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RP

OUR ORGANIZATION:  
American Roots and World Concepts

ROUGH DRAFT

(Preliminary Rough Draft  
for Full Discussion and  
Reorganization)

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### INTRODUCTION

This is the history of a small grouping of workers and intellectuals that have broken with all professed Marxist groupings. On the face of it, it would seem that this is of concern to no one but those involved, much less any substantial part of the American working class. The opposite is the case.

There used to be a time when a worker, sick of the crimes and hypocrisies of capitalist society, could find a refuge and a way out in organizations based upon the theory and practice of Marxism. However various were the forms Marxism took, it always had been a doctrine of liberation and freedom and above all, of liberation and freedom for the workers of the world. In times of peace as in times of war, Marxism propounded and debated and worked out policies for the working class, governed always by the idea of its liberation from all types of tyranny. Those days are gone.

A serious worker, that is a worker who is thinking seriously about the problems of the working class, cannot shirk the issue of precisely, what is Marxism.

Our grouping has broken with all professed Marxist groupings in order to pay attention to the workers and to try to find out what Marxism really is, not what Marx wrote in 1848 or 1867, but where his theory stands today, in 1953.

All these professed Marxists have never understood the American people, or rather they have never understood Marxism. They always learned it as a foreign doctrine, and then tried to graft it on to the American masses, instead of studying the history, the life and thoughts of the American people and the American nation and finding there the specific manner in which the universal truths of Marxism -- the liberation of the masses from all exploitation -- were expressing themselves. Thus they never studied the Abolitionist movement seriously. Yet this was a movement born in America 100 years ago -- and 83 years before what is known as Leninism. It was headed by such uncompromising fighters as William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, and Frederick Douglass. And it was a movement which had achieved in many ways, as we will show later, a concept of human relations that the Socialists and Communists in this country had not.

We have broken from all old radical groupings because of the complete capitalist mentality of all of them -- Communists, Trotskyites, Reutherites. They understand far less of the workers than the intelligent capitalist does. They all of them thirst to lead; their whole idea and aim is to sit in the seats of the capitalists,

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that's all. The workers are to stay where they are. That is what they call socialism. But that is precisely the type of socialism that the American working class has rejected, although its disillusionment with the men of power and authority is total.

It is true that there is no Marxist party in the United States. But if those people who profess they are Marxists think that that means the end of everything, they are displaying total blindness to the fact that the basis of Marxism is not in any party but in what the workers are doing and thinking.

The American working class is Marxist to the very marrow of its bones. Just look at it. Millions upon millions at one time or another believed in war for democracy, war to end war, League of Nations, peace, prosperity and progress. Today nobody does. In national politics it is the same. Fear of atomic war, the daily struggle against the speed-up, the corruption of politicians, murderous taxation; the worker in the plant or mine, the sharecropper, the back-aching typist, the student waiting to be called by his draft board, do any of them believe that anything has changed now that Eisenhower is President instead of Truman? Does any Negro believe that a new president and a new administration will do anything to alter the situation of the Negroes in the United States? The millions of Negroes in Africa; Arabs in Morocco, Tunis, and the Middle East; Spanish workers under Franco, Indian peasants, Australian workers, never in the world was there so universal a revolt among countless millions everywhere against the exploitation and the incompetence of their rulers, and the unending disasters they have imposed upon mankind for the last thirty years.

The rulers know it. The workers of the world no longer believe what they are told. The workers of Western Europe are so sick of war for democracy that they have split the American ruling class wide open. One group, led by Truman and Eisenhower, are frantically trying to whip the Europeans up for war, by corruption and intimidation, using William Green, George Meany, the Reuther brothers, Dubinsky, Lovestone, Irving Brown, and others of that type, as their agents among the European labor leaders. The second group, led by MacArthur and Hoover, think that defeatism is so widespread abroad that arms and money poured into Europe will end up as gifts to the Russian army when it moves. That is the great debate. They are debating over what the European workers will do. If they were sure of those workers, there would be no debate.

It is not only workers who do not believe. The great majority of the people do not believe. For observe. The government, the press, the politicians, the professors and the parsons, radio and television, scream with one voice that America must be saved from Communism. It is obvious that Russian Communism is a monstrous barbarism.

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It is equally obvious that its international power has steadily grown. Yet the hundreds of thousands of students in the universities are bitterly hostile to being drafted. If they believed what they were told, they would be willing to go.

That is what the rulers call the free world. How different is it with the one-party totalitarian states? Stalin, his stooges in Eastern Europe, and his allies in China, who between them rule nearly 890 million people, have so little faith in being believed that they can rule only by the most savage police-states history has ever known. They have a bullet waiting for anyone, however highly placed, who dares to express an opinion contrary to theirs. They have to keep their frontiers closed against all foreign visitors, all foreign newspapers, not even a postcard can go into these countries without being censored. They go to unlimited trouble and expense to jam out foreign wireless stations; anyone in those countries caught listening to the foreign radio faces slave labor in a concentration camp. How the so-called democrats denounce all this! They say that it is a monstrous tyranny, the most horrible the world has ever seen. But the government of the United States has itself instituted such a system of terror against those whom it calls subversives, that today vast numbers of people would not put their names to the Declaration of Independence or the Bill of Rights because they are afraid they would be accused of disloyalty and Communism. These rulers too know what their workers think of them.

This total disillusionment of the mass with the men of power and authority is one of the greatest advances ever made in human society. Yet the professed Marxists do not respect the American working class at all. They pay no attention to what it is really doing and thinking. They believe that if they had a chance to plan everything then that would be the new society. But, as Stalinist Russia has shown, that would only be the greatest totalitarianism on earth.

We are not out to "lead." We are unalterably opposed to all planners. Marx had shown, as far back as 1867, that there are only two alternatives in contemporary society: either the self-activity of the workers or the total plan over the workers. We are forever through with those who failed to see this in theory and who hailed in practice the "planned economy." When World War II began and Trotskyism called for the defense of Russia, we broke with it. When World War II ended and the American Trotskyites at least looked as if they retained a revolutionary perspective in America, we returned to them. But the degeneration in theory had eaten into their very lives and their relations with their own rank and file. We are now finished with them completely and forever. And yet it is only through the concrete struggle with them that we could

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have clarified ourselves and found the new elements -- rank and file workers, Negroes, women, youth -- for the new grouping.

The strength of our theory is this: it sees no individual or grouping as apart from the world objective situation. It therefore sees, within its own organization, the reflection of all that is on the outside. But it is not mere reflection. Different groupings, representing different social layers, forming different political tendencies, are brought so close together that the sharpest conflicts are inevitable, and because the conflict is sharp and concentrated, so is the solution. By a close study, day and night, then of all the relationships and tendencies inside, by never parting for a moment from its own rank and file which has the closest association with the masses outside on which all depends, there is revealed in a tiny and concentrated form, not only the problems of the day which the outside world shows, but the outline of the perspective of the future which only Marxism can anticipate.

What we want to do therefore is to tell the story of the development of Marxism in the United States in strict relationship to the development of the class struggles here. This story will show that in revolutionary politics not only do the great ideas and events explain small and apparently insignificant things, but that the opposite also is true. Through close observation of small political groups we are able to see ideas and forces of vast scope more clearly and profoundly.

SECTION I SPLIT IN THE SOCIALIST MOVEMENT IN AMERICA  
AT END OF WORLD WAR I

At the end of World War I, there was great dissatisfaction with the two big political parties in the United States. The Republican and Democratic Parties suffered the first great challenge since the days of Populism. No less than a million voters moved away from the capitalist parties and voted for the Socialist Party. Their candidate, Eugene Victor Debs, was in jail at the time for his anti-war views. In the main, it was a working class vote, but among this million there were also sections of the middle class, especially the intellectuals and the youth who had moved away from an old set of values, and were searching for a new philosophy, a new way of life.

Today Russian Communism is the greatest barbarism on earth. But in 1917 Russian Communism was the greatest liberating force in the world. It overthrew the hated Tsarist autocracy, brought peace to the nation, and established the first workers' state in history. Debs hailed the Russian Revolution as "the greatest, most luminous and far-reaching achievement in the entire sweep of human history." And yet it was his party that was undergoing the deepest split in its history precisely over that question and precisely at the very time when a substantial section of the American working class had broken with the capitalist parties and voted socialist.

1. Debs

Debs was a revered name, not alone to American Socialists, but to the entire American working class. This railroad worker had led some of the great class struggles that rocked American society at the turn of the century, like the Pullman strike. He became a socialist when the Federal troops came out, at the bidding of the companies, to put down that strike for elementary workers' rights. "In the gleam of every bayonet and the flash of every rifle the class struggle was revealed...The capitalist class. The working class. The class struggle."

Debs fought this capitalist class not only in peacetime, but during the war also. But he did not grasp the world character of the first world war, and he did not grasp the world character of the Russian Revolution. Although he hailed it as the greatest achievement in human history, he did not separate himself from those socialists who opposed it.

Y Yet a great dividing line was being drawn throughout the world socialist movement over this central event of the world we live in. It split socialism into two warring camps: those who were for and those who were against soviets.

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Today when we hear or read the word, soviet, it is usually in connection with the idea of government. Soviet means the Soviet Government, with its huge bureaucracy, its huge army, its millions of secret police, its factories which are prisons, its prisons which are factories, its ambassadors and representatives at the United Nations, telling lie for lie with the ambassadors and representatives of the old capitalist nations. But in 1917, the word, soviet, did not mean this. It meant the opposite of all this. It meant the destruction of the bureaucracy, the abolition of professional armies, the abolition of police. It meant elections based on factories, regiments, and groups of peasants. There was one delegate to every 500 workers, a delegate to every regiment, and a delegate to every few thousand peasants. The workers, soldiers and peasants formed these soviets. It was not bureaucrats, officials army, police or parliament but these soviets which held all power. Workers' rule -- that was what "soviet" meant.

The sad fact is that Debs lent his great prestige to those who were socialists in words, but who in action fought this soviet power. He remained part of the Socialist International and attacked the Communist International. The Communist International drew a class division against those who betrayed the interests of the workers through their support of the imperialist war. Debs refused to see it as a question of class. He interpreted it as a question of "dictatorship." He wrote: "When they (the Communist International) proceed to dictate to the socialist parties of other countries as to how they should conduct themselves, then it seems to me to be the time to back up."

The word "dictate" was for purposes of covering the real reason for the split: whether to fight only for workers' "rights" or for workers' power; whether to do so only on a national scale or on an international one.

## 2. The Immigrants

Those who opposed Debs split away to form the new Communist Party of the United States. It was not an easy thing to do, for Debs was the most revered name in the American socialist movement. The majority who formed the new party were immigrants, old and new, whose revolutionary fibre was steeled in the struggle against Tsarism first in 1904, and then in 1917.

