

Revolutionary Communist Youth NEWSLETTER

Special Supplement

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August 1973

Trouble in U.Sec. Rotten Bloc— SWP SPOUTS "ORTHODOXY," YSA EXPELS TROTSKYISTS

We print below the pre-trial statement of three former members of the Young Socialist Alliance, expelled from the YSA for expressing political solidarity with the Spartacist League/Revolutionary Communist Youth. This expulsion takes place during a tumultuous political discussion and struggle within the Socialist Workers Party and the United Secretariat that is raising the most fundamental questions of Leninism and Trotskyism: the relationship of party to class, the relationship of military activity to the party and the strategy for proletarian revolution, the nature of Stalinism and the Stalinist parties in the deformed workers states and the organizational norms and functioning of an international revolutionary party.

On all of these questions the Spartacist League has for over a decade stood unwaveringly for anti-revisionist Trotskyism so that, for each of the tendencies involved in the current dispute to appeal to Leninist-Trotskyist orthodoxy, they must make successive approximations to the politics of the SL/RCY. It is our politics which serve as the touchstone of orthodoxy in the present dispute. Thus Hansen's critique of the guerrilla road to power, Mandel's critique of nationalism and of the Argentine PST's social-democratic electoralism, the Internationalist Tendency's (IT) call for a proletarian orientation and a perspective of revolutionary regroupment towards the American left—these are all partial borrowings from the arsenal of Marxist analysis which is provided only by the SL.

To have expelled these three comrades from the YSA for expressing their political solidarity with the SL/RCY one month before the National Convention of the SWP is the height of bureaucratic hypocrisy, in light of the role the SL/RCY, as the standard bearer of anti-revisionist Trotskyist politics, is playing within the current discussion, albeit unacknowledged. Thus the article on the Vietnamese Communist Party which appears in the current *International Socialist Review* (July-August) is almost entirely rewritten from material that appeared several months ago in *Workers Vanguard* Nos. 19, 20 and 21. While the SWP majority is claiming to bend over backwards for oppositionists which they characterize as maneuverist, politically evasive and unprincipled, in the YSA three comrades who openly declare their solidarity with the politics of the SL/RCY—the Trotskyist politics which both wings of the U.Sec. dispute profess but do not practice—these comrades get booted out the door. This is coupled with absurd bureaucratic organizational practices straight out of the school of social democracy, where (as the former YSA comrades point out in their statement) Maoists, feminists, pacifists and even supporters of Sam Adams are encouraged to become members even if they do not claim to be Trotsky-

ists, but to be a supporter of politics which are avowedly Trotskyist—then it's out the door!

1953, 1963, 1973
—Splits and "Unity"

The expulsion of these comrades takes place twenty years after Cannon issued his "Open Letter" critique of Pabloism and the SWP split from the International Secretariat of Mandel-Frank, and ten years after the Revolutionary Tendency (RT), the organizational predecessor of the SL, was expelled as the left opposition within the SWP and "reunification" was consummated between the SWP and the Mandel-Frank International Secretariat (I.Sec.). Cannon analyzed Pabloism in 1953 as a liquidationist current which put forward the conception that non-revolutionary leaderships, under the "pressure of the masses" and the objective sweep of the capitalist crisis, would be forced to play a revolutionary role, thus substituting such "leadership" for the need to build independent Trotskyist parties rooted in the working class and armed with the program of the Fourth International. Unfortunately, Cannon recoiled from the unprincipled organizational practice of the I.Sec.'s Pabloite leadership not in the direction of genuine Trotskyist democratic centralism, but in the direction of the federalism of the old Second International which placed the discipline of national sections higher than the discipline of the International. As Trotsky said in his "An Open Letter to All Members of the Lenin-

