

STRATEGY AND TACTICS

The guiding principles of revolutionary organizational practice

INTRODUCTION

"Dialectical materialism has two outstanding characteristics. One is its class nature: it openly avows that dialectical materialism is in the service of the proletariat. . .

Marxist philosophy holds that the most important problem does not lie in understanding the laws of the objective world and thus being able to explain it, but in applying the knowledge of these laws actively to change the world." (On Practice)

The development of the assessment process has been a process of systematically building cadre's material understanding of the laws of dialectical materialism in general, and the dialectical method in particular. The level has advanced step-by-step--each building block taking the previous concept a step further--from the development of each individual's PIC, to the contradiction between two people in a relationship, and finally to the stage of applying the dialectical method in summarizing a process. As this process of development has advanced, so has our struggle (though uneven) to grasp and decompose our bourgeois world outlook, our mode of thought, our ideological form. We are beginning to materially grasp the dialectical method as we test it in the practice of explaining the processes we see, identifying the principal contradiction, the identity, state of motion, dialectical form. Now we are at the point of learning how these tools are applied to actively shape the development of processes, to advance the working class struggle.

"What is to be done in these conditions, and how is it to be accomplished?"

Strategy and tactics is the material application of the dialectical method to advance the working class struggle. Strategy and tactics is the science of revolutionary leadership.

GENERAL DEFINITIONS

Objective and subjective aspects:

- (1) In the general--social development--
 - a) The objective side is the objective processes, such as the economic cycle of capitalism (boom, recession, depression), technical innovation, chronic unemployment. These conditions can be analyzed and understood, but cannot be directly changed.
 - b) The subjective side is people's consciousness and movement, acting and reacting to the objective conditions.
- (2) In the particular--the working class movement--
 - a) The objective side (the spontaneous element) is those material processes of development which take place independent of the conscious and regulating will of the proletariat. *NEW MACHINERY-LAYOFFS*
 - b) The subjective side (the conscious element) of the movement is the reflection in the minds of the workers of the objective processes--their action and reaction to the objective processes of the capitalist mode of production. *STRIKES*

"Whenever we address ourselves to the formulation of S & T, we automatically address ourselves to the subjective aspect of the revolutionary movement, which is conditional. S & T speaks to the ideological effects and regulatory side of the capitalist mode of production.

"To avoid confusion, only a Marxist programme, and not S & T, deals with laws of capital which govern the economic processes of the capitalist mode of production. Therefore, S & T is subordinate to and is directed by a Marxist programme which speaks to essence and cause of the objective processes of the capitalist

mode of production. By looking at the objective processes of the weather, we may better understand this framework. The weather represents objective processes which we can't do anything about--seasons, sunshine, rain, drought--we have no real control over these processes. However, meteorologists study the weather's objective conditions and are thereby able to see its causes and movements, and can thus forecast the weather, its movement. Likewise, the objective processes of monopoly capitalism must be scientifically studied and grasped so that we may be able to predict the trends and outcomes of these processes." (from COOP PROGRAM & POLICY)

Strategy's function is to determine the main direction of the proletarian movement which can most advantageously deliver the main blow at its enemy in order to achieve its aims in the given historical period (to resolve the principal contradiction of a given historical period, which will be a major step in advancing the struggle toward resolving the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie). Strategic leadership is concerned with the overall development of Organization, developing the overall unity and struggle of forces (building the fighting unity and strength of revolutionary forces, and exploiting the weaknesses of the enemy), and using these to achieve the main objective of the revolution at the given stage of its development.

Tactics are a part of strategy, subordinated to and serving it. Tactics' function is to determine the ways and means, the forms of struggle and forms of organization. Tactical leadership masters all forms of struggle, and forms of organization to fit the forms of struggle--to prepare (through their experience) cadre to advance the revolutionary struggle, and the masses to support the revolution. Tactical leadership also pinpoints at a given moment the principal contradiction (the particularity) and determines the plan (campaign, for instance) to resolve it--thus moving the struggle to a higher level, closer to achieving the strategy. Tactical leadership masters forms of struggle and forms of organization to resolve the contradiction.

CONCEPTS IN THE PARTICULAR

There are material differences between the conditions of Lenin's Russia and the conditions we face in the U.S. at this time.

