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## AN INITIAL CRITICISM OF THE IEC MAJORITY TENDENCY "DRAFT POLITICAL RESOLUTION"

By Geoff Mirelowitz, Brooklyn Local

The "Draft Political Resolution" presented by the IEC Majority Tendency for adoption at the coming world congress of the Fourth International is an unacceptable document. It represents an extension of the incorrect methodology and ideas presented in the document entitled, "Building Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe," as well as other IEC majority documents such as those on Vietnam. It is unbalanced in its analysis, especially in underestimating the need and role of a vanguard party.

The Fourth International needs a document at its coming world congress that can help guide its intervention in the developing class struggle. One that presents a balanced view of the political situation that takes into account the many positive developments in the class struggle over the past few years, yet does not minimize the setbacks and defeats which have been suffered, such as those in Vietnam and Chile. The Leninist-Trotskyist Faction is currently preparing such a document which will be presented as a counter-political resolution at the world congress.

This contribution aims to point out some of the major weaknesses in the resolution submitted by the IEC Majority Tendency. Virtually every section of the resolution contains important political errors. I do not intend to deal with all of them but will rather pick out some that are central and discuss where the IEC Majority Tendency goes wrong.

### The Vietnam Accords One Year Later--Whose Assessment Stands Up?

The differences over Vietnam first emerged clearly before the entire world movement at the last meeting of the International Executive Committee, held in December, 1972. At that time, the Kissinger-Tho agreements had been announced, and although a final agreement had yet to be reached, the outline of the content of the Paris accords was already clear. The IEC meeting had the responsibility to assess the situation at that new turning point of the Vietnamese struggle and the international relationship of forces affecting it. We found that there were significant disagreements on these questions.

At that IEC, the majority viewed the accords as formalizing a more favorable relationship of forces and were thus to be considered a step forward for the Vietnamese revolution. While maintaining that this was not the final victory, they insisted that the accords helped advance the Vietnamese revolution. In our opinion they viewed the accords in a one-sided way. They stressed the concessions made by imperialism, such as the withdrawal of US ground troops, and de-emphasized the difficulties facing the Vietnamese struggle as a result of the officially ratified preservation of the Thieu regime backed by US imperialism, while Moscow and Peking choked off aid to the liberation fighters.

The minority at the IEC stated that, taken as a whole, the Vietnamese struggle had received a setback. This was the same position that the YSA adopted at our 1972 convention. We did not say that the Vietnamese revolution had suffered a decisive defeat, but that the accords, far from advancing the socialist revolution in Vietnam, represented an obstacle on that road and should be judged and acknowledged as such.

We agreed that the US government had been forced to include certain concessions within the accords. We agreed that both the withdrawal of US ground troops and the halt to the US air war over Vietnam were important concessions wrested by the Vietnamese. We further agreed that the accords would leave a highly unstable situation between the contending camps in South Vietnam.

However, we insisted on viewing the accords in a broader context. In an article in the February 9, 1973 issue of The Militant, Barry Sheppard explained our position as follows:

"Under the combined pressure of Washington's military attack, Moscow and Peking's refusal to provide adequate aid, and political pressure from Moscow and Peking, Hanoi finally accepted the cease-fire accords under terms they had previously rejected.

"These accords leave the Thieu regime in control of the major cities, keep Vietnam divided, and contain other conditions Washington has forced on the Vietnamese.

"The next stage in Vietnam will be marked by instability. The accords reflect the fact that the liberation forces have been unable to achieve national liberation and reunification, and also that they have not been crushed. Two powers continue to exist in South Vietnam--the Saigon regime of the landlords and capitalists, and the liberation forces based upon the peasants and workers. Such a situation is inherently unstable. One or the other of these forces must eventually predominate. The outcome can only be decided by struggle." (Reprinted in "The Meaning of the Vietnam Accords," Pathfinder Press.)

The Vietnamese struggle also had to contend with the obstacle of Moscow and Peking treachery, as well as the inadequacy of the Vietnamese Stalinist leadership itself.

In short, we felt that while imperialism did not achieve all of its original goals, the accords as such did represent a formula for the maintenance of capitalism in South Vietnam. While not deciding the issue definitively, the accords unquestionably strengthened the hand of the landlords and capitalists and legitimized their continued rule. We re-

jected the notion, expressed in "The Sterne-Walter Resolution on Vietnam," adopted by the majority of the IEC, that "The current situation in South Vietnam is one of dual power from top to bottom" (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 6, p. 22).

We expected that as events unfolded in Vietnam, the incorrect view put forward by the IEC majority would be exposed and that our position would be confirmed. In any case, we were willing to let the test of events decide.

Almost one year has passed since the signing of the accords and the last meeting of the IEC. Since then our view of the situation and line of development in Vietnam has been confirmed. Although the situation has remained unstable and could change quickly, South Vietnam has definitely remained capitalist and the bourgeois state apparatus has not been destroyed. Nor is there substantial evidence that the Thieu regime has been greatly weakened in the past year. The withdrawal of American troops has not been accompanied, as some expected, by the rapid collapse of the Thieu regime.

It is true that within South Vietnam significant sections of the country are controlled and administered by the Provisional Revolutionary Government. However, this is only part of the picture. Since the signing of the accords, the Thieu regime has consolidated its hold on the areas it controls, which includes all the major urban population centers as well as sizable rural areas. Today we are again told by the IEC Majority Tendency's political resolution that, "For an entire period, the situation will remain one of dual power from top to bottom in a large part of South Vietnam" (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 20, p. 6).

This assessment is overly optimistic. Furthermore, to state that there is "dual power from top to bottom," while asserting, as the resolution does, that "this dual power has yet to be extended to the country's principal cities," is to muddle up the very concept of dual power. A situation in which the capitalists control all the large urban population centers--the major working class areas--while the revolutionaries control areas of the countryside and small towns is not dual power in the precise Marxist use of the term.

Within the government controlled areas there is no dual structure of power. No soviet-type formations exist as a potential alternative structure to the governmental organs of the capitalist state. Under these conditions, the talk of "dual power from top to bottom" is inaccurate. Although continuous skirmishes take place and certain "no man's lands" exist, dual power, which implies an imminent contest for power between two alternative governmental structures, does not exist. It is politically more precise to characterize the present situation as one of civil war. This has existed for many years and remains at an intense, though reduced, level since the signing of the accords.

Why does the IEC majority insist on characterizing the situation in South Vietnam as one of "dual power from top

to bottom?" The fact that there is a military situation of civil war in South Vietnam leads them to believe the almost automatic conclusion that a political situation of "dual power from top to bottom" has arisen. This is not the case. Their error in this regard duplicates and extends the error that was first made in the last world congress resolution on Latin America. They elevate military considerations above all else. They deemphasize the importance of the degree of political organization of the working class and omit from consideration entirely the weakness of the subjective factor in Vietnam, that is, the absence of a Leninist party and leadership that can be counted on to lead the revolution to its consummation.

What are the dangers of the mistaken assessment made by the IEC Majority Tendency? Revolutionaries must explain the situation in Vietnam as it actually exists, not as we might like it to be. To describe setbacks as victories disorients both the masses in Vietnam and the antiwar activists all over the world who have fought to defend the Vietnamese revolution.

### Stalinist Misleadership in Vietnam

Another major weakness of the resolution tied to the above is that there is no real criticism of the Stalinist leadership in Vietnam. One of the fundamental problems of the Vietnamese revolution is that it is headed by the Vietnamese Communist Party which is a Stalinist party.

Of course, we should continue to emphasize as we have done that the primary responsibility for the unfavorable features of the accords lies first with the imperialists and second with the Stalinist bureaucracies in Moscow and Peking which collaborated with imperialism to force these accords on the Vietnamese. But the Vietnamese Communist Party is not faultless. Although they may have been forced to sign the accords they are wrong to describe the accords as a victory for the Vietnamese struggle and a defeat for US imperialism. This embellishment hinders the political preparations for mobilizing the masses for further struggle--a struggle which can only be successful by breaking the restrictions imposed on the liberation fighters by the accords.

To put it simply, the IEC Majority Tendency resolution does not discuss the problem of the Vietnamese leadership because they do not think it is much of a problem. The implication is that once an armed force is employed, revolutionary politics goes with it. They do not believe the Vietnamese Communist Party is Stalinist. They believe that although the VCP leadership has faults it is basically revolutionary--in theory and in practice. Comrade Sterne, a leader of the IEC Majority Tendency, expounded this view in his document entitled, "The Debate on Indochina."

Comrade Sterne states, "For the majority, a Stalinist party is a party that subordinates the interests of the socialist revolution in its country to those of a bureaucracy in a

degenerated workers state." So far, so good. But then he goes on to say, "This is certainly not the case of the VCP which has had to carry on a struggle against the orientation set by the Kremlin and today by the Kremlin and Peking." (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 7, p. 9, emphasis in original).

However, this is a one-sided view of the problem. The VCP itself heads a deformed workers state in North Vietnam and has many times subordinated the interests of the revolution in the South to its own bureaucratic needs and policies. True, the VCP does not always abjectly follow the lead of the bureaucracies in China or the USSR, but neither do the Stalinists in Yugoslavia or Rumania. The policy followed by the VCP after the signing of the 1954 Geneva accords was clearly a Stalinist policy. The stated program of the VCP has been and remains: for economic construction in the North; for democratic liberties while preserving capitalism in the South.

What has come out in this discussion is an adaptation on the part of the IEC Majority Tendency to the VCP because it has been at the head of armed struggle. This too is a one-sided view. The fact that Stalinists are at the head of an armed struggle does not mean either that they are leading it along correct revolutionary lines or that they cease to be Stalinists. The civil wars in Spain in the 1930s and Greece in the 1940s are two good examples of this fact.

The failure of the IEC Majority Tendency resolution to criticize the Stalinist leadership in Vietnam and to point to the need for a Trotskyist party there is another major weakness of their document.

This dispute has already received a fuller explanation than can be devoted to it here. For further information several articles comrades can refer to include: "The Nature of the Vietnamese Communist Party," by Fred Feldman and George Johnson (ISR, July/August, 1973); "On the Differences Over Vietnam," by Gus Horowitz (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 15); and "An Evaluation of the December, 1972 IEC Plenum," by Jack Barnes (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 9).

### Chile--The Betrayal of Popular Frontism

The lessons of the Chilean tragedy are very important. Allende's Unidad Popular became the world model for travelling the peaceful parliamentary road to socialism among the Stalinists and Social Democrats, as well as other political currents on the left. Allende was hailed by Moscow and its supporters throughout the world. Mitterand, the French Social Democrat and aspirant to the presidential candidacy of the Union of the Left, visited Chile to solidarize with Allende; so did Castro. The Stalinists and Social Democrats saw the Chilean model as a fine example of their popular front policy.

But this policy led to disaster in Chile. Only the Trotskyist movement can draw the correct lessons from this defeat. Yet the assessment of the Chilean events put forward

in the IEC Majority Tendency political resolution is not adequate. One major defect is its incorrect and misleading notions concerning popular frontism. In fact, it refuses to characterize the Allende regime as a popular front.

A popular front is a specific form of class-collaboration. The Trotskyist movement has used the term to describe an electoral or governmental front between working class parties and sectors of the bourgeoisie. The Stalinists, who coined the expression, and who are the most vociferous advocates of popular frontism, claim that popular frontism can lay the groundwork for the construction of socialism. But these fine words mean nothing. The practical policy of popular frontism is to preserve capitalism, while granting some concessions under pressure to the working class and poor masses which can be withdrawn or erased by reaction at the next turn of events.

The IEC majority political resolution misses these essential points. Their resolution states:

"Of course the Allende regime possesses several features of a Popular Front government, of collaboration with bourgeois parties. But from the start, it differed from a classical Popular Front regime by the fact that it openly proclaimed its resolve to enter on the road of socialism. . .

"What was revealed in Chile is, therefore, more a new demonstration of the bankruptcy of reformism, i. e., of the attempt to arrive at socialism by the 'legal' and 'peaceful' road, within the framework of the institutions of parliamentary bourgeois democracy, without the destruction of the bourgeois state apparatus, than an experience of coalition government with the bourgeoisie." (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 20, p. 10, emphasis in original )

This is a wrong definition. Part of the error is related to the use of journalistic terminology which introduces confusion, in place of precise Marxist terminology, which helps achieve clarity.

Where has there been a "classical" popular front? In France in the 1930's, where the Radical Party, a major bourgeois party, was a decisive component? Or was it in Spain, where bourgeois representation was only a "shadow," as Trotsky called it? Was it in France, where the "peaceful road" was followed in upholding capitalist rule, or was it in Spain, where armed struggle was carried out in defense of bourgeois democracy? What about the provisional Kerensky government of 1917, which was never elected, but came to power as the result of a mass insurrection? Yet all of these regimes, despite their differences, were labeled popular fronts by Trotsky according to his Marxist analysis. They were class collaborationist electoral or governmental coalitions. That was the essence of the matter.

The only hint of what the IEC majority means by the "classical" form is indirectly given in the statement that the Allende regime "openly proclaimed its resolve to enter on

the road to socialism. . ." Here at least is a negative if partial definition of what the IEC majority means by a "classical" popular front--one that does not "openly proclaim its resolve to enter on the road to socialism."

But what about the popular front in Ceylon? It has stated its goal to be socialism. Has that pronouncement kept it from being a popular front? This example is not very unusual. Many popular fronts in the colonial world have declared their goal to be socialism. Even bourgeois nationalist regimes in the colonial world often declare their ultimate goal to be some sort of "socialism"--for example, those of Sukarno, Nkrumah, or Nasser. They "proclaim" this as their goal "openly" and often with great verbal "resolve."

Allende's rhetoric about socialism did not change the political reality of his regime. The criticism to be made of the Chilean Communist and Socialist parties was not that they had a strategy to overthrow the bourgeoisie but made the mistake of trying to do it by peaceful means; the fact was that they had no strategy to overthrow the bourgeoisie at all. Despite the lip service they paid to socialism, their policy was to collaborate with the bourgeoisie, to subordinate the interests of the working class to the preservation of the bourgeois order. They taught the working class to rely on a multi-class governmental coalition with pro-bourgeois elements in a popular front. The workers were left unprepared politically to combat the capitalist class, and that is why they were unprepared militarily.

The IEC majority's refusal to characterize the Unidad Popular regime as a popular front can cause great confusion in the Trotskyist movement by blurring the distinction between a popular front and a united front. This confusion has already been spread by Tariq Ali, one of the top leaders of the IEC majority. In a newly published pamphlet by the IMG, he has referred to the Unidad Popular as a "reformist united front dominated by two large working class parties" (There is Only One Road to Socialism and Workers Power).

A united front is fundamentally a method of class struggle, not of class collaboration. It can certainly include the participation of reformist workers parties, but is formed for the purpose of carrying out specific actions in the interests of the working class. We do not use the term united front to describe a situation in which two reformist working class parties get together to counsel the workers to vote for and rely upon a class-collaborationist electoral coalition and regime.

By pointing to superficial differences between Allende's regime and the popular front governments in Spain and France during the 1930's, the IEC majority reduces the most important lesson to be learned from Chile to be that socialism cannot be achieved without armed struggle.

It is true that socialism cannot be achieved by parliamentary means. This is a key lesson, confirmed to the hilt by the Chilean defeat. But the failure of the Stalinists and reformists in Chile to organize the effective armed struggle of

the masses was a derivative of a more fundamental betrayal. Their advocacy of class-collaboration with nationalist sectors of the bourgeoisie disarmed the working class politically, which led, in turn, to their being unarmed militarily.

The process of arming the masses follows logically from a correct class-struggle program applied in all spheres. But a correct class struggle program does not necessarily accompany a recognition of the need for armed struggle to take power. This is precisely what the default of the Castroists in Latin America consists of.

Reducing the paramount problem to one of armed struggle lets the ultra-left and centrists organizations off the hook. Many such groups in Chile and around the world opposed the "peaceful road" and called for armed struggle. But at the same time they also taught the workers to support Allende's popular front government.

The Castroists current, for example, including the "focista" Debray, the Tupamaros, the ELN, and Castro himself, gave political support to the Allende regime. In Chile, left centrists such as the MIR and the left MAPU called for armed struggle and denounced the peaceful road to socialism. But at the same time they advocated support to the bourgeois Allende government as a "popular government"--and thus cut across the possibility of mobilizing the working class independently on all fronts, including the front of armed struggle. We should keep in mind that in order to establish a workers state, the armed struggle would not only have had to block a rightist coup against Allende, but would have had to end up in overturning the Allende regime from the left, just as the Bolsheviks acted with regard to Kerensky.

These currents, even though they called for armed struggle, also bear a share of responsibility for the defeat in Chile--though of course, to a degree not comparable to the betrayal of the Stalinists and Social Democrats. But the IEC majority's treatment of armed struggle as a political panacea has blinded them to the need for such criticism; and it is not surprising that their contribution says nothing about the role of the centrists.

The IEC Majority Tendency document commits another basic mistake in relation to the events in Chile. Nowhere does the document discuss the need for a revolutionary party in Chile. Nor does it point to the absence of such a party as one of the reasons for the success of the generals' coup.

In reply to a letter from a comrade from Sweden printed in the November 5, 1973 issue of Intercontinental Press, the editor explains the importance of a revolutionary party and what such a party could have meant in Chile.

"Against the counterrevolutionary moves of the generals, a revolutionary party would have defended the popular front government while opposing it politically. When the generals were defeated, it would have moved to topple the Kerensky of 1973 and replace his regime

with a workers and peasants government. But the Chilean workers lacked such a party. They had no way of effectively applying the policy advocated by Trotsky and practiced by the Bolsheviks in 1917.

"In Chile, because of the treacherous role played by the Social Democrats and above all the Stalinists, the task of building a revolutionary party was not undertaken. The Chilean workers were thus left disarmed politically. It must be added that those who thought that guerrilla war could be counted on to provide a shortcut, obviating the need for a revolutionary party, must likewise share political responsibility for this failure. Insistence on assigning political responsibility, let it be repeated, does not deny the heroism of individual members of these currents who took up arms in a desperate struggle against the counterrevolutionaries; nor does it deny the positive role that their heroism can play in a future upsurge of the class struggle in Chile.

"After seeing what happened in Chile, many who held illusions about Allende will now agree that the 'peaceful, parliamentary road to socialism' proved once again to be a deadly trap. It is to be hoped that they will also draw the still deeper lesson--the need to build a revolutionary party in time." (IP, Vol. 11, No. 39, p. 1280, emphasis in original )

However, this lesson is not made explicit by the absent-minded authors of the IEC Majority Tendency political resolution.

The IEC majority resolution, by failing to characterize the Allende regime as a popular front or a bourgeois government leaves unclear whether they consider the question of giving support to such a government a tactical question or a principled one. To consider it only a tactical question would be wrong.

This is a fundamental issue for the Fourth International because in many parts of the world the organizations of the world movement are faced with the problem of how to orient to popular front type formations. Because of the lack of clarity on this question within the International, in more than one case comrades supporting the IEC Majority Tendency have taken the wrong approach.

One example is the mistake made by the POR (Combate), the Bolivian section of the Fourth International, in joining the Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist Front (FRA) in Bolivia. The FRA has a class-collaborationist political program. Although the FRA, like Allende and the Unidad Popular, verbally calls for socialism, its program, if carried out, would result in a coalition regime with elements of the bourgeoisie. The FRA finds no contradiction in combining its hailing of the previous Torres regime with calls for armed struggle against the present Bolivian government.

The POR (C) supports the FRA because the FRA calls on paper for "armed struggle" and "socialism." However, the

FRA's call for armed struggle and its verbal endorsement of socialism does not change the fact that it is a multi-class coalition with a pro-bourgeois program that aspires to establish a bourgeois government.

Another aspect of this same problem within the world movement is the orientation taken by the comrades of the now-banned Communist League of France in supporting the Union of the Left in the March legislative elections. In the second round of those elections (after the Communist League had run its own candidates in the first round) the French section called for a vote en bloc for the candidates of the Union of the Left. The Union of the Left included bourgeois elements, the Left Radicals, and had a popular front perspective.

In a letter on behalf of the Political Committee of the SWP to the Political Bureau of the Communist League, Comrade Mary-Alice Waters explained what was wrong with the orientation of the French comrades:

"The problem with the Union de la Gauche was not simply the presence of the Left Radicals, ... Even if the Left Radicals had not joined the Union de la Gauche, we believe it would have been an error to call for a vote for it per se.

"The key question was not when some section of the bourgeoisie, or as in Spain some 'shadow' of the bourgeoisie, might decide to participate in the Union de la Gauche. From its very inception it represented a projected electoral bloc with bourgeois forces, the ultimate goal being a coalition government. Its essence, its purpose was to prepare for this.

"Under these circumstances a vote for the Union de la Gauche per se did not represent a vote for independent working-class political action. It was a vote for a petty-bourgeois electoral bloc with a popular front perspective." (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 14, p. 15, emphasis in original )

Furthermore, in the first round of the elections the Communist League called for votes for other organizations of the "far left" on the basis of their "rejection of the peaceful road to socialism." While it may have been correct to have attempted to work out an agreement whereby the Communist League and these other organizations would not have run candidates against each other, to call for a vote for these organizations because they are for "armed struggle" ignores the fundamental programmatic differences of our party with these organizations. There are many organizations which may be for "armed struggle"--for the purpose of carrying out an incorrect pro-bourgeois program--such as the FRA in Bolivia. Here again the gun is given precedence over Marxist politics by the supporters of the IEC majority.

The confusion and mistaken notions of the Communist League in regard to their orientation towards the Union of

the Left underscores the importance of the question of popular frontism for the Fourth International.

A political resolution for the Fourth International should help to clarify our approach to the question of coalitionism, not blur it. On this score the IEC Majority Tendency resolution is unacceptable. Coalition politics with elements of the bourgeoisie leads to defeats for the working class. The Fourth International must reaffirm the time-tested position of Marxism on this score.

