

Second People's Forum Report 7/23/16

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Following the decision last week for the People's Forum to become a weekly event, our comrades met with a contact to continue the discussion. The People's Forum was created in an effort to go beyond the organizational form of reformist marches, and build a discussion and exchange of experiences that could serve as a basis for building proletarian power.

Much like last week, the discussion was centered on the question of political organization. This week, our discussion opened with the topic of identity as a basis for organization. The question was posed, should revolutionary politics be based on an identitarian determination of one's political role. For instance, should white people primarily organize white neighborhoods, and black people organize black neighborhoods? A position commonly put forward by practitioners of liberal identity-politics is that the division of labor within political organizations should be strictly determined by one's nationality.

Comrades put forward the argument that, rather than strictly dividing labor according to various identity categories (i.e. gender roles, nationalities, etc.) that a revolutionary political organization should focus its practice on the central political task at the moment to further the revolutionary cause. Of course, there is a need to abide by the principle, 'No investigation, no right to speak'; comrades must take the time to work with the masses to understand the particular situation in particular communities, and not assume that we have the answers, or assume that we ourselves do not have backwards ideas, or that we are not affected by our social class origin. Much like the Chinese communists in 1937, we must relate to the masses like fish in water. To do otherwise would be to lapse into dogmatism and assume that we have the correct ideas all by ourselves.

The forum concluded with agreement that the work of a political organization cannot be based solely on one's social class (i.e. nationality, socio-economic background, etc.) but must also, and primarily, be based the principal political task at the moment to further the revolutionary cause. Of course, there is a need to struggle over the question of the principal political task at the moment, but struggle is the life of an organization.