Precisely because they were immigrants they appreciated the Americanism of Debs. Debs, it is true, was no William Lloyd Garrison. That great abolitionist was a true Bolshevik in the fullest meaning of the term -- uncompromising, unflinching, total in his devotion to the cause. Like the Bolsheviks, he opposed both the slave power itself and also those who opposed the slave power in words, but worried about what means to use, or sought high office in the interim, or even compromised with those who sought office. Garrison's famous phrase, "There is



some roguery here," was definitely not a part of Debs' make-up. The latter saw nothing fatal in "independence" even where it meant betrayal of the interests of the workers.

Nevertheless Debs was American from head to toe. And the immigrants who fought for the defense of the Russian Revolution knew there would never be an American revolution so long as they were the dominant group in the newly-born Communist Party.

Why, then, did the immigrants break with Debs?

First, because they recognized that here a class division is involved. This is not easy to see since, as far as Debs was concerned, it was only a theoretical division; in reality he was a man whose whole history was one of class struggle. Nevertheless, it could not be an accident that a man who had gone to jail for his anti-war views should be in the same international with the German Social Democracy that not only jailed, but murdered Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg for opposing the Kaiser's war and struggling to achieve workers' power. They were murdered not by the capitalists but by the socialists who saved capitalism. This was no personal aberration. It represented a political tendency.

If there was anything the immigrants knew well it was the question of political tendencies. Lenin's party, which was the only one in history that had achieved workers' power, had taught them, ever since its beginning in 1903, that it was necessary to fight, not alone Tsarism, but the petty-bourgeois tendencies within the Marxist movement. The working class had achieved victory once in history and its leader, Lenin, could lead it to victory for one reason and one reason only: because he believed that the workers of the world were ready to rule, not after he and some intellectuals and planners had trained them, but then and there in 1917. For him, a socialist revolution meant that the workers and other oppressed classes were to rule.

There you have the fundamental problem of the world in which we live. However different it may be in different countries, in essence it is the same. When the workers overthrow the capitalist government, as they have done so often, who is to rule? Will the workers rule or will the labor bureaucrats, in terror of the revolutionary working class, rush to find a government of liberals, "progressive" police chiefs and such like, all of whom aim at nothing else but putting the workers back in their place in the plant and in politics, i.e., restoring the old society. That's what the German socialists did. Ten thousand books and ten million words and a thousand such as Debs cannot explain that away.

That is the modern problem and that's what gave the small band who were ready to strike out on a new path the strength to break with Debs. They were ready to accept the discipline of the Communist International. To them it was not a "dictate" but something self-imposed. Indeed it is only when it is self-imposed that its semi-military aspect is entirely subordinate to the passionate vision of the future called a political perspective.

The political perspective they held was simple and clear: The working class, and only the working class, is to rule. It was the workers' role in production -- in the factories, in the mines, in the mills, and in the fields -- that defined the class character of society and then the class nature of the state or national government. There can be no true socialism, no serious Marxism, outside of this overwhelming consideration of the role of labor at the point of production. To move one inch from this concept of labor is to betray the working class interests.

The working class is not just the workers fighting for their rights against the steel barons, or the railroad interests, but the whole working class and its future: workers' power. If once a workers' party placed in the center of all its thoughts and actions the aim of workers' power, then sooner or later the American proletariat would produce its own new and indigenous leaders and the band of immigrants need not fear the loss of Debs. Already in fact, looming then on the horizon was a comparable American figure who was joining forces with the Communists, William Z. Foster, the leader of the great steel strike.

### 3. The Life and Activity of the Communist Party Members

The American ruling class was terrified at the new passions and forces stirring on the American scene. Race riots spread as well as strikes. Millions of Negroes, newly arrived from the South to swell the expanding labor force that had heretofore been filled by the immigrants from Eastern Europe, rebelled against intolerable conditions. These new immigrants from the South were in revolt not only against the life in the factories, but life in their neighborhoods, the crowding, the segregation in living quarters, the discrimination and lack of freedom of movement. The conditions were the more intolerable precisely because they were no longer share-croppers in the South but an integral part of the American labor force in basic industry. They organized into a mighty mass movement led by one Marcus Garvey.

The government struck out blindly at all opposition, but especially at "Russian Communists." It whipped the country into a hysteria and continued on a rampage of illegal raids, arrests, break-up of meetings, suppression of books, pamphlets and the paper of the fledgling C.P. This forced it underground before it ever got a start.

That knock on the door at midnight which was supposed to have had its origin in Hitler Germany in 1933 had its start in America in the Palmer Raids in the early 1920's. But these government persecutions could in no way dampen the enthusiasm, activism and energy of the young party members, who had their imagination fired by the Russian Revolution, and felt that the revolution in America too was one they would see in their lifetime.

It was this type of perspective that made no task too hard or menial. The party, though only a few thousand, tried to penetrate as deep into the masses as possible. They went, not to unionized shops where conditions were comparatively easy, but to sweatshops so that they could try to organize them. They were on picket lines and before houses where eviction notices were put up. The greater the capitalist magnate, the greater the desire to penetrate into his citadel, whether that be U.S. Steel in Pittsburgh or textiles in New England; the International Harvester in Chicago or the shipyards of San Francisco; the mines in West Virginia and Illinois and the sweatshops of Georgia.

That was their life. That did not mean they forgot their theory, for they had learned in their fight with Debs that, just as there are only two basic classes in society, so there are only two modes of thought. Serious theory meant, had to mean, in the final analysis, a class division, and they studied Marx assiduously as they worked in the sweatshops that did not seem to have changed much since the days when he described them.

But there was one field from which the party was cut off; which was clearly a revolutionary arsenal: the Negroes of America. But these Negroes kept far away from any whites. The Garvey Movement was an all-Negro movement. The unions had kept them out from membership and they in turn kept away from radical parties. Yet, as far back as 1913, that is before the war and before they had shown in action what a mighty revolutionary force they were, Lenin had recognized their revolutionary potential. He likened the share-cropper in the South to the peasant in Russia and said their oppression had them seething so that they would actually be the bacilli, or stimulant, to bring the socialist proletariat onto the historical scene.

The question now was: how to translate this theory into action?

The party had a lot to overcome because all oppression had worn a white face, and the Socialists had behaved very shabbily indeed. They had evaded the Negro question by saying that it was "economic" and hence would not really be solved until socialism triumphed. They thereby not only had not faced the question of social equality, but, what is of even greater importance, they had not sensed the validity of Negroes' independent movement, "nationalistic" as it might have appeared. The Negroes were

treated by them as some inert mass "to be given" economic rights because of some abstract principles. That's all. That was at best.

At worst, as was the case in the South, the few Negroes that came to socialism were put in separate branches from their white "comrades." That was life in the Socialist Party.

No wonder the Negroes kept far away from that type of socialism. When they embraced Garveyism by the millions, that put an end once and for all to the myth "you can't organize the Negro." But of all those millions, less than a handful, like A. Phillip Randolph, joined the Socialist Party.

What to do? The answer must be in the life of the Communist Party branches and in the very lives and relations of its white and Negro members. There lay the answer, and they acted on that.

The method of approach was entirely new precisely because the external politics was correct and broke completely with old concepts. The C.P. decided not to limit itself to manifestoes and talk, but to make it a part of the life of the branch.

It was the first serious approach to that burning question on the part of the Marxist movement since its origin in the United States. First the right atmosphere was created by the setting down of the political line, in the life of the party, i.e., their own lives, and not limiting this to the world outside. The line held that the new attitude to the Negro must be shown in life rather than in words. To do so required:

1. a recognition of the fact that so long as you are part of the American scene you will have certain prejudices of the ruling class although politically you have broken from it.
2. a desire to drive these out through exposition, not by whispering in corners
3. choosing the victims of this prejudice to be the ones to fight it by feeling free to speak about their actual relations with party members. Let them speak up. Let them test the theories of the party.

Any member could, as a regular part of the agenda, bring up the guilty person on charges of white chauvinism. The branch was the judge. There was no shilly-shallying on the question.

It was the first time the few Negroes who had joined began to speak up. It was the first time that more Negroes joined. It was the first time the white members felt the Negro question instead of merely orating it. It was symbolic of a new approach to human relations externally.

Everyone had a new, more real concept of the forces of the American Revolution. No one who was not ready to go all the way on this could long find refuge in the party.

4. The End of An Epoch and the Appearance of a New Type of Organizer: the Lovestonites

The party was suddenly thrown into turmoil by a spirit that emanated, or seemed to emanate, from Russia. Since the death of Lenin, the economy, the state, and the party there had been in a continuous state of turmoil, during which Stalin rose to power. Members suddenly found that in America they were being thrown out for "Trotskyism," and the party was disintegrating not through any government persecution -- it had long since come out legally and functioned without any interference -- but internally. The approach to the Negro Question, so symbolical of what should be the approach to all the most oppressed sections of the population -- the mass of workers, the women, the youth -- should have meant the realization that the party was not immune to bourgeois influences on the outside and must constantly hack away at them. But there was no time for anything like that.

However it was not "only" a Russian phenomenon. In the American party it emerged in the fight against the appearance of a new group to leadership called the Lovestonites, after their leader, Jay Lovestone.

The immigrants had been hungry for the American types to join their ranks. Well, here was an American. But he was not the hardy proletarian type. He was a petty-bourgeois intellectual. They surely had not meant to sneer at theory for they knew without theory the Russian Revolution could not have succeeded and maintained itself. But this type of theory seemed a solid departure from Marxism which recognized no country as immune from the general laws of capitalist development.

But here Lovestone said that America was immune. His theory was known as the theory of exceptionalism, and it led him to all sorts of fantastic schemes, such as being drowned almost completely in LaFollette's Farmer-Labor Party scheme. But what the rank and filers hated most of all was the "training to be organizers."

Heretofore organizers would go into the sweatshops and learn from the workers their conditions as one of them and with them see whether the shop could be unionized. Now, however, they were told to work, not with the mass of workers so much as with the top leadership of the union. There were all sorts of flirtations with the top bureaucracy, and suddenly the new type of organizer "for" the workers arose. The needle trades swarmed not only with the regular labor bureaucrat, but with the special consultant supplied by the Lovestonites, and now came the new

product: a combination of woman "leader," union organizer, and general debater.

I will take just one type I knew very well. Her name was Minnie Lury. She was a terrific little activist and organizer of the same type that they all were, except she was American. But she became Lovestone's secretary and from him learned to go to the shop not as any worker, but after having been trained to a special skilled job in the shop and then in the union as a "leader." He consciously trained these semi-intellectuals and of course it was beneath them to start as a floor girl. They went directly to be an operator. Minnie would orate to the workers at union meetings, and they "loved" her for just teaching them how to turn the switch off, whether or not you got the workers out from the shop, as if they did not know how to turn the switch. She was the anticipation, and only the anticipation of the Stalinist organizer. She was one of a long line that, first, swarmed the needle trades, and with the depression, then were everywhere.

SECTION II STALINISM

Stalinism is not an exclusively Russian phenomenon. It is only the Russian name for what we have seen rise throughout the world in 1933 with the destruction of the national state, the centralization of capital, fascism, the Plan. Pamphlet #1 traced the rise of state capitalism and, theoretically, we will trace it here again in the next section. At this point we wish to stop a moment at its specifically Russian physiognomy.