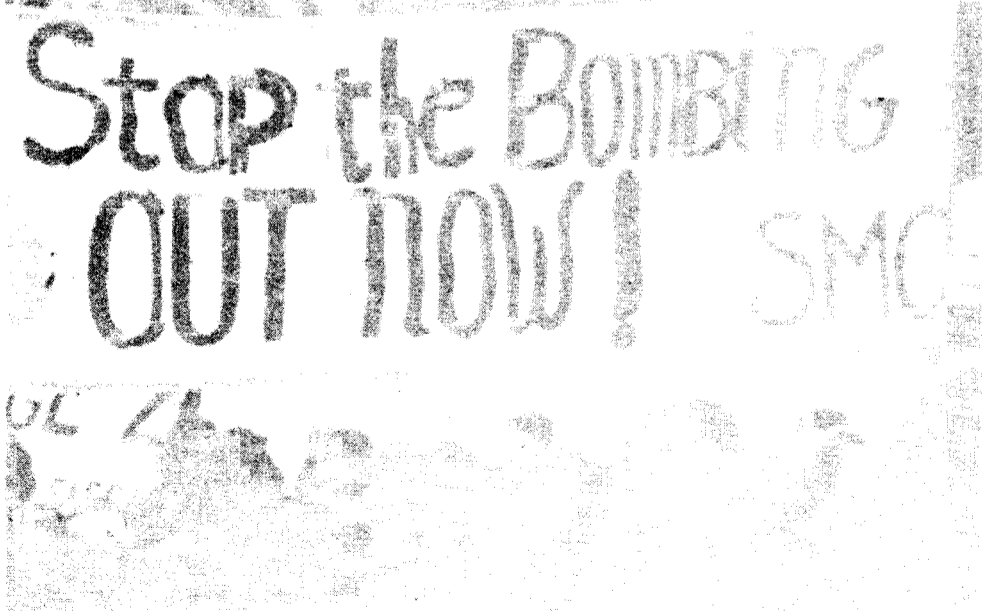
organizations like the Black Muslims made black nationalism revolutionary and substituted for the need to develop a black Trotskyist cadre—and internationally, when it claimed that Castroite guerrilla bands were adequate revolutionary instruments to make a socialist revolution:

"Along the road of a revolution beginning with simple democratic demands and ending in the rupture of capitalist property relations, guerrilla warfare conducted by landless peasant and semi-proletarian forces, under a leadership that becomes committed to carrying the revolution through to its conclusion, can play a decisive role in un-

a non-aggression pact. Long-standing differences (such as why there was a split in 1953!) were temporarily buried and since both sides lacked a conception of international democratic centralism, except for abstract statements of solidarity, each tendency went its separate way.

"Reunification" and
Expulsion of the RT

The U.Sec. claimed that all Trotskyist currents would be welcomed into the reunified Secretariat, extending invitations in particular to the Socialist Labour League in Britain and the OCI (Internationalist Communist Organiza-



bund" (6 February 1930):

"We stand not for democracy in general but for *centralist* democracy. It is precisely for this reason that we place national leadership above local leadership and international leadership above national leadership."

Under the pressure of the Cold War McCarthyite witch-hunt and apparent working-class quiescence of the '50's, the SWP itself abandoned the perspective of struggling for independent Trotskyist parties both in the U.S.—when it claimed that the development of or-

dermining and precipitating the downfall of a colonial power.... This [lesson] must be consciously incorporated into the strategy of building revolutionary Marxist parties in colonial countries."

—"For Early Reunification of the World Trotskyist Movement," Statement by the Political Committee of the SWP, 1963

The reunification that took place in 1963, facilitated by the SWP's Pabloist turn towards guerrillaism, was still

In anti-war movement, SWP/YSA-led NPAC and SMC limited themselves to slogans acceptable to liberal bourgeoisie (left), happily existing on steering committees with bourgeois political representatives. As against this popular-front betrayal, SL/RCY fought for class-struggle approach (above) and called for communist victory in Indochina, in sharp contrast to SWP's social pacifism.

tion) in France, promising them ample opportunity to fight for their politics. But the necessary prelude to the 1963 "reunification" was the expulsion of the RT—not for any breach of discipline but simply on the basis of its politics. It is these politics which would continue to serve as a beacon within the SWP, exposing the SWP's departure from Trotskyism and the unprincipled nature of the SWP-International Secretariat combination. The SWP major-

continued on page S2

ity could not tolerate this then, just as it cannot tolerate it now in the course of the current dispute. Over the years as the SWP has moved increasingly rightward (including opposition to guerrillaism from a reformist viewpoint), it had to increasingly bureaucratize or "social-democratize" its organization and youth group. Thus it was no accident that Spartacist politics were made officially taboo in the SWP at the same time the SWP conclusively became a hardened reformist current in adopting the single-issue pacifist and classless politics in regard to the Vietnam War in 1965.

