

The People's Forum: A Reportback

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In the wake of recent acts of police violence in Louisiana and Minnesota, members of Mass Proletariat attended a meeting for the planning of a left unity rally as part of the national upsurge in public protests against police violence. At both the meeting, and at the subsequent rally, our comrades pursued the two-line struggle, putting forth the distinction between reformist politics which diffuse the correct ideas of the masses and proletarian politics which concentrate the correct ideas of the masses.

This intervention was in no way an effort to unite with organizers in their task of building a “big-tent” left-unity procession. Instead, we promoted the need for a people’s forum to discuss the basis for an organization capable of doing more than simply organizing protests that react to the white supremacist violence of the police. We put forward the idea that reformist politics don’t address the fundamental issues of white supremacy and capitalism, and that there is a need to build a people’s power organization capable of making concrete gains towards the abolition of white supremacy and capitalism.

A forum was held on Saturday, July 16th with four contacts to discuss our political orientation and possible steps forward. A key question, posed to us by a contact in attendance, was how we were able to convey our Maoist politics to contacts made during our regular tabling and fliering in proletarian neighborhoods in Boston. We responded that Maoist politics can be conveyed through the connection of particular struggles to universal struggles. Through promoting the idea, which is already present in the masses, that their particular struggles are part of a larger system of oppression and exploitation. We have had success in clarifying the need for political organization capable of coordinating struggles beyond their particular locality. We also emphasized the need for an organization based in the actual ideas and struggles of the masses, rather than in a top-down hierarchical structure. In turn, contacts expressed the importance of empowering the people through discussions which promote the Maoist principle that their ideas are an essential part of the basis for communist politics, for a politics that squarely aims to destroy the basis for all forms of oppression. This empowerment along with subsequent discussion will serve as the basis for

building proletarian power.

In retrospect, we realize that we should have explained the mass-line – the principle of “from the masses, to the masses” – as the basis for our politics and the structure of discussion and moderation. More moderation within the meeting itself was needed to ensure the collective discussion was moving forwards at all times.

As a conclusion to the meeting, attendees agreed that the people’s forum would be a weekly event. Please contact us at MassProletariat@riseup.net for more information about the people’s forum.