OBJECTIVE SIDE: The working class is quantitatively larger in numbers and as a percentage of the population. Small farmers are but a small sector of the population, with huge corporate farms spreading over the countryside. Not only are Third World workers facing social oppression and economic super-exploitation; more and more women are moving from the isolation of housework into socialized production--coming face to face with economic super-exploitation and social oppression. The standard of living of the post-war booms is rapidly deteriorating, intensifying growing discontent among the working class and the petty bourgeoisie as well (which is being squeezed into the working class). In the face of these conditions, the bourgeoisie has developed sophisticated means of maintaining the relations of production. The bourgeoisie has developed control mechanisms--ideological forms, which people internalize to survive in (maintain) the relations of production--and levers (forms of organization) used to assert and preserve the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. These bourgeois forms of organization are diverse and technically advanced: mass media, computer banks, the intelligence apparatus, many organizational forms which use the forms of struggle of cooptation (such as buying off labor unions and supporting reformist organizations) and repression (such as police SWAT teams).

SUBJECTIVE SIDE: The key to people's consciousness is people internalizing bourgeois ideological forms and hence acting themselves to preserve the relations of production. In this way, the bourgeoisie relies on the masses to build and maintain the levers which are used to preserve the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. There is, of course,

another side to this: as the proletarian movement materially understands the objective conditions and grasps the tools to develop the conscious element, the masses will be organized and can turn those bourgeois class levers into their opposite--serving the proletarian struggle; as well, an organization armed with the tools of dialectical materialism and the weapons of strategy and tactics can put these bourgeois forms to tactical use. The Organization has used the mass media to our advantage, by our material understanding of that lever, and ~~by~~ through press releases and TV appearances have brought the coops out of isolation and were able to neutralize a potential attack on the coops by the pigs.

Third World workers and working class women are rising forces that serve as key links in forging a united working class--a proletarian revolutionary force. Thus, the material practice of the Organization which develops working class women leadership and offers material programs which speak to this rising force.

The proletarian movement is developing with the aid of rich experience of revolutionary struggles in China, Cuba, Vietnam, African countries, and other proletarian movements. With the development of a working knowledge of the tools of dialectical materialism (proletarian world outlook) and strategy and tactics, the essence of revolutionary theory thus far developed can be applied to new conditions. In particular, the Organization at this stage has a concrete understanding of PIC's, ideological forms, sources of organizational decay--internal forces which hold people back and keep them in their place. So we have an understanding of the motor that individuals in bourgeois society run on. On the other side, the Organization has an understanding of the proletarian ideological basis for building proletarian world outlook and proletarian organization--the tools applied to assessing people and moving them forward on the material basis of struggle against their ideological forms and bourgeois PIC's.

STRATEGY: Our goal is the dominance of the proletarian class. Long range, this is a revolutionary movement based on Marxist Leninist organization, or the Party. In particular to the Twin Cities, how to build this goal, we ask: "Who are the forces?" We are looking mainly at white working class women.

In this historical stage of the movement, the coops were a place to launch the struggle. Given the state of the movement, the coops were strategically the place with the beginnings of and potential for building a mass base and with potential to speak to the material interests of working class women.

"The programmatic reason why we have chosen the coops ~~to~~ to work in:

"The coop program provides us with ideological and economic levers by which to politically educate the masses to the monopoly food industry, which is interconnected to the monopolistic control of all industries of capitalist production.

"In direct reaction to the monopolistic control of the food industries, economically the coop program is a socialized tool to be used by the working masses and small farmers in their financial struggle against the never-ceasing encroachment of capital, which takes the forms of credit squeeze, high profits, and low wages. In this connection, the coop movement has an excellent opportunity to build ideological unity with them. The first step toward building ideological unity is by forming an economic alliance out of mutual necessity.

"The coop program generally is confined to the ideological struggle of anti-monopoly capitalism, but in particular to anti-monopoly control of the food industry. Thus the content of the coop program is economic, and its strategic aim is to build economic solidarity with small farmers and to build a political base on anti-monopoly control of the food industry among the working class and unemployed masses."

(COOP PROGRAM AND POLICY)

The program is based on an analysis of the objective aspect. Strategy is based on assessment of the subjective aspect.

TACTICS: At a particular step in the struggle, what's the principal contradiction at that given time, which must be resolved to advance toward achieving our strategy? Example: lack of any organization; resolution--the systematic development of the CO. Another example: internal organizational decay; resolution--assessment process, expulsions.