The non-aggression pact and rotten federated bloc between the SWP and the Mandel-Frank leadership of the U.Sec. blew apart when Mandel-Frank maintained the old guerrilla-struggle line of the 1963 reunification while the SWP was collaborating with the cops to throw pro-guerrillaist U.S. "ultra-lefts" out of its peace marches in order to appease its precious bourgeois speakers. After all, Vance Hartke might be more reluctant to rub shoulders with Fred Halstead on peace parade platforms if Hartke knew that Halstead's fraternal comrades in Latin America were kidnapping and assassinating local generals and factory managers! When the SWP began building its own little factions, first in Canada and Britain and then in Latin America, and began denouncing the pro-U.Sec. sections publically in its press, the non-aggression pact was superseded by the SWP's appetite to reconstruct the Second International of Hillquit and Kautsky, of Berger and Noske.

Only One Road To Proletarian Power

At the same time, the Latin American sections which were once the pride of the U.Sec. have since discovered that it was Kim Il Sung and Mao Tse-tung who are the fathers of the guerrilla road to power and not comrades Mandel, Maitan and Frank, and they have re-oriented their allegiances accordingly, to the acute embarrassment of Mandel and Frank, if not of the shameless Maitan. Suddenly, in order to put a little distance between himself and his one-time Latin American supporters, and perhaps to appease his queasy friends in the IT, Mandel rediscovers that there are not two possible roads to the conquest of power by the proletariat, the October Road and the Vietnamese or Cuban Road, but declares:

"There is no other road to the direct rule of the workers and peasants than the establishment of Soviet power, of power based on elected committees of workers and poor peasants. The fact that capitalism was overthrown in China by Mao means that from its very inception, the revolution was bureaucratically deformed in that country, that the working class has never directly exercised power there."

—"In Defense of Leninism; In Defense of the Fourth International," *International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, X, p. 4

But if China, then why not Cuba? And if the revolution in Cuba was from its very inception bureaucratically deformed, is this not the position uniquely held by the RT in 1961 and the Spartacist tendency today? Marxism is a world view but Mandel and Hansen are content to eclectically paste together bits and pieces of Marxist-Trotskyist orthodoxy. This is why it is precisely those supporting SL/RCY politics who are excluded from this discussion through organizational expulsion.

Finally, we note that the IT parrots like good Barnesites the SWP majority slanders about SL/RCY "sectarianism"—obviously demonstrated by our principled intervention into SDS; our ability to carry through the kind of revolutionary regroupment with left-moving ex-Maoists that the left wing of the IT falsely imagines Mandel to be calling for; our principled intervention into the women's liberation movement; the fact that the SL is the only organization in the U.S. doing consistent communist work in the trade unions; our



In women's movement, SWP/YSA has fought for petty-bourgeois feminism (below) and attacked SL/RCY for raising, in tradition of Bolshevism, need for drawing class line before sex line (above).

carrying the struggle against the Vietnam War into the labor movement instead of the classless, powerless, pacifist SWP anti-war movement and our "Shachtmanism" in regard to Vietnam clearly embodied in our "Shachtmanite" slogans: "All Indochina must go Communist!" "Military victory to the DRV-NLF!" "For full Sino-Soviet military support to the DRV-NLF!" Shachtmanism indeed! These slanders, whether they come out of the mouths of Barnesites or the left face of Pabloism embodied in the IT, shall not be permitted to exclude us from the possibilities for revolutionary regroupment which the current U.Sec. dispute opens up.

Since the formation of the Proletarian Orientation Tendency within the SWP in 1971, the best and most serious groups and individuals have continued to find their way to the SL and the RCY. We thank the SWP and YSA for the revolutionary cadre you have sent us in the past and those you will send us in the future, and in particular, we thank you for these three comrades whom we now welcome into the Revolutionary Communist Youth.