### The United States--Is the Current Radicalization an Obstacle to Mass Workers Struggles?

The IEC majority resolution contains less analysis of what is occurring within the United States than any recent political resolution of the Fourth International. The analysis that is presented is inadequate and inaccurate.

What have been the key features of political life in this country over the past ten years? The antiwar movement, the Black struggle, the student movement, the women's liberation movement, the Chicano struggle, along with other struggles of the oppressed have all been components of a continuing radicalization which we have assessed to be the deepest of this century in the US. This generalization comes in for only passing notice in the IEC Majority Tendency resolution.

Instead we are told that the key factor of political life here has been a negative one: the absence of workers struggles such as those which are currently taking place in Europe. This is a one-sided and inaccurate way of analyzing the class struggle in the United States. However, we are assured that mass workers struggles are on the immediate order of the day.

"Consequently, the most probable variant for the immediate future in the United States is neither the prolongation of the present temporary decline in the mass movements of revolt, nor the rapid evolution of the country toward a military-police type dictatorship, even of the fascist type. It is, on the contrary, that of an explosive new thrust of the mass movement, this time centered on workers' struggles... The revolt of important sectors of the proletariat against the union bureaucracy's policy of class collaboration, against its acceptance of successive wage freezes and of the incomes policy, will stimulate this resumption of workers' struggles, will give them a more pronounced character that is both anti-capitalist and anti-bureaucratic, and will deal heavy blows to the bourgeois two-party system, again placing the creation of an independent, mass labor party on the order of the day." (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 20, p. 8 )

This is projected as an immediate perspective. The scenario described above will take place as a result of "the recession that will follow... in 1974 or 1975..." (Ibid., p. 3).

Of course such struggles by the working class will take place in the foreseeable future, and perhaps even within a short space of time, but it is hazardous to predict so specific a date as a guide to action.

In this connection the IEC majority thinks that a big theoretical problem is posed in dealing with the United States. The resolution states:

"Of all the important imperialist countries, the United States is the only one in which the proletariat is not yet participating in the spectacular resurgence of struggles of the last years. Revolutionary Marxists should give particular importance to the theoretical and political analysis of the causes of this delay..." (Ibid., p. 8.)

The IEC majority resolution gives some correct reasons for this delay (though not nearly as rounded as our own analysis). But then it goes on to say later:

"The absence of a centripetal thrust of the working class also explains the sectoral fragmentation of the radicalization, which, in the absence of a solution of a total socio-economic alternative to monopoly capitalism, in turn delays a massive entry of the proletariat onto the political arena." (Ibid., p. 8 )

In other words, the radicalization has acted as a brake, delaying the entry of the working class into struggle! Fortunately for the class struggle in the US, exactly the opposite is the case. The present radicalization has not only developed around important political issues which are of deep-going concern to the working class but has helped and will continue to help draw sectors of the working class into struggle. The nationalist struggle of the Chicano people, for instance, has been a major factor in promoting the organization of farm workers into trade unions. The women's movement has inspired the formation of women's caucuses in the factories and unions. Similarly for the Black movement.

The tremendously changed political climate in the US that has developed as a result of the radicalization has made it much, much easier for the working class to radicalize on a massive scale, not more difficult. To belittle the recent forms of social struggle or to see them as a block to the advance of massive working class struggles leads to sectarian conclusions. Movements like the Black struggle, the Chicano struggle, and the women's struggle will propel the advance of the more massive and ultimately decisive working class struggles yet to come.

The treatment of the United States in the new IEC majority political resolution stands in sharp contrast to the analysis in the political resolution that was adopted by the Fourth International at its last world congress. In that 1969 document there is a much more thorough and realistic treatment of the political situation in the US.



One big difference can be seen in the way that the Black liberation struggle is discussed in the two resolutions. The 1969 resolution contains a thorough discussion of the Black struggle and correctly assigns it a central role in the developing class struggle in the US. The current IEC majority resolution barely mentions the Black struggle and virtually ignores the national question in this country.

The American Trotskyist movement has recognized that the American revolution will be a combined revolution of the working class against capitalism and the oppressed nationalities for self-determination. The IEC majority resolution's silence on this point is as revealing as it is wrong.

The American supporters of the IEC majority have a position on the Black and Chicano struggles that is the opposite of the position in Ernest Germain's document, "In Defence of Leninism; In Defence of the Fourth International." The Germain document, which was previously officially adopted by the IEC Majority Tendency, included a judgment that Black and Chicano nationalism are progressive, and indicated agreement with our call for an independent Black party. But the recent counter-political resolution of the Internationalist Tendency in the SWP took the position that Black and Chicano nationalism are not progressive, rejected the SWP's call for Black and Chicano parties, and essentially rejected the SWP's basic analysis of this key aspect of the coming American socialist revolution. Because of the global importance of the American revolution, these questions are important for the entire world Trotskyist movement.

But the IEC majority political resolution avoids taking a clear stand on these vital issues. That is not a principled way of proceeding.

The error of the IEC majority's political resolution in belittling the national question in the United States is paralleled by a similar error in respect to Canada. While talking of the maturation of the class struggle in Canada, they omit reference to the Quebecois national struggle, a central factor in the revolution in Canada. The big working class upsurge in Quebec in May, 1972, for example, was intimately linked to the national liberation struggle there.

Another important consideration that is unnoticed by the IEC majority resolution is the relatively favorable relationship of forces on the left in the US. In this country Trotskyists do not face the obstacle of winning the leadership of the working class away from mass Stalinist or Social Democratic parties such as those which exist in Europe and elsewhere. As a result of the work that the SWP and the YSA carried out in the antiwar movement and the other movements of the current radicalization, we hold as much political influence today as any of our opponents in the radical movement. This is probably the most favorable relationship of forces confronting the Trotskyist movement in any major industrial country in the world, and certainly should

be taken into account in any analysis of perspectives for building Leninist parties capable of leading the socialist revolution.

### Once Again: The "New Mass Vanguard"

In the document entitled, "Building Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe," supported by the IEC Majority Tendency, the concept of the "new mass vanguard" was developed at length and an orientation to it was projected. This concept and orientation is now extended on a world scale in the IEC Majority Tendency political resolution:

"The appearance on a world scale of a new vanguard of a mass character for the first time since the creation of the Communist International constitutes one of the principal features of the new rise of the world revolution since 1968....

"This new mass vanguard can be characterized in the most succinct fashion as the totality of forces acting independently and to the left of the traditional bureaucratic leaderships of the mass movement." (*Ibid.*, p. 16 )

This definition is very broad. Yet the IEC majority proceeds to treat the "new mass vanguard" in some ways as if it were a homogeneous grouping. This is unwarranted.

If the "independence" of the "new mass vanguard" is conceived only in the narrow organizational sense (that is, being formally outside of the mass Stalinist and Social Democratic parties), this risks leaving out of consideration other important forces that the Fourth International must win to its banner.

For example, there are many radicalizing young workers who are members of the Communist or Socialist parties and who currently follow the leadership of these parties, but who are also in the forefront of important class struggles. This is the case with regard to the Communist Party in Spain. Another example is the important development of radicalizing youth in the German Social Democracy. These forces must also be won to Trotskyism.

If the "independence" of the "new mass vanguard" is conceived in the political sense, then care must be taken not to view this "vanguard" as a homogeneous grouping. Most of the forces of the "new mass vanguard" which are "acting independently and to the left of the traditional bureaucratic leaderships" supported the Union de la Gauche in the French elections. They supported Allende's regime in Chile. Many support Mao's regime in China. Many are uncritical of the Vietnamese Stalinists. Their "independence" from Stalinist and Social Democratic leaderships is only relative. Many of these forces are also uncritical of Guevarism.

The proposed orientation towards the "new mass vanguard"

in Europe has meant in practice bending our political program and our political actions to cater to the moods of a layer of radicalizing youth.

One of the ways proposed by the IEC majority political resolution to orient to this "new mass vanguard" is to take "initiatives in action." The resolution does not clearly spell out what this involves in practice. However, we do have evidence of what is meant by examining some of the actions that are hailed as exemplary by supporters of the IEC majority.

One such "initiative in action" carried out by "revolutionary Marxist militants," according to a report in Rouge, was the firebombing of the Argentine embassy near Paris in August, 1972, following the massacre of political prisoners from Trelew prison in Argentina. A similar "initiative in action" was carried out against the Honeywell-Bull offices in France for their complicity in the US war effort in Vietnam. "Initiatives in action" denotes activities such as these.

However much such ultraleft actions may impress some radicals, they should not be organized or supported politically by the Fourth International. Actions of this kind indicate the real meaning of "initiatives in action" purported to win over the "new mass vanguard."

It should be noted that the actions referred to above are defended by Comrade Pierre Frank, a central leader of the IEC Majority Tendency in his article entitled, "Two Ways of Constructing the Revolutionary Marxist Party and Engaging It in Action." Comrade Frank writes:

"In our opinion, the crime of Trelew required an immediate response and, as everyone knows, one cannot always summon up mass demonstrations. Thus the question of a vigorous action was posed, and we were of the opinion that the Trelew crime required more than a telegram or a customary gesture. But in the question of Honeywell-Bull, one finds a problem posed that Comrade Mary-Alice didn't seem to suspect. Why did revolutionary militants attack this American firm if not because it made material used against the Vietnamese revolution? We are for the defense and victory of that revolution, of the workers state of Vietnam. On this question we are not just for mass actions but also for the sabotage of the capitalist troops and of their armament..."

"The action against Honeywell-Bull, symbolic as it had been, fell into this category... and one can simply regret that there weren't more of them and more vigorous ones." (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 14, p. 10 )

In their answer to the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction declaration entitled, "Let's Discuss Political Differences, Not Old Wives' Tales," the IEC majority again indicates what their real intentions are. They state, "... the minority

actually denies them our sections the right to take any action on their own, including, of course, any action of minority violence" (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 20, p. 27).

No one, least of all ourselves, denies the right of sections to take actions on their own. However, we do reject the political concept behind the theory of "minority violence," whether it's called "initiatives in action" or some other term signifying ultra-left adventures.

There is another side to the problem of the proposed orientation to the "new mass vanguard" on a world scale that directly concerns the YSA. In focusing almost completely on orienting towards this amorphous grouping, the IEC majority deemphasizes the student radicalization. While recognizing the existence of the youth radicalization, the IEC majority projects no orientation towards its student component. This can lead to many missed opportunities.

The recent student struggles in Thailand, South Korea and Greece reinforce the importance we have assigned to the student movement both as an objective force in the development of the world revolution and as a source of recruitment for the Fourth International. The orientation proposed in the document entitled, "The Worldwide Youth Radicalization and the Tasks of the Fourth International," a document which was adopted unanimously in 1969 by the United Secretariat, has evidently been shelved by the IEC majority. For us, that orientation is still completely valid today as Comrade Andy Rose has demonstrated in his article entitled, "The Red University Strategy vs. the 'Irreversible Turn'" (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 19).

#### How Important is the Detente?

The IEC majority makes a major mistake in underestimating the effects of the detente that has been worked out by Washington with the Soviet Union and China. In addition, the resolution ascribes to the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction and its supporters views that we do not hold. They write in their resolution, "... it is entirely improper to speak of a new Yalta, in the sense of the ability of Washington, Moscow and Peking to divide the world into spheres of influence and to maintain the status quo" (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 20, p. 5).

No one maintains that Washington, Moscow and Peking have the ability "to maintain the status quo." They have never enjoyed this ability no matter what their intentions or how strongly they have sought to do so. Did the Yalta agreements "maintain the status quo?" The post-World War II period saw the overturns in Eastern Europe and the immense upsurge of the colonial revolution which included the historic landmark of the Chinese revolution. The Yalta agreements were only an attempt by the wartime allies to maintain the status quo. However, capitalism, with or without the cooperation of the bureaucracies in the two most powerful workers states, cannot solve the problems confronting the oppressed all over the world. In the long run the status quo cannot be maintained because the oppressed will continue

to fight against their oppression.

However, it must be recognized that the agreements worked out between the imperialists and the bureaucrats in the workers states in their attempt to contain the world revolution, will, as in the past, have extremely harmful effects and form a framework in which the class struggle will continue to develop, and will affect its development. These effects can already be seen in both Vietnam and the Arab East.

Comrade Jack Barnes summarized our view of the detente and its effects in his report to the April, 1973 plenum of the SWP National Committee. He explained:

"What the detente entails, of course, is a shift in all international political relations: among the imperialist powers and the workers states; among the workers states; between imperialism, the colonial and semicolonial countries and the workers states.

"The agreements between Washington, Moscow and Peking are made on the basis of the current world relationship of forces; but the agreements themselves affect this relationship....

"The important thing to remember is that while the class struggle on a world scale unfolds within this new international political framework, it continues to assert its presence. In just the brief period since the detente began, while the new relations are still being worked out, we have witnessed many confirmations of this....

"The class struggle has not been halted, reversed or annulled by Nixon, Breznev and Mao; it continues but within an altered set of conditions.

"The problem is not the combativity or the revolutionary potential of the working class and its allies. The problem remains the crisis of proletarian leadership." (SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 31, No. 12, pp. 5-6 )

The IEC majority resolution rejects these implications of the detente. The resolution also fails to analyze accurately the factors leading to it. It states: "The economic crisis that the Soviet Union is today undergoing... was the determining factor in leading the team of Breznev-Kosygin-Podgorny to seek a rapprochement with American imperialism..." (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 20, p. 11).

There is some truth to this observation. The economic problems plaguing the Soviet Union may have been a factor in causing Moscow to seek a detente with US imperialism. But there is a deeper reason, which the IEC majority misses. The Kremlin has followed the policy of seeking detente since the inception of Stalinism, with its theories of "peaceful coexistence" and "socialism in a single country" which were proclaimed by Stalin with the death of Lenin and the exile of Trotsky in the late 1920 s.

The major new development behind the US detente with both China and the Soviet Union is a change in US policy. It stems from the need of US imperialism to preserve its strength in the face of an increasingly unfavorable international economic, political and military situation.

In addition to the many mistakes within the IEC Majority Tendency resolution, the document is also unacceptable because of other important points that it leaves out and does not discuss. The national question, for example, which is a pressing problem of the class struggle in every sector of the world revolution, receives just passing notice. The women's liberation movement is virtually ignored although its growth has been one of the more significant recent developments on a world scale. There is almost no balance-sheet on the most successful campaign carried out by the Fourth International in the recent period, the movement against the war in Southeast Asia. For all these reasons, it should be clear that a completely new document is needed for the guidance of the world movement in the next period.

November 20, 1973

## BLACK STRUGGLE REPORT

By John Hawkins

(The general line of this report was approved by the National Committee on June 10, 1973.)

American capitalism has entered a new stage, one in which it no longer holds uncontested sway in the imperialist world. Under the pressure of the inflationary effects of the Vietnam war, the immense cost of maintaining military bases around the world and the pressure of increased inter-imperialist competition, the American capitalist class and its government have been forced to attack the wages and living standards of the American workers. The brunt of this attack on the American working class falls first and heaviest on those at the bottom of the economic and social heap-- among them Blacks. Traditionally the last hired and first fired, Blacks were among the first victims of the Nixon administration's economic policies. Black unemployment stands at 9.1%, compared with 5% for the population as a whole, and among Black youth as high as 30% in some areas, over 6 times the rate of unemployment for the population as a whole.

The Black communities are among the hardest hit by cuts in budgets for Urban Renewal, Model Cities, Office of Economic Opportunity, childcare, welfare, Youth Corps, and Title I funds for schools. Nixon claims that the effects of these cuts will be offset by revenue-sharing. But the reality is quite different. The funds allotted through revenue-sharing go to racist city and state administrations to allocate as they please. More likely than not these funds will be used to beef up police forces rather than provide more social services for Blacks.

### Attacks on Education

The crisis brought about by the budget cuts and the general decay in the cities is having a big impact on the educational system. Tuition hikes, cuts in loans, grants and other forms of economic assistance threaten to cut short or preclude higher education for the majority of Black students. Increasingly the gains made in Black student enrollment at the college level are coming under attack.

According to the latest Bureau of Census estimate, 700,000 Black students currently attend college. 25% of these students are enrolled at the longtime Black institutions; 40% are enrolled in the community colleges. Cutbacks in government financial aid programs seriously threaten these students with an end to their education. The same applies to Black students in the larger state universities and in the private schools.

At a meeting of admissions counselors of what the New York Times called "the country's most selective institutions" in May, concern was expressed over the increase of Black enrollment. The article in the Times reported that

some of these institutions which had few Blacks on campus until the late 1960s have increased the Black composition of their student bodies to between 5 and 10%. And that's where they want to halt it. Many are even considering a decline in Black student population. Such a decline is expected in the nation's largest public institutions this fall.

Coupled with the financial squeeze caused by Nixon's cuts, the Times article noted that outright racism and bigotry are becoming fashionable among faculty and administrators. No longer feeling the pressure of a mass movement of the Black community and encouraged by Nixon's racism, many of these intellectual hacks now voice open opposition to programs designed to increase Black enrollment. This racist attitude is especially becoming more acceptable at the prestigious private schools.

Another aspect of the attack on Black education is the merging of formerly separate Black and white educational systems in the South. This is very important. It represents a major effort to reduce the costs of education to the racist state administrations and to reduce the enrollment of Black students. They also recognize that all-Black institutions are potential powder-kegs. Nationalist-minded students and faculty see no reason why these institutions should not be used to benefit the Black community on and off campus. This represents a threat to the status quo. The struggle at Southern U. clearly showed this.

A recent conference of over 300 Black students who were mostly from all-Black colleges met to discuss how to mount a campaign to preserve the all-Black institutions. According to a report in the African World they plan to launch a propaganda campaign to get out the word on what's happening to these schools, culminating with a National Save Black Schools Emphasis Week in October.

Nixon's cutbacks in Title I funds and other programs affecting public education hit hardest the primary and secondary schools in the Black community and those with predominantly Black enrollments. Nixon's cuts further aid the general deterioration of schools in the Black community fostered by racist city governments and school boards. In some areas, such as Detroit, public school systems have been threatened with closure.

### Racism and Watergate

Racism is a key element of Nixon's strategy. His approach has been to bear down hardest on the poor and less organized sections of the working class. He wants to divide the working class through racist demagoguery, blaming high

taxes and other economic problems of white workers on Blacks.

But along with these attacks by Nixon we've seen something else. Probably the most important is Watergate.

The Watergate revelations and the 100% certain implication of the whole rotten Nixon administration represents a real blow to the reactionaries and racists of all stripes in this country. The whole Watergate affair came in the midst of Nixon's campaign to make "law and order" a household phrase in this country. The whole affair has helped to undercut Nixon's racist campaign, and as further crimes of his administration come to light they will further undercut this campaign.

In addition, the Watergate affair raises important questions in the minds of the Black community that we want to answer. The revelation that not only Nixon but the Democrats as well engaged in a massive spying campaign against Black activists and leaders, from Martin Luther King to Fred Hampton, is something we should drive home. Watergate will make it a lot easier for us to explain that there's no real difference between the Democrats and Republicans, that they are both vicious and rotten, and the only way to get rid of the type of things Watergate reveals is to replace their capitalist government with one of the working people.

Something else we've seen is the beginning of struggle by the Black community against these attacks by the Nixon administration. Beginning with the Children's March of over 50,000 last year in Washington, D.C., we've seen continuing struggle against the cutbacks and other attacks on the Black community. Across the country demonstrations protesting the cutbacks took place April 4. Black women were in many places the leaders of protests against the cutbacks in childcare. While no exact figures exist as to how many Blacks participated in the meat boycott, it must have met with a positive response in the Black community, since those places where it was most effective are the large urban areas with significant Black populations. In New York we saw a significant involvement of Blacks in the May 5 anti-inflation actions, with the Harlem Consumers Council playing a leading role in the committee.

Another significant development is the series of strikes in Atlanta by Black workers. The demands raised in these strikes clearly point up the dual oppression of Blacks. The striking workers demanded wage increases and an end to racist company practices. One other thing these strikes point up is the tendency of struggles of this type to grow over from employer-employee disputes to battles between the employers and the whole Black community. They also point up the absolute bankruptcy of the current leadership in the trade union movement. Here were non-unionized workers out on strike, a perfect opportunity for one of the unions to come in and organize them, and not one of the major unions in this country attempted to do it.

## Growing Combativity

One thing is for certain. Blacks are far from being in the mood to simply submit to Nixon's attacks. With Nixon's rhetoric about an end to the war in Southeast Asia, postponement of satisfying the most pressing needs of Blacks seems even more ridiculous. Even during the war Blacks were not willing to sacrifice any more than any other sector of the American population. In fact the most pronounced forms of combativeness on the part of the Black community came to the fore during the height of the war--the ghetto rebellions in the mid and late '60s, the campus upsurge from '67-'69, and the rebellion of Blacks in the armed forces, from Fort Jackson to the U. S. S. Constellation.

This unwillingness to submit to the racist attacks of the Nixon administration or his local counterparts has also won some important victories. One of the most significant of these just took place in Detroit with the abolition of STRESS (Stop the Robberies--Enjoy Safe Streets). This victory is the fruit of nearly two years of struggle on the part of the Detroit Black community. It began openly in September, 1971, when 5,000 Blacks marched in Detroit to protest the Attica massacre and the killing of Blacks by STRESS.

Activities like the Black Commission of Inquiry and the picket lines and demonstrations at police headquarters had a real impact in the Black community. These actions were a big aid in changing the sentiment of the Black community toward STRESS and thrusting the issue into the center of politics in Detroit. A recent poll compiled by Market Opinion shows that 65% of the city's Blacks and 15% of the city's whites oppose STRESS. It was this drastic change in sentiment toward STRESS in the Black community that forced the Detroit city government to dissolve the terror squad.