No truer commentary on the Russian Revolution was ever made than by its great leader, Lenin, who saw not only the elemental forces it unleashed, but the barbarism of the counter-revolution that would be needed to stop it. He spoke in one and the same breath of how the Russian workers must seize power and hold out until the workers of the advanced countries came to its aid, and at the same time of the fact that "no backward step towards capitalism would be possible without the most atrocious violence perpetrated upon the masses."

Stalin rose to power because he had the necessary barbarism required to reestablish capitalism once the European revolution lay crushed. The world does not stand still and once the revolution on a European scale had not succeeded, the counter-revolution rolled its arsenal in. But it was a new type of capitalism, a total ruthlessness needed by the monstrosity of capitalism in its death-agon.

First, to destroy the workers' state, Stalin and the Stalinists had to murder Trotsky and nine-tenths of the Old Bolshevik Party that had led the revolution. Then that new bureaucracy committed the most atrocious violence on the Russian workers. The only way they could keep the Russian workers down was through the establishment of bureaucratic tyranny, purges, concentration camps, GPU (NKVD and MVD) surveillance day and night.

Stalin rose to power because each stage of world capitalist production has posed only two alternatives: either the self-activity of the workers or the Plan over the workers. And Stalin was ready to choose the Plan.

The Plan, so to speak, also chose Stalin, for only one who had been as disloyal as Stalin and had concentrated in his hands more power than he knew what to do with (as Lenin noted in his Will) possessed the sort of ruthlessness needed to turn the clock of history back. The Plan stopped at nothing because it was total, and Stalin stopped at nothing because he was ruthlessly disloyal to the workers' state. Together they (1) liquidated millions of peasants, (2) tied millions of workers to the factory with a terror that private capital had not exercised for it never had the total state power, (3) sent other millions who had rebelled against this totalitarian machine to the concentration camps.

Clearly something new had arrived in the world with the First Five Year Plan. The country to follow in its footsteps was Hitler Germany. Bureaucratism, ending in the one-party state, is rooted in the need to discipline workers in production.

This explains also the existence of the labor bureaucracy. This is the reason why the labor bureaucrats behave as they do; it is their function to discipline workers. The workers feel this to be so and that is why the white heat hatred of the labor bureaucracy. What they are searching for is the type of total revolt that will once and for all put an end to bureaucracy as a category -- to labor bureaucrats, to intellectual planners and self-appointed leaders.

This new quality of the proletariat could not be fully appreciated even by the greatest living Marxist of the day -- Leon Trotsky.

#### Its Opponent, Trotsky

Trotsky fought Stalinism from the beginning of its appearance with the death of Lenin in 1924. But the method of the struggle foretold its doom, for he never once turned to look for the economic roots of Stalinism -- the new quality of state capitalism. Rather he denied its very existence. Limiting his fight to the "wrong politics" Stalin pursued, he could offer the masses nothing more than the "right politics" and the "right leadership." He could not open a fundamentally new road for the proletariat trying to hack its way out from under these totalitarian planners, for he himself stood for a "planned economy."

Of course Trotsky the great revolutionary hailed the rise of the CIO and the sit-downs in France and the Spanish Revolution. But he could not see the entirely new quality of this revolt because he had no conception that there was a new economic quality to the epoch in which he lived. For him the epoch had not changed basically from the period of World War I and Lenin's analysis of imperialism. What Trotsky tried to do was to preserve Leninism as it was in 1917. Thus he still maintained that because property was nationalized, Stalinist Russia remained "a workers' state."

World War II did not shake Trotsky from his false position. His stubborn insistence on the defense of Stalinist Russia brought no workers to his side, but it did succeed in splitting the Trotskyist movement itself.

We went with the Workers Party which had split from orthodox Trotskyism. But within a year (1941) we found ourselves in opposition to the majority of that party led by Max Schachtman. It all revolved around our new theory of state-capitalism, which included in it the class analysis of the Stalinist bureaucracy.



SECTION III A NEW DIVISION IN MARXISM: OUR BEGINNINGS

1. The Theory of State-Capitalism

Three intellectuals got together as a grouping in 1941. One was of European background theoretically; another was of Russian background theoretically, and the third was American. They joined forces because they had all come to the conclusion that state-capitalism summed up the economic movement of our epoch.

What distinguished these three from all others who had toyed with the idea is, first of all, the seriousness of their effort. For years they continued to work at all aspects that went into the make-up of this theory: economics, politics, philosophy.

The one who knew Europe was the one who had worked out fully the theory of state-capitalism as the theory of the modern world. He brought to it both the knowledge of Marxism and of European civilization. In pamphlet #1 the collapse of the national state was analysed, and it was shown how World War II placed a question mark over European civilization. This knowledge went into this new doctrine of state-capitalism. At its core was the basis of all Marxism -- Volume I of Karl Marx's Capital, that is to say, the role of the worker at the point of production. This new theory established a continuity between capitalism today and the analysis of capitalism by Marx.

The one who knew Russian made an analysis of the Russian economy. We will take that up a little later when we develop the theory of state-capitalism. Here we are only tracing the first discussion among these three, and the contributions of each at that point. At that point he brought up the question of the trade union dispute that had occurred in 1920. He said: "I would like to study that aspect further, because it seems to me that there Lenin was able to pose -- long before state-capitalism characterized the epoch -- the task of the revolutionaries today: to be propagandists, not administrators."

The American, Tobin, said: "Yes, I have read some of the articles on that debate, but I think that Shlyapnikov of the 'Workers' Opposition' grouping, not Lenin, was right in the three-cornered debate between Lenin, Trotsky and Shlyapnikov."

Thus, in these three individuals, was incorporated not only a new stage of Leninism and Bolshevik organization to illuminate the world of today, but also a schism which syndicalism within the Marxist movement would create. Later on we will trace this American's development, not because he was once a member of the tendency, but for the more fundamental reason that this type of "worker-bolshevism" does have objective roots in the American background and hence

is sure to reappear in one form or another. Tracing Tobin's development will therefore stand as a warning signal to any who think that running into the factories, in and of itself, solves the problem of intellectuals. It was the ruination of Tobin.

In 1943 this statement that Shlyapnikov was right was made in passing while all were intent on developing all the implications of the new theory of state-capitalism. State-capitalism is not just a continuous development of capitalism. It is a development of capitalism through transformation into opposite.

Here the contribution made by a new adherent with a special training in the dialectical philosophy of Hegel was of infinite value and became part of original contribution. When Marx had built on that philosophy of Hegel, he demonstrated the class nature of its principle of development through opposition.

Of all opposites joined together none is so fundamental as the presence of the working class and the capitalist class within the same modern society. You cannot watch the development of one without watching the development of the other. Thus when Lenin realized there was something new in his epoch as distinguished from the capitalism of Marx's day, he used this dialectic method of approach and with it was able to prove concretely that just as free competition had developed into its opposite, monopoly, so had a stratum of labor developed into its opposite, the aristocracy of labor. It was this which caused the downfall of the Second International, that is its betrayal of the interests of the masses, and its capitulation to the bourgeoisie. On the other hand, this duality within labor, which brought a split in the socialist ranks, was the very one which had also developed the new type of revolt of the lowest, deepest layers of the masses, and this made the Russian Revolution a reality.

The one of Russian background here began his concrete analysis of the Russian economy. It was the first time that an analysis of the Russian economy based on first-hand material was made which established the revolt of the Russian workers in the factory as the key to the need for the Stalinist police state. The millions in forced labor camps are the true measure of the never-ending resistance of the Russian workers to the Russian rulers in the state and in the factory. Had the revolt not been so persistent, and the terror wouldn't have been so violent, Nobody wants to put millions of people in concentration camps.

This is what distinguished our grouping from all other state-capitalist groupings. The others had analysed only the terror of Stalin, and the development of the centralization of capital. There they stopped. They did not see the revolt of the workers which is the basis of any rev-

olutionary perspective. They were blind to the struggle of the Russian workers and the European workers as well. European workers built the tremendous resistance mass movements to fascism, but they saw in it a "retrogression" to the national state. Their theory was called the theory of historical retrogression, and we will have more to say on it when we come to deal with the Workers Party which "took over" this theory. It was the beginning of the end of that party as a revolutionary grouping.

The decisive point is: what is new in an epoch? What necessitates, gives rise to, a new theory? What relationship does it have to the objective situation, that is, the reality of the day? For in the final analysis, unless a theory does correspond to reality, it is no earthly good to anybody.

Great historical crises, like World War I and World War II aren't just accidents. These violent outbursts that shake the world to its foundations don't just happen. There was a century of peace between the end of Napoleon's day to the first world war. There was only a short period between that and World War II. It was short because the holocaust on the battle field had done nothing to change the chaos in production, but rather exacerbated it so that the short peace brought it right into the long depression and finally war. And we are in a more violent and total mess now precisely because nothing basic has changed in the mode of production and mode of labor.

It is the mode of production, the relations of the two basic classes at the point of production, which dominate all aspects of society, political, and social as well as economic. The relations of production in any society determine, shape, put their stamp on all other relations. As production expands and is bureaucratized, so is it with all other spheres of social activity. The most important is government. Government today consists of vast administrative bureaucracies which in any large country comprise millions of officials and functionaries, the majority of whom grow and multiply by the same needs and procedures as they do in production. They exist for the same purpose, to discipline the population in general, and are essentially as useless.

Modern scale production, the daily class struggle in the plant, the cooperative labor of thousands working together in the highly organized and complicated and scientific processes of modern technology, concrete knowledge of the labor bureaucracy -- these are the foundations of understanding modern society, and therefore of understanding Marxism.

Essentially, what Marxist theory does is show that everything depends upon the relationship between the two fundamental classes: the capitalist class and the working class. Since one is the dominant class, and the other

the opposed, it is natural that the impulses that each class gets from the objective movement -- in production and in politics -- are entirely different, opposed. The point that a Marxist must never forget is that all political tendencies, in turn, get their impulses from one of these two dominant classes. That is why a Marxist who fails to analyse the economic situation in strict relationship to the revolt of the workers is lost. He falls, he must fall into the bourgeois trap for in thought, as in production, there are only two basic modes: that of the capitalist class or that of the proletariat. This mode of thought, or theory, gets its test is proved right or wrong, by the movement of society of which it is an integral part.

The theory of state-capitalism tested itself against the reality of the day, by establishing the following:

1. That it was a world-wide phenomenon. Russian state-capitalism, it is true, wasn't like the American, and the American New Deal wasn't like the British Labor Party type of capital, nor the British like the German Nazi autarchic structure. Not exactly. Nevertheless, in all the varieties the centralization of capital had reached such proportions that all -- those where state intervention was only partial and those where the state had achieved full control over the economy -- all revealed that we had entered a new epoch in history, as basically different from that of Lenin's imperialist epoch, as Lenin's epoch was from the competitive economy that characterized the period of Marx.

2. The difference lay in the following: where the development of international capitalist monopolies in pre-World War I days led to the war and a new redivision of the world, the movement of centralization of capital preceding World War II had reached such gigantic proportions that only vast state-capitalist trusts on a continental and inter-continental scale (Hitler's Europe, Stalinist-dominated Europe and Eastern Asia, America) could even attempt to control it, and they failed.