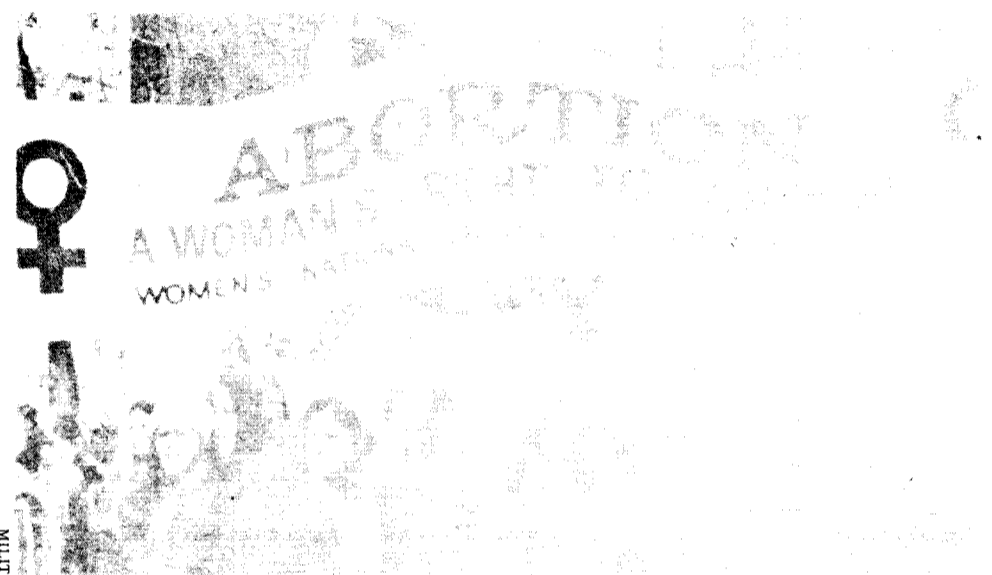
[The following statement was presented to the Executive Committee of the Upper West Side New York local chapter of the YSA on 15 July 1973 and to the local chapter itself on 18 July. Sub-headings have been added by the RCYN editors.]

This trial body has been convened to investigate charges presented to us only four days ago on 11 July 1973. These charges accuse us of giving political support to the Spartacist League/Revolutionary Communist Youth. We are accused of considering the SL to be the "real Trotskyist organization in the U.S. today" and of being "in basic political agreement with the Spartacist League." These charges call into question our political beliefs and thus a political response is appropriate.

As revolutionary Marxists we must follow a program of class struggle, a program that recognizes that only the working class will play the primary role in making the socialist revolution and ending all forms of social oppression. The SWP which claims to be the vanguard party of the American proletariat, however, has departed from its Trotskyist heritage and embraced a program of class collaboration. This is reflected in the SWP's program both domestically and internationally.

Imperialist War

The struggle against any imperialist war cannot be built in isolation from the class struggle. NPAC, the SWP's main vehicle for building the anti-war movement, was a class-collaborationist, non-exclusionary formation which attempted to "unite as many people as possible regardless of political affiliation or views" (*Militant*, 21 May 1970).



Thus we see by the SWP's own admission that NPAC deliberately avoided drawing the class line. This approach of building a "classless" anti-war movement resulted in the presence of Vance Hartke and other representatives of the liberal bourgeoisie at major NPAC rallies. This served to reinforce illusions that the liberal wing of the bourgeoisie could end the war. Furthermore, it developed new illusions that strata divorced from the means of production and hence having little social weight (e.g., students) can play the instrumental role in ending the imperialist war. As Marxists we recognize that only the working class (not popular-front formations uniting the working class and the bourgeoisie) can end imperialist war. While the SWP lacked the massive working-class support necessary to attempt electoral blocs with the bourgeoisie, NPAC was the organizational form that popular frontism was forced to take in the U.S. The SWP has not always been ignorant of this basic Marxist concept. In 1953, Farrell Dobbs, in reference to the Korean War, wrote:

"The most vital place to carry on the anti-war agitation is participation in anti-war actions in the unions where the masses are...the fight against the war can really be effective only to the extent that the workers adopt class-struggle policies in defending their interests."

The SWP maintains that its anti-war coalitions which raised "Out Now" as the principal demand, constituted the best possible defense of the Vietnamese Revolution. A defense of a social revolution, however, must be honestly stated, not deceitfully implied. The slogan "Out Now" when raised in abstraction does not serve as an adequate defense. Both Vance Hartke, representing the liberal bourgeoisie who seek to protect the long-range interests of U.S. imperialism, and the ostensible revolutionary SWP can both scream "Out Now." In addition to "Out Now," the SWP should have raised the following de-

mands: "Smash U.S. imperialism in South-East Asia"; "For military victory to the NLF-DRV"; "For political revolution in North Vietnam"; "For labor strikes against the war"; "For a workers party, toward a workers government"; "For a communist Indochina."