So what have we seen in the Black struggle in the past year? Nixon has been unsuccessful in his racist "law and order" campaign waged against the Black community. Radical and nationalist sentiment continues to deepen in the Black community. Although actions are still not to the scale they were several years ago, many significant and important actions have occurred.

## African Liberation

A graphic example of this in the Black student movement was the African Liberation Day (ALD) demonstrations on May 26. Tens of thousands of people participated in these demonstrations in over 30 cities across the country.

To a greater extent than last year's demonstrations the focus of the actions was clearly on the role of US government and business in the racist settler regimes in Southern Africa and the Portuguese colonies. In only a couple of areas was ALD seen mainly as a cultural event or subordinate to raising funds for the various liberation organizations in

southern Africa. In general, organizers of the action saw the need for mass-oriented action in the streets against US involvement in southern Africa.

The fact that the African Liberation Support Committee was oriented toward action gave us an opening to become involved in building these demonstrations. Where the African Liberation Support Committee (ALSC) groups were organized on a non-exclusionary, united-front basis we were able to play a significant role in building the demonstrations.

The demonstrations were primarily student in composition. This was for several reasons: 1) the organizations that built ALD were closely tied to the Black student movement (in several areas the campuses served as organizing centers for the action); 2) independent organization among Black students is deeper than in the Black community as a whole at this time; 3) Black students, in general, are in a better position to absorb the lessons of the antiwar movement; and 4) Black students are more conscious than the Black community in general of the US role in Africa and tend to identify more with Africa.

Nevertheless, something we should recognize is that the need to actively support the liberation struggles in southern Africa is not something immediately understood, even among Black students. Throughout the building for the demonstrations, the organizers grappled with the task of tying the struggle against US government and business involvement in southern Africa to the burning needs of the Black communities in the US. We played a significant role in this process through our propaganda activities. When we consider the fact that the majority of people in this country do not even know what is going on in Africa then the importance of propaganda work in this area becomes clearer.

Another contribution we can make to the development of the movement in defense of the African liberation struggles is to get out the truth about what US business and government do in southern Africa. We have to get out the truth about the absolutely brutal oppression suffered daily by the African masses in southern Africa, and show how this is related to the day-to-day problems of existence here and how it is related to the struggle for socialism worldwide.

In addition to our propaganda work on southern Africa we have an important contribution to make in how to best build the movement. We have years of experience in the antiwar movement to draw upon. Most importantly in our opinion the movement has to be based on reaching and mobilizing the broadest possible forces the demand an end to US government aid and support to, and US business involvement in the Portuguese colonies and the apartheid regimes. Organizing non-exclusive mass-oriented activities such as demonstrations, picket lines, teach-ins, meetings, on as broad a scale as possible is the best way to accomplish this goal.

## Protests Against Cutbacks

In addition to the ALD demonstrations we've also seen significant actions by students against Nixon's cutbacks. Beginning with the Southern University struggle at the end of last year, Black students have begun to fight the effects of Nixon's economic policies.

The Southern struggle began by raising demands against inadequate facilities and in support of a fired professor who used his classes to teach students something of the nature of racist oppression under American capitalism. From these demands the struggle grew to take in demands for student-faculty control of the university, curriculum, and replacement of the administration. The Southern students reached out to the Black community for support of their struggle and sought support from students nationwide. The response to the Southern University struggle among Black students and students as a whole took the form of nationwide protest meetings, rallies and demonstrations. The YSA contributed to getting out the truth about the Southern University strike and helped build these actions.

At City University in New York, Black and Puerto Rican students were the first to move into action against the proposed imposition of tuition on the city university system and the threat of cut-backs in special programs and financial aid. The students correctly saw these moves as attacks on open admissions, a gain won in 1968-69 through strike actions by Black and Puerto Rican students.

The YSA was active in the fight during the spring. Although we were unable to prevent the leadership of the struggle from directing it into small, exclusive actions, the YSA continued to carry out an educational campaign on the city university campuses explaining the need to defend tuition-free education and to fight to restore the funds that were cut.

Last fall, in Detroit, Black high school students moved into action against the threatened closure of their schools. The YSA played a role in that struggle as well. One of our high school comrades was a spokesperson for the Student Action Coalition, and through her active participation we were able to help direct the struggle along mass action lines.

A couple of things should be kept in mind in regard to these actions. While they are modest in size to date they have the potential to grow once the gravity of the situation becomes clearer to Black students. And most importantly, these struggles point to the need for an approach that goes beyond the campus in its scope, both in identifying the enemy--i. e., the racist capitalist government locally and in Washington--and in drawing into struggle potential allies--the Black community and labor movement.

In addition to the struggles on campus, Black students have been actively involved in the struggles of the Black

community as a whole. And they have continued to use the campus as an organizing center or a base for building support for the struggle, for example the anti-STRESS fight in Detroit.

\* \* \*

Where then does the Black struggle in general stand? We see a continued rise in both nationalist and radical consciousness as exhibited in the struggles we just discussed. While we've seen Nixon launch a racist attack on the Black community, we now see, as a result of Watergate, the racists and reactionaries on the defensive. We've seen as well other blows against racism, such as the victories won by Black activists such as Hayward Brown, Angela Davis, Ruchell Magee, Gary Lawton in their trials, especially in light of the fact that the juries were in the main predominantly white.

We see a distorted reflection of the same thing--that is, the failure of Nixon's racist offensive--in the continuing election of Black officials--3 more Black congresspeople, 2 of them the first from their states since Reconstruction; and the election of Thomas Bradley as mayor of Los Angeles, the nation's third largest city, despite the racist hysteria former mayor Sam Yorty tried to whip up.

We see no turning back of the Black struggle, no mood of defeat. And while this is not a period of upsurge, like that of the mass rebellions and student strikes of the late '60s, important struggles continue.

The main problem confronting the struggles developing in the Black community and the Black movement as a whole is the problem of leadership. We can better understand the scope of this problem if we briefly trace the history of the movement over the past two decades.

#### Evolution of Black Struggle

The current struggle for Black liberation has gone through two phases. The first was the civil rights movement, the struggle against de jure segregation primarily in the South. Through the creative use of mass action and drawing in allies, students and some sections of the labor movement, the civil rights movement won important victories. It accomplished a change in the racial atmosphere of the country, awakened the country to the plight of Blacks, ended Jim Crow--i. e., the system of exceptional laws governing Blacks--and achieved extended voting rights for Blacks. The civil rights movement dealt a heavy blow to reaction throughout the country.

Many Blacks including leaders of the civil rights movement had considered racism a mistake, something that could be ended by simply pointing out its absurdities to an enlightened population. But, with the victories won against legal segregation, Blacks were brought face to face with

racist oppression in its institutional de facto form. Many Blacks became conscious of the fact that racism is a structural feature of American society. This awareness created fertile ground for and spurred the development of the nationalist consciousness that characterizes the Black communities today. The recognition and struggle against institutional or structural racism also posed greater problems of leadership.

These problems stem from the fact that it's a lot harder to solve the social and economic problems confronting Blacks than it was to knock down Jim Crow. The demands raised in the course of the current phase of the Black struggle have much more far-reaching implications. For example, the demand for Black community control of the schools and other institutions challenges the right of white capitalists to control Blacks. The demands for Black studies and open admissions challenge the racist exclusive nature of the educational system. Demands for employment, job-upgrading, preferential hiring, and training in the skilled trades, for increased funding of social services, all challenge the status of Blacks as a reserve army of unemployed labor at the bottom of the economic heap.

Struggles around such demands tend to come much more rapidly into conflict with the state and with the privileged labor bureaucracy than did the struggles against Jim Crow. In fact, the labor bureaucracy has been one of the main roadblocks to the successful development of both the Black struggle in its current phase and a leadership for that struggle.

#### Role of Labor Bureaucracy

Rather than championing the demands of the Black community for control over the institutions in it, the labor bureaucracy has actively opposed those demands. The role of the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) in the District #1 school board elections in New York's Lower East Side, and their role in the Oceanhill-Brownsville school district in 1968 are only two examples.

In the District #1 elections, Albert Shanker, president of the UFT, reached a new low. In union meeting after union meeting Shanker blamed District #1 superintendent Luis Fuentes for all the problems the teachers had in order to throw the union's whole strength into a racist campaign to "get Fuentes." When some rank and filer (who was also against Fuentes) had the impertinence to ask if Shanker really meant what he said, pointing out that the board of education was creating some of the problems, Shanker was quick to answer that Fuentes was really the cause of these too.

The disastrous effects of this policy for the Black community and the unions were illustrated in the teachers' strike in 1971 in Newark. The Newark city government was able to defeat the strikers who refused to link up with the Black community. This erroneous strategy not only left the union defeated but also helped continue to deceive the Black com-

munity on the real nature of the school board and the city government.

Through their ties to the Democratic Party the labor bureaucracy has impeded the growth of independent leadership for the Black community as well as independent political organization of labor. In one concrete instance where an attempt was made to organize a Black party, the Freedom Now Party in Detroit in 1964, the bureaucracy of the United Automobile Workers was in the forefront of a campaign to bury the formation. In leaflets issued prior to the elections the UAW bureaucracy, joined by Martin Luther King, attacked the Freedom Now Party. The leaflet, with a picture of King on it, quoted the civil rights leader, "I do not and have never advocated an all-Negro party," and concluded, "Make it emphatic, vote straight Democratic."

The UAW bureaucrats also didn't take a kind approach to the development of Black caucuses within its ranks. The local and national bureaucracy launched a concerted campaign to drive DRUM (Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement) and other Black caucuses out of the plants.

These Black caucuses, grouped together in the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, had grown out of wild-cat strikes against racism in the plants and working conditions, such as speed-up. Rather than helping the Black union members take on the company, the supposedly liberal-minded UAW bureaucracy collaborated with the corporations to fire the workers involved in the caucuses. Their campaign included roughing up DRUM members, rigging and stealing union elections, and a public smear campaign that included violence-baiting and red-baiting and branding the organizers of the caucuses as outside agitators.

### Black Panther Party

Of all the groups that attempted to play a leadership role in the post-civil rights stage of the Black struggle the Black Panther Party best exemplifies the generally mistaken manner in which many groups approached the struggle. Unable to forge links with the masses through propaganda and organization around their 10-point program for Black control, the Panthers degenerated into ultraleft adventurists. Not only did they isolate themselves from the masses through their pistol-toting rhetoric, but they proved incapable of fighting opportunists and reformists within the nationalist movement. They tried to mask this inability to deal with the reality of politics in the Black community with Marxist-Leninist abstractions.

Their adventurism opened the organization to government attack. The result of these attacks, against which the Panthers could not defend themselves politically, was either the physical liquidation or political demoralization of a whole layer of young Black activists who were either members or sympathizers of the Panthers. Under the blows of government attack the Panthers, at least a majority of

them, sought a road back to the masses. Again, rather than seeking to mobilize the masses in their defense or around the demands of the 10-point program, they sought a road that has now led them right into the lap of the Democratic Party.

### Crisis of Leadership

Given the lack of a militant leadership in the Black community, the Black Democrats have emerged as the most authoritative leadership. The Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), after the experience of the Gary Convention, has decided to limit its activity to the legislative field. Its members are no longer going to even pretend to be social leaders but rather legislators of the typical sort. This retreat from the struggle comes at a time when it is more necessary than ever to mount an effective defense against Nixon's racist policies and to take advantage of Watergate to launch a fight to extend the gains of the Black community. The traditional civil rights organizations also remain tied to a pro-capitalist perspective, although they are forced at times to mobilize the masses.

Many of the radical Black formations and Pan-Africanist groups are grappling with some of the problems raised by the new phase of the Black struggle. Their errors are indicative of the difficulty of solving these problems outside the revolutionary socialist movement.

Within the Pan-Africanist movement Imamu Baraka and the Congress of African Peoples continue to put forward a strategy of maneuvering in the Democratic Party, despite the fact that they have been burned several times by the Black Democrats in the CBC. The Youth Organization for Black Unity (YOBUB), though it calls for the formation of a Black party and has a healthy approach to mass action as a weapon of struggle, tail-ends Baraka and accepts his strategy of maneuvering within the Democratic Party.

Other radical formations like the Black Workers Congress, the Black Masses Party in Milwaukee, and Stokely Carmichael's African Revolutionary People's Party consider themselves to be socialist. Yet all of them either reject the national oppression of Blacks as insignificant or reject the class nature of Black oppression. While some recognize the key role the radicalization of the white working masses will play in making a socialist revolution, none translates this recognition into an understanding of the need for a multi-national vanguard party along Leninist lines.

The Communist Party (CP) and Young Workers Liberation League (YWLL), despite their talk about fighting racism, have no program for carrying that fight out. While they adapt to the nationalist consciousness of Black youth, they oppose the independent thrust of that sentiment, seeking to keep the Black struggle within the limits of class-collaborationist politics, more precisely the Democratic Party, as their support to Bradley in Los Angeles and Badillo in New York proves.



The complex nature of the current phase of the Black struggle demands a conscious leadership to take it forward. One that is far-sighted, armed with a program and a keen understanding of how to implement it. Such a leadership on a sufficient scale to organize and mobilize significant sections of the Black community has not developed. The only leadership outside our own movement that began to grapple with these problems and pose favorable solutions to them was the Organization of Afro-American Unity, under Malcolm X's leadership. This organization was unable to continue along those lines after his assassination.

Today no organization outside the revolutionary socialist movement puts forward a clear program and perspective for combatting the racist oppression of Blacks. The need for revolutionary socialist solutions to the problems confronting Blacks is more pressing than ever. The only youth organization with such a program is the YSA, and our central task is to get out our program on how to fight racism and to organize Black and white youth around it.

### Revolutionary Socialist Strategy

Our solutions to the problems confronting Blacks are codified in the Transitional Program (The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International) and the document A Transitional Program for Black Liberation, adopted by the 1969 SWP convention. Nonetheless, we still have to be creative in terms of applying the program and formulating it in accordance with the current stage of the Black struggle.

It is correct for us to characterize the consciousness of the Black masses as increasingly nationalist, that is, consciousness of the systematic racist oppression they suffer and the need to organize as Blacks to fight it. However, it would be a mistake to equate this nationalist consciousness with conscious nationalism on the part of broad layers of the Black community. In fact the majority of Blacks, all of whom share to one or another degree the sentiments of Black nationalism, do not consider themselves nationalists. The consciousness that they are victims of racial oppression or racism is the prevailing consciousness and the one to which we have to relate. We should talk more about our program to fight racist oppression as just that, a program to fight racist oppression, a program to fight racism.

I want to say a few things about two of our propaganda slogans: Black control of the Black community and the Black party. We need to be concrete about Black control of the Black community. An all-out struggle along these lines will develop through the struggle for Black control of various institutions in the Black community.

In putting forward this demand we have to start from specific concrete situations, popularizing the idea of Black control of specific institutions. In cases such as the schools we have to advance this demand for Black community control hand-in-hand with the demand for adequate funding of

the schools. We don't want to give the impression that we are for Black control of simply the shells of schools and other inadequate institutions in the Black community.

In terms of our call for the formation of a Black party, we want to make sure that we don't pose it as a be-all and end-all solution to the problems that confront Blacks. Because there is no widespread motion around the formation of a Black party, we want to raise this idea more in a propagandistic fashion, in such a context that it comes across as one instrument that can aid in the struggle against racist oppression.

We have sometimes mistakenly called for Black control of the police. This is an ambiguous and imprecise formulation. While we are for Black control of schools, libraries and hospitals, we are not for Black control of the capitalist police. We call for the expulsion of the police from the community and its replacement by a police force selected by, drawn from and controlled by the Black community.

The point is that schools, libraries and hospitals will not be dismantled or abolished after the socialist revolution. The capitalist police will.

At the same time, while we are not for the reform of the capitalist police but its abolition, we can support partial struggles that demand civilian review boards of police activity or struggles that demand the abolition of specific police units. We can also participate in actions protesting police brutality, which help expose the role of the police in the Black community.

Drugs are another question that is on the minds of many in the Black community. In putting forward our position on drugs we have to make it clear that we don't think the answer is the capitalist state prosecuting drug pushers. We see the problem of drugs as endemic to capitalist society and vanishing once the grinding poverty and alienation that spawn drug use are abolished. In addition we see the addict as a victim of capitalist society and demand that addiction be treated as a medical and not a criminal problem.

### Reaching Black Youth

Some of the vehicles through which we can get out the revolutionary socialist program on how to fight racist oppression are the sales of our press, public meetings, our student government campaigns and our support to the SWP election campaigns.

Special attention should be given to sales of our press to Black youth, especially students on both college and high school campuses. These sales should be consistently organized as the responsibility of the local as a whole and not just the Black comrades. In addition to sales of the press, we want to step up our coverage of Black student struggles in The Militant and the Young Socialist.

Through our student government election campaigns this spring we were able to reach out to thousands of Black and white youth with our program for ending racist oppression. In several areas we were able to involve Black students who were not YSAers in our campaigns either as supporters or as candidates on our slate. We want to continue to use our student government campaigns to get out the YSA's program on how to fight Nixon's racist policies. In addition our campaigns should support any campus or local struggles against racism or any issues along those lines that develop on the campus.

Our support to the SWP election campaigns will enable us to reach out to Black youth and draw them closer to our movement. Recruitment of these campaign supporters should be viewed as the primary task of campaign work.

The 1974 campaigns in most states where there are branches of the SWP will be statewide campaigns. Special emphasis should be placed on getting speaking engagements for candidates in the regions, at schools with large Black student populations and at all-Black campuses. Getting to the all-Black schools and those with large concentrations of Black students should be a high priority of the regional teams this fall.

In addition to our campaign work and sales work, we should make sure that we have campus forums on the Black liberation struggle and the fight against racism. We should invite representatives of any struggles going on in the Black community to speak on campus and thereby help build campus support for the struggle.

In all our propaganda work we want to pay special attention to the Black student groups on campus. We should make sure they have subs to The Militant and YS, and we should seek their endorsement of our student government campaigns as well as of the SWP campaigns. In many instances we can co-sponsor joint activities on campus, for example, a speaker on the African Liberation struggles or around a struggle going on in the Black community. While we want to pay special attention to these formations and seek to draw them into joint activities with us, we should not hesitate to take the initiative around questions of concern to the masses of Black students, the majority of whom belong to no organization on campus, around issues affecting them or that they would be interested in.

Finally, in all our propaganda work among Black students we want to get out the full program of the YSA. We not only want to talk to Black youth about the Black struggle but about the struggles of all oppressed and exploited sectors of the American population. We want to explain the need for a united fight against the common exploiters and oppressors, the capitalist ruling class, and the need for the socialist transformation of society. And most importantly, we want to explain to Black students the importance of a multi-national revolutionary youth organization and party and recruit them to the YSA.

## Participating in Struggles

While carrying out our propaganda work on the Black struggle we want to remain especially attuned to any developments in the Black community in which we can participate or directly intervene. We can't know for sure exactly how these struggles will unfold--some may last over a long period of time, such as the series of strikes in Atlanta or the campaign to end STRESS in Detroit; others will break out for a few days or weeks and then subside. In either case the YSA should be present, helping to support and lead such struggles.

On the campuses we can take the initiative both in building support for struggles and in initiating discussion and action around such issues as attacks on Black studies departments, cutbacks in various financial aid programs affecting Black students, tuition hikes, and any other form of racism on campus.

One area to which we should pay more attention is the area of defense. Thousands of Blacks are being victimized by the racist legal system of this country, and we want to participate in defense efforts where we are in a position to do so. We can show our support by helping to organize campus forums on such cases and through having leaflets and defense materials on our literature tables.

## High School Work

Special emphasis should be placed on all our Black work in the high schools, as only 10% of Black students go on to college. In our general propaganda work, the Black high schools should be singled out for special sales of the Young Socialist on a regular and consistent basis. We should make a special effort to get speakers into these high schools, to sign the students up as endorsers of the campaign and involve them in campaign activities.

While the main vehicle for our work at the high schools will be the sales of the press, we should be conscious of combining this with our other work. We can leaflet for the Militant forums at the high schools, publicize campus meetings there, especially in the cases of high school campuses that are close to college campuses where we are located. In general we should seek every opportunity to get into the high schools where Black students are and recruit them to our ideas and our movement.

## Community Colleges

Locals should also take the community colleges into serious consideration when planning the expansion of our campus base. As stated earlier in the report, 40% of Black college students attend the community colleges. These campuses are among the hardest hit by cutbacks in financial aid programs and special programs for Black students.

By expanding our campus work to the community college

campuses, we can also deal a blow to the YWLL and our other opponents who in some cases have built a base for themselves on these campuses in our absence. Even if we are not able to send comrades onto these campuses as students, we should carry out the same sort of work there that we are concentrating on at the high schools, such as regular and consistent sales of our press.

### Recruitment

One-to-one contact work will be central in winning Black youth to our movement. The key to this contact work is explaining the relationship between the Black struggle and the struggles of working people as a whole and the need for the YSA and SWP, multi-national revolutionary socialist organizations, in order to make a socialist revolution.

We need to discuss with Black contacts why the white workers will radicalize and how this relates to the Black struggle. We also have to explain the role of racism and convince our Black contacts that fighting for socialism is the only way to end it.

There are many Black youth who have been through a number of political organizations who are searching for answers to the questions involved in how to make a revolution in the US. While we don't want to overweigh our propaganda work in answering their questions, we should be conscious of discussing with them and recruiting them to the YSA.

In order for us to carry out our Black work most effectively constant leadership attention must be devoted to it. The responsibility for carrying out our recruitment and propaganda activities and for intervening in the Black struggle is the responsibility of the local as a whole.

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The situation our movement faces today--both in terms of the objective situation and our ability to intervene in it--is better than ever in relation to Black work. Unlike the 1930s and '40s when the Stalinist Communist Party dominated the scene, no tendency within the workers' movement has an absolute command in the Black struggle.