TACTICAL CAMPAIGN: SPLIT
(fall, 1975)

Objective conditions: The developing class struggle in the coops gave rise to a material split in the coop system when the reactionaries set up the DANC warehouse, following the September 1975 PRB meeting. PW was bled of much of its working capital by the reactionaries who were allowed to (1) withdraw large amounts of money that had been "loans", and (2) run up food bills at PW, siphoning the money from sales into DANC. The resulting crisis in cash flow at PW was intensified by large purchases of inventory, the markets for which had been lost due to the unstable political climate in the coops. PW had invested capital in the new Bryant Central coop store which offered the possibility of some economic relief if it proved to be a substantial market.

Subjective conditions: Due to an organizer's ideological mistake based on his world outlook, class stand (as opposed to a theoretical mistake which is based on confusion as to political aims and objectives; as opposed to an organizational mistake which is based on a confusion of ~~XXXXXX~~ forms of organization or forms of struggle)--Bryant Central coop fell under the control of Moe Burton, a disruptive political element. Using the ~~XX~~ new store as his private political base, Moe acted out his internal contradiction more and more, until his political ambitions led Moe to come to PW and demand its control Nov. 18. Tactical Campaign SPLIT was put into motion.

ASSESS - MOVE - PULL BACK - ASSESS

The campaign began after a careful assessment of the economic and political conditions. The economic factor has played the leading role in the historical development of the coop system.

PRELIMINARY STEPS:

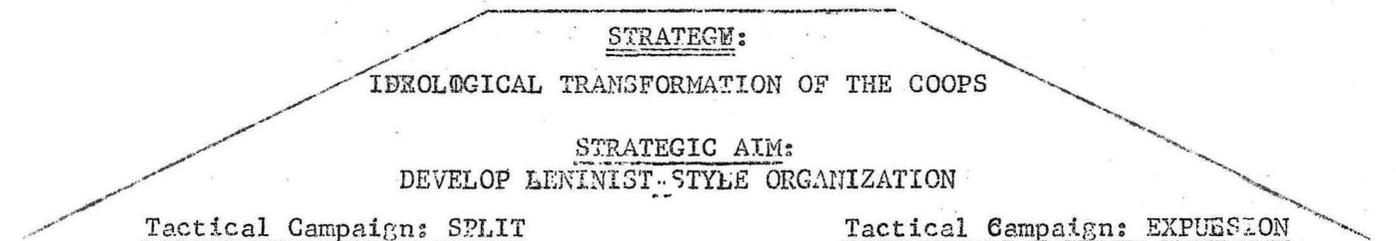
- investigation -- forces were sent to do material work at BC and to check out Moe and his forces.
- analysis -- it was determined that the organizer's siding with Moe led Moe to think that the Organization (PW) was coming from a position of weakness; also, BC folks had been hired at PW (this was opportunistic).

PRINCIPAL CONTRADICTION: PW vs. MOE --this contradiction reflects the particularity, in the given conditions and time

LATENT CONTRADICTION: PW vs. DANC --this contradiction reflects the universality of the contradiction in the coop system

It was predictable with certainty that with the application of S & T, Moe would swing to DANC; thus, the principal contradiction would ultimately become PW vs DANC. This would move the contradiction on the level we wanted to deal with it--getting more to the essence of the economic struggle in the coop system.

[The following is an illustration to indicate the relationship between Strategy, Strategic Aim, and the Subminimal Strat. of a tactical campaign:]



SUBMINIMAL STRATEGY: eliminate DANC, unify the coops (under the dictatorship of the proletariat), build democratic centralism with working class base.

SUBMINIMAL STRATEGY: wage internal ideological struggle against 20 enemies; rebuild ideological unity on a higher level.

STRATEGY: IDEOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE COOPS

The tactical campaign is a part of this strategy, subordinated to and serving it.

SUBMINIMAL STRATEGY (strategy for the tactical campaign)--eliminate DANC, unify the coops under the dictatorship of the proletariat, build democratic centralism with working class base.

TACTICAL AIM OF CAMPAIGN: SPLIT -- create the material condition for the formation of a reactionary unit of coop opportunists, whose individual interests will (1) unite the forces of reaction around DANC, and (2) split the reactionary camp inside DANC when individual interests of the opportunists become primary over common reaction to the CO. [This is what it means to "form the contradiction"--to set the material conditions that are the basis for identity between the two aspects; in this case, defining the opposing aspect to PW by setting conditions to create the camp of opportunists connected to DANC.]