Female and Black Oppression

As in the anti-war movement, the SWP's intervention in the women's liberation struggle resulted in the creation of WONAAC, a broad-based, single-issue coalition which consciously seeks to blur the class line. We must recognize, however, that women's oppression is but one aspect of pervasive oppression which cannot be abstracted out of the class struggle. The liberation of women will come with the ascension of the working class to power, only as a product of the socialist revolution. WONAAC seeks to unite all women as women, independent of, and hence counterposed to, the class struggle. Thus WONAAC's program is as acceptable to Bella Abzug as it is to the SWP. Just as NPAC attempted to deceive workers into believing that the liberal bourgeoisie can end imper-

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The *RCY Newsletter* is published by the Revolutionary Communist Youth, youth section of the Spartacist League. We seek to build a revolutionary socialist youth organization which can intervene in all social struggles armed with a working-class program, based on the politics of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky.

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ialist war, WONAAC deceives women workers into thinking that bourgeois women are their allies and that the common oppressor is men. This can only serve to undermine working-class solidarity in favor of the petty-bourgeois ideology of feminism. The slogan should be "Workers of the world unite," not "Women of the world unite." Any program that implies that women as women can end their oppression is un-Marxist and negates the historical task of the working class, the elimination of all forms of social oppression. The only principled intervention a communist can make in the women's struggle is to link the liberation of women to the proletarian revolution, thus interjecting a class-struggle perspective into the movement.

The SWP's general methodological approach which dictated its capitulation to feminism, previously allowed its capitulation to petty-bourgeois black nationalism. This is typified by two of the SWP's major slogans, "Black control of black communities," and "For an independent black party." Once again, these demands deviate from a Marxist class-struggle perspective. The former demand makes no reference to the class nature of community control. Communists must raise the demand of workers control, not a classless call for Bantustan power. The latter demand fosters the illusion that blacks as blacks can end racial oppression, just as feminism fosters the illusion that women as women can end their oppression. Communists must struggle for a labor party which will fight for the interests of the working class as a whole. There is certainly a need for independent organizations of the most oppressed strata of the working class. But these organizations should be transitional in nature, that is, through their most conscious cadre they should link up with the vanguard party. Independent organizations of the most oppressed strata must never be organized as a substitute for, or in opposition to, the vanguard party. This dual-vanguardist approach is what the SWP's independent black party would be. The SWP envisions two separate vanguards, organizationally independent, coordinating their activities. The struggle against this "federated vanguard" is similar to Lenin's fight against the Jewish Bund's demand for autonomy within the Russian Social-Democratic Party for the sole right to work among the Jewish workers. Only through the united actions of black and white workers can the proletariat overthrow capitalism and end forever capitalist exploitation and the special oppression of black workers.

The Class Struggle

The only class which can make the socialist revolution is the working class, led by its revolutionary vanguard. The SWP frequently pays lip service to this concept, yet in practice it contradicts it. The only independent organizations of the working class in the U.S. are the trade unions. This makes the unions the most obvious place for the party to do its work. By leading trade-union struggles and presenting a principled Trotskyist program the party seeks to win leadership within the unions and make them

a powerful proletarian tool for the class struggle. On this point we are in basic solidarity with the document entitled "For a Proletarian Orientation." The SWP, however, because of the "backwardness" of the American working class, has attempted to short-cut the process of building a base in the class by tail-ending the groups that are "on the move." Thus the SWP devotes much of its precious cadre to working in the feminist movement and the gay-liberation movement. Instead of intervening in these movements and interjecting a class analysis, relating these struggles to the working-class struggle, the SWP does just the opposite. The SWP tends to build these movements independently of the class struggle. This is a poly-vanguardist approach. This is an approach that sees women, gays, blacks and students as playing an independent revolutionary leadership role, a role Leninists reserve for the vanguard party.