Going into the civil rights movement the Trotskyist movement had far fewer Black members than today. We now have a whole layer of Black cadres in the SWP and YSA. We want to continue this process of recruitment and development of Black cadres. Our propaganda campaigns and intervention in the Black struggle are one side of this. On the other side is the necessity of consciously organizing the recruitment of Blacks and consciously training Black members as well-rounded revolutionary socialists. It's in this way that we will go forward in building the YSA into the multi-national youth organization that will help strike a death blow to racism and capitalism and open a socialist era for humankind.

## ANALYSIS OF OPPONENT PROGRAMS FOR BLACK LIBERATION

By Malik Miah, Lower Manhattan Local

The Black liberation movement today lacks a resolute national leadership willing and able to organize the Black community in a fight for its rights. This crisis of leadership also holds true for the working class movement. Both lack a revolutionary leadership with a political program capable of mobilizing Blacks and other working people in a revolutionary struggle to overturn capitalism. As Marxists, we understand that the quality of leadership for any movement is determined by the political program it puts forth, and how that program is applied in the unfolding class struggle.

This void in political leadership puts special responsibility upon us. Even with our limited forces we must be bold and take initiative in all possible circumstances to propagandize our transitional program for Black liberation. By such participation in the Black struggle we will be able to win more Black youth to our program and the YSA.

Today we face a number of non-revolutionary currents who disagree with our program for Black liberation. All hold reformist programs or vacillate between opportunist and ultraleft positions.

The purpose of this contribution is to assess these different opponent programs for Black liberation.

A discussion of these programs is very pertinent. There are increasing numbers of Blacks open to revolutionary Marxist ideas. Many have concluded that a socialist revolution is needed before Black liberation can be achieved. Others are still debating whether or not the system can be reformed. They are asking whether Black liberation can be won under American capitalism.

Because many currents on the left claim to be authentic revolutionary socialists, we must not only clearly provide answers to these questions but clearly explain where these non-revolutionary tendencies go wrong in their programmatic analysis of the Black and working class struggle. These non-revolutionary tendencies vying for leadership of the Black movement include the Communist Party and Young Workers Liberation League, the Social Democrats, USA, and Young People's Socialist League and a number of Maoist grouplets.

Another significant current vying for leadership of the Black movement is the Congress of African People (CAP) led by Imamu Baraka. The program of CAP is also important to analyze because many Black youth who are open to socialism have come to accept the Ujima (self-reliance) and so-called "African socialism" rhetoric of Baraka as an alternative road to either "white capitalism" or revolutionary socialism.

### Where Does the Movement Stand Today?

A brief look at the present state of the Black movement will help place this discussion of opponent programs for Black liberation in perspective.

The present leadership of the Black movement remains completely tied to the Democratic Party. The recent elections of Black mayors in Detroit, Atlanta, Los Angeles and a number of other cities points to the potential political power of the Black vote if used independent of the capitalist parties. The elections also reflect a conscious policy by the ruling class to coopt the Black vote--even in cities where Blacks are a minority like Los Angeles--and shows the depth of Black nationalist sentiments in the Black community. The deepening of nationalist sentiments (both conscious and not) and the ruling class's response to it by allowing the election of more Black pro-capitalist politicians--reflects the contradictory stage of the Black movement today. (A more detailed discussion of the current stage of the movement is presented in Comrade John Hawkins' report on the Black struggle printed elsewhere in the discussion bulletin.)

At the same time that Blacks have been voting for the Democratic Party, there has been a growing radicalization. Many gains and changes have taken place in the Black community during the past two decades. The demonstrations, sit-ins and other forms of mass activity organized against Jim Crow and other racist legislation in the 1950s and early 1960s brought about the 1964 Civil Rights Act and other laws granting Blacks legal equality.

The mass ghetto rebellions in Detroit and Newark in 1967 and the community explosions in numerous other cities after the assassination of Martin Luther King also won concessions from the ruling class. As well, the struggle by Black students for Black studies and open admissions in the late 1960s brought about significant reforms.

These struggles were primarily organized independent of the capitalist parties, in the streets, and thus provided examples of how Blacks could win significant reforms from the ruling class. All these factors combined engendered a change of consciousness among Blacks. Blacks will not accept a return to the pre-civil rights days, the return to Jim Crow. Nor will growing numbers of Blacks accept the continuing social and economic deterioration of the Black communities.

Despite some of the changes, the fundamental problems of social and economic oppression still exist. The social, economic and political conditions of the Black community have improved little since the early 1950s.

In 1952 the median income for a Black family was only 57% of that earned by a white family; while in 1968 the median income of a Black family in comparison to a white family rose to only 63%. (Figures are taken from a government report referred to in an article by Dick Roberts in the June, 1970 International Socialist Review.)

This increase of 6% is not accurate, however, since it takes three earners in a Black family to make the same wages it takes for one earner in a white family. Also the increase reflects that two-thirds of the Black population now lives in large cities (nearly half in the North) where wages are higher.

The job crisis for Black youth is as harsh as it has ever been. The schools, housing and other institutions in the Black community are not much better. The gains made by Blacks over the last two decades have not ended the racist oppression of Blacks. These gains have only made it clearer that racist oppression is rooted in the capitalist system.

This national oppression that Blacks continue to suffer has convinced many Blacks that control of their destinies is impossible within the capitalist system; that racism is tied to capitalism; that racist oppression can only be eliminated with a permanent restructuring of society.

It is within this context of ongoing struggle within the Black community that we should analyze the various opponent programs for Black liberation.

### Stalinists

The Stalinist program for Black liberation is best summarized in a newly published book by Communist Party national chairman, Henry Winston. The book, Strategy for a Black Agenda, is coined as "a critique of new theories of liberation in the United States and Africa."

Winston explains that the only winning strategy for Black liberation is "one that would advance the self-organization of the Black liberation movement, and simultaneously combine this independent strength with that of allies--working class, Black, Brown, Red and white, together with all the poor and exploited--in a new formation. This is the basis for an anti-monopoly coalition, the only strategy that opens the way to a future without racism, exploitation, poverty or oppression" (p. 288 with emphasis in the original).

Winston makes this clearer when he states, "The only path for 'enrichment' of the people is through a great anti-monopoly formation, with Black and white workers at its center and its leadership, which--in moving to break the power of monopoly over the total economy--can bring about Black liberation and end poverty and exploitation for all" (p. 299).

"Racism, poverty and exploitation" can be ended, according to Winston, by the formation and the victory of

an anti-monopoly party in the elections. What Winston forgets to tell us, however, is that this anti-monopoly coalition will include liberal capitalists and Black Democrats. That is, the Stalinist road to Black liberation is an electoral bloc between liberal capitalists and the Black community. According to the CP and YWLL, capitalism can be reformed to the point that "racism, poverty and exploitation" can be eradicated. No socialist revolution is required.

A further explanation of the anti-monopoly party was provided by Jose Stevens in 1971. Stevens is a leader of the YWLL. In an article written for the CP's theoretical journal, Political Affairs, he said this anti-monopoly coalition would be a "working class force / a completely false claim --MM/ that can neutralize the instability of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie in the community and force them into consistent struggle against monopoly and in the interests of the Black masses."

Such an approach, to the contrary, would only lead to the subordination of the desires and needs of the masses of Black people to those of the "liberal" wing of the capitalist class. As Stevens himself points out, "This coalition... must be based on ideological unity." In other words, the "minimum program of unity" must be one that is acceptable to the capitalist politicians and other so-called "progressive" elements the CP and YWLL want to link up with.

A recent example of this strategy was provided in Chile. The crushing defeat that the Chilean working class suffered on September 11 was the outcome of similar policies of class collaboration and indicates what will happen if faith is placed in any section of the capitalist class, and not in the independent power of the working class.

The Stalinists see the main enemy of the working class not as capitalism as a whole, but a so-called more reactionary monopoly capitalism. They see as the first task for revolutionaries the defeat of this more reactionary monopoly capitalism. Later in the future, they say, a so-called liberal capitalism will be destroyed, and then socialism will be on the agenda. A major flaw with this analysis is only one capitalism exists in the imperialist epoch--monopoly capitalism. There is no fundamental difference between so-called "liberal" capitalism and "reactionary monopoly" capitalism. The Yankee capitalists who support Nixon, for example, are no less reactionary than the reactionary southern capitalists who support Nixon. The CP's attempt to draw a qualitative distinction between "liberal" and "reactionary monopoly" capitalism is done in an attempt to derail the masses of working people from confronting the entire capitalist system.

This is why the Stalinists oppose the right of Blacks to self-determination. For Blacks to win political and economic control over their communities, it will mean the destruction of capitalism as a whole. It can't occur otherwise. Racism is tied to the social fabric of American capitalism

and can only be destroyed after the workers take power.

This revolutionary potential of the Black struggle is in opposition to the utopian Stalinist program to pressure "liberal" capitalists to fight against so-called reactionary monopoly capitalists. Black liberation is impossible unless capitalism is overthrown. This the Stalinists understand and are opposed to.

Their reformist perspective for the Black struggle flows from the Stalinists' general strategy to bring fundamental change to America. They are not for revolution but for reform. Why?

The American Communist Party is not an independent political party that makes its own decisions. It is the official mouthpiece of the Moscow ruling bureaucracy. And the history of their position on the Black struggle since Stalin usurped power in the Soviet Union in 1924 clearly shows this.

It was the Communist International (Comintern) under the revolutionary leadership of Lenin and Trotsky, that first convinced the CP-USA to take a correct position on the Black question in the early 1920s. Prior to 1920, the early socialist movement viewed the Black question as a lesser part of the class question. But Lenin and Trotsky impressed upon the early non-Stalinized CP that Blacks were not only oppressed as part of the working class but as a national minority. That is, similar to oppressed semi-colonial nations in Latin America and Africa, Blacks are dually oppressed--as workers and as an oppressed nationality.

This correct position, however, was turned on its head in 1928 by the then Stalinized Comintern at its Sixth World Congress. The Stalinists proclaimed at this Congress that revolutions were on the agenda worldwide and that capitalism would soon be overthrown. This period was called the "third period," where CPs around the world organized ultra-left and adventurous actions.

At the Sixth Congress the Comintern passed a resolution on the American Black struggle in line with their general analysis of the world situation. The resolution called for Black self-determination in the US, but only in the Black Belt. That is, the right to set up an independent Black state in 200 or so contiguous counties in the South. The CP did not ask the Black population what they thought of this idea. They decided for Blacks that self-determination meant an independent Black state in the so-called Black Belt, and proceeded to organize support for their position around the country.

However, in 1935 the world Communist movement changed its position that revolutions were immediately on the agenda--as they said at the Sixth World Congress. Instead, the main danger had become fascism, after the CP's disastrous line led to the victory of Hitler in Germany and

the subsequent crushing of the CP and SP. The Stalinist line was now to attempt to organize people's or popular fronts. That is, like Winston's anti-monopoly coalition, these fronts would include a section of the so-called liberal capitalist class. For example, the CP participated in two such class-collaborationist fronts in Spain and France in 1936. Both fronts laid the groundwork for major defeats of the working class, including the victory of fascism in Spain in 1939.

The Comintern's new position of popular frontism led the CP-USA to change its position on the Black struggle. They dropped the call for self-determination in the Black Belt. This was done to make it easier for the Stalinists to collaborate with liberal capitalists. The change in line flowed not from the needs of the Black masses, but from the needs of the Kremlin.

Again in 1939, when Stalin signed a non-aggression pact with Hitler, the CP-USA changed its line on the Black struggle. It once again raised the demand for self-determination in the Black Belt. Stalin was collaborating with fascist capitalism instead of "democratic" capitalism and it was necessary for the CP-USA to act as "revolutionary" as possible against the American government.

This back and forth position on the Black struggle continues to this day. Whatever the needs of the Moscow bureaucrats at any point in time is reflected in the position taken by the American CP. If it means scuttling the Black struggle, so be it.

In 1941, for example, A. Philip Randolph, a leader of the Socialist Party and founder of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and National Negro Congress, initiated a call for a March on Washington by Blacks demanding an end to racist hiring practices and the right to work in the arms industries. The March was later called off by Randolph after Roosevelt created the Fair Employment Practices Committee providing Blacks some jobs in the war industries. The Stalinists, however, opposed this planned national march because of the Soviet Union's alliance with fascist Germany and said the demands of the March were too moderate--the CP wanted militant action against the US government. But as soon as Hitler launched war on the Soviet Union, they changed their ultra-left position, and then demanded that the March be completely called off. The Stalinists said the main tasks of Blacks and working people was to support the "allied" imperialists against the "axis" imperialists, even at the expense of their own struggles for civil rights and a better wage against the bosses. Throughout the US and USSR alliance during World War II, this was the policy of the Stalinists toward the Black struggle.

The Black Belt position, for example, was again raised by the CP after World War II, in 1948, at the start of the cold war and imperialism's whipping up of anticommunist hysteria. In 1959 it was dropped again with the rise of the

civil rights movement and the present radicalization. At their 1959 convention, the CP claimed that Blacks no longer had the right to separate because the majority of the Black population now lived in urban centers. They concluded Blacks no longer resided in one common territory, and therefore, to support Black self-determination, i. e., including the right to separate, would be a capitulation to monopoly forces.

The position the Stalinists take on the Black struggle as on all other questions flows from their general program. At the present time, building an anti-monopoly coalition is in their best interests. This fall the Stalinists organized two predominantly Black conferences. They gathered around 800 people at a political prisoners defense conference and another 800 people (all Black) at a national conference on African liberation. They held firm political and organizational control of both conferences.

They did not organize either conference to advance the Black liberation movement. For example, their African conference was organized despite the fact that another coalition exists, the African Liberation Support Committee, which organized the large May demonstrations in support of the African liberation struggles. The CP's move was to advance its own interests, not for building a movement against the US role in southern Africa. The fact that the CP only barely participated in building the earlier May ALD actions points to the divisive role they are now attempting to play among supporters of African liberation.

The CP is opposed to building any type of movement that involves masses of Black people in the streets against the government. At their Africa conference they did not project to build any actions but, instead, to launch a petition campaign to pressure the United Nations to apply further sanctions against South Africa and Portugal.

The CP's perspectives for the political prisoners defense organization was likewise done for their own interests, not in the interests of Blacks being victimized by the police and government. Little activity has been carried out by the defense committee since its formation.

The Stalinists have been forced to take initiative and organize these recent conferences because of the pressure of the Black struggle. Also, by organizing these conferences under their control, they can use them to recruit to the CP and YWLL at the expense of Black activists who are seriously interested in defending those victimized by capitalism or in building a solidarity movement with the African liberation struggles.

The CP strategy for an anti-monopoly party is shown by their support to liberal Black or white "progressive" Democratic politicians and formations like the Congressional Black Caucus. They supported Coleman Young for mayor of Detroit and Thomas Bradley for mayor of Los Angeles--

both are Black Democrats. They support such "progressives" as the road to build an anti-monopoly party. In fact, the Stalinists do not exclude the possibility of the Democratic Party being transformed into that party.

The Stalinist program is one of reform not revolution, and thus, their program for Black liberation limits itself to reforming capitalism. The CP and YWLL with their rhetoric of socialism and anti-monopoly is only a cover for their past and undoubtedly future betrayals of Blacks and other working people. They represent an obstacle of Blacks moving from their present consciousness to a socialist consciousness.

Our struggle against Stalinism in the Black movement must be viewed as part of our struggle against their overall reformist program for the working class. Their adaptation to nationalism in dress and in organizing all-Black conferences is done out of necessity. It does not reflect a change in their political opposition to Black nationalism and Black control of Black communities. Their perspective remains tying the Black community to the Democratic Party and attempting to win Black liberation through the ballot box.

The Stalinists were a major obstacle to the Black struggle in the 1930s and 1940s, and they still retain a large number of older Black cadres and have won new Black youth. We must be conscious to expose their past betrayals as well as their bankrupt strategy of today.

### Social Democrats

The Communist Party and the Young Workers Liberation League are not alone in advocating a reformist program for Black liberation. The Social Democrats, USA, and Young People's Socialist League likewise call upon Blacks to stay tied to liberal capitalism as the only road to Black liberation.

Although the Social Democrats are by far one of the most reactionary political tendencies in the country, they play an important role within the labor bureaucracy. The Social Democrats attempt to portray themselves as anti-racist and speaking in the interests of Black workers. And since the labor bureaucracy has been one of the major obstacles to the advancement of the Black struggle as well as the radicalization of the entire working class, it is important to analyze the Social Democrats' program for Black liberation.

The Social Democrats state that their goal is to bring democratic socialism to the United States. That is, like their comrades in Germany, Sweden and Israel who control those governments, a socialism that does not mean the overthrow of capitalism. The Social Democrats stand for reforming capitalism, and since the October, 1917 revolution and the rise of Stalinism in the Soviet Union in the mid-1920s, they have also concluded that the main danger to working people is communism not capitalism.

The Social Democrats see capitalism being reformed through the pressure exerted by the labor movement on liberal capitalism. Their goal is to construct a liberal coalition of Blacks, labor and the poor to bring about a more liberal capitalist government.

This reliance on labor to lead the fight for change, however, is not one to transform the present reactionary misleadership to one that will fight for the rights of Blacks and other working people. No, instead, the Social Democrats support 100% the present Meany-led leadership of the labor movement. The Social Democrats are opposed to independent political action by labor to fight for working people's needs.

Although historically the labor movement under militant leadership has fought in the interests of the oppressed, like in the 1930s when the Congress of Industrial Organizations was built and organized both Black and white workers, the present labor movement is saddled with a conservative leadership whose main concern is the preservation and expansion of their own privileges and powers.

In 1963 the Socialist Workers Party passed a resolution on the Black struggle, "Freedom Now: New Stage in the Struggle for Negro Emancipation." This resolution explained how these conservative bureaucrats function:

"The capitalist-minded bureaucrats are guided by class collaboration, not class struggle. In practice, this means not fighting the employers but seeking deals with them--sometimes to preserve the conditions of the older, more privileged, higher seniority workers and always at the expense of the weaker and most exploited workers, of whom the Negroes and other minorities form a large part.... Their only real interest in Negroes is collecting their dues and keeping them tied to the Democratic Party."

This policy of the labor bureaucracy still holds true today. Their main concern remains collection of dues and opposition to struggles by Black workers that attack the racist privileges of the bureaucracy.

Despite the fact the AFL and CIO, after their merger in 1955, pledged to eliminate racism, the day-to-day actions of the trade unions toward the Black struggle has been one of indifference or hostility.

What has been the practical application of the Social Democratic line? Internationally, the Social Democrats have sided with imperialism on every assault it has carried out against the oppressed. The Social Democrats supported US imperialism's racist aggression against the Vietnamese people. The Social Democrats wholeheartedly support US-Israeli aggression against the Arab peoples. YPSL, for example, has launched a campaign against the YSA as being anti-Semitic for our support to the Arab peoples,

Domestically, they support the Meany-led trade union bureaucracy and "pro-labor" liberal capitalist politicians in the Democratic Party.

In relationship to the Black struggle, the Social Democrats are opposed to the classification of Blacks as a nationality. Since Blacks are primarily a part of the working class, they believe that national divisions should not be recognized. They argue that to recognize "racial categories" would cause resentment among white workers. In reality, they place major responsibility for racism on the backs of Black workers who dare to fight racist oppression and not on the capitalist government and on the real racist practices of white workers. Everything is turned upside down.

Besides being opposed to quotas to increase Black employment in the building trades and construction industries where Blacks have been discriminated against for years, the Social Democrats oppose Black control of institutions in the Black community. They argue that those who hold such positions are enemies of the labor movement, and thus, enemies of Blacks struggling for full integration and equality in American society. They instead propose, as stated in their 1973 political program, "We remain strong advocates of integration, and we adhere firmly to the belief that the main hope for Black Americans lies in the success of the American labor movement's struggle for an egalitarian society" (New America, April 25, 1973).

They view this fight for integration to be led by the reactionary leadership of the labor movement. Flowing from their program that Black liberation is possible under capitalism, they oppose any independent organization of Blacks as Blacks outside of the two capitalist parties.

Although it is true that the fight for Black liberation is tied to the revolutionary transformation of the labor movement, this does not mean subordinating the struggles and needs of the Black community to the current backward leadership of the labor movement. It means fighting for a revolutionary leadership of the labor movement that supports the right of Black self-determination, as well as fighting for demands of the entire working class.

What best epitomizes the Social Democrats' approach to the Black struggle, and why we must be knowledgeable of their politics, is the role Social Democratic or Social Democratic-minded bureaucrats have played in many teacher strikes.

The best example is provided in New York where the United Federation of Teachers, led by Albert Shanker, a member of the Social Democrats and vice president of the American Federation of Teachers, organized racist campaigns against the Black and Puerto Rican communities.

The UFT, in line with the program of the Social Democrats, views the best way to secure gains for teachers and



improvements in the educational system as supporting the Democratic Party. They oppose any independent initiatives outside of the capitalist parties. In carrying out strikes and other actions, they look to the capitalist politicians to fight the Board of Education. They reject the strategy of mobilizing their own ranks and winning support from the oppressed nationalities as the most effective way to win. They instead oppose any demands raised by the Black and Puerto Rican communities for more control over their children's education.

In 1968 the UFT organized a racist strike against Black and Puerto Rican parents and students struggling for control of their schools. Although Shanker attempts to pass himself off as an opponent of racism and for the rights of oppressed minorities, he organized the union in opposition to the right of the Black community to have any control of their schools. He claimed that he was fighting against "mob" rule and upholding democracy. Shanker called Blacks who opposed his actions "racist" and "anti-Semitic." Shanker's racist policies of opposing the right of Blacks to control their schools against the common enemy--the Board of Education--placed the UFT on the side of reaction.

A more recent example is the Shanker-led campaign against Puerto Rican superintendent of New York's School District #1, Luis Fuentes. Black, Puerto Rican and Chinese parents are trying to gain control of their children's education. Again, the UFT's opposition to so-called "mob" rule has placed them on the side of racism and reaction.