The problem today is clearly no longer one of division and redivision of the world market.

The problem is one of complete mastery of the world by one of two great powers: Russia and the United States.

With this tendency to centralization of capital on a world scale, there is a change in Labor's ranks. The truth that the Social Democracy betrayed the proletariat in World War I as the main social support of capitalism was analysed in pamphlet #1. The truth of today is that the bankruptcy of capitalist society today is such that it can continue to live only because the labor bureaucracy has increasingly substituted itself for the capitalist class in the process of production itself.

The working class of America bore the brunt of the bureaucracy's rosy "no strike pledge" during World War II and the hatred of the masses for the labor bureaucracy

then grew to a white heat. This, then, is what is involved: How can labor free itself from this octopus-like labor bureaucracy that is right at the process of production to discipline it day in and day out, hour in and hour out, and every minute of the hour? That is what the masses were searching for in the great strike movements that followed the end of World War II. The wild-catting, the mushrooming of rank and file committees against the labor bureaucracy, so vividly described by that labor-hater, Victor Riesel, is what characterizes the working class of today. Its role in production prepared and steered it for this role of life and death opponent of the labor bureaucracy. It is not dependent upon any theory to find that role or that road. But a Marxist, not so situated in the labor process, cannot find this road except by Marxist theory. That is what he lives by. If he doesn't, degeneration awaits him.

The greatest proof of that is what happened to Leon Trotsky, the greatest revolutionary Marxist living at the time, the very one who headed the only existing revolutionary opposition to Stalinism throughout the period of 1928 to 1940.

Trotsky drew a division between the Stalinist bureaucracy and itself. But he drew this division not along class lines. To him Stalinism was not the new face of the class enemy -- state capitalism and its totalitarian planning -- but only a usurping, luxury-loving bureaucracy who had the wrong policies. All that was needed under the circumstances was to have the right policies and a self-sacrificing leadership.

Trotskyism tried to preserve Leninism, as it was in 1917. Thus it maintained that, despite Stalinism, Russia remained a workers' state because its property was nationalized and the economy was planned. He was therefore powerless to fight it at its root.

In opposition to the method Lenin used to find out what was new in his epoch that caused the downfall of the heretofore Marxist International (the Second), Trotsky stubbornly maintained there was nothing new in our epoch to distinguish it from the epoch of imperialist monopoly capital of World War I. He could not find the class nature of Stalinism because he had not found the state-capitalist nature of our epoch. Lenin, on the other hand, looked for the nature of his epoch precisely because he wanted to find the economic roots of the betrayal of the masses by the Social Democracy. Without the why of this phenomenal betrayal, he would not only have been reduced to name-calling, as had Trotsky, but, what is vastly more important, he could not have found the new forces for the new type of revolt that would take place despite the betrayals and would come from a new layer of the population, the lowest, deepest masses in opposition to the aristocracy of labor which was the basis of the Second International.

## 2. Trotskyism, Orthodox and Otherwise

Trotsky would not fight Stalinism as the class enemy because he did not have the theory of state capitalism. And precisely because he did not fight Stalinism as that class enemy of the proletariat, as Lenin had fought the Social Democracy as the lackeys of capitalism, all his policies were completely ineffectual, and his fighting came to naught. Not only that. He had no theory which would have prepared him to see the new types of revolt. Quite the contrary, he was waiting merely for a repetition of the Social Democracy's type of betrayal -- refusal to seize power -- to repeat itself in this war, with only the cast of characters changed: the Communist Parties would this time capitulate each to its own bourgeoisie. Trotskyism (the Fourth International) would then "take over" and lead the workers to power. And he kept assuring everyone that the workers were more and more revolutionary. This optimism was not at all infectious precisely because the optimism stemmed not from his theory, but from his faith. His theory held that the workers were constantly being duped by the Communist Parties and it needed Trotskyism to expose the true nature of Stalinism. But while Trotskyism was "exposing" Stalinism, the not-so-duped workers were revolting against all capitalisms, private or state, and Stalinism was crushing the proletarian revolutions. Wherever the Red Army marched, from Poland to Germany, there the revolution lay crushed, not because the Stalinists didn't take power, but because they did.

In opposition to this movement of the workers, Trotsky's theory of Russia remaining, despite its degeneration, a workers' state, led him to call for the defense of Russia at the outbreak of World War II. This led, not to the exposure of Stalinism, but to the split within Trotskyism itself. We, as individuals, (for there was no state-capitalist tendency in Trotskyism in 1940) followed the Workers Party, headed by Max Schachtman, out of the Socialist Workers Party which retained its orthodoxy.

Orthodox Trotskyism held together till the end of the war not so much because of the theory of Russia as a worker's state -- Russia was after all a far-away land and nothing they could do here would affect it -- but because of the international perspective of world revolution which would result when the Communist Parties capitulated to private capitalism and Trotskyism would "take over." But the Communist Parties did no such thing anywhere in the world. Where they had to, they seized power and at the same time crushed the workers' revolution. It wasn't Stalinism that disintegrated. It was Trotskyism.

What happens in every great historical crisis is this. The ruling class, which did everything to prepare the war and knew this is a fight to the end, not alone with the declared enemy on the outside but above that with

the class opponent within, mobilizes itself completely to have its ideology, that is its thinking, be the dominant one in the nation as a whole. The working class opposed to the struggle with the outside enemy in which it has nothing to gain, and internally where it has a lot to gain looks for an ideology, or comprehensive view of life, which would correspond to its instinctive desire to reconstruct society on new beginnings. Before World War I, the class division in Europe in any case was so clear, in thought as in production, that everyone had expected the Social Democracy to be the one to lead the fight against the imperialist war. Instead, its fortresses of trade unions and party capitulated entirely, folded up like a house of cards. Socialism, the Marxism of the days before World War I, betrayed because it itself was corroded from within by the aristocracy of labor, which arose with monopoly capitalism and superprofits and which had become its basis. Leninism replaced the Social Democracy as the ideology of the deepest, lowest masses that was the more oppressed by monopoly and by this labor aristocracy. It was this new layer that gave birth to a new type of revolt.

State-capitalist theory utilized the Leninist dialectical method of never separating the economy from labor. If the law of the centralization of capital is being driven to the ultimate limits, so is the law of the socialization of labor.

The socialization of labor is not a mere question of resistance to centralized capital. It contains within itself the positive elements of the new society. Once you see this in production, you can see it everywhere. Unless you see it in production, you can see it nowhere, and can never understand what is meant by the Marxist contention that the workers are the most advanced class in society. One of the difficulties in the way is that many of the ideas of the ruling class persist in the minds of workers even up to the moment of the revolution. It is only after the first great outbreak that the masses begin to bring their energies and their years of thought and discussion to bear upon the problems that face them. Then, stage by stage, their own class ideas and class program rapidly unfolds. No single human being or party could have predicted, far less organized the Soviet. No one could have guessed that it was coming until it came. But it is obvious that the Russian workers were in their own way and among themselves coming to the conclusion that they wanted something more than parliamentary democracy. Who in 1935 when Lewis and Green were proposing and counter-proposing in A.F.ofL. council halls, who could have foreseen the gigantic actions and the sit-down strikes which brought the C.I.O.? Nobody. Absolutely nobody. Still more, did anybody conceive that American workers wanted to have a system whereby they would decide all grievances on the spot by immediate discussion, and if the employers did not agree, immediately walking off the job. Yet that is what they were thinking while Roosevelt was passing the N.R.A. and Green and Lewis were arguing.

It is always very hard to foresee these things, im-  
possible to foresee all of them. Yet today bourgeois soc-  
iety is in a very advanced stage of decay, and despite the  
superficial dominance of bourgeois ideas, it is possible to  
see unmistakably what tremendous and world-shaking passions  
lie behind the restlessness and the bitterness of the work-  
ing class.

It is these new forces and new passions everywhere that  
Lenin knew would burst forth in a new type of revolt, al-  
though he did not and could not have known that it would  
take the form of soviets. Despite Trotsky's revolutionary  
faith he could not see these. More than that. He was so  
bound up with the old form of nationalization of property  
and planned economy that he, or rather his followers, first  
found themselves bedpartners with Tito, and now are the  
handmaidens of Stalinism itself. The logic of the cry, we  
see, is beyond the intentions of any individuals or group  
of individuals. It had not only its external form, but was  
corroding the party from within. It is this life that we  
come to now.



SECTION III - B - The Life of The State-Capitalism Grouping

I Education, Propaganda, Agitation: a new addition to our leadership

An original theory such as that of state capitalism does more than explain the world and the national political scene. It has been elaborated by mature politicians and it creates, so to speak, a political tendency.

Our theory had brought us into immediate conflict with the majority of the W.P. leadership led by Max Shachtman. He had, in the meantime, elaborated a theory of "bureaucratic collectivism". This theory, at first, actually flirted with the idea that bureaucratic collectives were a progressive phenomenon because the property was nationalized and the economy was planned. It became an enigma why in that case he broke with orthodox Trotskyism. Then this same theory veered to the other extreme and said that Stalinism was the most reactionary phenomenon in the world.

But these seeming extremes were only opposite sides of the same coin: the genuinely Trotskyist concept that it was property forms, not production relations, which distinguished historic epochs from one another. Like orthodox Trotskyism, it was a prisoner of nationalized property and plan. But, where orthodox Trotskyism with its concept of workers' state kept veering toward Stalinism, Shachtmanite Trotskyism, with its concept of the backwardness of the American workers, kept veering toward the other pole of world capitalism, American Imperialism. It was governed by the theory of "historical retrogression". The authors of that theory said that the degeneration of bourgeois society meant also the degeneration of the proletariat.

Our conception was the exact opposite. We said that the degradation of bourgeois society was due to the maturity and power of the proletariat. There were all the elements of a head-on collision between the two political tendencies within the W.P.

We had grown from 3 to 15, but we as yet had no workers in our tendency. We were, however, beginning to find our roots in the United States. We wrote Education, Propaganda, and Agitation. In this we outlined a program for the Americanization of Bolshevism:

"Every principle and practice of Bolshevism has to be translated into American terms. Historical materialism, the Marxian economic analysis, the role of the party, the relation between democracy and socialism, the relation between the trade union and the party, reformism and revolution, the role of Social Democracy, the theory of the state, the inevitability of socialism: every single one of these can be taught, developed, and demonstrated from the American economic, social, and political development. The American Revolution, the Civil War, the Knights of Labor, the Populist Movement, the Southern economy, the tremendous history of the G.I.O.; the development of the two major parties, the Wilson administration, the New Deal, the N.R.A., the American dollar civilization,

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the decline of the American Socialist Party, Eugene Debs, John L. Lewis, the Marxist analysis of all this is the material of our propaganda, of the creation of a Bolshevism which will break a path for us to the American masses. The ideas and principles of Marxism must be boldly and uncompromisingly presented to these American workers."