ASSESSMENT OF REACTIONARY MOTIVATION: (probable leadership of the opposition)

Moe Burton: principal contradiction*--generating momentum with an inability to organize; revolutionary intentions vs. undeveloped political motivation and limited knowledge; comes out as individualism and egotism. Material interest: needs food for BC coop.

Susie Shroyer: p.c.--egotism, reaction to revolutionary change; Comes from (1) feels left behind (historical relationship to the Org.), and (2) sexual opportunism. Desires to get in on momentum to prove her self-worth. Takes an opposing view, tries to get on top. Material interest: base of legitimacy in coops is her sewing factory. Main intention: start West Bank supermarket.

Chuck Phenix: p.c.--egotism (?not precise?). Seeks to maintain existing relations of production in the coops to protect his private interests. Anarchist philosophy justifies protectign his individual rights. Material interest: Mill City coop gives him personal economic livelihood--base of political legitimacy as "anarhist leader".

Eddie Felien: Material interest--base of legitimacy in the existing relations of the TC "left". Sees himself as a revolutionary, but doesn't work in an organization.

*NOTE: p.c.'s were determined on the basis of ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ patterns of phenomena; through the development of the assessment process, we have developed tools to determine ideological form (the conditions they'll react or conform to); this, along with more precise p.i.c.'s, can be used to set conditions for touching off and directing people's motion.

ALL THESE PEOPLE HAVE IN COMMON: (1) material basis of reaction to CO thrust; and (2) are historical political opportunists.

Their common basis for reaction is in contradiction to the incompatibility of their p.i.c.'s and their distinct material interests.

DEVELOPMENT OF TACTICAL CAMPAIGN: SPLIT

PW vs. MOE
(dominant) (subordinate)

identity: interdependence based on supply and market

1st state of motion:

STRENGTH WEAKNESS

Organizer organizes the creation of BC. (+)

[This state of motion develops with the beginning stages of the development of BO coop; it is when Moe ~~XXXX~~ is led to believe that PW is weak (seeing our forces as weak) that this state of motion makes a qualitative leap into the 2nd state.]

[The condition for the leap into the 2nd state of motion was when Moe moved to take over PW.]

PW

vs.

MOE

identity: interdependence based on supply and market

2nd state of motion:

ATTRACTION

(PW as center of attraction)

REPULSION

(Moe is driven away--repulsed)

TACTICAL STEP #1: Undercut Moe's attack on PW, isolate him economically & politically; this leaves him no alternative but to go to DANC in order to get food for BC. Moe's tendency to seize control and generate momentum will in this way be directed to advantage. Force all the opportunists together in one camp.

+ "Moe's a Hoodlum" leaflet--demands that he leave PW (in order to not disturb BC community, confine Moe and lock him into personal relationship with the organizer, B; confined as a personal conflict.)
[shaping a contradiction; set up Moe]

+ B's leaflet condemning himself and Moe

+ PW support to BC is cut off, to push Moe to DANC

- Moe approaches "reactionary leadership" (SS, Leo, Chuck) to pressure DANC to help BC

WITH THE IDENTITY DISSOLVED, THE LATENT CONTRADICTION THUS EMERGES AS THE PRINCIPAL CONTRADICTION:

PW (subord)

vs.

DANC (dominant)
(including Moe)

identity: interpenetration based on markets

1st state of motion:

WEAKNESS

STRENGTH

TACTICAL STEP #2: Shape the reactionary leadership and DANC by waging struggle against their opportunism, approaching their respective bases. They have common basis for reaction and a need for organization to serve their individual interests. [We played into their weakness.]

+ CO put pressure on stores (leaflet & talk to DANC people)

+ old BC coop folks move in to take control of BC coop

+ B: psychological warfare -- phone calls to Moe, challenges to fight at 1 AM (aim: to isolate Moe and discredit him; for B to cleanse himself, the condition to wipe out his earlier opportunistic error, a dialectical opposite condition to condition of obedience of B's ideological form.)

+ reactionary leadership put pressure on DANC to help Moe

- DANC didn't materially serve BC; this heightened internal contradictions in reactionary unit

- Moe goes to bourgeois forces for help (Harry Davis of Mpls School Bd.; City Hall; etc.)