These policies of the Social Democratic-led UFT have made the UFT one of the most hated organizations in the Black community. And these racist actions, as carried out by the UFT, are encouraged by the Social Democrats throughout the labor movement. This is why we must be aware of their politics and combat them. The Social Democrats are influential within the labor bureaucracy and represent one of the most conscious groups with a worked out program of opposition to Black self-determination and socialist revolution.

### Maoists

Besides the Social Democracy and the Moscow Stalinists, we are also vying with the followers of Peking Stalinism for leadership of the Black movement. We can expect as the radicalization deepens the influence of the various Maoist grouplets will continue whether or not the present discussions to form a national pro-Peking Stalinist party come to fruition. At the current time, we are confronted by different Maoist grouplets on a number of campuses and a pro-Maoist newspaper with national influence. We should be prepared to take them on both ideologically and practically.

As explained in the political resolution, there are a number of these groups around the country: Revolutionary Union, October League (Marxist-Leninist), Black Workers

Congress, The Guardian newspaper and other small groupings. Although they have differences on domestic perspectives, they all agree with Mao's two-stage theory of revolution for oppressed nations--"people's democracy" first, then socialism--and opposition to Trotskyism. On the Black question, they all agree, with slight variations, on complete opposition to Black nationalism.

All are sectarian and ultraleft and view winning Black liberation solely from the perspective of the overall working class struggle against capitalism. They downplay or even reject the need of independent Black organization and mobilization in the fight for Black self-determination. They subordinate the nationalist struggle to the class struggle, and reject our analysis of the combined character of the coming American revolution. This approach to the Black struggle is shown by their sectarian view that the only significant Black struggles are those waged by Black workers.

Despite the Peking Stalinists' sectarian approach to the national question, Blacks are coming around them. This is a reflection of the growing interest in Marxist ideas by an increasing number of Blacks. It is also a reflection of the prestige of the Chinese revolution and the equating, by many Blacks, of the Chinese bureaucracy with the masses of Chinese people who brought workers power to China.

We want to expose the real nature of the Chinese leadership. The Maoists are Stalinists. Their strategy for world revolution is one of "peaceful coexistence" as the unfolding world detente clearly shows. Their foreign and domestic policies are designed to defend the interests of the ruling bureaucracy, not to defend the interests of the workers and oppressed worldwide. We should point to their most recent counterrevolutionary policies as examples to Blacks sympathetic to Maoism. For instance, we can point to Peking's recognition of the Chile junta and its refusal to grant political prisoners' asylum in its Chilean embassy; its support to Pakistan in the 1971 slaughter of over one million Bengalis; along with Moscow, its pressuring of the Vietnamese to sign the Paris "peace accords" and numerous other treacherous policies to explain the counterrevolutionary essence of Maoism. Imperialism's continued attempt to use the Sino-Soviet dispute to advance its own aims, also will help to expose both Moscow's and Peking's policies as being carried out only in the interests of the ruling bureaucratic castes, not in the interests of the world working class.

Maoism's role in the Black struggle, like Moscow Stalinism, is to stay in line with the wishes of the Peking regime. Support to Peking's line is always first, never the needs of the Black masses.

### Baraka and the Congress of African People

Besides the left tendencies just described, another opponent nationally is the Congress of African People (CAP) led by the anticommunist Imamu Baraka of Newark.

The Congress of African People is a conglomeration of different Pan-Africanist groups scattered across the country. The major link between each is their general agreement with Baraka's general political program on how Blacks will win liberation. This program consists of viewing Blacks as only a nationality, and not recognizing that the mobilization of the working class as a whole is needed for revolutionary change.

Baraka summarizes his strategy in the slogan of "unity without uniformity." That is, the coming together of nationalist and non-nationalist forces in the Black community to strengthen and unite the community. But not in order to organize the Black community in independent political action that can eventually link up with other forces in opposition to the capitalist state. Instead, it is to tie the Black community to Black reformist politicians in the two capitalist parties.

For example, at the Gary Black political convention held in March, 1972--where the question of a Black party was posed but scuttled by the Congressional Black Caucus and the Baraka leadership of the conference--Baraka made the meaning of his strategy clear. He viewed the Gary conference as a way to bargain with the two capitalist parties to advance the struggle for Black liberation. He opposed the Black party and spoke against it when some delegates raised it on the convention floor. He instead supported the formation of a national Black Assembly as the bargaining vehicle for the Black community vis-a-vis the two capitalist parties.

Baraka, however, to provide himself a left cover, stated he was in support of a Black party but for some time in the future. This argument against forming a Black party today is similar to the position of the Stalinists and other reformists in the 1930s who opposed the immediate formation of a labor party. As we all know, no such labor party has come into existence forty years later. Baraka's "later" position on forming a Black party is only a justification to work in the Democratic Party.

Baraka's attempt to bargain with the capitalist parties in 1972 led nowhere. He went to the Democratic Party convention but came home with nothing--a clear refutation of his program. His strategy is totally utopian and reformist and cannot advance the struggle for Black liberation. It will not be Baraka and his followers who will decide the program of the Democratic Party on the Black struggle. As the Democratic Party convention showed, none of the needs of Blacks were included in the Democrats' platform despite Baraka's bargaining.

Baraka and other Pan-Africanists who follow his views oppose breaking the Black community from the capitalist parties. By mouthing Pan-Africanist rhetoric, he is able to provide a nationalist cover for Black Democrats and help keep Blacks, particularly young Blacks who are interested in struggle, within the capitalist parties as a caucus to bargain for concessions from the ruling class. Although Baraka and

his followers are not visible where we primarily carry out activity, their anticommunist pro-Democratic Party ideology must be combatted. This holds particularly true in the work we do around Africa. In a number of areas, primarily on the East Coast, Baraka's formations have taken political and organizational control of the African Liberation Support Committee.

### Our Strategy

In contrast to the political programs put forth by the opponent tendencies just discussed, we, as revolutionary Marxists, conclude that Black liberation is not possible under capitalism. Only the victory of socialism will allow Blacks to reach full economic and social equality with whites either within the confines of one state or through the formation of an independent Black state or states after the victorious socialist revolution, that is, through whatever form self-determination may take. Racism is integrated into America and can't be destroyed except with the overthrow of capitalism.

The fact that Blacks are mostly centered in the cities and are predominantly working class in composition gives the Black community tremendous social and political power. The example of Black political action will in the long run help facilitate the general politicization of the working class. White workers will take note of these Black struggles and see that only independent action on their part and support to Black demands against the common enemy will improve their situation.

Black liberation cannot take place without the unified action of the entire working class, both Black and white. The American socialist revolution will be a combined process, that is, the fight of Blacks for self-determination and the fight of the working class to seize state power. And Blacks will be the vanguard of the working class. As Trotsky pointed out in 1939 in discussions with leaders of the SWP on the Black struggle:

"If the workers' aristocracy is the basis of opportunism, one of the sources of adaptation to capitalist society, then the most oppressed and discriminated against are the most dynamic milieu of the working class. We must say to the conscious elements of the Negroes that they are convoked by the historic development to become a vanguard of the working class. What serves as a brake on the higher strata? It is the privileges, the comforts that hinder them from becoming revolutionists. It does not exist for the Negroes. What can transform a certain stratum, make it more capable of courage and sacrifice? It is concentrated in the Negroes. If it happens that we in the SWP are not able to find the road to this stratum, then we are not worthy at all. The permanent revolution and all the rest would be only a lie."

The ultimate unity of Blacks and labor, however, will

not be based on Blacks subordinating their struggles to the backward desires of the present labor bureaucracy. Unlike the Social Democrats, we do not accept the Meany leadership of the labor movement. We seek to replace the present bankrupt leadership for one willing to fight in the interests of working people.

The road to Black liberation is for Blacks to break with the parties of capital and form an independent Black party to fight for Black control of their community. This means taking the Black struggle out of the hands of the reformists and those wishing to keep Blacks tied to the Democratic Party. It means waging a fight on the political field for control over their lives. It means organizing the Black masses in mass action campaigns around issues related to the daily racist oppression Blacks suffer--the fight for control over Black schools, the fight for better housing and better jobs like struggles waged in the building trades, and the fight against police brutality waged in Detroit and Atlanta. These types of independent campaigns as well as running independent Black candidates in elections are the way to fight against capitalism and for Black liberation.

None of the other tendencies discussed have such a program. None of the currents besides ourselves hold that the coming American socialist revolution will be a combined one. The CP says liberal capitalism--an anti-monopoly coalition--can solve racism. The Social Democrats say reform--won by liberal Democrats in alliance with the reactionary union bureaucracy--can end racism. Baraka and other Pan-Africanists of his ilk say Blacks organized in a bargaining unit can pressure the two capitalist parties to advance the struggles of Blacks. And the Maoist sects reject in practice the national side of Blacks' oppression because of "workerism," and therefore, provide no program that can win Black liberation.

Only our movement has the revolutionary program to win Black liberation. "As against both the reformists and ultralefts," the Transitional Program for Black Liberation states:

"the revolutionary Marxists seek to take advantage of the basic weakness in the position of the ruling class. This lies in the deep-going tendency of all serious social struggles in this epoch to involve government power and to raise the question of who should exercise this power, no matter how limited these struggles may be, or may appear to be, at the beginning.

"The revolutionary Marxists propose a strategy based on this fact. The succession of transitional demands suggested above corresponds to the course of struggle repeatedly observed in the world today. To pose these demands in their logical succession, to try to organize battles along this line, helps to develop an understanding of the main existing tendency in the class struggle, thereby advancing the political understanding of the masses and hastening the stage when a final showdown with the racist capitalist system becomes a realistic possibility....

"In order to win liberation, the revolutionary movement must overthrow these exploiters whose system breeds and sustains racism and oppression."

We must apply the method of the Transitional Program in our day-to-day activities in the Black liberation struggle. We must become more aggressive in getting out our program and talking to the increasing number of Blacks open to our revolutionary Marxist ideas.

November 21, 1973

## ORIGINS OF THE DISPUTE IN THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

By Rudy Zeller, Detroit Local

The Fourth International is holding its Tenth World Congress in January. It is tremendously important for comrades to understand the significance of this event and particularly the role we as YSAers can play in the shaping of the politics of our world movement.

We as Trotskyists are first of all internationalists. That is, we understand that the struggle we are involved in, the making of socialist revolution, is a process that can only be accomplished successfully on a world scale. This reality can simply be understood by the fact that our opponents, the capitalist class, rule and think on an international scale. Vietnam and now Chile are ample proof of this fact. So that a defeat abroad is a defeat for us here in the U. S., and a victory abroad is a victory for us here in the belly of imperialism.

It is, therefore, crucial for us to pay attention to events around the world, learn the lessons of those struggles and through the International, its world pre-congress discussion and the congress itself allow the leadership and rank and file of the sections to comprehend these events. It is only this way that we can intervene effectively into the class struggle.

The YSA in the past has played a major role, best exemplified in our adopting and defending the document, "The World Wide Youth Radicalization and the Tasks of the Fourth International," which was discussed at the past Congress. I believe we can play a similar role this coming January. It is therefore very important that all comrades participate in the YSA pre-convention discussion, both orally and written, so that we can elect delegates confidently and make sure we make this an authoritative YSA convention, and through that process send authoritative observers to the world congress.

What are the origins of the dispute? Here, I want to focus on this question and particularly around some important events in Latin America. I do not want to discuss Argentina or Bolivia, the events past are quite clear and most comrades are familiar with the relevance they hold in this discussion. Instead, I will use the events around Cuba, Peru and the latest events in Chile to try and give this discussion a wider scope in terms of its meaning. At the end I would like also to make a couple short points on methodology.

### Cuba

"It was differing judgments concerning the possibility of a repetition of the Cuban pattern that divided the delegates at the last world congress into a majority and a minority. On the basis of these judgments different prog-

noses were made. The debate now centers on which judgment turned out to be correct as shown by the lessons of events since then." ("The Underlying Differences in Method," by Hansen, IIDB, Vol. X, No. 12, p. 15 )

Aside from a further confirmation of the theory of the permanent revolution, which the Cuban experience tested and which is generally agreed on by all members of the Fourth International, there are other important lessons to be absorbed around which important differences have arisen. In an article by Comrade Camejo, "Guevara's Guerrilla Strategy," a few very important lessons are drawn by now members of the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction.

"The aim of the article was to determine 'if it is possible to repeat the strategic path of the Cuban revolution elsewhere in Latin America.' Comrade Camejo's conclusion, after considering the relevant material, was that the 'general outline' of the Cuban revolution can be repeated; it is possible once again for a mass mobilization to begin in one of the Latin American countries with democratic demands and continue until it passes over into a socialist revolution. 'But what cannot be repeated is the conquest of governmental power without the mobilization of far more powerful social forces than were required in Cuba.... Thus, the strategic approach of the July 26 Movement is insufficient to achieve the necessary mass mobilization and participation prior to achieving governmental power. This will require political and organizational strategies better than those employed in the Cuban revolution.'" (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 12, p. 14 )

In essence, we say that the Cuban example on the question of taking state power was a historical exception that cannot be repeated. We cite primarily the semi-neutrality of U. S. imperialism and indecision on the part of the native bourgeoisie as very important factors in allowing Castro to take power. These factors can no longer be anticipated. Vietnam and Santo Domingo so very clearly demonstrate that U. S. imperialism has also learned in its own way the lessons of the permanent revolution. No longer will they allow any movement for social change go unchecked in any third world nation. The native bourgeoisie has also learned their lesson. In Chile they never allowed Allende an opportunity to touch or alter the state apparatus (particularly the means of repression) and finally they crushed the mass movement.

We also cite the historical pattern since the Cuban revolution as further evidence of the Cuban experience as being an exception. That is, since 1959 every guerrilla front in Latin America has been resoundly defeated, including Guevara's own experience in Bolivia, where he met with his death. These lessons have been further confirmed by the events in Bolivia and Argentina, where sections of the Fourth International put this guerrilla strategy into practice so disas-

trously.

And now, the detente between world imperialism and Stalinism, which will bring out even more clearly the counter-revolutionary nature of Stalinism, dictates now even more so the necessity of building the revolutionary party as the only way to ensure the possibilities of making a socialist revolution.

The comrades in the IEC majority did not draw these lessons back at the Ninth World Congress and more dangerously, they refuse to learn from the experiences after four years of further disasters with such a strategy. I quote Comrade Germain, so that comrades can understand the extent of the differences on these lessons from the Cuban revolution:

"Is this a 'model' which can be repeated? In some parts it can, in others it probably won't. Instead of speaking about imperialism's 'semi-neutrality' during the civil war, it would be more correct to speak about imperialism's hesitations after Fidel's military victory. This is certainly unlikely to repeat itself. Rapid if not instantaneous intervention by US imperialism or its continental relays, is the more likely variant now, as the case of Santo Domingo indicated.... This is precisely why it is correct to raise the perspective of 'prolonged civil war,' with a possible retreat from the cities where the revolution has already triumphed, if one understands what such an imperialist intervention could mean." ("In Defense of Leninism," by Germain, IIDB, Vol. X, No. 4, p.23 )

That is, although he agrees that we can no longer expect the "semi-neutrality" of imperialism, the lessons to be derived from it are totally opposite those we make. He insists on calling for a prolonged civil war and amazingly abandoning the cities after a revolutionary victory has been accomplished as a major possibility. It would seem that Comrade Germain should go over the other possible variations. It is interesting to note that he only discusses a retreat from the cities. I think that it flows from the fact that he sees the question of answering imperialism's might mainly as a military question. It flows logically from their adaptation to Guevarism, which I will touch on a bit later. It seems that he would have recommended to Lenin and Trotsky that after October they should have retreated from Moscow and Petrograd to the steppes of Russia and fight off imperialism in guerrilla bands. The conditions in some Latin American countries are in fact very similar to those in Russia back in 1917.

It is precisely in the cities where the strength of the revolution lies; to abandon them would mean certain defeat. This is precisely why we must be able to mobilize much more powerful social forces than was necessary in Cuba. In this context the necessity of the revolutionary party is all important. In the process of being built it becomes the highest expression of the desires of the masses and it is able to mobilize tremendously greater forces in a conscious

manner during a revolutionary uprising that far surpasses the process in Cuba before Castro came to power. It becomes more than anything else a political attempt to strangle imperialism's military attempts to crush the revolution, i. e., mobilizing international support through the Fourth International and other means, arming of the masses not in guerrilla bands but in a huge red army, harnessing the economic resources available to aid in the effort, etc. It takes a revolutionary party of mass to do this. The IEC majority's strategy of armed struggle makes the building of such a party impossible. The last four years have proven this contention outright.

I end this section on Cuba with a quotation from Hugo Blanco's Land or Death which succinctly expresses some of the miseducation that occurred from the Cuban revolution:

"Other positive milestones can certainly be enumerated with respect to the first socialist revolution in our hemisphere. Nevertheless, along with its invaluable positive influence on America and the world, it had some negative effects in the radical movement. Of course, the Cuban Revolution is not to blame for this, but rather that we revolutionaries lacked dialectical maturity and were not equal to the interpretation of such a sweeping and contradictory process.

"The Latin American Trotskyist movement, enthusiastic as it was about this revolution which confirmed the theory of the permanent revolution, could not remain immune from the negative influences, and was also affected by them in various degrees. We can enumerate the most important characteristics of this negative influence: the underestimation of the Leninist principle of constructing a Bolshevik-type party as a fundamental instrument for making the revolution; the underestimation of the transitional program, substituting for it the so-called strategy of armed struggle, or even the strategy of guerrilla warfare; the substitution of audacious actions by a courageous group for mass actions." (Pp. 74-75 )

#### An Adaptation to Guevarism

Why do the comrades in the IEC Majority Tendency maintain their positions in the face of events tested by the class struggle? It is my opinion that it flows from a mistaken conception of the varied objective factors affecting the subjective consciousness of the masses. Other comrades have defined it as an adaptation to ultraleftism. But the nature of this adaptation must be pinpointed clearly, and in this manner answering the question posed above.

Comrade Camejo in the same article quoted earlier initiated a discussion on this question. Under the heading of "Objective Events," Camejo takes certain principles of Guevarism to task. I believe the IEC Majority Tendency has adapted to these same principles of Guevarism and we

therefore, criticize them specifically for this adaptation. I quote from Che Guevara:

"The balance between the oligarchic dictatorship and the pressure of the people must be upset. The dictatorship constantly tries to function without resorting to force. Being obliged to appear without disguise, that is to say, in its true aspect as a violent dictatorship of the reactionary classes, will contribute to its unmasking, and this will deepen the struggle to such an extent that it will not be able to turn back. The resolute beginning of long-ranged armed action depends on how the people's forces fulfill their function, which amounts to the task of forcing a decision on the dictatorship--to draw back or to unleash the struggle." (Che Speaks, p. 82 )

Although comrades in the IEC Majority Tendency understand and would disassociate themselves from Che's position that the revolutionary vanguard must precipitate the fall of "bourgeois democracies" and thus cause the imposition of dictatorships, they do fall into Guevara's simplistic schema of the revolutionary process in Latin America. That is, that under the deepest repression, when all democratic rights are extinguished, when the police and the army control the streets, the peasantry and the proletariat are able to overcome their illusions about the nature of their exploitation and are, thus, impelled forward in a conscious anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist direction. This adaptation is not made explicit, but runs as a veiled thread throughout their arguments. I will quote from the latest documents of the IEC Majority Tendency to support the above contention. Comrade Maitan, in a report to the IEC last December, evaluated the events in Bolivia and stated:

"The strategy of armed struggle should begin with the presupposition that, owing to the aid and intervention of imperialism, the enemy is equipped with sizable political and military resources, that it will be impossible to defeat them in relatively short battles, that the culminating stage of the revolution when large masses of workers and peasants mobilize will be preceded by other stages where armed struggle will be the task of sectors or nuclei of the vanguard. Thus the need for this specific form of armed struggle which is guerrilla warfare." (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 6, p. 11 )

Notice the similarities between this and the quotation of Che. That is, the stages preceding the revolutionary overthrow no longer demand that the revolutionary party involve itself in the political activity and mobilization of the masses (building class struggle left wings in the unions, economic struggles, democratic struggles, etc.) as its major task using the method and program of transition; but, instead, have elitist vanguards carrying out armed action that will demonstrate to the masses that state power can be won. In other words, after exemplary actions by the vanguard, which demonstrate that the repressive apparatus can be defeated, the masses will understand that their day has come

and will thus proceed to take state power (of course, the masses will be armed by the vanguard). The entire emphasis in the argument rests on the fact that the bourgeoisie has extensive means to repress the masses. The entire political struggle, in practice, must therefore become secondary. This is one of the logical outcomes of this adaptation to Guevara's schema. We beg to differ, for the political struggle in all cases has been and will be the key task of the revolutionary party; because without winning the political struggle, that is, political hegemony in the workers' movement and its allies, the revolution will not be made--dictatorship or no dictatorship.

This adaptation is also evident in the major resolution submitted by the IEC Majority Tendency. Comrade Germain argues against Comrade Lorenzo for his inability to distinguish a stable bourgeois democracy and a military dictatorship and states:

"So the opposition between Comrade Mandel's analysis and Comrade Lorenzo's does not consist in Mandel's alleged inability to understand the need for exploiting legal opportunities, nor in his inability to link such opportunities with the rise of the mass movement at a given stage, nor with his lack of concern for building the party. The opposition hinges on Comrade Lorenzo's lack of understanding of the difference between a short legal interlude of a year or two, between periods of rising or declining military dictatorships, and a whole period of 'constitutional systems of classical bourgeois parliamentary democracy' in which the working class movement can organize and grow gradually, progressively and legally." (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 4, p. 6.)

