also the need for a political organization that recaptures the experiences of the struggle for the independence of the entire continent, not just Chile. A party is needed that will explain that what needs to be done is what happened in Cuba, where the workers and the people destroyed the bourgeois army and state, kicked the capitalists out of Castro's government, expropriated the lands and factories of the bourgeoisie, and created a workers' state."

—"The Chilean Revolution—Part II" *International Marxist Courier*, (monthly magazine of the IWL),
printed in *WCO*, October 1986

"The *Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores* (Revolutionary Workers Party—PRT), the official section of the International Workers League in Nicaragua...proposed a series of measures....

"These proposals would guarantee the best defense of Nicaragua, while, at the same time, would open the door to transforming Nicaragua into a new Cuba, that is to say, into the second free territory of America."

—"Resolution of the International Secretariat of the IWL(FI)," printed in *WCO*, October 1986

"Historically, they are counterrevolutionary leaderships [in Nicaragua, Libya and Angola], even if they go as far as expropriating the bourgeoisie, as Castro did in Cuba. Castro stopped all extension of the revolution at the international level and he maintained a totalitarian domination within Cuba. In doing this, Castro acts like a bureaucrat who defends the privileges that he obtains

from the Cuban national state."

—"Nicaragua, Libya, Angola: Are They Allies of the Revolutionary Working Class?" by Nahuel Moreno, printed in *WCO*, December 1986

To sum up then: the IWL views Cuba as (a) a Stalinist "police state" which is nonetheless (b) a model worker state to which Chilean and Nicaraguan proletarians should aspire although (c) it is in the grip of a counter-revolutionary bureaucrat (Castro) who maintains a "totalitarian domination." Clear as mud.

Comradely,
Fred Riker

1917 Replies:

We thank comrade Riker for his letter. The "dual nature" of the Morenoites' schizoid position on Cuban Stalinism is given an added twist by their insistence on the characterization of Stalinism as simply "counter-revolutionary through and through." This is one of the "Ten Points" put forward as criteria for attendance at the projected 1988 "International Conference," at which the IWL hopes to swallow what's left of the British Workers Revolutionary Party. It is typical of these political chameleons that they denounce Stalinism as simply counter-revolutionary always and everywhere, while simultaneously holding up the Cuban Stalinist regime as a model for the workers of Nicaragua and Chile. And, of course, in Argentina the Morenoites are in bed with the Stalinist Communist Party in an ongoing reformist electoral bloc appropriately known as the "People's Front."

The sole "principle" of Morenoism is a constant willingness to redefine political positions in accordance with what they perceive to be in their immediate organizational interests. In the 1950's in Argentina, when they were adapting to the bourgeois populist General Juan Peron, the masthead of *Palabra Obrera* (Moreno's press) proclaimed that it was an "Organ of Revolutionary Workers Peronism—Under the Discipline of Gen. Peron and the Peronist High Council."

The July issue of *Working Class Opposition* contained an American example of the Morenoite proclivity for unprincipled maneuvers—an appeal to Rev. Jesse Jackson, the two-bit black hustler who is once again running for the Democratic Party presidential nomination. *WCO* proposes that the "Rainbow Coalition" (Jackson's vehicle within the Democratic Party) should:

"...Break the loyalty pledge to the Democratic Party machine, and do it now. Instead of being a symbol of hope with no chances of fulfillment, the Rainbow should break from the Democratic Party and run Jackson as an independent. Moreover, the Rainbow should adopt a program that truly meets the needs of the Black community, the millions of immigrant workers, trade union members and all those who today are oppressed by the capitalist system

with its dual racist parties. There is only one name for that program and Jackson and everyone else in the Rainbow know what it is—socialism....Who knows what would happen in a three-way Presidential race in 1988? Who would have a better chance in a contest between George Bush, Michael Dukakis and Jesse Jackson? At the very least, Jackson's chances of making it to the White House would be better than they are today in his effort to make it there via the nomination of the racist Democratic Party!"

Instead of telling the truth about this cynical demagogue, *WCO's* tactful advice can only reinforce the illusion that Jackson and his "Rainbow" are in fact a "symbol of hope" for the oppressed. Always on the lookout for a "short-cut" to the big time, the Morenoites have apparently decided that the quick and easy way to build a big socialist movement in America is by winning over capitalist politicians! Who's next—Teddy Kennedy? ■