"American or nothing" summed up that section and inevitably brought us from the question of theory to the question of organization. It was entirely fantastic to believe that we or the W.P. or the S.W.P. or both together would build the American mass party:

"Groups of West Virginia miners, West coast sailors, Pittsburgh steel workers, all sorts of 'left' formations will coalesce in time and hammer out a unified organization. They will bring their qualities. Our task is to form such a strong nucleus that the coalescence will take place around us, or even that does not take place, our special contribution will be Marxism and the theory and practice of Bolshevism. But to do this we have to gather a nucleus of thousands, of 75% will be American workers, men and women, instinctively hostile to bourgeois society, who are workers, have been workers and who have no other prospect in life except to be workers. They and only they can build a mass party. They are the only real propagandists and agitators, day after day."

That was 1944. When we had first clashed with the leadership and theory of the W.P. in 1941 it concerned the role of the Russian worker at the point of production. By 1943 the European masses rose in the great resistance movements to fascism, and in America the miners came out in a general strike although we were in the midst of a world war. In the same year that the miners challenged not only the mine-owners but the capitalist state, the Government, the Negroes rose up in great demonstrations in Harlem and in Detroit. But the W.P. was so bound and gagged by its own theory of historical retrogression, by its concept that the workers were backward, that it could not greet these events in a manner that would get it a substantial following. They attracted only 50 people to a meeting on the miners. They saw nothing new at all in the Negro struggle. We, on the contrary, had hailed it as a new stage comparable to the miner's struggle in its own way. This brought us our first proletarian recruits: two Negro women proletarians.

Education, Propaganda and Agitation brought us also our first white production worker.

These new worker elements who were joining our tendency were finding it difficult to get along with the members of the W.P., although they themselves, as they were breaking from bourgeois society, had been attracted to the W.P. and that is how we met them.

Among the majority tendency it all became a big joke how

"only raw workers" were joining our tendency. Previously the opposite was whispered about: we were "just" theoreticians and know nothing about real political life. The youth had been warned not to take a class in CAPITAL led by us because, it was said, we were making it "sound" as if it were a treatise on state-capitalism. Now it was "only the raw workers", white and Negro, and it was the women, "just because" one of the leaders of the tendency was a woman, whose joining us supposedly made us subjects for their ridicule.

Meanwhile, it became clear that all new layers in the party - rank-and-file workers, white and Negro, women, the youth - had become restless. So blind are leaderships of small radical groups isolated from the great masses of the workers that they had no conception at all that the restlessness in the party was a reflection of the general stirrings on the outside.

But while the third layer elements were reflecting the revolt of the masses outside, the leadership was reflecting the petty bourgeois and even outright bourgeois conceptions. A head-on collision within the party was on the way.

A committeeman of a union who joined our tendency at that time quickly became part of our leadership. The analysis of the labor bureaucracy was, of course, an integral part of our theory of state-capitalism. But now, with the addition of this new leader, for the first time our resolutions became permeated with the same feeling against the bureaucracy as that which permeates the American worker to whom this is not a theoretical question but a matter of the very conditions of his life and work. Thus the new leader contributed to the Americanization of Bolshevism, not just in general but in the concrete.

"...lurking in my head, as lurks in every American worker's head, and it's to a degree you just can't explain - is this phenomenon of bureaucracy. A worker has a profound instinct - a profound distrust of the bureaucracy and a hatred of the bureaucracy that's beyond description."

So active and live is the actual hatred of the American worker against the labor bureaucracy, continued our new leader, that he totally isolates anyone who is in anyway connected with it, including also the committeeman:

"There is a sense of isolation and alienation. I mean you just don't feel a part of them. They won't let you feel a part of them. You just feel that they just separate you. The only time I ever experience a sense of integration with them is during wild-cats. That's the only time. And it'll last for several weeks after a lot of wild-cats. In many ways they will show a terrific respect for me and an admiration. But then, after 2 or 3 weeks, it completely disappears and that wall comes up again. And I've only been able to break that wall down where, over a period of years, I've been able to talk with certain workers, discuss and exchange ideas. There they understood clearly that I play a certain role in production because of the objective necessity, and that also I have

certain other ideas with which they agree."

From the start what was involved in the fight within the W.P., as later within the SWP, was the total blindness of those parties to the elements of the new society in the impulses, thoughts, and struggles of the workers, especially the American workers, today, not in the millenium, but today.

When they looked upon Romano, the white production worker who had joined us and began to tell us his story of the daily life in the factory, as backward, our leadership wrote:

"The profundity of Romano's contribution lies not in making any new discovery but rather in seeing the obvious - the constant and daily raging of the workers against the degrading and oppressive conditions of their life in the factory; and, at the same time, their creative and elemental drive to reconstruct society on a new and higher level."

This head-on collision with the party leadership which was on its way has to be seen in the context of the developing objective movement. Toward that end we are making no distinction between the two parties.

#### II The Rank and File Worker

In 1951 our rank and file voted unanimously to leave the SWP. Never before had there been a case of a split from an organization that claimed to be revolutionary which had not produced a schism also in the grouping about to split, especially worker-members, who, being organized, united, and disciplined by the very process of production, show an amazing stick-to-it-iveness to organizations which have pointed the road away from the exploitative, degrading capitalist society. We soon found out that the unprecedented action on the part of the rank and file was due to the fact that they had found their comrades to be more revolutionary than the so-called revolutionaries in the SWP.

We realize now not only that the members of our tendency had not left the socialist movement by leaving the SWP, but neither had the hundreds who had walked out of the SWP-WP in disgust those past 10 years with, what seemed to us then, nowhere to go. It is clear now that they were rejoining their class. They were continuing their search for a party which would show them that in its internal life it is at the opposite pole of the life in the world outside, especially on the matter of the relation of the men of power and authority and the great mass of people.

This, indeed, is the problem of our age: how to keep in the age of state-capitalism the relations between leaders and ranks free from the bureaucratism that pervades the whole of society.

The worker has a right to know the answer particularly since it is in his own instincts and impulses that the answer lies. All that he has to do is to have confidence in himself; know that he did the right thing in walking out of the party where he saw this bureaucratism paralyzing it, and demand that an organization that claims to be revolutionary be organized in his image. To help him to do that we must first take up the objective situation, to show why his impulses are so correct and yet why they must be organized into a total conception.

First the objective situation:

"Every stage of capitalism has its own particular class relations. We are now in a new stage, the stage of state-capitalism. This stage is distinguished by the fact that bureaucracy is the only means by which the capitalist class can hold its power.

"But in this bureaucracy the labor bureaucracy is decisive. In each country it has specific forms. In the United States the struggle is centered in production.

"The workers all over the world have learnt or are learning that a mere victory at the polls or nationalization of industry is not enough. They distrust and fear and hate bureaucracy. They do not want good Trotskyite bureaucrats instead of bad heutherite or bad Stalinist bureaucrats. They want to substitute a system in which bureaucracy as such..."

...does not exist. The only system which from its very nature excludes bureaucracy from the start is the Leninist worker's state, as we saw in detail in pamphlet #1. The workers in the United States are ready to listen to this for they understand the problems of production better than any other working class.

It is necessary to begin with production.

The capitalists are primarily interested in uninterrupted production their way. The worker wants to produce under conditions where he can decide what is to be produced and how it is to be produced, where he can do the work he likes, and most important of all, where he knows that his worth is recognized and that he is playing an important and necessary role.

Under present conditions, the most powerful and at the same time the most frustrating tendency of the workers is to produce and to cooperate for production as little as possible. The workers realize that a certain minimum of production on their part is necessary in their own interest. They also realize that they must not produce above the minimum. They therefore agree among themselves to set such production quotas as will subject them to as little exploitation as possible. This gets them into immediate and constant conflict with the capitalist class and the labor bureaucracy which is there to keep the workers tied to the machine and the contract. The result is persistent wild-catting. As one labor-baiting journalist, Victor Riesel, put it:

"Wherever you travel you find strikes, costing millions in pay and profits, forced by the hotheads down below - without consulting the responsible union leaders - because a foreman reprimanded a man in his division; or a chap wasn't guaranteed special pay. Or someone was shifted to a new department. Or there was a lack of new tools. There's an argument and out walks the entire department, idling thousands in other sections."

That is American society today. The men walk out over and over again apparently for nothing, and they do this because they are sick of the whole system. One day, despite the stranglehold of the labor bureaucracy, all are going to walk out at the same time and then the system will never be put together again in the same way.

All this is happening in American society today, and all this was posed by Marx some 85 years ago. Marx was able to "prophesize" so precisely by the simple method of drawing to a conclusion the movement of capitalist production itself. Marx did not mince his words. He said that unless the workers, every worker, became a highly-skilled educated individual, bringing all his force and his energies to production and all other social activities, the society of modern industry would collapse:

"It becomes a question of life and death for society to adapt the mode of production to the normal functioning of this law. Modern industry indeed compels society, under penalty of death, to replace the detail worker of today, crippled by a life-long repetition of one and the same trivial operation and thus reduced to a mere fragment of a man, by the fully-developed individual fit for a variety of labors, ready to face any change of production, and to whom the different social functions he performs are but so many modes of giving free scope to his own natural and acquired powers."

Either the powers of the workers are released from the stranglehold of capitalistic production where he is nothing but an appendage to a machine, or society will continue on its rush to the abyss.

This Trotskyism could not comprehend. In study circles it would be quoted but in life it was never followed because it was inconceivable to them that the workers could do this without being "led", led by them, of course.

This is it in a nutshell.

Totally opposed to all this is the political attitude of the genuine rank and file who comes into the party. He is the one who leads the wild-cat strikes, symptomatic of the revolt against the bureaucracy. He is seeking to build caucuses to win posts in unions. He is seeking primarily a revolutionary socialist organization in which he will gain knowledge, the understanding, the discipline and the associations which will fortify and develop him in his instinctive

hostility to bourgeois society. He is serious about building the party as a basis for a new way of life. The WP-SWP were geared to demoralize him and in the end to drive him away.

He finds nothing. And limited, handicapped, circumscribed as we have been, we have been able to demonstrate that new, inexperienced comrades and friends without long experience of Marxism, trained and educated by us, have been able to participate in various spheres of the class struggle as effectively as any others in the party - in similar circumstances.

In Detroit when the pension scheme came up, the SWP busied itself as usual with the politics of a few pennies more. One worker who is very sympathetic with our ideas took the floor against Reuther. He told him: "You got \$100. Maybe you should have got \$110. Maybe others would have only got \$90. That is your affair. We are not interested in that. What we are interested in is that you have consistently given away to the company the privileges that this union had won in its early days of struggle, privileges of controlling our own production. That is what we want back. We shall never be satisfied until we get it". Reuther was driven to the defensive. The pension discussion became a debate between Reuther and this worker and went on from meeting to meeting. So many Reutherites were supporting the worker that Reuther had to say that although these ideas were correct, the time was not yet ripe.

The WP-SWP listened to neither more than to this type of worker. Yet it was precisely this type of worker who became an integral part of our leadership and with whom we went to ever deeper strata of the proletariat. It was this type who introduced Romano's pamphlet to which we referred to above and with which we wish to deal again now.