In his argument Germain makes an incredible mistake. In fact, he dismisses "a short interlude of a year or two, between periods of rising or declining military dictatorships" as if it meant little to the revolutionary party and the masses; for although he reminds us that he understands the importance of exploiting legal interludes, his following analysis of Bolivia and the role of the POR (aside from the misrepresentation of the facts) does not take this short interlude of a year or two too seriously. Germain's entire argument does not base itself on the fact that this short interlude existed and the possibilities it opened up; but on the storm over the horizon, the coming repression. His eyes are firmly glued to the impending and inevitable coups! We agree with Comrade Germain for the necessity of explaining the possibilities of a right-wing coup and the importance of blocking such an occurrence. But how is that done exactly? Is it by supporting the attitude of the POR as Germain did before Torres fell? I quote from an interview with Hugo Gonzales in the Intercontinental Press of June 14, 1971:

"But obviously this work cannot be capitalized on, or having any meaning in the long run, except in the context of preparing our organization for armed struggle. In the present unstable situation we look on everything

as temporary. The repression that is to come will signal the start of a new stage of armed struggle on a scale previously unknown here.... Fundamentally it is this stage we are preparing for by trying to take full advantage of the opportunities offered us by the present situation." (All emphases are mine )

What has happened to the masses? There is no mention of them. Everything the POR did was not to help prepare the masses to seize state power, but preparing themselves technically to carry out armed struggle after a coup! This is crass sectarianism! That is the logic of the turn at the Ninth World Congress. Again, how is one to block a right-wing coup? By exploiting the interlude politically, not by arming the vanguard and maybe even sections of the masses and then sitting back expecting a coup. It is done by mobilizing the masses politically in stronger and stronger actions that finally lead to the question of state power. Right from the start the POR should have been involved in the Political Command and then in the Popular Assembly. It should have been there exposing the bourgeois elements that were participating in those organs. It should have fought to extend these incipient forms of dual power into real soviets of peasants, workers and soldiers. It should have carried out real agitational work in the army calling among other things for democratic election of officers, instead of making appeals to individuals to join the guerrilla forces. It should have spent more energy in producing a regular revolutionary paper and holding democratic conventions where a correct line could have been laid out. The POR did none of the above, instead it preoccupied itself with guerrilla warfare after Torres fell. The masses will find the means to arm themselves; it is the job of the revolutionary party to arm the masses politically. Comrade Germain has adapted to the schema set down by Che. His revolutionary clarity has been clouded by this schema exemplified in his singular preoccupation for the coming coup and not the political opportunities opened up by the interlude.

This problem is even evident in the contribution by Comrade Maitan in the July 2, 1973 issue of IP. The above criticisms hold true for the following statement concerning Argentina.

"Revolutionary Marxists must systematically underline the precariousness of the 'democratic' interlude and the inevitability of armed confrontation. They must not only demystify all the parliamentary and 'mass-ist spontaneist illusions,' but also--more precisely--insist on the need to prepare to respond to the inevitable attacks of the enemy, whatever form they might take. This means that an underground apparatus must be maintained; that under no circumstances must the special apparatus be given up; that even during the stage of a democratic interlude the use of forms of armed struggle to counteract the repressive actions against the mass movements or the revolutionary vanguard must be envisaged." (p. 795)

The dangers of adapting to this schema are evident even in an organizational fashion here. The need to maintain an underground apparatus at all times. This adaptation, as has been noted already, has become evident even in the perspective document on Europe.

I restate once more the major problem in conception that the IEC Majority Tendency faces. They mistake the objective factors that affect the subjective consciousness of the masses. They feel confident that the bourgeoisie's need for "strong" states, particularly of a military dictatorship variety, is the prime objective factor affecting the consciousness of the masses in Latin America (by extension also similar situations around the world). This, in fact, is much too simplistic to fit the reality of Latin America today.

In effect, the IEC Majority Tendency has allowed the discussion in Latin America to be reduced to a debate between the Stalinists and the Guevaraists or Castroists. They have allowed the debate to remain on the plain of a peaceful transition to socialism, the opinion of the Stalinists, or the armed and violent road to socialism, in this case meaning guerrilla warfare, the position held by Castro. The IEC majority has sided with Castro, but refuses to interject into the debate the positions and opinions of Trotskyists. That is, yes, the struggle will be armed and violent, we agree with Castro there; but for the struggle to be successful, the masses have to be armed politically so they can outflank the Stalinists and reformists, who will try to contain their struggles. And imminently tied to that political struggle is the building of a Bolshevik party, the conscious leadership of the proletariat that can assure a victory. That is the third position in this debate, and the only correct one. The IEC majority, through their adaptation to ultraleftism, has totally abstained from that political confrontation with the disastrous consequences in Bolivia and Argentina.

### Chile

This singular preoccupation on armed struggle, abstracted from the political realities of the class struggle, has led the IEC majority to make a one-sided evaluation of the events in Chile, and which I will cite as a further extension of the famous turn back in 1969. In the October 1 issue of IP, there appeared a statement drafted by the majority of the IEC on the events in Chile. In it they analyze the events of Chile and make an evaluation of what went wrong. Their entire emphasis rested on this fact: there is no peaceful road to socialism, the masses must be armed and must use them to smash the bourgeois state apparatus. In and of itself the above conception is correct. We agree also that the masses had to be armed and that they could not rely on any parliamentary horse-trading. The difference is that the comrades in the IEC majority see this problem, in practice, as a logistical, technical one! That concept is totally absurd! In essence, it becomes a technical question for them, because all the party had to do (probably the MIR in their opinion)

was form an armed wing, and through its examples of minority violence whip the masses into armed struggle. But the arming of the masses was by far a political question, and this the IEC majority totally omits from their analysis. The question at hand was to break the masses politically from the illusions sowed by the Popular Unity government. They had to be exposed for what they were, a popular front thrown up to deflect the class struggle. This could only be done by building a revolutionary party that could counterpose itself to this front, through clear principled politics. The comrades in the IEC majority omit this, except in broad and vague generalizations from their analysis. We say, though, this was the biggest lesson of the Chilean events. This is the major criticism they can muster against the Popular Unity:

"The Unidad Popular schema was presented by its supporters as the prelude to a stage in which the passage to socialism would be on the agenda; it foresaw reformist action within the framework of the capitalist system. That is why the coalition included political formations of bourgeois origin. What is worse, it sought collaboration with sectors of the bourgeoisie and the party representing those sectors and reaffirmed its complete fidelity to the existing constitutional system." (IP, Oct. 1, 1973, p. 1099 )

That is all fine and dandy, but that is only a broad and abstract criticism! Political lessons of the class struggle can only be learned in the concrete. This was precisely the task of revolutionaries in Chile, not the collection of arms as the IEC majority would propose. In my opinion these are very dangerous one-sided conclusions. The question of armed struggle has become a cure-all, a short-cut that blocks the long arduous unromantic work of building a revolutionary party.

#### Peru

At this point, the experience of our comrades in Peru, particularly of Hugo Blanco, on this question of armed struggle is very important to interject into the discussion. In our opinion, we have in this experience a model as to how the question of armed struggle is posed and then carried out. Again, it is to the detriment of the comrades in the IEC majority that these lessons are not absorbed. This example is a confirmation that the question of arming the masses is primarily a political question and secondly that party building always remains the singular most important priority of our cadre.

This is how Comrade Hansen describes the situation in Peru:

"The Trotskyists had succeeded in rooting themselves in the masses, had organized a broad, militant, peasant union structure, in which they had established themselves as key leaders. They had participated in revolu-

tionary actions undertaken by huge contingents of peasants--seizure of land. Organs of dual power had begun to appear in the countryside. The tactical use of guerrilla war thus occurred in the context of a mass upsurge in which the Trotskyists had won central leadership." (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 12, p. 12)

It is amazing that Comrade Germain tries to compare this experience with the actions taken by the PRT-ERP in Argentina. He derives from some broad generalization about the fact that the pre-revolutionary situation in Argentina was deeper and broader than in Peru at the time of the peasant uprisings; that therefore the activities of the ERP were just as warranted. This broad generalization about the overall political situation is correct, but the deduction he makes to the concrete is automatic and incorrect. Nowhere in Argentina was the ERP rooted in the masses. Nowhere did their actions flow from the concrete extension of the struggle on the part of the masses. Every single action the ERP took was vanguardist, conspiratorial and totally abstracted from the ongoing experience of the masses. Therefore, the Sallustro kidnapping as the best example was no more than terrorism. It is difficult to understand how the IEC majority tries to cover such mistakes with cleverly drawn up debators points and not with revolutionary criticism that these actions demanded.

We have here in Peru, then, a positive experience on exactly how the question of armed struggle is posed and then carried out. Comrade Blanco's own words describe these lessons most poignantly:

"In the most recent stage, we have had to combat the ultraleftists, for whom revolution is synonymous with guerrilla warfare carried on from one or more focos. In Peru, several Fidelista groups have sprung up, and the Maoists combine this position with Stalinist opportunism.

"We Trotskyists know that armed struggle is a necessary phase of the revolution, but it is only that--a phase. The revolutionary struggle is a process through which the masses rise in their organizational level, in their consciousness, in their forms of struggle, guided by their conscious vanguard, by the revolutionary party.

"The masses naturally prefer to settle accounts peacefully. In the course of the process, they begin to realize that the exploiters will not step down, and that they will respond to their demands only with violence; only then do the masses see the need of meeting the violence of the oppressors with their own violence. With the sharpening of this clash between the violence of the exploiters and the answering violence of the exploited, armed struggle arises inevitably...

"Nevertheless... it developed after the masses had come to see that armed struggle was the only solution.



I emphasize the role of the masses because that is the part the ultralefts do not understand; they believe that what is necessary is for us, the revolutionaries, to understand that the revolution will have to employ violence...

"It is very possible that rural guerrilla warfare will be one form of the armed struggle in Peru; but we cannot say that it will be the chief form. It seems to us that the more widespread and uniform the movement, the less spontaneous it is, the greater will be the importance of the relatively stable militias, both urban and rural.

"In our case, it was precisely the isolation that obliged us to convert from a militia to a guerrilla band.

"It is also necessary to explain that we are not against guerrilla warfare in principle, but we are certainly against using it artificially, out of context. We believe that guerrilla bands will arise fundamentally as ours did, that is, as a result of the political development of the local peasants. If our work is integrated into the development of the mass political consciousness, there is no reason to turn to artificial guerrilla activity; it appears to us that if we need to use such activity, it will be as an exception, not the rule.

"In summary, for us, the Trotskyists, guerrilla warfare is a tactic that may be used in a particular country under particular conditions, but it is not a strategy." (Land or Death, pp. 62-64 )

To end, there was also a negative lesson to be learned from the Peruvian experience. Again Comrade Blanco explains it clearly while polemicizing against the Stalinists,

"Nevertheless, I still think it was correct to choose the armed confrontation, even if all the guerrillas had been massacred and the repression against the peasants had been even more severe. The error was not in turning to guerrilla warfare. It was in having neglected

from the start to build the party, which would have organized, extended, and centralized all aspects of the struggle (armed struggle among them) in all their variations." (p. 69)

#### The Differences in Methodology

The method used by the majority of the United Secretariat is that "... in essence it consists of drawing tactical prescriptions directly from broad analytical projections that in themselves may be correct but do not correspond to the current concrete situation " (Hansen, IIDB, Vol. X, No. 12, p. 31 ) I already gave an example of this approach in Comrade Germain's treatment of the events in Peru and the comparison he makes with Argentina. This methodological error is expressed strikingly in their drawing broad tactical prescriptions for entire continents, i. e., Latin America and Europe. Such an approach leads to a further mistake in method, that is, raising a tactic to the level of a strategy, i. e., guerrilla warfare in Latin America, winning over the "mass vanguard" in Europe. This approach has led to major disasters in Bolivia and Argentina and, unless it is corrected, it will do the same in Europe or wherever else it is applied.

What is involved, I believe, is the abandonment of the approach of the Transitional Program. It is an attempt to find short-cuts to obstacles that will confront us in making a socialist revolution. In the process the long rooted politics of Trotskyism get swept under the rug. In fact, it is not us that will assimilate the mass vanguard, but it assimilates us. This, of course, would be a long step backwards. It is for these reasons, the political consequences of the turn at the Ninth World Congress and the persistence in continuing with that mistaken course, as well as the organizational obstacles thrown up by the IEC majority (the difficulty in getting documents translated) that has led to the formation of the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction. We hope that through this step, we will arrest the dangerous implications of this deepening dispute and that we can hold an authoritative world congress.

November 21, 1973

## THE FIGHT AGAINST FASCISM AND THE LIGUE COMMUNISTE

By Emily Ford (Internationalist Tendency), San Francisco Local

This contribution will specifically deal with the question of fascism and why the ex-Ligue Communiste (LC), formerly the French section of the Fourth International, was correct in taking the approach that it did toward the Ordre Nouveau.

### What is Fascism?

In order to understand the correctness of a particular approach toward fascism, it is first of all important to know just what fascism is and what its historical roots are. It is only by understanding the important characteristics of a particular social phenomenon that we can determine the role that it plays in the historical process and we can decide how to deal with it--or fight to smash it in this instance.

Let me begin by saying what fascism is not: it is not simply a "strong state" or a military government. True, certain fascist elements could support a government of this nature, but that still does not constitute the essence of fascism. A strong dictatorial regime is not enough--there are more ingredients which are required to cook up the rotten swill of society known as fascism. If a lack of democracy, authoritarian rule and police state methods constituted the essence of fascism, we could characterize the Soviet Union as fascist also, couldn't we?

What characterizes fascism is a whole social movement which exists solely in opposition to the working class and its organizations. As Trotsky pointed out, there are a number of elements which constitute fascism and I will briefly go through them. First of all, it is a mass movement. It is not a movement of ones or twos or small isolated groups of thugs, rather it grows to have influence over the minds and lives of millions of people who are disenchanted with the way that the society is being run and who earnestly want stability and order. A hallmark of fascism is the mass mobilization of hundreds of thousands of people in the streets. The composition of a fascist movement is mainly impoverished petty-bourgeoisie who are incensed by the turn of events that have occurred in the economy. Because of the particular role that the petty-bourgeoisie plays in relation to the means of production, they are actually being crushed between the two major classes: the workers and the capitalists. As a result, their position is economically, socially and consequently politically very insecure. That is why they are frantically striving for order and stability.

Fascism is predicated on the destruction of all working class institutions: trade unions, workers newspapers, social clubs and especially revolutionary organizations. They see the strength of the working class as being the main evil in society and hence their main enemy. Because of this, armed fascist gangs will constantly try to bust up any meeting or organization of workers.

Fascism gains its major impetus after there has been an economic and political crisis in society and a pre-revolutionary situation has occurred in which the working class has failed to take the initiative. In other words, the working class has had the chance to seize power but failed to do so. The petty-bourgeoisie, having no independent political path of their own, must follow the lead of a stronger class than itself. After viewing the defeat or demoralization of the proletariat, the petty-bourgeoisie will prostrate itself to the leadership of big capital in desperation. Even some workers will follow the banner for fascism even if it doesn't represent their own objective interests. It provides an alternative to the betrayal of their own leadership and in their eyes, this is what gives it an appeal. We Trotskyists are fully aware that the main reason that the working class is not able to take advantage of the pre-revolutionary situation is that it lacks revolutionary leadership and the leaders it has, whether Stalinist or Social Democratic, lead it down a treacherous road of pacifism. This is an important point and one which we will return to. My final point is that even though it does appear to provide an alternative by sprouting anti-capitalist rhetoric, fascism is not in opposition to or contradictory with capitalism. Instead, it is a degenerate form of capitalist rule and represents a last-ditch effort by the bourgeoisie to try and maintain their hold on society. Their desperation is manifested by the high degree of brutality that usually accompanies fascist regimes.

### Fighting a Fascist Movement

What does this have to do with the functioning of the ex-Ligue Communiste in France? A correct revolutionary approach toward a fascist movement was demonstrated by the Socialist Workers Party in 1938-39 in this country. Our attitude was that the fascists had no right to exist or hold meetings and rallies. The SWP held demonstrations for the purpose of busting up fascist gatherings because we knew, with Trotsky's guidance, that fascism had to be nipped in the bud--that it couldn't be allowed to grow. That is why our comrades didn't wait for it to become a mass movement before trying to crush it. The time to deal with it is when it is still small. The same can be said for our comrades in France.

It is important to recognize that a pre-revolutionary situation already occurred in France in 1968 and we expect to see similar upsurges and crises of the bourgeois order in the relatively near future. This is the only conclusion we can draw from our understanding of the deep contradictions the world and European economy is in. The Leninist-Trotskyist Faction has given no alternative to counter that outlined in the European Perspectives document. From this, we recognize that a certain reaction will grow in response to the worsening economic conditions and the growing

strength of the working class. We must also face the reality that if the class is not able to take proper advantage of the next major upsurges, then periods of reaction will almost inevitably set in. This situation gives rise to growing fascist currents. Both of these especially apply if the class remains under reformist leadership without significant sections having broken away toward the revolutionary left. This point was clearly recognized by the International Executive Committee Majority Tendency in the document The Building of Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe when they say:

"If a new revolutionary leadership is not built in the time remaining to us, after successive waves of mass struggles (some of which will certainly surpass even May '68 in France) the European proletariat will experience new and terrible defeats of historic scope."

We have seen this happen in the past and we should know enough to take concrete steps to try and avoid it in the future. It is precisely for this reason that the French comrades are absolutely correct to take the attitude that when the fascists begin to become a real threat, any meeting they attempt to hold should be protested and, if possible, broken up. This is especially the case when you are entering into a period of new upsurges and potentially pre-revolutionary situations and the vanguard of the working class is rapidly gaining strength.

Naturally, an important point--and one that is stressed by the IEC Majority Tendency in the Europe document--is that the defense against the emerging fascist movement must be "conceived and executed in such a way that they will be understood and endorsed by the workers." When one considers the impact that German, Italian and Spanish fascism had in Europe and the stamp that it has had on the minds of the workers, it is easy to see that actions against fascists are not unrelated to the consciousness of the workers as some comrades in the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction would believe. The basic, simple point to be drawn from all of this is that you do not wait until fascism engulfs you or even becomes a major pole of attraction because by then, it will have been too late.

### What Trotsky Said

Now, some comrades have made the accusation that our French comrades violated a cardinal lesson of the class struggle--that it takes the involvement of the masses to crush fascism.

Trotsky wrote extensively about the struggle against fascism. He explained that the reformist workers' parties could never lead this fight--only capitulate until their own destruction. Thus, this task, as all revolutionary tasks, falls into the hands of the Trotskyists. Trotsky explained that part of the dynamic of fascism is its bravado, its false confidence and air of invincibility. Compared to the cowardly and hesitating union bureaucracy, the fascists look

strong and brave. This is their attraction to the impoverished intermediary class.

In its initial development, before the bosses as a whole have given it their endorsement and backing, a fascist movement relies heavily on daring attacks on workers' groups and meetings. It does this as a way of demoralizing the workers and forcing them into passivity. In this phase of the fight, Trotsky emphasized that the workers must reverse this process. The workers should send squads to the fascist gathering and break it up. Trotsky emphasized the need to demonstrate in action that the fascist vermin were not invincible. The workers and petty-bourgeoisie must be shown that they can be beaten! An example of militant defense of the workers' movement is necessary and can win.

No one, least of all Trotsky, felt that such actions alone were enough to insure the defeat of fascism. The revolutionary vanguard must be able to break the masses from their cowardly leadership and insure organization of armed pickets for strikes and organized workers' self-defense on demonstrations and for their newspapers and meeting halls by creating a workers' militia to carry out this task. These involve raising these questions within the unions and proposing a united front to the reformist mass parties. All of these are calculated to win the workers away from the pacifist perspective of their mis-leaders.

We believe that this approach is exactly the one used by our French comrades. Upon putting out the call for a mass demonstration to confront the Ordre Nouveau, the comrades waged an extensive campaign within the workers' organizations. It must be noted that the former French section is in a much better position to do this than the American Trotskyists due to their regular and persistent efforts to become rooted in the working class since 1968. The ex-LC was in a position to, and did raise the need to fight the fascists within the mass organizations of the class. They also waged extensive propoganda among immigrant workers--the focus of the fascist attacks.

On June 21st in Paris, when a demonstration of 5000 marched upon the fascist meeting, THIRTEEN, not one or two but THIRTEEN different political tendencies were represented. While the Communist and Socialist Parties specifically denounced the action, some of its members didn't go along with their leaderships and did participate alongside immigrant workers and our comrades.

Trotsky emphasized that a crucial criterion for judging when to go on the offensive was the concrete relationship of forces. Some comrades seem to think that this means we should have no June 21st actions until the reformist leaderships are already discredited and the workers have come over to the revolutionary vanguard. This represents a spontaneist conception that has never resulted in success, only in paralyzation of the advanced workers and defeats. While no one advocates walking into an ambush, it would have

been betrayal to wait for the CP and SP to lead the fight. They never will!

Did the SWP wait for the AFL or CIO in the late 1930's before building anti-fascist demonstrations and busting up fascist meetings? The record shows that it didn't! Just like the ex-Ligue Communiste, the American Trotskyists put out a call for a united front of all organizations to take on the fascists. Jewish groups, Zionist and youth groups joined us in our tasks. Did we wait for the union bureaucracy to fight against U. S. imperialism in Vietnam to start an anti-war movement? NO! We can conclude that the former Ligue Communiste did propose a united front, does raise the need for workers self-defense within the unions and understands the need to involve the masses in the fight against fascism. But the action on June 21st, led by our comrades, was entirely correct and defensible.

The supporters of the LTF who claim that the anti-fascist campaign conducted by the French Trotskyists isolated our comrades must explain why, after their banning by the government, Rouge (their paper) doubled its circulation and rank-and-file members of the Communist Party were seen selling it in the streets. They must explain how the Rouge contingent at the LIP solidarity demonstration in Besancon

attracted hundreds of workers, many from the Lip factory itself. This action took place after the June 21st demonstration and the Ligue's banning. The Militant reported an incident where at a factory when police came in for another reason, the workers surrounded our comrade to protect him from the police reaching him, believing that the police had come for our comrade. Does this sound like isolation?