In this epoch one of the most important documents around which Trotskyists can build a principled program both in the trade unions and in other struggles is the Transitional Program of 1938. The Transitional Program attempts to build a bridge between the subjective felt needs of the working class and their objective historical tasks. In the trade unions this takes the form of building militant caucuses. These caucuses must be built around the full Transitional Program. The caucus must fight for workers' limited democratic demands, but it must always present the proper revolutionary program. In the unions the SWP, however, uses as one of its main slogans the reactionary slogan: "Preferential hiring for women and minority workers." This demand provides jobs for one section of the working class at the expense of another, helping to destroy class solidarity. The correct transitional demands are: "Thirty hours' work for forty hours' pay, for a sliding scale of wages and hours"; "No discrimination in hiring and firing"; "No reliance on the capitalist state—bust Jim Crow trade unionism through the struggle for revolutionary leadership in the unions." This provides jobs at the expense of the capitalist class rather than at the expense of a section of the working class.

Divisions in the U.Sec.

The current divisions in the United Secretariat (U.Sec.) and the imminence of a split make it necessary for us to analyze both the majority and minority of the U.Sec. in order to clarify where we stand on international questions. We feel that both trends in the U.Sec. represent fundamentally revisionist positions that capitulate to Pabloism—a methodology whereby the Trotskyist vanguard is replaced by other forces which seem to offer greater chances of success. The U.Sec. majority's support to a guerrillaist strategy in Latin America is a Pabloist deviation from Leninist party building. The subjective factor of the vanguard party of the proletariat is no longer viewed as a necessity, since the objective tide of revolution can sweep petty-bourgeois guerrillaist leaderships to power. The U.Sec. majority's accommodation to such alien forces as guerrillaism is indicative of their adaptation to Pabloite methodology. Whereas Pablo in the 1951-1953 period advocated the liquidation of independent Trotskyist parties into mass Stalinist parties, the present-day U.Sec.-majority Pabloites advocate the subordination of the Leninist party to the guerrilla struggle in Latin America. Both varieties of Pabloism, the 1950's version and the newer forms, represent a capitulation to objectivism—a methodology which implies that, whether or not a conscious Trotskyist vanguard is leading the struggle, the unfolding of the permanent revolution will inevitably result in the formation of workers states. Furthermore, both wings of the U.Sec. fail to recognize the qualitative difference between a healthy workers state and a deformed workers state, i.e., they cannot tell the difference between a socialist revo-

lution, which opens the door to social emancipation, and Stalinism, which slams the door on social emancipation.

Yet the U.Sec. minority, as represented by the Socialist Workers Party in the U.S., fails to provide a revolutionary alternative to the majority's capitulation to Pabloism, guerrillaism and objectivism. In spite of its veneer of Trotskyist orthodoxy, the minority counterposes to the program of the Mandel/Maitan majority a program amounting to social-democratic reformism. Whereas the fruition of the class-collaborationist line of the SWP/YSA has been destructive enough in the U.S. with regard to the anti-war movement, the women's movement, etc., the inevitable results of a reformist, minimalist program are even more apparent in a pre-revolutionary situation, such as in Argentina. The PST's reformism is clearly evident in its strong emphasis (fetishism) on electoralism, accommodation to Peronism (as exemplified by the running of left Peronists in the Workers Front), its refusal to call for a break with Peronism or to say one word about arming the working class in a country which has been in a pre-revolutionary situation for four years.

Pabloism, Majority and Minority Style

Quite clearly, Pabloism is a methodology common to both the U.Sec.

have the U.Sec. majority which ostensibly provides a program of class struggle for the working class but in actuality provides a program of liquidation for the Leninist party in favor of winning leadership in a "new mass vanguard." The European document of the U.Sec. majority projects that the decisive struggles will occur in the next four or five years in Europe, and rules out the possibility of having sufficient time to build mass Trotskyist parties before these decisive struggles. Thus, the strategy substitutes the new "blunt but adequate instruments" for old-style Pabloite liquidationism.

The centrist politics of the Ligue Communiste (a majority section of the U.Sec.) are further manifested in its position of "critical support" to the popular front (Union of the Left) in the second round of the French election. The Left Radical Party in France reflects what Trotsky referred to as the "shadow of the bourgeoisie." In composition and program it cannot be differentiated from the Radical Party in the Chilean Unidad Popular. The program of the Union of the Left, like that of all popular fronts, is a minimalist program that does not transcend bourgeois-democratic property relations. A position of "critical" support towards this formation only serves to create new illusions for the French proletariat.