In the interim period between leaving the WP and re-entering the SWP, we published THE AMERICAN WORKER. This pamphlet consisted of two parts, one part being written by the production worker and the other by one of our theoretical leaders who had special training in the Hegelian philosophy.

Part I was a description of life in the factory. It was a sort of diary of a rank and file worker in a mass production industry. It showed at one and the same time, the degradation of the worker by the capitalistic process of labor and community of labor between the workers themselves. Precisely because the cooperative bond between the workers themselves is stronger than this slavery, there is in the cooperative labor process the elements of the new society. Romano, for example, showed how, whenever the worker sneaks away, he investigates the other sections of the plant because of the longing to vision the whole of which he is a part; how the worker's creativity is expressed in what was known as "Government jobs" - jobs for himself on company time; and how he wants to be not a cog in a machine but an all-round man.

Part II was a philosophical analysis of the new social individual arising in the factory in opposition to the trade union bureaucracy:

"Today, in all strata of society, a search is going on for the way to create a world, one world, in which man can live as social and creative individuals, where they can live as all-round men and not just as average men. Out of this search a new philosophy

- o of life is being created... (nothing) parallels in depth and scope the process of evaluation and re-evaluation now going on in the activity and the thoughts of men."

"If our tendency has been able to make any contributions to Bolshevism, it has been because for it the study of the Hegelian dialectic in its Marxian form, of Marxian economics, and of the method of the great revolutionaries is nothing more than intellectual preparation and the pruning of bourgeois ideas in order to be able to understand and interpret and organize the instinctive drive and revolutionary instincts and the rank and file proletarian and the petty-bourgeois but idealistic youth."

We had learned that in their instincts and impulses are to be found the highest social development of the day and the road to the new society. It is this conception which brought directly into our leadership the worker type and at the same time laid the basis for new relations between leaders and ranks. On the other hand, the conflict of the leadership of the old parties with its rank and file was a permanent, continuous feature of party life. This was because that leadership was insensitive to its rank and file, never understood, listened or learned anything from it and also because of their own notions of the relations of masses to parties and parties to revolution. Because they had the notion that the workers must be led they could not learn anything from them. In the WP the petty bourgeois arrogance of the leadership was not a question of social origin. The arrogance came from the concept that all the American workers wanted was life of "plenty for all", and not of a life where men would for the first time be able to use all their natural and acquired talents, become truly human beings. In the SWP the blindness came from completely misunderstanding the nature of Stalinism and therefore blaming the workers for constantly "being duped". They just had to be there to lead or the workers would again be "duped" by the Stalinism.

The truth is the exact opposite. It is the SWP leadership which with eyes wide open to all the crimes and betrayals of Stalinism nevertheless holds on to it for dear life, simply because it cannot free itself from the Plan.

The rank and file worker in our grouping came to us not only because he finally had a forum in which to express himself. That was good and in the types in our organization he recognized the various layers of the working class outside and could return to them with new ideas. But it was something much more than that.

He came to us because he found a grouping in which the leadership did not stop at merely recognizing that the basic source for progress of the organization, its ideas, in its theories, in its next concrete steps, for theoretical advance and organizational



method, comes and can come only from the third layer in the organization which represents the mass outside. The task of leadership begins with this. The job is to organize these impulses into a total conception, a new way of life.

The party is a whole. Politics, forces, intellectuals, union leaders, third layer. It was necessary to bind them all together. It was necessary to work out a new relationship between them and in this working out of a new relationship, the party meets the nature of the epoch in which we live.

All politics in the United States are expressed most sharply

### III The Negro

All politics in the United States are expressed most sharply in the Negro Question. Politics is only a concentrated form for expressing economic relations. Both are seen clearest in the daily lives of the people.

The politics of radical parties differ from the politics of the ruling class which prevail in capitalist society. The politics of radical parties are reflected in the life within the party. The moment they deviate in any way from the strict working class position, immediately the life within the party begins to reflect bourgeois politics and prejudices.

We have described what the break from the Socialist Party meant in the life of the newly-formed Communist Party. But, just as the white chauvinist trials made the Negro feel this party is different, this difference dissipated itself when the party itself was transformed into a carbon copy of the Stalinist totalitarian party of Russia. During the Popular Front Days, for example, when it was fashionable to hobnob with bigwigs, I know for a fact that in Washington, D.C. there were actually separate branches for whites and Negroes. The spurious alibi was that it just "happened" because these were neighborhood branches. With Russia's entry into World War II the struggle for Negro rights was shelved altogether by the Communists. "A war for democracy against fascism" meant that the most fascistic practices of the Southern bourgeois as well as in the Army itself had to be tolerated. Negroes were told that they must forget their rights in America. This drove them out by the thousands quicker than the Communist Party activism during the unemployment days and eviction and the Scottsboro case brought them in. When in 1943 Ben Davis joined La Guardia on the platform and told the demonstrators to go home, it was in reality the end of any C.P. branch in Harlem.

### The W.P.

Although embroidered in much Marxist phraseology, the Workers Party had a position on the Negro Question that was not fundamentally different from that of the Socialist Party. It was an economic struggle that would not be solved till socialism. However, the '40's differed very considerably from the turn of the century, so that in the W.P. social equality was not alone preached but practiced. That did not change by one iota their concept of the backwardness of

of the Negro.

This had its inescapable consequences in the life of the party. In fact the history of the WP's position on the Negro Question discloses, in concentrated form, its departure from Marxism and at the same time reveals why the WP failed to grow. This has its lessons for us:

1) From the start of its independent existence (It split from the SWP in 1940) it felt no need to sensitize itself to the fact that the Negroes were searching for a new way of life, a new way of thought and a new mode of action. Quite the contrary, it ignored this despite the fact that the most exciting event that had occurred at its first convention was the appearance of two Negro sharecroppers from Missouri presenting a possibility of real revolutionary work in the mass movement. It continued to ignore this when the most important strike action the party participated in occurred among this most exploited part of the American population. Just because this action was led by our tendency it was just let pass. Or, what is worse, slandered. In any case it never became a part of party life and thought.

2) At the same time the National Negro Department ceased to exist before it ever really got going. David Coolidge, it was whispered, was opposed to a Negro Department, a Negro column, etc. To him it was just a form of "black Chauvinism". It was not necessary, you see, to go to the outside to look at the difference between the "talented tenth" and the Negro masses. Right within the party the condition was even worse. This talented tenth representative was actually hostile. Under the spurious, outworn "thesis" that only the Marxist party can bring class consciousness to the proletariat, the Negroes were told they cannot "go it alone" organizationally. Coolidge denied that the Negro was an especially revolutionary force.

"Last and very intriguing", he wrote, "is the doctrine that Negroes will be more militant and revolutionary than other people. There doesn't seem to be much solid ground under this 'race' exceptionalism...If we have in mind the Negro proletariat, how will it function uniquely. Will it be more revolutionary because it is the most oppressed? But it is also the lowest in the economic scale, with the highest illiteracy and the least organized."

3) There you have it in a nutshell: the whole bourgeois theory. Mere social equality couldn't change that concept.

The SWP

If there is anything the great revolutionary Leon Trotsky knew it was that no revolutionary party can be built in any country that is not 1) indigenous, 2) bases itself on the deepest layers, most exploited sections of the proletariat, and 3) whose leadership does not permeate the party with that type of attitude towards the most downtrodden who may be the least glib with their tongues but are nevertheless the most revolutionary by instinct.

But he knew America only from books, therefore he could not do it. For years he asked the SWP to study the Civil War as the beginning of any understanding of American development. But the most persistent subject of all because it was contemporary as well as historical and hence had an urgency for the building of the party now, was the question of the Negroes. He began almost as soon as he landed in Prinkip. after his expulsion from Russia. But the conversations he held then with an SWP leader got nowhere. All the SWP knew was they were opposed to Stalinism and therefore rejected anything that the CP did on any subject. Trotsky tried to show that what they were doing on the Negro Question was not Stalinist, but Leninist, the heritage Lenin had left about the special validity of national struggles, in which he had included the Negro Question. The SWP could not understand this, not because the revolution was originally written in Russian but because the SWP did not understand the American Negro.

In 1938, a whole decade after his first attempt he made another try to pose the Negro Question as fundamental for the American movement. This time he succeeded through one who had already come to that conclusion through his own thinking, but who soon after broke with the SWP. The SWP just couldn't move ahead.

When we returned in 1947, the SWP adopted a Negro Resolution showing the revolutionary role of the Negro in the development of America from its earliest days to the present. But by now some very bad practices had eaten into the SWP.

Although they had done a great deal of work among Negroes, they did it on the basis that Negroes were supposed to be pretty easy to get. They never understood why, they never understood the revolutionary feelings of the Negro people, and hence were never able to express them in a revolutionary way and make the Negroes feel that this was their party. This was especially glaring in Detroit where the attitude of the organizer was that Negroes only came down there because they liked to dance and have a drink. With an attitude like that it was no wonder that 125 joined and 125 left.

Secondly, just as one swallow does not make a summer, so one correct position isn't sufficient to create a revolutionary atmosphere. It happened that the correct Negro position was adopted just when they moved back to the concept that the American worker was backward. It is impossible to dissociate the Negro Question from the American Question and once the SWP interpreted the expulsion of the Stalinists from the unions as a recession in the class struggle, it meant rough going for any serious Negro work.

It was then that we saw that they do not listen to their own rank and file.

The Negro members in that proletarian center of Detroit had certain ideas on how to implement that resolution, but they were completely disregarded.

You have to have the skin of a rhinoceros to be able to stomach some of the things the SWP does. Thus before we came into the party, they had held a convention in Chicago which, it turned out, was a Jim Crow hotel. Instead of practicing what they preached

and moving promptly, they "explained" to the Negro members how much it would "cost" them to change plans now and had them swallow it.

Other Negro members tried to show that the atmosphere in the local itself was not so good. They said they brought sympathizers around and these felt ill at ease so that they refused to return again. But all the SWP could do was show them "the correct line". Relations in real life meant nothing at all. As another Negro member put it: "The party has a caste system. When you walk in you are conscious of difference between Negro and white, women and men, youth and adults". They did nothing to change the relations in the party, or even to analyse them, and hence could do nothing on the outside.

One Negro proletarian walked around with a life story which showed that a single individual comprised all the revolutionary history and politics that no amount of resolutions could embrace, but he found no listeners. The only result of it all was that when they found out that he was associating himself with our tendency a steady persecution and isolation of him began that showed they were twin brothers of Coolidge.

It was only after the split that this worker's contribution could be published. We will return to this later.

#### IV The Women

During the war women by the millions left the kitchen for the factory. The physiognomy of the labor force changed very considerably, and with it the relationships in the home. But this is by no means a completed battle. The revolt of the women which began during the war did not end with the end of the war. Quite the contrary, it has intensified. It is a daily, an hourly struggle in which the woman wants to establish new relations with her husband, with the children, with other women, and other men.