The fact is, our comrades' influence has increased since last June--among immigrant workers, rank-and-file of the CP and vanguard workers like those at Lip. This is not to say that we should welcome being banned and repressed. It merely belies the claim that the June 21st action and the entire campaign of our comrades against the Ordre Nouveau has isolated Trotskyism in France and was a catastrophe or even a serious setback for the world movement. The anti-fascist campaign of our French comrades proves the willingness of these comrades to undertake the tasks of the vanguard. We, supporters of the Internationalist Tendency in the YSA, reaffirm our support to the International Executive Committee Majority Tendency and the perspectives for Europe they have outlined.

November 24, 1973

## A CRITICISM OF THE PROPOSED "ORIENTATION TO THE NEW MASS VANGUARD"

By Harvey McArthur, Philadelphia Local

The political questions raised in the current discussion within the Fourth International have a direct bearing on the work of the YSA. The IEC majority has proposed many serious revisions of the traditional principles and methods of our movement. If these are adopted, they will have serious consequences for Trotskyists across the world. I would like to discuss some of the implications of the orientation towards the "new mass vanguard" (NMV) presented in the resolution "The Building of Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe" (IIDB, No. 5 in 1972).

This concept of the "new mass vanguard" is vague as presented in the Draft Thesis. The closest it comes to a real definition is the following: "What chiefly distinguishes this new vanguard from the one we have known throughout the preceding decades is its ability to intervene in the class struggle in its own right, to take political initiatives, and here and there to take leadership of mass workers struggles" (p. 13).

As far as clarifying what an orientation to the NMV will mean in practice, the Draft Thesis says: "The central task for revolutionary Marxists in the stage that opened in 1967-68 is to win hegemony within the new mass vanguard in order to build qualitatively stronger revolutionary organizations than in the preceding stage" (p. 13).

It calls for: "A constant political struggle within the vanguard to transform it, making it an adequate instrument for regenerating the organized workers movement" (p. 14), and for "organizing national political campaigns on carefully chosen issues that correspond to the concerns of the vanguard, do not run against the current of mass struggles, and offer a chance for demonstrating a capacity for effective action, even if still modest, by our sections" (p. 24).

Even the authors and supporters of the draft thesis seem unclear as to just what they are talking about. The resolution projects the NMV taking the leadership of mass workers struggles, even now. However, as Comrade Duret says in his contribution to the international discussion, "Some Questions of Method Concerning the European Document" (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 18), this vanguard is composed mainly of students. What role an essentially student grouping would play in leading workers' struggles is never specified. One would also suspect that these students would become engaged in other political struggles, and that it would be important for our comrades to intervene in these. Yet there is no discussion of work around campus issues, women's liberation, national struggles, anti-imperialist campaigns, defense of civil liberties, etc.

### The YSA's Approach

One thing that is clear from the Draft Thesis is that it is a major revision of the orientation and perspectives held by our movement in the past. This is laid out in the resolution "The Worldwide Radicalization of the Youth and the Tasks of the Fourth International" that was proposed by the United Secretariat at the last world congress, and adopted by the YSA at our December, 1969 national convention.

After discussing the scope and causes of the youth radicalization, this document says: "The college, high school, minority and working class youth should be brought together onto a common ground of struggle for their own demands against the established order. The aim should be to unite all these into a single powerful fighting force and thereby win the best representatives of all these categories to revolutionary positions and the revolutionary party" (IIDB reprint, 1968-71, p. 9).

In outlining a program of democratic and transitional demands to advance in the student movement, it says: "The objective is to link the student struggles with the struggles of workers and national minorities at their present level of development and orient them towards a combined drive for state power, bringing into the struggle all the forces opposed to the capitalist or bureaucratic regimes" (p. 11).

Nowhere is there an attempt to divide the student population into two sectors: the radicals and the others, and then to orient just towards the first group. The perspective is to concern ourselves with the needs of the masses of workers and students, and to mobilize as many people as possible in actions against the capitalist system. Out of this mass struggle, we will not only help raise the political consciousness of the masses, but also convince the more radical elements of the need for socialism and a revolutionary organization.

In her contribution to the international discussion, Mary-Alice Waters describes what the IEC majority line meant in practice for antiwar work in Europe ("A Criticism of the United Secretariat Majority Draft Resolution on 'The Building of Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe'--An Initial Contribution to the Discussion," IIDB, Vol. X, No. 3). I would like to look a little closer home, and evaluate the proposed orientation to the NMV in light of some recent experiences of the YSA at the University of Pennsylvania (Penn) in Philadelphia. I think that these experiences have shown the correctness of the YSA's line.

## The New Mass Vanguard at Penn

It is first necessary to try and define the NMV so that we know just what we are supposed to orient to. Some recent documents and contributions by some of the IEC majority comrades have been a little more helpful than the Draft Thesis in this regard. Their Draft Political Resolution states: "This new mass vanguard can be characterized in the most succinct fashion as the totality of forces acting independently and to the left of the traditional bureaucratic leaderships of the mass movement. What is involved is both a social and a political phenomenon, with the new vanguard including the radicalized layers, those that have gone into action, of the youth, the working class, women, the majority of which is unorganized, but an organized fraction of which is part of or follows the far-left organizations: Trotskyist, centrist, Maoist, Mao-spontaneist, etc." (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 20, p. 16.)

Pierre Frank also says: "For us the large vanguard is made up of these dozens and hundreds of thousands of people, above all youth, who want to overturn the capitalist regime, and who have already freed themselves from the grip of the Social Democracy and Stalinism" (IIDB, Vol. X, No. 14, p. 7).

Thus students, who are taking anti-capitalist political action but are not under the control of the traditional organizations would seem to be members of the NMV. Antiwar protesters, SDSers, women's liberation activists, Black activists, YSAers, ultralefts and radicals of all sorts would be included.

At Penn, the number of such activists has probably numbered several hundred at times. Recently, it has included very few organized opponents: only one or two YWLLers and one PLer. It is mostly unaffiliated radicals and reformists of different varieties.

The "reformist-ultraleft" category is broad and, since these people had no organization or real program, vague. But they are the people that have led many struggles at Penn over the last few years. They also tended to shift their political positions as the political situation changed. Those that set out to "shut down the government" on May Day, 1971, and who opposed the "liberal" April 24 antiwar demonstration, were also those who voted and even worked for McGovern in 1972. This is the real "new mass vanguard" at Penn.

In addition, there have also been a number of people working with the Student Mobilization Committee--25-30 activists at the most. Until recently, the YSA has had no comrades on campus, although some of us did spend a lot of time there during political upsurges.

So what did the NMV do?

Spring of 1972 saw a lot of activity at Penn. In March, the administration announced a large tuition hike, and hundreds of students marched to the main administration building (College Hall) to stage a sit-in and protest. The NMV elements were the undisputed leaders of this action.

It soon became obvious that the administration had learned a few lessons from earlier confrontations. Rather than call in the police to oust the sit-in, they graciously allowed us the use of a large lecture hall in College Hall to sit-in. Their work went on unimpeded, and it was clear that they intended to just wait out the protest.

The YSA proposed that the 300 protesters should not just sit there, but that we should reach out to the rest of the campus and win more support and more power in our fight. We suggested extensive leafletting, calling support rallies, organizing meetings in the dorms, and even launching a petition campaign to explain the issues surrounding the sit-in and to win more student support.

This was rejected by the NMV. They said that the people outside were apathetic, uncommitted, and that if they weren't inside sitting-in ("getting sore asses and bags under their eyes" as one person put it), they were really worthless to us.

When the administration did not respond favorably to the protest, the NMV began to get frustrated. They decided that the tuition hike didn't really matter, that the important question was whether our education was relevant or not. After all, what does it matter how much we have to pay to go to school if the education isn't meaningful? So the sit-in was supposed to propose and implement radical education reforms. It happened that a number of the NMV types had spent the last year in a radical education study group, and they had lots of suggestions on what changes to propose. Lengthy discussions were held, but no action was ever taken, and the sit-in gradually fizzled out.

### Antiwar Actions and the New Mass Vanguard

In April, 1972, the fighting in Vietnam escalated, touching off a wave of antiwar protests around the country, including at Penn. At first, the Penn SMC led these protests. Despite its few members on a campus of 20,000 (20 or so activists), the SMC organized rallies, leafletting both on campus and off, and built for the April 22 national antiwar demonstration in New York. These were the biggest actions at Penn since May, 1970, drawing in hundreds and hundreds of students at different times. The NMV was conspicuously absent throughout this period--organizing antiwar rallies and protests was not meaningful enough for them, even during a major escalation of the war.

However, it turned out that elements of the NMV had been meeting all along, and they finally decided what to

do about the war. The week after April 22, the week Nixon made a national television speech about the war, the NMV moved into action.

They called a mass meeting to watch Nixon on TV. (Not a bad idea, incidentally.) To ensure the best political discussion afterwards, they purchased one hundred gallons of wine and distributed it all, free, before the speech began. Four to five hundred people attended this meeting, and jeered Nixon all through the speech.

Once the speech was over, everyone wanted to do something. Someone suggested that we focus on getting ROTC off campus, and that we should occupy College Hall until this was done. A few people objected to taking over the building, but there were no provisions that night for conducting a real, democratic discussion. The NMVers suggested that we not discuss things where we were, but that we should move to College Hall and discuss it there. They then led a march to College Hall.

Once inside, the question of what to do was once again raised. A YSAer suggested that we use our time, numbers and the resources now at our command to turn Penn into an organizing center against the war. We could reach out to the surrounding community, to the high schools, other campuses, the factories, etc., and build a real citywide response to Nixon's continued aggression. The YSAer had hardly begun, however, when he was shouted down with cries of "Down with the Trots!" and the megaphone was taken away from him.

The NMV decided not to focus on the broader question of the war, but to concentrate on getting ROTC off our campus. What effect can we have on the course of the war, they asked. All we can do is purify our own campus. (Note: getting rid of ROTC is a good thing to do, and the YSA supported and participated in many such struggles. But at a time when there was a general antiwar upsurge developing, the correct political perspective, the most effective actions, would have been those oriented towards the masses of people in the country, and towards using the campus as a broad antiwar center.)

In keeping with the gravity of the situation, and hence the need to do "something committed," the NMV decided to barricade the entire building, keeping everyone out until ROTC was abolished. This was soon accomplished with remarkable efficiency (the NMV has certainly proved itself proficient in the technical aspects of such struggles).

The occupation was a serious political mistake, however. It cut off the more active students from the thousands of others who were against the war and who were willing to do something about it. They were unable to participate in the take-over, though, both because it was physically difficult to get in, and because they couldn't relate to this type of confrontation. The strength of the antiwar protest was thus considerably weakened.

The political character of the protest was also weak. The NMV had been so concerned with taking over the building (and hence proving themselves committed), that they had never clarified why they were doing it. The demands of the occupation remained obscure to those outside, and even to many inside.

The occupation lasted two days. During this time, the issue of ROTC was forgotten and most of the discussion revolved around the question: What do we do when the police come to throw us out? A few students wanted to go down fighting in a "committed" gesture (what they intended by this was never explained), but most of the people realized that this would be pretty stupid.

The major accomplishment of the occupation was teaching everyone a rather witty song called "Revolution, It's the Real Thing," sung to the tune of the Coca-Cola commercial. When the sheriff arrived to serve the injunction, he was greeted with a singing of this song, and then everyone filed out and the NMV went home.

The task of real antiwar organizing was left up to the YSA and the SMC. We were the only ones who built the continuing opposition to the mining of North Vietnam and other US aggression. We were the only ones who built the May 4 and May 15 antiwar actions.

Building the antiwar movement in this country was the central political task of revolutionaries for nearly a decade. It defended the struggle of the Vietnamese against US imperialism, it fought for the interests of the American and world working class, and it helped raise the political consciousness of millions of people here and around the world.

"Orienting to the vanguard," worrying about "the concerns of the vanguard" and focusing our work on building "actions of the vanguard" as outlined by the Draft Thesis, would have been disastrous for our antiwar work. It would have meant abstaining from actual antiwar organizing most of the time, thus losing our ability to influence masses of people and leaving the field open to the reformists and Stalinists. It would have meant engaging in isolated, sectarian actions when we did protest the war.

It should be clear who were the real builders of the antiwar movement, who met the test of the political situation and who didn't. It was the patient, consistent organizing such as that done by the YSA that maintained the continuity of the antiwar protests, that kept the pressure on the imperialist government, and that was ready to respond in a massive way to each new imperialist attack. It was the YSA that fought in the antiwar movement to give it a broad, powerful character. We fought to prevent it from becoming either a small, sectarian clique, or an amorphous reformist vote catching machine for the Democratic Party.

Many radical youth got discouraged and tired and began looking for easier ways to protest the war--either reformist

or ultraleft dead-ends. And we told them and showed them that you could and must organize the masses of people to have any impact on the course of the war. Our record is one that we can be proud of, in contrast to any other tendency on the left. You'd have to admit that we have demonstrated our capacity for taking effective action many times over.

### Building the YSA

There is another reason put forward for orienting to the NMV. The IEC majority comrades say that it is necessary to worry about the concerns of the vanguard or else we will not be able to influence them politically, will not recruit to our organization, and will not grow in influence.

In fact, the "traditional" methods of the YSA, based on the Transitional Program and the Youth Radicalization document, have proved to be very effective not only in increasing the political weight of the YSA at Penn, but also in having an increasing impact on the NMV.

This fall was the first time that the YSA has had a sizable fraction at Penn in some years. We launched an extensive propaganda campaign from the first day of school; selling hundreds of papers each week, setting up tables several times a week, launching a weekly socialist forum series, and building the SWP campaign. We were virtually the only active political group on campus, and soon everyone came to know of our existence, and that we would be an important political force this year. We also started a campaign to help support the UFW strike, to build PRDF, to defend the former Ligue Communiste, and to help establish USLA on campus.

The NMV was politically inactive at first. The only thing any of them had been involved in last semester was the UFW support group, and once they realized the YSA was also going to be active here, they left. The extent of their activity was organizing a couple of radical study groups and trying to form a new group called the Radical Action Group. RAG is supposed to be an all-inclusive radical formation, rather like the old SDS, but it has yet to get past the discussion stage.

The NMV types were very hostile to YSAers, as they had been in the past. We were seen as an unavoidable evil on campus, but they went out of their way not to talk with us or work with us. This was most blatant in the Penn Committee to Boycott Lettuce and Grapes. We took great care to involve the old NMV activists in the discussions planning the first meeting, the first tables, etc., to make it clear that we wanted to work with them. They responded with red-baiting ("You can't identify yourself as a YSAer if you work with the Farmworkers"), opposed our suggestions for broadening the committee to involve more new students, and finally dropped out altogether.

This hostile attitude has been changed by the work of

the YSA this fall.

We oriented towards the campus as a whole, trying to involve anyone who we could in the YSA's activities and in the different political struggles that we participated in. We were the only people that carried out consistent political work. The fact that our comrades were always there, through the conjunctural ups and downs of political activity, has forced some of the NMV to respect us a bit, and to look again at what the YSA is all about.

More important were some of the political campaigns that the YSA helped organize. When the coup occurred in Chile, we helped organize the Penn Student-Faculty Committee Against Military Repression in Chile. (We proposed a slightly shorter name, but lost.) This committee was formed to tell the truth about the coup, to organize in defense of political prisoners there, to oppose the repression, and to demand an end to US support for the junta.

In planning the first rally, we proposed that any campus group that worked with the committee be asked to say a few words in support. There were a few Stalinists working with the committee then, and once they realized that this would mean a YSA speaker, they opposed the whole proposal, even though the YWLL could have had a speaker too. We lost the vote 25 to 7. Some of the NMV's, who had left early, came back just to vote against us.

Nonetheless, we built the rally, and proved in practice to be the most consistent activists in the committee. Several independents, including one ex-Stalinist professor, complimented comrades on the way we worked in the committee. And when we organized a large teach-in on Chile two weeks later, there were no objections to a comrade speaking on the topic, "Why Allende Fell." A lot of people agreed with our basic analysis too.

The PRDF campaign, the response to Nixon's firing of Cox, also indicated a new attitude towards the YSA. Lots of NMV's bought the PRDF button, and became the most consistent wearers of it. One of them, the president of the Young Democrats, spoke at the meeting we arranged for Cathy Perkus, and some of the NMV's attended.

When Nixon fired Cox, the NMV's immediately formed the Penn Impeach Nixon Committee (PINCO). They called only for Nixon's impeachment, and projected a lobbying campaign. We did not support this group, since we know that just getting Nixon will not end government harassment, although we made it clear that we favored Nixon getting what he deserved. We explained our differences to these radicals, and found to our surprise that they were willing to talk with us about them. They even allowed a comrade to speak at their rally about the PRDF suit as an answer to Nixon's Watergating.

Our campaign in defense of the Arab struggle against Zionist aggression had perhaps the biggest impact. Much of



the NMV did lean towards the Arab side, but it was only the YSA that did anything about it. We sold our press extensively, wrote letters to the campus press answering Zionist letters, and formed a coalition with several Arab student groups to build a teach-in on the Middle East crisis.

This teach-in was a tremendous success. 235 people attended, making it the largest political event on campus all year. Everyone knew that the YSA had played the major role in building it. We were listed as a sponsoring organization; we convinced the student government to provide money for it; we did most of the leafletting and posting; a YSAer chaired half of the program, and Dave Frankel, staff writer for the Militant, was featured in a debate with a Zionist professor from Chicago.

The NMVers were really impressed. Even some formerly virulent "Trot-baiters" gave Frankel a standing ovation. Another told a comrade, "Only the YSA could have pulled off something like this." And many of them are now willing to discuss politics with YSAers. And they don't always disagree with our point of view.

Through our work, the YSA has had a big impact at Penn. Thousands of students have had some contact with us, and many see us as important political leaders on campus. We have been able to organize important, broad actions on campus. And we have taken important steps to-

wards winning hegemony in the struggles of the campus as a whole.

In the process, we have forced some of the NMV to come to grips with the important political and organizational differences that separate the YSA from all other political organizations and tendencies. We did this by showing how a revolutionary organization should function, and by sticking in a principled manner to the Trotskyist program. The approach advanced in the IEC majority resolution has led these comrades to revise and obscure some of the important points of our program--such as the nature of a popular front and the French comrades' incorrect position on the Union of the Left in the recent elections in France. This is no way to win the more radical elements to a revolutionary position, and it shows the dangers inherent in the IEC majority proposals.

I think that the perspective of the YSA has proven correct, not only at Penn, but by our work and growth throughout the country. During this preconvention period, we should reaffirm the political perspectives of our movement, evaluate the work we have done, and help both ourselves and comrades across the world come to a better and correct understanding of the revolutionary process and our role in it.

November 26, 1973

## A REVIEW OF REGIONAL WORK

By Andy Farrand, Liberty, New York, At-Large

Certainly by now, it should stand clearly in every comrade's mind that our central task in the Young Socialist Alliance is to build the Young Socialist Alliance. We say this not because of any chauvinism for the letters YSA, but because we understand the indispensable role of the revolutionary vanguard in the socialist revolution. It is from this vantage point that we view all political decisions and all organizational decisions. Consequently, it is essential that a discussion of regional work begin with this focus clearly in mind.

Growth of the YSA must always be viewed in two respects--quantitatively and qualitatively. Obviously the recruitment of additional numbers to the YSA is very important, but even more crucial is the recruitment of qualitatively strong cadres; that is, the forging of an organization whose membership is well trained and disciplined and has deeply assimilated the lessons of the revolutionary movement. So when we map out plans for the growth of the YSA, we must consider both expansion and solidification. The organizational apparatus of the YSA from the National Office to the locals is geared to do this and the regional apparatus is no exception. It should be noted, however, that the means, both political and organizational, towards growth, are not always the same. In a big respect the organizational means are shaped at any particular time by the interrelationship between the strength of the YSA and the correlation of social forces; i. e., state of the radicalization. This is how we should view the historical development of our regional work.

Prior to 1970, the relatively newborn YSA was struggling to establish a base in the traditional centers (the major cities of the US). By 1970 we had reached a point where the growth of the YSA and its present strength presented us with the objective basis from which we could project the construction of regions. But this decision did not mean that the regional center was yet strong enough to operate as the real center of a viable regional apparatus. The center's heartbeat was not yet strong enough to supply the political blood on a region-wide basis and still maintain its own strength for the needed activity in traditional political hot-spots. The focus of regional work, therefore, was necessarily upon strengthening the regional centers. By 1972 the growth of the YSA and a great deepening of political maturity and stability in the regional areas presented us with a qualitatively different situation. The 1972 convention of the YSA reflected this change through the projection of building campus fractions on as many campuses as possible and, concomitant with that, a new step in our regional concept.

The concept of regional work that came out of the 1972 convention was a much more rounded one than that of the

previous years. But it is important to realize that this change occurred because the objective conditions had lost their lopsidedness. The deepening of the youth radicalization and the heightened development of the YSA as a whole and the regional areas in specific presented us with the objective basis from which we could realistically project the construction of fully rounded collaborative regional apparatuses.

The general tone of discussion of regional work at the 1972 convention was that the function of regional centers is not to serve as a siphon cleaning the most experienced comrades out of the region, but rather as a pump to supply political and organizational experience to the whole region. In this way it serves as the heart of a regional operation to expand and solidify the YSA. But neither did discussion view the regional areas as passive receivers in the regional operation. Rather they are correctly viewed and must function as active, consistent and important contributors to the regional apparatus. Comrades and locals in the regional areas serve as active contributors by providing experience which can lay the basis for further growth and solidification in the region, by acting as centers of political action on their campuses reaching more radicalized students daily with the YSA's program and by the proper allocation of personnel to strengthen the regional apparatus.

