

Los Angeles, Jan.7, 1966

Dear Larry:

Thanks for your Christmas card. It show that you are still alive -- and kicking, I hope. Some kicking is surely necessary now that one can get a view of the party policy pursued in the anti-war movement. This policy forms a continuation of the opportunistic trend displayed at the time of the Kennedy assasination; but there is this difference; now this is carried into the living movement, which make it so much more serious.

I do not know what you think of this question but to tell you what I think about it, I enclose a letter I sent to a comrade containing some preliminary remarks.

I do agree completely, however with your very critical views of the youth contingent of predominatly petty bourgeois make-up that has been added to the party. In combination with the opportunistic trend, this addition to the party presents a real danger. It is entirely true that the history of the movement over many years and in many lands show many youth of petty bourgeois make-up having turned out to become sterling revolutionary fighters and leaders. But the real danger here is that in our party the student youth is promoted directly from college into the party leadership. This is precisely what Trotsky most insisently warned against. He said: "Members of the party untested in the class struggle must not be placed in responsible position." And Trotsky added: "The American section of the Fourth International will become proletarian or it will cease to exist."

On Trotsky's urging we wrote some strict interpretations of these views into the resolution adopted by the SWP in 1938 on The Organizational Character of the Party, reading as follows:

"The party must select from its younger members those qualified, talented and promising elements who can be trained for leadership. The road of student youth to the party leadership must not and cannot be class room and college directly into the leading committees. They must be sent without high sounding titles into working class districts for day to day work among the proletariat. The young student must serve an apprenticeship in the workers' movement before he can be considered a candidate for the National Committee."

Now these precepts, the same as other good practices and methods established by our tradition, are being violated. More serious, however, is the opportunistic trend that pervades party leading circles. My hope is that our proletarian comrades keep an eye on these development study them and intervene when necessary.

Very best regards,

s/ Arne