From all this the radical parties were as isolated as they are from the mass movement in general. But the new imprint that the women were making in society as a whole could not leave the parties unaffected, and the struggle burst out there when the men began to return from the war and resume their old posts, even as it did in bourgeois society. But it was so wrapped up in Marxist jargon that it was not always easy to see that between the party and bourgeois society there was no basic distinction on this very basic question.

To get a concept of the smaller battle in the party it is best to see it in society as a whole first. The mass movement into the factories was looked upon with suspicion by men in the same manner as the first movement of the Negroes into industry, before the CIO: would they bring their working conditions and standards down. And just as the Negroes proved to be loyal fellow workers, so did the women. Only the women looked at the men with suspicion too: will these try to dominate them in the factory as their husbands, fathers, brothers do in the home? They were determined that no

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such thing should happen.

Then the women as human beings proved to have a class loyalty, the men loosened up sufficiently in their relations to note that in fact something new had appeared on the American scene: not the women in factories but even white collar women, telephone workers and such, took to the picket line and mass worker approach. They said of the awakening of these New strata in the population: "I didn't know they had it in them."

They also didn't know that the women workers would "have it in them" to come home and wish to establish new relations there, too. There the men stopped. The woman was still expected to do all the housework and take care of the children, and stay at home while the men went out to play poker. The women, however, took their new role in production seriously; they gained a new dignity and a new concept of what their relations to their fellowmen and fellow women should be as they refused to submit to the subordinate role in which they had been placed in the home before they got their factory jobs. So where they could not work out the new relations they took to breaking up the homes, even where it meant the woman would become the sole support also of her children.

The politicians thought all that was needed to reestablish the stability of the home was to give the women a few posts in the government, business, the army, and point with pride to the expanding American economy and all the gadgets for the kitchen to make life easier for "The little woman."

Not so the women. They categorically refused to remain an appendage to the men. They wished to have not only sexual but human relations with them. They were out searching for a total reorganization of society. In that search some women also came to the radical parties. These radical parties failed to recognize this new concrete revolutionary force in society, but that force recognized them for it had set up new standards by which to judge this so-called revolutionary movement.

In that same period, at the end of the war, a fight broke out in the WP over their failure to grow. They looked, not to the type of propaganda they had put out which was governed by their view that the American masses were "backward". No, they looked only at the people who had carried out the line and since these happened to have been women who had replaced the men in all posts where needed it was against them that the fight had started.

For the first time our tendency, which had never paid any attention to struggles between members for posts, began to pay attention to this one. For it was clear that this was not an individual question but here a social problem was involved.

We came to the defense of the women who had occupied the post of city organizer which was now being contested. "What is this bourgeois nonsense of the men returning to their posts as if the women who had done all the work during the war years were not genuine political leaders, but just substitutes?" But this new element was buried in the old political terms: it is your political line,

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not the person executing it, which had brought about this mess, has stultified the party's growth.

Our own use of old political terms instead of seeing the entirely new element - that the woman question in and of itself was playing a new role, not alone outside but inside the organization - left us unaware of the significance that women, in increasing numbers, were workers and Negroes than that they were women. One woman in particular had a special problem since she had a 12 year old child and no husband. But we paid no special attention to this problem as if, to the extent that it was not just a personal but a social problem, it was in any case unsolvable under capitalism. That is the monstrous trap that awaits all who do not see the new in a situation, and we ourselves almost fell into it.

What prevented us from so doing in this case was not our leadership, but our ranks, and especially the women. First one thing was clear. There was a new type of response to certain historic incidents which would stress "the affinity of the struggle of Negroes and women in America." The new women members in our tendency would listen, for example, to the relationship between the Woman's Rights Movement and the Abolitionists, to the fact that Frederick Douglass was the only one, even among the Abolitionists, who was willing to chair the woman's meeting, as if this was something that occurred not in the '30's of the last century but something that in one form or another they were encountering right now daily, at the bench and in the home.

The historic questions assumed that contemporary coloration because of the urgency of their present revolt. What was pushing itself outward was the intensity and totality of the approach. By continuing her revolt daily at her home the woman was giving a new dimension to politics. She was bypassing the specialized organizations of women and looking for a new, a total way out. This our own women were sensing by their association with their shopmates and the proletarian housewives in their neighborhoods.

#### The SWP

It is from these new social types among the masses outside that our women were getting new impulses. They were finding their best friends, moreover, not among the so-called revolutionaries on the inside, but amongst their shopmates on the outside. If this had brought them into conflict with the petty-bourgeois women in the WP, it reached even a greater intensity when they began talking to the women in the SWP, which our tendency rejoined in 1947, when it looked as if they were at least retaining their revolutionary perspective on the American scene. We will deal with the SWP in detail later; here we wish to limit ourselves to the climax which the Woman Question reached in our life in the SWP.

Our rank and file women first came into conflict with the women in the SWP because some occupied the same subordinate position the women did in bourgeois society: they worked to support their men who were "leaders" in the party. They were equally hostile, however, to the women leaders of the party who looked to them like the career women in the bourgeois world. These weren't the new social types they were meeting on the outside who

who added a new dimension to the American character by their present revolt. Not at all. They were women with a "mission" -- to lead other women. The struggle was one of the rank and file against the leaders, male and female.

The first incident came about as follows. Our ranks had been talking to their shopmates and to the neighborhood women and from then they began to get tales of revolt, described rather broadly a bore but very vividly and concretely by these women from the outside. One young woman of our tendency stated that the woman question was not something merely historic, and she for one was not interested in the development of matriarchal societies, but instead would like very much to talk about the women of today, her revolt that is still going on.

When she was permitted to present her little talk, the male intellectuals listened, amused, while their outstanding woman leader stated that the only real solution was for women not to be women. This was the very woman who, in electioneering, wore tight skirts, with a slit on the side, and advised our woman comrade who was her junior in campaigning: "You've got to use sex."

The mannishness of these SWP women, on the one hand, and their mawkishness, on the other hand, was too much not only for the women in our tendency, but the rank and file women in the SWP also began to rebel. It was impossible, they said, to bring around proletarian women and have their leaders appear as anything but "exceptional women." There was nowhere a concept of the question being a social question. These women leaders had merely reduced the whole fight to fighting for positions in the party itself and accusing all and sundry who opposed them of "male chauvinism."

Some of the battles with the SWP women reached ludicrous proportions. One woman leader said: "Men and women are more alike than opposite." Our rank and file women said, "No wonder, when you carry out the line and beat down all opposition, you have some of the elements of a storm trooper."

These emancipated women of the SWP had no use whatever for the housewife. When they went to see any in the regular course of contacting their husbands, the politeness of their tone had all the rasping quality of someone cutting in on a party line and saying, "Please, won't you get off?" You could actually hear the politeness -- it was so full of contempt. And they made much too much of sex. The result was that they came up with these types of inanities, "Prostitutes have too much sex; good women not enough." This passed as a "social" concept of the Woman Question. It was on a par with their attitude to Negro men who came to party dances. These women either didn't dance with them or put on a show. It differed very little from outright bourgeois attitude of "luring men" -- to get men interested sufficiently to come to the next dance, or to go out and help sell Militants, but never to establish a human relationship. It was only natural that when white women and Negro men among the rank and file got together naturally, that the leadership always found fancy reasons why these should break up. It wasn't only the Negroes who walked out. It was the rank and file white women.

One young woman in our tendency continued to develop her entirely new approach to the question in which the original qualities of the new woman arising out of the break-up of the old pattern of woman-man relations which showed not alone a rebellion against household drudgery and isolation but the strong new ties formed with other women, the new society present in our midst. But it was impossible to bring these to fruition within the confines of the SWP. Everything was working to a break with the old organizations. We will see the new appear when we come in the next session to deal with the life of our party.

There is a daily violence in the American high school which is difficult to see from the outside. A vast conspiracy of silence is maintained about. The youth fight, day in and day out, to run their own lives inside the school. Teachers, prison routines, social workers, courts of law and the police, all work closely together to "discipline" these youth and teach them to "behave".

In April 1940, this struggle exploded into the great Student Strike in New York City. Forty thousand high school youth left their schools and marched through the city to City Hall. Mounted police were thrown against them. For eight hours the police tried to break them up and couldn't. The youth fought the police, sang songs, exploded fire-crackers to frighten the horses, shouted slogans like "No Sports, No School!" and "Does your father work? No, he's a cop!" They climbed trees and poles, turned over cars marked "City-Official", and shouted their defiance at the sweating police. They made fools out of the whole city administration - police, Mayor, school administration and social workers.

The newspapers screamed, get those kids off the streets! It had never happened before. The papers tried to tell people that the strike was called for higher wages for teachers. But if you asked any youth why he was out, he would answer "To get out of school." The strike was a complete rejection of the school. It expressed the hatred the kids had for the teachers who tried to boss them around all day. The teachers, in whose cause the strike supposedly was held, were against the strike. Every politician, every "friend of the youth" was scared stiff of it. Because no one had called the strike, no one was leading it, no one "responsible" was at its head. The youth themselves, their cliques, sports groups, clubs, by themselves, had planned, organized and led the whole business. The professional Marxists had nothing but contempt for the strike and the youth participating in it, and tried to say it was held for teacher's wages. And they wonder why their parties are isolated and sterile!

The self-discipline and cooperation of the strike, the complete freedom from teachers and "student governments", and above all the "holiday spirit" of the youth in the strike are an indication of what these youth want the schools to be like every day. Every day, inside the schools, they fight continually to change the way the schools are run. They cut continuously, destroy school property, and wage small-scale riots in the lunch-rooms. The teacher knows she must maintain the harshest discipline inside the classroom - prohibit all whispering, break up cliques of friends, allow only one person



to leave the room at a time, - or the whole classroom will explode right in her face.

This is the American high school today. When the working-class moves to destroy bureaucracy in the whole nation, the youth will go right along with it. Until that time, they will continue to fight the bureaucracy inside their own school, and work out among themselves what they want the schools to be like.

It has been noticed that American middle-class youth today as a whole ask for little, expect little, do as they are compelled to do, and seek a little spot for themselves in the bureaucracy somewhere. Among them the old American vigor and optimism seem dead. They seem to take little interest in politics. They say openly that politicians are only a bunch of corrupt gangsters. They are deeply stirred by the Negro question, that is known, The inter-racial nature of the Stalinist youth group, Young Progressives of America, attracted many of these youth to it before the 1948 elections. More important than the politics of Wallace was the fact that the organization had Negroes in it. These middle-class youth are not pro-labor in the ordinary political sense, but socially they are not conscious of any great division between themselves and labor. In the United States, the class struggle in production is as sharp as it can be, but in social practices and behavior there is not that gap between the classes that exists in many countries in Europe. That means a lot. For the passivity of the American middle-class youth is a most unnatural thing. They are "passive" because they trust nobody. They do not wish to be disappointed once more. They do not know where to look. They do not have that discipline, training and that sense of cooperative life which industry by its very structure imposes upon the workers and thus forces them forward. But if the workers should at any time seek to realize in life a new society, the middle-class youth the millions will go with them and drag along a large section of the middle-classes as a whole. They too are seething with hostility against the system. The small professional man, the typist, the clerical worker, the salesman or woman in the department store, are as sick of capitalism, its inflation, its sweatshop speed-up, its corruption, its wars, they are as sick of it as everybody else. But because there is no great Labor Party in the United States, they do not know where to go. For the time being on the surface they think in terms of capitalism. These people as a class cannot lead anything. But they are ready for organic change.

