I. History of Our Groups

A. Kansas City Revolutionary Workers Collective (KCRWC)

Our collective has its roots in the Afro-American student and community struggles of the early 1970's. The organizational forms that our work took were Black Student Unions, national liberation support groups (such as African Liberation Support Committee), and national formations such as the Youth Organization for Black Unity (YOBU). Through our work and study in YOBU, we became acquainted with an amalgam of theories and theoreticans--Marxism, Trotskyism, Ché, Pan-Africanism, Mao, etc. This eclectic development was a result of not having a genuine Marxist-Leninist party in existence that could win developing revolutionaries to the movement on the basis of a sound proletarian ideology.

As YOBU developed nationally, it and some other organizations came more into contact with the anti-revisionist communist movement. This brought about a major schism within the Black Liberation Movement (BLM). One section of the BLM continued to develop into Marxists. Another section clung to the old narrow nationalist and African nationalist outlook.

Those of us tending toward Marxism began to study more and attempt to apply the basic features of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought (MLMTT). We shed many of our narrow nationalist tendencies, abandoned the campuses and headed for the urban areas and urban proletariat. We also began to seek out others from the old BLM who were tending toward MLMTT. In early 1974, a Black M-L organization was formed from several existing groups (YOBU, Malcom X Liberation University, People's College, Lynn Eusan Institute, and some individuals). This organization would later be known as the Revolutionary Workers League (RWL). Several districts were organized, including one in Kansas City. The student/youth organization became the February First Movement (FFM).

We should point out that although we recognized Marxism-Leninism as the most revolutionary theory, we still retained aspects of our old world outlook. Our world outlook contained MTT which we have not summed up yet, but which at this time we can see is revisionist on crucial questions regarding M-L organizational principles on inner party life. Thus we remained a Black organization for sometime, and most of the work was focused on community and and student struggles. Another negative factor was that the pre-

dominant contact with the communist movement was with the October League (OL) and the Revolutionary Union (RU).

Internally, there was very little systematic study of Marxism-Leninism. Although we were organized employing the principles of democratic centralism, in many districts little democracy existed. This was especially true in the Kansas City district. Without the necessary theoretical work, cadres could not know on what principles the organization was based, and could not exercise fully their democratic duty of discussing and helping to develop the line. Thus, in our district, bureaucratic elistism developed into a major problem. This and other deviations were a reflection of the lack of remolding of the petty bourgeois world outlook. As well, there was never a process of Bolshevization in the organization. People had been admitted to the organization on the basis of their work in the student and community struggles. But many were unfit for the disciplined, self-sacrificing life required of a proletarian revolutionary. Thus, during the struggle against bureaucratic elitism and the other deviations, many cadre quit the movement entirely. Others, including those who formed KCRWC, quit the organization. We later summed up our resignations as being incorrect. This, again, reflected our petty bourgeois tendencies such as liberalism, lack of daring in struggle, hopelessness in face of hard struggle, etc. In fact, our view was later upheld inside the organization and some honest cadre remained.

In February, 1975, KCRWC was formed. We were a small group made up of inexperienced cadre. Our theoretical and political development was at a low level. We had no concrete contact with the rest of the communist movement. Because of our inadequacies, our line on building the party was not complex--join one of the existing national organizations. Because of our state of development we did not feel that we could make any independent contribution to the movement.

The organization which we contacted initially was the RU. We had initial unity with some of their criticism of the OL, and had decided that the Black Workers Congress/Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers Organization (BWC/PRRWO) trend was "dogmatic." As well, we were impressed with the militant spirit exhibited by the RU, and their disdain for idle "theoreticans." After some initial discussions, which were almost entirely around the economist plant work we were doing, they began promoting their draft programme (Spring, 1975). We took part in some programme discuss-

ion committees they set up. Our main disagreements with the RU were over the Afro-American national question (nation of a new type), the manner in which they were building the party (central task for the brief period ahead), and their refusal to deal seriously with our criticisms and disagreements. They encouraged us to join the party with our differences and they would be struggled out internally. Eventually we were given an ultimatum by the RU--join the party <u>now</u> or be prepared to sever relations. Because of our lingering questions, we did not join the newly formed RCP. We should point out, though, that although we broke with the RU organizationally, ideologically and politically we continued the RU's economism and liquidation of party building tasks.

In reexamining the movement, we sought to develop unity with a group that would pace more emphasis on theory, and that upheld party building as the central task. Of course, because we failed to sum our RU experiences on the basis of M-L, we could not be sure exactly what we were opposed to in our opposition to economism, nor what tasks were required in carrying out the central task. As a consequence, we developed ties with another group which we eventually summed up as right opportunist. This group was the Workers Viewpoint Organization (WVO), whom we established relations with in the Fall of 1975. We were also influenced in seeking out WVO by their newly established relationship with our old friends of the RWL.

In our struggle with WVO we adopted much of their line. This wholesale adoption included such noted WVO gems as the anti-revisionist premises, two contending trends, unite in order to expose, proletariat shaped like a football, etc. This unity was achieved on the basis of shallow study and again reflected our right opportunist, liquidationist attitude on building the party. In our petty bourgeois haste to liquidate our circle, we continually denied the need for our collective to develop some independent views, based on our own study of M-L theory, on how to proceed on building the party. Without this basis, we had no concrete idea of how a genuine party should be developed and thus did not have the ability to distinguish genuine from sham.