	<u>PW</u> (subord)	vs.	<u>DANC</u> (dom)
1st state of motion	(WEAKNESS)		(STRENGTH)

REVOLUTIONARY ACTION PRECIPITATES REVOLUTIONARY CONDITIONS

+ B. fights Moe

A TACTICAL DEFEAT FACILITATES A STRATEGIC AIM

+ Organizational paper; response to Eddie's

+ Eddie's paper on the CO

+ leaflet: "CO Condemns BH, etc."

- opportunist camp hiding out behind the scenes

(based on analysis of each person in opportunist camp, if their self interests are threatened, they'd turn on each other)-- sow seeds of dissent in opportunist camp

[We couldn't get a rise out of them!]

+ "Stop Coop Opportunists" leaflet (the famous blue leaflet)--named the opportunists & named their game; widely distributed thru-out their bases. This set people in motion and enlarged the character of the struggle.

- Opportunists reacted--BACKLASH!

THIS WAS THE CONDITION WHICH MOVED THE CONTRADICTION INTO THE SECOND STATE OF MOTION.

2nd state of motion:

<u>ACTION</u>	vs.	<u>REACTION</u>
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TACTICAL STEP #3: When steps #1 and #2 have developed, raise the struggle to the level of political principle. Use the momentum generated thru the struggle to consolidate progressives and advance the struggle to a higher level.

+ Reunification dinner

+ "United Front Against Opportunism" paper-- and discussion (public)--exposed reactionary character of opportunists to the progressives who attended the discussion.

- opportunists attended United Front discussion -- exposed their subjective reaction.

WE FAILED TO SPLIT DANC, because we overestimated the opposition (DANC); they moved slow and unsystematically, and we didn't give them the time to consolidate their reaction.

WE WERE PICKING UP MORE AND MORE PEOPLE. We united as many as possible and moved the struggle to a higher level.

INTERNAL SUMMARY OF TACTICAL CAMPAIGN: SPLIT followed, for the benefit of our many forces who were not involved in that campaign.

SUMMARY

The tool of the assessment process has been used to develop ourselves, and to understand and develop others. These tools can be used further to advance the struggle. "Know the enemy and know yourself". These tools can be applied to gain understanding of our mistakes, to determine the source of our mistakes (ideological, theoretical, organizational). Understanding our mistakes helps us to summarize our practice and then move ahead on a higher level.

In sum, cadre are building, through experience in protracted class struggle, a material understanding of the firm and long-range course of revolutionary strategy. Through the organizational experience of systematically advancing the struggle step-by-step, cadre are building a material understanding of the flexibility of tactics (forms of struggle and forms of organization) as vehicles to further our revolutionary aims. Cadre are developing the indispensable tools of dialectical method (contradictions, principal contradiction, dominant/subordinate aspect, identity, dialectical form, states of motion, etc), which will enable us to transform our understanding into action--to deepen our understanding and sharpen our action.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. What do you know about the tools of the dialectical method that would be an aid in formulating S & T, and how would they be useful?
 - principal contradiction
 - dominant/subordinate aspects
 - identity
 - state of motion
 - dialectical form
2. How have you applied S & T in your practice--and what did you learn in that process (successes as well as mistakes)?
3. How have you seen the Organization provide (and what were the effects):
 - strategic leadership:
 - concentrating the main forces of the revolution at the enemy's most vulnerable spot at the decisive moment
 - selecting the moment for the decisive blow (failure to do so = "loss of tempo")
 - sticking firmly to the course toward the strategy (failure to do so = "losing one's bearings")
 - proper retreat, to gain time, to consolidate forces for later offensive
 - tactical leadership:
 - proper use of forms of organization and struggle, to prepare cadre for advancing the struggle and to prepare the masses through experience for supporting revolution.
 - pinpoint the principal contradiction of the moment, which when resolved will move the struggle to a higher level, closer to achievement of the strategy.
4. What's the difference between shaping the struggle based on conditions as opposed to reacting to conditions?
5. Give examples of different forms of struggle and forms of organization based on them:
 - bourgeois
 - proletarian Organization
6. How have different forms of organization (open/closed) prepared you for the revolutionary struggle?
7. What is a tactical defeat?
8. What is the function of these 3 forms of struggle: political, military, intelligence?
9. What is the difference between reformism and opportunism? What do they have in common?