Therefore, we cannot give our support to the International Majority

young socialist the organizer

6-10-70



... this has
been the 1905
of the
student
movement

YSA linked post-Kent State student outbreaks to abortive proletarian revolution of 1905 in Russia. The French Ligue Communiste also held a similar position, recently praising student "soviets" divorced from the workers.

majority and minority. The minority, in spite of its current condemnation of the guerrillaist strategy in Latin America, continues to accommodate itself to petty-bourgeois and guerrillaist movements. The U.Sec. minority and the SWP, for instance, refuse to analyze Cuba as a deformed workers state and consequently do not call for a political revolution and the creation of a Cuban Trotskyist party. The SWP's virtual uncritical support of the Cuban Revolution and its current uncritical support of the guerrilla strategy in Africa serve to illustrate that the SWP capitulates to guerrillaism where it does not intrude on its social-democratic appetites.

When dealing with the European perspectives, one is faced with two positions equally lacking in Marxist methodology. On the one hand we have the SWP-U.Sec. minority whose program consists of an avoidance of the working class in favor of work in a petty-bourgeois milieu. On the other hand, we

Tendency as it does not present a valid revolutionary alternative to the reformism of the U.Sec. Minority Tendency, as exemplified by the Socialist Workers Party.

Democratic centralism provides for full freedom of discussion and complete unity in action. While the SWP maintains that it closely follows the formula, in practice it consistently violates the Bolshevik norms of democratic centralism. To Lenin, "full freedom of discussion" meant inner-party discussion before a decision was reached, followed by constant re-evaluation of the decision. Lenin saw the democratic and centralist aspects of this formula as always being present. In the SWP, inner-party discussion occurs for three months every two years, during pre-convention discussion period. During the other 21 months the SWP has no internal political life. During this time, decisions made at the previous convention cannot be questioned

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by the party membership despite a constantly changing relationship of political forces. National Committee Plenum reports dealing with political issues are labelled as "informational reports" to prevent any political discussion.

The SWP refuses to allow proportional factional representation on the higher bodies (National Committee, National Executive Committee, Political Committee) of the party, thus denying another evolved Leninist organizational practice. At the time of the 1971 Convention the party majority denied representation on these bodies to the Proletarian Orientation Tendency, maintaining this grouping did not represent a "serious" tendency.

Leninist practice in youth-party relations developed by the first four Congresses of the Communist International provides for organizational indepen-

dence and political subordination for the youth organization. In practice this means that the youth group has a separate structure approximately parallel to that of the party. There is common discipline in both the youth group and the party so that a faction developing in the party has the right to fight for its position in the youth group and vice versa. In contradistinction, the SWP binds minority comrades to party discipline, prohibiting them from discussing their differences with the majority line to non-party youth. The YSA is treated as a hostile organization and serves the function of a front group for the SWP majority.

"The Majority is the Party"?

Further degeneration of the SWP as a Leninist organization can clearly be seen in the accepted use of organizational maneuvers as opposed to political debate to deal with minority tendencies. We are not the first oppositional group to be threatened with expulsion for our thoughts, opinions and perspectives. Beginning in 1963, with the expulsion of the Revolutionary Tendency for "a hostile and disloyal attitude toward the party majority," the SWP has conducted periodic house cleanings, expelling a variety of oppositional groups within the party for ideological differences with the majority. The SWP justified these purges by Farrell Dobbs' formulation: "The majority is the party." Hence opposition to the majority becomes disloyalty to the party itself.

Indicative of the SWP/YSA's departure from democratic centralism is the way we are being driven out of the YSA. This trial body has been convened to investigate charges presented to us only four days ago. The trial body, the Executive Committee, is the same body that drew up the charges.

We requested that the trial be postponed so that we might seek to prepare an adequate defense. Certainly the E.C. used as much time to investigate and prepare the charges as they needed, but our requests for extensions were refused. It is interesting to note that the E.C. never denied that we would be unable to prepare an adequate defense, but instead made statements concerning

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STUDENT REVOLT ROCKS FRANCE



In French student strikes of last Spring, Ligue Communiste's approach was indistinguishable from youth and student vanguardism typical of SWP/YSA. YSA enthused indiscriminately over all student actions (e.g., above), happily reporting Ligue statements about lessons workers were learning from students!

our "status" of "being in limbo" since we had been "accused"—a "status" which they wished to clarify as rapidly as possible. Therefore, guilt is assumed before proven.