At this time, WVO, RWL, ATM, and PRRWO had assembled in what was called the "Revolutionary Wing" of the communist movement. Other smaller groups such as ourselves were also associated with the "Wing." However, it was never fully agreed upon who all was in or out of the "Wing." For our part, our unity was with the WVO/RWL

motion. Those two organizations had agreed to merge and invited us to join the merger process. Finally, we thought, our search for a parent organization was over. The unity between WVO and RWL, however, was shortlived. A split occurred in early 1976 and WVO was purged from the "Wing."

What followed immediately was some of the most heated and unprincipled struggle to date in the movement. For our group, because of the unprincipled unity we had achieved with the "Wing" in the first place, we had much difficulty in trying to distinguish genuine from sham. We vacillated a great deal and united with first one, then another, of the tendencies. In the main, because of our previous right line, we were attracted more to the line of the WVO. However, because of increasing differences we never reached a state of general unity. Although still at a low level, our understanding of some questions was beginning to develop. For example, we came to realize that much theoretical work needed to be completed before a party programme could be developed. Thus, we could not unite that "The party is a settled question." Also, we were beginning to have differences with WVO's version of the "three worlds theory"--in particular, their support for the "second world" bourgeoisie. We raised several criticisms to WVO and they refused to give them serious consideration. Our relationship ended in February, 1977.

At this time, we were becoming more aware that our approach to building the party was all wrong. We saw that we could not establish unity with any of the major national organizations, and that would have to rely mainly on our own efforts in understanding our tasks in building the party. We also summed up that organizational unity was something that had to be worked for in protracted struggle. Although we were aware of these problems, they were not yet eliminated, and errors were still being made.

With the rejection of the national organizations, we decided to seek out and become acquainted with the smaller circles. We developed relations with both the Colorado Organization For Revolutionary Struggle (COReS) and the League for Proletarian Revolution (LPR). Through our discussions with LPR, we felt that we had some unity on certain line questions. However, when we began to take a stand against the "three worlds theory," our relationship deteriorated.

We would like to mention two other circles which affected our development during 1977-78, Kansas Collective for Proletarian Rev-

olution (KCPR) and WCC.

KCPR was formed in 1977. It was made up of cadre who had also once been a part of the old RWL in the Kansas City district, and of the FFM. From the beginning, their development was closely intertwined with ours, as we established joint commissions and held common positions. Since our actual practice was that of one organization, we began to function under the name of one group. This merger process was to be summed up and put forward to other comrades in the movement. The problem, however, was that we still did not properly understand what constituted a principled merger process. Thus, although we held similar political positions, our internal basis of unity was not as strong. Specifically, there had not been sufficient Bolshevization of the ranks in either group, and this task was not undertaken as a part of our merger process. As a result, there was no assurance that our groups were made up of only the most dedicated, self-sacrificing and persevering cadre--the type of cadre that we must have in our organizations. This problem was coupled with a lack of strong leadership in developing the unity of the groups and putting the combined group on a sound footing. Hence, when problems arose, many cadre did not have the necessary committment and leadership to see them through hard times. Several cadre, including those of KCPR, left the movement. As we learn more about how to carry out principled merger, the KCPR experience will be summed up more.

We first came in contact with comrades who would form WCC in late 1975. We have had a fairly close relationship with these comrades since that time. We will not detail our entire relationship with WCC here but would like to mention two aspects important to the development of KCRWC. One was the concretization of the revisionist leadership in China. At the time this occurred, our group vacillated on whether or not China was actually under revisionist leadership. We vacillated even through evidence was becoming conclusive showing that a revisionist line was being promoted. Through struggle with WCC we were able to combat our internal petty bourgeois philistinism and take a definite stand against the revisionist CPC leadership.

Second, after we produced "Let's Move Party Building Forward" jointly with WCC (and KCPR), our party building line actually went backward. We returned to our old practice of liquidating party building tasks and tailing the spontaneous movement. Again, through

struggle with WCC we were made aware of our retrogression and are now working and studying harder to adhere to our party building line. In sum, our relationship with WCC has been mutually beneficial and a great deal of unity exists on important questions.

In conclusion, we think KCRWC has made some positive motion over the years and that our understanding of many questions is much greater. We can identify three major historical problems which we must continue to work on:

1. Continue to adhere in practice to our central task of building the party. In past years, as we have shown, we have not had a correct orientation on our party building tasks. What we need to do is clearly identify our tasks, grasp the key link, and boldly make our contribution to the development of a genuine party.

2. Bolshevize our collective. We need to build a truly professional organization of dedicated revolutionaries. This means that we must strive to rid our ranks of the lingering petty-bourgeois baggage of individualism, liberalism, and other such deviations.

3. Develop strong leadership capabilities. Internally and in our relationship with others, we must develop and exhibit more the characteristics of strong proletarian leadership.

This sums up the basic development of our collective. We hope that this presentation has given comrades a clearer picture of who we are.