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PERSONAL

FORWARD

IN THIS MAIDEN ISSUE;
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THE PLIGHT OF THE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS IN NIGERIA
QUESTION AND ANSWERS ON COMMUNISM

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AGAINST APARTHY TO TRADE UNIONS

It is normal argument amongst the old 'conrades' and 'marxists' (who either pontificate within university walls or engage in anarchistic forms of struggle outside university walls) to argue that there is no point working within the trade Unions, (because) they are reactionary and opportunistic. All the labour aristocrats are good for nothing....etc, etc. These 'conrades' remind the 'upstarts' of the fact that they (old marxists') had read Marx Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao etc., before the 'Upstarts' were born. But these "experienced and all knowing conrades" have over the years remained isolated from the working class, thanks to their backward analysis of concrete situations. These clearly unmarxist positions are typical of the moribund 'conrades' in the country today. And over time they have allowed the so-called labour aristocrats to spread strange ideas within the rank and file of the working class and their trade Unions.

But what is the correct position and role of true revolutionaries vis-a-vis trade Unionism in the Nigerian neo-colony? First and foremost, we have to recognise our immediate task which is that of mobilising and organising the working class for a total destruction of the capitalist order in our country. And while we concede that the struggle for a socialist order cannot and must not be limited to trade Union struggle, we believe however, that it is totally incorrect to write off the trade Union struggle (given the relative infancy of the trade Union movement in Nigeria) as this amounts to empty puritanism.

In Nigeria today trade Unionism is now only being Seriously established. There are no independent trade Unions. The despotic government legislates to have or not to have Unions. The more strategic the industry is to the bourgeoisie (for the smooth running of its oppressive state machinery), the more determined the bourgeoisie is to exclude the workers from trade Unionism. (the so-called essential services decree). Even in places where the Capitalist government has allowed trade unions to exist, many workers are yet to attain trade union consciousness. The duty of revolutionary Socialists therefore is to support all struggles of workers to establish their trade unions and where they already exist, while supporting their day-to-day economic struggle to better their conditions, strive not only to introduce revolutionary socialist ideology and influence but make revolutionary socialist politics the motive force behind the trade union