The SWP Alternative to Bourgeois Democracy

To speak of the current assembly as a trial body in the context of proletarian democracy is a farce. The E.C. members have constantly told us that the body did not constitute a "bourgeois court." We agree. But, under the norms of workers democracy under which the trial is allegedly held, we should be granted the full defense rights to which the ruling class itself gives at best occasional lip service. The E.C. has used its statement in the opposite manner—specifically to deny us the rights that even the bourgeoisie would normally grant us as part of the hard-won heritage of the bourgeois-democratic revolutions against feudalism.

First, while the charges against us include all three of us, acting as a unified group with a common political basis (agreement with the SL/RCY), the E.C. has stated that we would in effect be tried separately and not permitted to present a joint defense. Also we have been told by the E.C. members that we would not be allowed to be present at our "trial" when the witnesses against us presented the alleged evidence. Thus we are denied even the right to cross-examine our accusers! Furthermore, we have been charged essentially for our political beliefs. It is particularly unfortunate that when the SWP's fraternal French group, the Ligue Communiste, has been banned by the French government for its ideas, the YSA chooses to establish star-chamber procedures within its own organization for the purpose of expelling dissidents. Because of the utter absence of the norms of workers democracy in this "trial" body, we refuse to in any way sanction this procedure.

The trial procedure is reminiscent of the manner in which Trotskyists were expelled from the Communist Party. Any differences which may exist only demonstrate that the procedure to which we have been subjected is *less* democratic than the procedure originally faced by Cannon, Shachtman and Abern. Like them, we stand fully on the revolutionary positions of Trotskyism.

Trotskyism continued within the SWP despite the revisionism of the YSA and SWP majority leadership. We declare our full political solidarity with such Trotskyist positions and documents. Specifically we declare our support for the documents of the Revo-

lutionary Tendency, particularly the document entitled "In Defense of a Revolutionary Perspective." Equally, we declare our support for the original "Declaration of the Leninist Faction" of the SWP. Since the politics of these documents and groups is reflected in the Spartacist League and Revolutionary Communist Youth, we are in basic political agreement with them.

YSA: Mao, McGovern OK, But Not SL/RCY

But such sympathy is declared to be incompatible with membership in the YSA. One can remain a "loyal" member of the YSA while not a socialist, according to the majority. Equally, a YSA member can be a supporter of Mao, the Moscow Trials, full intervention in the gay-liberation "movement," and can be against dialectical materialism while supporting George McGovern. All such ideas are permitted in the YSA. While this is true, and despite the fact that the SWP National Secretary, Jack Barnes, in defense of the SWP's 1966 electoral policy, has stated that the SL is the closest group to the SWP, SL/RCY politics are singled out as the specific political beliefs which are incompatible with YSA membership.

What is even more astounding is that the YSA is seeking to expel us for sympathy with the SL/RCY when a growing number of the SWP and U.Sec. leadership have suddenly "rediscovered" orthodox Trotskyist positions held by the SL/RCY for over a decade. Thus, after a decade of enthusiasm for guerrilla warfare, Hansen suddenly discovers that the SL was indeed correct for condemning it. After a decade of support to the International Minority's positions on nationalism, Mandel begins writing what the RT/SL had been writing for over ten years!

It is most unfortunate and not accidental that the YSA leadership chooses to drive us out at the moment when a profound political crisis is shaking the U.Sec. and the SWP, a crisis that raises all the old questions about the nature of Pabloism, the 1953 split and the 1963 reunification, the nature of the Cuban Revolution and the "guerrilla road to power," etc. We feel that only the Spartacist League has consistently attempted to answer all these questions on the basis of anti-revisionist Trotskyism, and we call on all serious revolutionaries in the YSA and SWP to seek fusion with the Spartacist League/Revolutionary Communist Youth.

Signed Robert Bennet
Michael Feldman
Alice Risman

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In September 1973 *Women and Revolution*, a Marxist journal dealing with issues of particular significance to the struggle for women's liberation, will make its reappearance as a publication of the Woman Commission of the Central Committee of the Spartacist League.

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