Within the context of regional work, transfers have sometimes been touchy subjects. The consensus of discussion at the 1972 convention provided the correct orientation that the timely transfers of experienced comrades into the regional center aid not only the individual comrade but also the regional center, the regional apparatus and the regional local from which she or he transferred (by providing secondary leadership the room to advance). This does not mean that what we want is a stampede into regional centers, or that there is a blanket pressure on regional comrades to transfer into centers or that comrades who remain in regional areas are somehow unworthy. Rather it means that well planned and thought out transfers are an integral part of the growth of the YSA--locally, regionally and nationally. In any case, the 1972 convention indicated that if we ever did, we do not now view the work of comrades in the region as unimportant in comparison to work of comrades in the center. If we did, then the decision to orient towards the construction of campus fractions on as many campuses as possible would be nothing but hollow words. That does not happen in the YSA. The depth of the radicalization permits us to say in full sincerity that wherever we have a comrade, we have an important comrade, who is carrying on important work in the whole schema of the YSA's tasks. The regional apparatus is specifically designed to gain maximum mileage out of the work of every comrade and local in the region. Briefly, then, the '72 convention projected the construction of collaborative regional apparatuses functioning to best

extend and solidify the YSA with each component playing an important role in the apparatus and the center serving as not only an administrative center but also as a political center.

While the 1972 convention discussion made the projection of fully collaborative regional apparatuses, it did not vote into existence a reality. The projection has to be built. It is one that we have made big strides toward in the past year and one which we must still continually work toward. The tasks needed to turn this projection into a reality lie in three areas: 1) organization of the apparatus; 2) use of the apparatus; 3) financing of the apparatus.

The organization of the apparatus, that is, the structures through which regional collaboration functions, has developed over the past two years six essential organs which need to be built in every region. It is necessary, however, to note again that the organs of the regional apparatus will change as both the needs and capabilities of the YSA grow. At this particular juncture, however, the following organizational forms appear as essentials in regional work: 1) The maintenance of a regional office staffed adequately to consistently gather and dispense information throughout the region. 2) A full time regional organizer. This assignment should not be viewed as the assignment of an office manager. Rather the organizer should be seen as the vertex of collaboration throughout the region and more importantly as the key organ in the first of a region's two purposes--to promote the YSA's qualitative growth throughout the region. The regional organizer should spend a great proportion of his or her time out in the region gaining first hand knowledge of regional comrades or locals' activities and needs. She or he should pay particular attention to the problems of relatively inexperienced or new locals and should aid these locals in all possible ways to successfully tackle their problems. It is only through the first hand knowledge that the organizer can provide the needed line which will insure ongoing collaboration in the still diverse regions and more importantly it is the only way he or she will be able to aid in regional locals' qualitative growth. 3) A regional team. Just as the regional organizer is the regional apparatus' key organ in the effort to solidify the YSA through the region, the team is its key organ in the effort to extend the YSA. The ability and methods of regional teams in getting out the program of the YSA and recruiting more comrades was clearly presented in the 1972 document on YSJP teams. 4) Speakers bureau. Not only does the speakers bureau provide funds for the operation of the regional apparatus, but most importantly it gives regional comrades and locals ready access to the political expertise and talent gathered in the center. In connection with this is the regional educational conference. While it is usually a good idea to hold these in the center, if there are important possibilities of a major breakthrough in a particular area of a region, comrades should not hesitate to hold the educational conference out in the region. 5) Regional newsletter. Coming

out as often as events necessitate and resources permit, the newsletter can lay the basis for the systematic exchange of information and ideas throughout the region. As the development of the regions deepen, so too will the role and possibilities of the newsletter. 6) Regional conference/meeting. At the present there appears to be a great confusion over the purpose of the regional conference/meeting. Perhaps it would be of help if we look at what we want the conference to become and therefore have bearings on the direction in which we want them to develop. Certainly we want the regional conferences to become the highest decision-making organs in the regional apparatuses; that is, become regional conventions. At this point, however, they can realistically function only as the highest expression of regional collaboration. Discussion and workshops on the nature of the political tasks in the region and how they are being carried out are the major parts of the conference, but they should not be all of it. There should be concrete discussion on the general functioning of the regional apparatus and its application to specific political tasks. This should not be viewed as a complaint session but rather as a time to, through a collaborative discussion on a region-wide basis, develop projections for the strengthening and refinement of the regional apparatus. In order for this to occur successfully, regional comrades cannot enter a regional conference blindly. A regional consciousness should be developed in the local areas and comrades should be thinking about how the regional apparatus is operating for the region as a whole. Comrades' ideas could easily be discussed prior to the conference in the local areas so that firm ideas or projections are presented at the conferences. Clearly in regional locals, the executive committee should take leadership in this discussion. As regions develop in strength, the regional centers should be looking towards ways of turning over the decision-making process on the operation of the region to the conferences, e.g., deployment of regional teams. This does not mean that we have reached this point. Clearly we haven't. Simply that comrades should keep their eyes open for the opportunity to extend the role of regional conferences and deepen the development of the region as a whole. However, we have reached the point where we can project a collaborative discussion on the operation of the regional apparatus as an integral part of every regional conference/meeting. These then are the six essential organs of the regional apparatus that every region should work toward building the capability to maintain.

The second task in building viable regions is making full use of the regional apparatus, i. e., collaboration itself. Obviously, the regional apparatus without political content becomes nothing but an empty shell. Every step forward in organizational integration must coincide with a step forward in political integration in the region. The present collaborative apparatus must be filled with a constant flow of information throughout the region and a continual analysis of that information. This means that while regional comrades should recognize the leadership of the center, they must not feel

inferior to the center. Their experiences and analysis are crucial to the operation of the region. And it also means that while comrades in the center should recognize their leadership responsibilities, they must listen to and learn from the experiences and analysis of regional comrades. Without this, projections for growth in the region will be based only upon the outlook of a single sector of the region. Without this, we take a step backward to pre-1970.

The third and final task is the financing of the apparatus. Within the past year, financial consciousness in the YSA has deepened greatly. The success of our past fund drive indicates that comrades understand that without adequate and independent financing our plans for political work would become nothing more than good intentions. This is just as true regionally as it is locally or nationally. It is also true in regions that while outside fund raising is important, regional sustainers must form the backbone of the regional finances. Sustainers are the only source that can be an independent and guaranteed weekly or monthly income from which sound economic planning can spring.

Just as the region is not solely the organizational and political responsibility of the center, neither is it solely the center's financial responsibility. While the center, because of its greater strength, provides the greatest funding, regional comrades and locals must view their financing of

the regional apparatus with utmost seriousness. The regional sustainers and contributions through the speakers bureau of comrades in the region can easily make or break the collaborative apparatus. But it must be remembered in any effort to deepen regional financial consciousness, the greatest determining factor is the depth of the political understanding of the regional concept and its specifics of concrete application.

While the discussion at the 1972 convention showed the positive developments in our regional work, it also revealed the existence of much antagonism between regional locals and the centers. We cannot now nor need we review each case and find the guilty party. But it is necessary to state unequivocally that antagonism from any quarter has no place in our regional work. It is the polar opposite to collaboration. To understand how we should deal with differences in how regions should function, perhaps we would do good to take Lenin's advice on Bolshevik propaganda work; that is, that in any differences in the course of regional work, we should constantly "patiently explain" our own particular opinion or analysis. That is the heart of regional collaboration. It is with such an outlook that we can build strong regions and continue to weld the cadres of the YSA into an ever stronger fighting organization.

November 27, 1973

## ENTRYISM SUI GENERIS: ONCE WAS ENOUGH!

By Bennett Satinoff, Brooklyn Local

Entryism sui generis, also known as entryism of a special type and deep entryism, has recently received a new lease on life. This occurs only four years after the European sections of the Fourth International have officially terminated this disastrous method of "building the party." The International Executive Committee Majority Tendency in "The Building of Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe," (International Information Bulletin, No. 5 in 1972, Nov. 1972) in the space of two sentences, gives a positive "historical" assessment of seventeen years of the entryism sui generis experience in Europe.

The draft theses on Europe's evaluation of entryism sui generis is located in the section titled "Three Tactics" of party-building. In this section we are handed the proposition that entryism sui generis was not just a tactic of party-building based on a unique conjuncture of objective historical circumstances, but is an ahistorical, universal method of constructing the party that "corresponds in a fundamental sense to" one of "three objective perspectives on the predominant form of radicalization." This legitimizes entryism sui generis for resurrection in the future.

In an immediate sense, the most important point is the methodological similarities of the Draft Theses on Europe and entryism sui generis. Some have labeled this the method of "doomsday politics."

### Voting on History

At the 1963 re-unification congress of the Fourth International, both the former International Committee and the former International Secretariat agreed to defer any long-term historical evaluation of entryism sui generis to the future. This step was taken because both sides had diametrically opposite judgments of the fruits of entryism sui generis.

Marxists do not vote on past history. We vote on what to do next. Comrades can have disagreements on interpreting past historical events, but may have complete agreement on the necessary steps to move forward in building the party and the International. In "The Underlying Differences in Method," Comrade Hansen states that "It is a matter of principle" to "vote against any resolution that includes a rider calling for approval of a historical question that is in dispute in our movement."

### Entryism: Sui Generis and the French Turn

Entryism is an organizational tool. In "Deep Entryism: Its Relevance to the Present Discussion" (SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 31, No. 31) Cliff Connor describes entryism

as "the process whereby the revolutionary party dissolves itself as an open, independent organization into another organization, a non-Trotskyist organization, for a period of time."

Trotsky first devised the entry concept in 1934 as a response to the particular conditions of that time. The Social-Democratic parties in many countries were experiencing a revival due to the influx of militant young workers and students into their left-wings. Trotsky proposed that the tiny Trotskyist nuclei enter these parties for a relatively short period of time. This was started in France, hence its name: The French Turn.

In the United States, this took the form of the Workers Party, our movement's name at the time, entering the Socialist Party in 1936. We had the objectives of recruiting the left-wing militants to Trotskyism, eliminating the Stalinist attempt to win the SP to popular frontism and finally to remove a potential competitor on the left. At the end of 1937, the Social-Democratic bureaucrats expelled the Trotskyists. That the Social-Democrats ceased to be a major factor on the American left after our expulsion is testimony to our correct understanding of the entry tactic.

Entryism sui generis was devised in the early 1950s by Michel Pablo. Pablo saw a third world war as inevitable. Instead of an inter-imperialist war, this would be a global civil war between the capitalist countries and the degenerated and deformed workers states. He envisioned the mass Stalinist parties being forced to the left by their membership and in the process of defending a Soviet Union under mortal attack. Pablo labeled this the "war-revolution" thesis.

The perspective laid out at the Third World Congress and later refined was for the Trotskyists to bury themselves in the Stalinist parties, leaving only a few individuals outside to present in public the Trotskyist political solutions. The Trotskyists in the CP were to try to influence the formation of left-centrist currents which as Pablo put it, would be the "adequate instruments" to lead the coming revolution. Pablo and his supporters stood a short term tactic with specific objectives for building Bolshevik parties on its head and emerged with a proven method for politically and organizationally liquidating the party.

### Entryism Sui Generis: An Initial Balance Sheet

The European Draft Theses states that "entryism (which was by and large valid during the preceding phase)... was shown to be correct in capitalist Europe in the period that extended from the early fifties until the beginning of 1969."

A more detailed defense of entryism sui generis is found in the "Draft Resolution on Our Tactics in Europe" and the "Report on Tactics in Europe" by Pierre Frank (International Information Bulletin, Discussion on Europe, 1968-1971), to be referred to as the Draft Resolution on Europe, not to be confused with the current Draft Theses on Europe.

The Draft Resolution on Europe declares:

"Taking everything into account, despite the error committed with respect to the conjuncture in 1952-53, it was not possible at that time to project any other tactic than entryism. This tactic was justified at that time. Those who stuck to strictly independent activity did not succeed at all in developing numerically during that period. If from the beginning, we had had a perspective of prolonged economic prosperity, with the enormous difficulties which that entailed for our movement, we would have still followed an entryist tactic.... Finally, when entryist work, beginning in 1963-64, proved unproductive, if our organizations... did not raise the question of giving up this tactic, it was because practically no other general tactic was available to take its place."

The document continues on:

"Despite the completely unexpected conditions, which were very unfavorable for revolutionary Marxism, the entryist tactic is far from having been a failure. On the numerical level, several sections were able to strengthen themselves through it (Belgium, Italy...)... It was above all on the political level that considerable gains were made through entryism."

The European Draft Resolution reads like a papal bull.

One can look through Pierre Frank's "History of the Fourth International" (Intercontinental Press, Spring, 1972) and be subject to further falsifications on the effects of entryism sui generis on the European sections of our movement. This assessment is false to the core. Instead of being a tactic of building the vanguard party, for seventeen years entryism sui generis devastated the party and those who practiced it in Europe.

A look at the actual results of entryism sui generis, ironically, is provided by leading young comrades in Europe who support the Draft Theses on Europe. This is found in "Preparatory Texts for the 1971 Conference of the Leaderships of the European Sections" (International Internal Discussion Bulletin, Vol. IX, No. 5) by Vergeat and Delphin and "The Axes of the International Debate" (Internal Information Bulletin, June 1973, Number 3 in 1973) by Jebrac. Vergeat and Delphin are both members of the United Secretariat. Jebrac was a member of the political bureau of the now-banned Communist League of France and gave his article as a talk to a cadre school of the Parisian leaderships of the Communist League. Vergeat and Delphin say, "The organizational results of

this work were uneven, but generally they did not lead to the crystallization of genuine revolutionary tendencies in these parties or originating from them." Jebrac adds, "that a delay in breaking with entryism,... resulted in serious consequences that we are still paying for dearly."

In Greece, Jebrac writes, "even though the comrades... foresaw the danger of a coup d'etat to a certain extent, the absence of an adequately developed autonomous organizational structure was an obstacle in confronting the situation and carrying the struggle forward. Therefore the problem is to decide if the break with entryism in Greece shouldn't have been made earlier... through the appearance of an independent youth organization."

"In England," Vergeat and Delphin state, "the absence of a structured Trotskyist pole led in the final analysis to our mass work in the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign (VSC) reinforcing other already structured organizations like the IS (International Socialists)."

"In Belgium," Vergeat and Delphin report, "the worker nuclei gained during that period... remain imbued with syndicalism and find it rather difficult to grasp the role of a revolutionary party." This happened, they add, because, "The Belgian section hung on too long to the centrist perspective, so that the organizational base they had worked out... eroded away. Only their virtual disappearance obliged the construction of a new section, the LRT (Revolutionary Workers League)." Vergeat and Delphin report on Belgian youth work: "The JGS (Young Socialist Guard)" was formed "on a left centrist base... The organizational and political carelessness of the JGS only served to maintain the traditions unavoidably inherited from the Social Democracy. The renovation of the JGS in the past few years is not the result of entryism."

"In Germany," Jebrac writes, "we remained relatively outside the great upsurge in the student movement... This orientation was stubbornly followed... In fact, after having missed the ascending phase of the student movement, we came out in the open in its declining phase... without a concretely fixed or defined organizational answer." This resulted in "the German section" finding "itself torn between a sectarian current and a routinist current deeply emeshed in the routine life of the local Social Democracy." Vergeat and Delphin continue, that being "unable to win the advanced sections of the radicalization," the section ended up being "broken up."

"In Italy," Vergeat and Delphin go on, "where the deepest kind of entryist work in the CP (Communist Party) and JC (Communist Youth) was carried out for a very long time, the section had the objective of constructing rather important leftist regroupments... These attempts blew up at the very moment they came to a culmination, the militants involved in them either going over to ultraleftism or Maoism. The new Italian section had to start again with very little after its disintegration, relying on small groups of workers who had been

won in the past. The Italian section did not dare or had not decided to make the decisive choice at the opportune moment ... and thus they let an opportunity like the one in France slip by." Jebrac reaches similar conclusions stating, "In 1965-66 the Italian section looked like the most advanced section." But in reacting to the politicization of the youth, "it failed to offer an independent organizational solution to the radicalization, certain leading comrades... [they] themselves adapted to the very forms of the radicalization,... From then on, neo-Stalinist degeneration was almost inevitable."

The success over the past few years in the growth of the now banned Communist League of France is put forward as justification enough for the almost two decades long policy of entryism sui generis. The JCR, which was key to the rebuilding of the section, is claimed to have been produced by the policy of entryism. But the young leaders of French Trotskyism present an entirely different picture than the older generation of European Trotskyism.

"When one considers that the French situation up to now has been the most successful and has paid off in the existence of the League," Jebrac tells us, "one can in retrospect... realize that the gains are not all due to the particular clear-sightedness of the leadership, but to a not insignificant extent to the political conditions themselves. On several occasions wavering could be seen in regard to our break with entryism... In 1965 our leaving the UEC (Union of Communist Students) was not so much chosen as forced by the hard-line Stalinist leadership of the French CP." Jebrac titled his section: "An Empirical Break With Entryism." Vergeat and Delphin echo this estimation: "The French section has the enormous good fortune of living through the revolutionary crisis in May 1968. This compelled it to give up entryism and to act like free lancers so far as the other sections were concerned. But this existence took place empirically, leading as a result to instances of opportunism or sectarianism."

Jebrac concludes that, "the appearance of new struggling social forces, the student movement... made it absolutely necessary to make a conscious break with the entryist tactic and a fortiori with its Pabloist strategic interpretation. The dynamic of this break was already implicitly included in the 1963 reunification. Yet, if a trend in this direction proved to be irresistible, one cannot say that it was consciously guided. The pragmatic character of this re-orientation caused many false steps and cost a high price."

Vergeat and Delphin provide a telling description of the destruction of Marxist cadre during entryism sui generis:

"The militants immersed in this work and not burdened with open work on the outside adapted to the milieu, its tempo, its customs, and its routine. The necessity to remain under cover, to confine their political intervention to small doses ended with their giving up the program bit by bit. Some of these comrades were lost in this way, being drawn in by the Stalinist or Social Democratic structures. The fractional work... did not

educate our militants in mass work or in how to assume responsibility or take the initiative, except in isolated cases. A minority fraction within a mass party does not at all learn how to build an organization and it does not provide the militants with the leadership responsibilities to be found in an independent revolutionary organization: especially in working out programmatic questions."

Even though Vergeat and Delphin and Jebrac have dramatically demonstrated the complete and utter failure of entryism sui generis, they conclude it was "a correct tactic often tried but poorly mastered." We see the same attitude towards guerrilla warfare, first re-named armed struggle and then "initiatives in action," in Latin America by the IEC Majority Tendency. Even though the real world disproves your schemas, persist in the errors of your ways. This boils down to a variant of petty-bourgeois idealism.

### Entryism Sui Generis: A Methodological Frankenstein that Refuses to Die

The Draft Resolution on Europe resurrects the idea of entryism sui generis for future use. It states, "Explanations and defense of the entryist tactic are important... for the future, which... will inevitably entail a whole series of political operations... it is necessary to teach our sections and our members that the future will demand of them an organizational flexibility at least equal to that displayed in the entryist tactic." This flexibility is concretized further on in the document. "In the old parties... we do not orient at present in accordance with the perspective of the formation of left currents... Nevertheless, we must carefully follow the developments that can occur in the old parties in consequence of transformations of the objective situation and be ready each time to reexamine what may be required in solving the party-building problem."

Though the concrete specific tasks of Pablo's entryism sui generis are not proposed in the Draft Theses on Europe as our tasks for the coming period, the identity between the two is shown by the disturbing similarity in terminology.

A striking example of this is the doomsday political atmosphere. The European Draft Theses states that, "The socialist revolution is once again on the agenda in Europe... even from a conjunctural point of view." We can "envision a period spread out in most cases over four or five years before the decisive battles are fought... If a new revolutionary leadership is not built in the time remaining to us, after successive waves of mass struggles... the European proletariat will experience new and terrible defeats of historic scope." Compare it to this from "The Building of the Revolutionary Party," Michel Pablo's report to the Tenth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Fourth International, February, 1952, (International Information Bulletin, June 1952): "The situation is prerevolutionary all over in various degrees and evolving toward the revolution in a relatively brief time. And this process from now on is in general irreversible."

The Draft Theses on Europe declares that our main task is "to win hegemony within the new mass vanguard." The draft resolution on Europe speaks similarly in speaking of our tasks in the 1950s. "The entryist tactic for building a revolutionary party proceeded from the hypothesis that the process of radicalization -- of forming a new mass vanguard -- was taking place for the most part within the traditional mass organizations."

These similarities in terminology are not coincidence. They reflect a similarity of method. Instead of hunting for left-centrist currents in the traditional mass workers parties, we are now supposed to seek them outside the CP and the SP, in the new mass vanguard. This will then be turned into "an adequate instrument," just like the left moving CPs were in the early 1950s for Pablo.

This is not a method of building the Leninist vanguard party. It is tailism and shortcutism and must inevitably lead to political adaptation to non-Trotskyist currents. Just as being buried in the CPs and SPs led to many comrades giving up

Trotskyism bit by bit, so today we see comrades of the IEC Majority Tendency revising some of the basic positions of Trotskyism on the class nature of the state, Stalinism, the role of democratic demands, terrorism and the relationship of the party to the arming of the masses. In response to the "concerns of the vanguard" our European sections discontinued anti-war work in 1968. Now they say the Vietnamese CP is not Stalinist and refuse to recognize the disastrous impact of the 1973 Paris Accords on the struggle of the masses in Vietnam. The list of programmatic concessions by the IEC Majority Tendency goes on and on and is well documented by other comrades in the discussion.

To quote Trotsky from In Defense of Marxism, "The duty of a proletarian revolutionist is not to persist in mistakes, not to place ambition above the interests of the cause but to call a halt in time... Otherwise the scratch which has already developed into an ulcer can lead to gangrene."

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