To all this the SWP was as blind as a bat. It was just then that they proclaimed Tito as the only hope of humanity, and the greatest event that has occurred since the Russian Revolution -- no less! At the same time on the American scene they abandoned any perspectives for the American revolution. The drive against the Stalinists in the unions by the bourgeoisie and the labor bureaucracy they interpreted as a retrogression on the part of the American working classes. At their 1950 Convention the leader went so far as to say that the American working class as a whole had been corrupted, as had the aristocracy of labor in Britain during the heyday of imperialism. The demoralization of the party came to a climax when its own caucuses in the union suffered disintegration. It was then

they turned to the youth. They turned to it not because they saw all the revolutionary sentiments seething in the youth as a whole and reflected in their own youth membership. No, they turned to the youth, and without shame, only because there was no arena for them in the trade union movement. Their only point was to subordinate the youth completely to the "party line".

The concrete expression of the party line at this time came in its attitude to the YPA as a mass movement. Our tendency saw it as a movement of youth, confused, disoriented, non-political but seeking a means to express their hostility to capitalism and the war. The SWP did not understand this in its own theory and practice. How could it give direction to the youth? All that it saw was a struggle for control, a repetition of its hopeless attempt to win people in the United States by means of Titoism, and an exposure of Stalinism over civil rights. The whole thing turned out to be a total failure.

The transformation of the youth into a party branch was an attempt to keep the youth subordinate by party discipline. The unworkable result was to throw the youth into a blind conflict with the party, a conflict in which, as with the Negroes and the women, it was impossible to disentangle the political issues without raising the most fundamental questions of the life of the party.

The most serious thing of all was that the youth could not express its own original qualities. To cite just one example. One youth was quick to seize upon the 1950 strike to make a comprehensive study of the youth movements both here and abroad in the '20s in France, in the '30s in Germany and in the '40s in the United States. But this study could be developed and concretized only in practice and they were in the stranglehold of the party policy and party life. They were about to walk out of the party on their own when they saw our tendency and joined forces with us. We will come back to the youth when we deal again with their achievements and their present crisis.

#### C - Organization Follows Politics: The Leader and The Line

In the case of both Trotskyist parties in the United States we left a description of the leader of each to the very end. This is not because the "line" rather than the leader takes precedence. There is no such unbridgeable gulf between the line and the leader as old politics would have you believe. Each is shaped by the other. When all is said and done a political line does not hang in mid-air like a clothes line. It is not without bodily shape. Without some people to put forward a line, there would be no line. Ultimately a political line expresses itself in the very personalities of those shaped by it. It is no accident that one cannot separate Nazism from Hitler or Stalinism from Stalin or God for that matter from the saints.

I James P. Cannon and Martin Abern

James P. Cannon is known in the Marxist movement not for his theoretical talents, but for his organizational astuteness. We say this not derogatively, but only because his strength lay precisely in the building of a radical party and hence in the struggle with the cliquist, Martin Abern. Cannon's finest contribution to Marxism is his Building the Proletarian Party which contains his writings during the struggle with the Skachtmanites known as the Petty Bourgeois Opposition. One of the best chapters in that book is his analysis of Abern. The traits of that organizational disease are: cliquism, unprincipled combinationism, gossip and intrigue.

There is no doubt whatever that the SWP took a real step forward after the Petty Bourgeois Opposition left it. Business was dealt with at business meetings, not in coffee clatches. Proletarianization and the building of the party were bound together as one. A new leadership was developed around a line and not in supercilious fights over abstract democratic rights -- right to discuss interminably and on a level fitted to petty-bourgeois intellectuals and not workers. A leadership was built up that knew how to take command when the primary leadership went to jail for their anti-war views. A revolutionary perspective was adhered to and this culminated in 1947 in Cannon's THE COMING AMERICAN REVOLUTION, the very thesis that attracted us back to the SWP. Moreover, when his leadership did wobble, as it did when it nearly embraced the Wallace movement, the leader knew how to bring them back to the class line.

Yet in a few years this same man was distinguished not by his firmness, but by his flabbiness; not by principled politics but by cliquist considerations, not by correct internal relations with opponent tendencies but by gossip and intrigue. What happened? Nothing psychological, you may be sure. Nor was it a question of age. Physique and psychology crumbled because politically the ruler was gone. World War II had ended and the incipient revolutionary movements throughout Europe and Asia were crushed by the Red Army. Contrary to Trotsky's predictions, none of the CPs capitulated to their own bourgeoisies and yet they crushed the revolutionary movements. Where they did not have the Red Army to crush them with, they stifled them with compromises as in Western Europe. The Stalinist bureaucracy proved itself the staunch defender of nationalized property and yet huried any attempts at workers states. The leadership of the SWP that was most unstable became desperate and veered violently from one side to its opposite -- Eastern Europe was state capitalist; Eastern Europe was worker's statist; Tito was the hangman of the Spanish revolution; Tito was the greatest revolutionary opponent of Stalin; Yugoslavia was state capitalist; Yugoslavia was the first worker's state since the Russian Revolution of 1917; there can be no workers state without a Worker's revolution; workers states can be achieved through "structural assimilation"; the Chinese Communist Party is a bourgeois party; the Chinese Communist Party is a true revolutionary party and we must enter its ranks; the Communist Parties have betrayed the revolution and new parties must be built; the Communist Parties can be "changed under pressure from the masses"; the American working class is paving the way for

revolution; the American working class is bourgeoisified, backward, and are part of the reactionary sweep of the country.

What could Cannon, the party man, hold up against those wild changes of desperate men when he had no political line in opposition to Trotskyism to give? What the rest of his leadership did from political instability he was compelled to do from political necessity. He sacrificed principle for the sake of the organization. Here Abern did it to keep his faction together, Cannon did it to keep his party together. The name for it is the same: it is cliquism.

And as if he were being stage-directed by Abern, he drifted from that to gossip and intrigue for he was completely impotent to fight us politically and had to resort to the fact that it wasn't really a question of politics but of "personalities". No, he fought the SR and was founder of CP for principles. He fought the bourgeoisie and went to jail for his anti-war views. He was a serious revolutionary so long as he had a serious political line. It was only when he wavered between Stalinism and Trotskyism that his "personality" suddenly changed and, though he came with Trotskyism, never stopped fighting its "regime". We didn't fight Cannon's "regime". We fought his politics and his organizational practices to correspond. A new chapter in the building of the Proletarian Party will have to be written by others than its author. The proletarians have long since voted with their fight on his party.

#### II. Max Shachtman and James Burnham

Before we deal with Max Shachtman we must deal with James Burnham who was the theoretical leader of the split from the SWP although he very shortly left the party he had created in its image, the WP. James Burnham was a professor of philosophy, well-to-do, aristocratic in bearing, and personally unaffected by the great depression. But his mind was very alert and the debris around him brought on by the 1929 crash sent him searching for the working masses. He found it in a new grouping called the CPLA which tried not to associate with any political movement and yet be part of the mass movement. Between the Stalinists and the Trotskyites concentrating on that single independent movement, the CPLA moved, in the main, to Trotskyism, with a good many of the leadership however going instead to Stalinism: the Budenzes, Johnsons who moved into the Daily Worker offices and began "leading" the workers. But Burnham came to Trotskyism.

Not only did he chose the small splinter party, but he took that seriously. For one thing he tried seriously to Americanize Marxism. He concerned himself with the current scene, and wrote both on the New Deal and the American Worker.

Intellectual though he was it is the theory of Marxism that he rejected in its most fundamental aspect -- its philosophy. Where Marx reconstructed the Hegelian philosophy and showed the class nature of its fundamental principle of development through contradiction, Burnham considered dialectical philosophy a "mystical left over" from Marx's student concern with German philosophy.

Where Marx considered truly scientific the question of the interpenetration of opposites because none is so fundamental as the working class and the capitalist class within the same contemporary society, Burnham just couldn't stomach it. He kept hitting at the fact that the workers "too" couldn't understand it. He forgot but one overwhelming fact - the worker, whether he "understands" the philosophy or not acts it out because his very role in the process of production makes him oppose that method of production. But an intellectual, whose province is ideas, who is not subject to the discipline of the factory, and at the same time is not disciplined by this class philosophy of Marx's must of necessity accept the dominant bourgeois philosophy.

Be that as it may, the ranks had a simple way of judging Burnham. They said the very manner in which he walks up the steps to the party offices is of one who is sliding for indeed there is nothing alike in a 14th St. loft and in a Sutton Place Residence. They said, furthermore, no matter what his profession of faith is, it is clear he cannot stand the life of the proletarians. They suspected he would return to his snug home soon for he lived a life too far apart from the ranks of the party, much less the proletarians outside.

It was he who was the theoretical leader of the split. Before World War II broke out he had not alone moved away from the conception of Russia as a workers state but from the conception of the inevitability of any socialist order; to him a managerial society was the more likely prospect. He knew therefore where he was going and his firmness brought along the rest of the leadership that was vastly superior to him in seriousness about the revolutionary movement and in their devotion to it through the years. The most important of these was, of course, Max Shachtman.

It is true that ever since he had entered the movement as a youth he was known as a brilliant journalist - one who could write brilliantly for ~~either~~ either faction in any party struggle - but he had nevertheless been part of the movement for a quarter of a century. The fear was that he would never take power himself. The ranks of the WP feared he would just be Burnham's journalist instead of Cannon's. But that was entirely false. Burnham left and Shachtman became the leader, consciously and with the seriousness which political chairmanship of a radical organization demands. He re-registered the party; he sought to proletarianize it; he published the paper and theoretical journal regularly; and he went in for popularizations galore and for campaigning.

But it all came to naught. The line not only brought no masses to the party; his shilly-shallying almost took his own party away from it. In the very first convention, Carter with his conception of bureaucratic collectivism as the next stage of humanity almost took the majority away from Shachtman. We saved his neck. We were few it is true but we hold the balance of power and we said: so long as you Shachtman do not yet know where you are going - where St. Carter has already given up the proletariat - we will support you organizationally. Then he moved over closer and closer to Carter's position himself and the whole party was permeated with the conception that the working class was backward. We gave him one more chance.

It was in 1947 and there was a chance to unite the Two Trotskyist parties and try with the more revolutionary perspective at least on the American scene to have the American working class make its experience with it. But Shachtman was a leader who had no line to put across, so he had to give in to his petty bourgeois whipper-snappers who did not wish to go through the discipline of the SWP. He had shown, from the very start, that except where he accepted a line from us, he could not withstand that collective leadership of his. From the start they had planned in the most cliquish and underhanded way ever seen in the radical movement to remove Abern from leadership simply because they did not like his "past". He knew that none of them had measured up to Abern's record, but he had to capitulate to them and devote Abern from national committee membership. And now these planners were at it again, and this time we said: if you do not go into this unity, we will try it ourselves. We left and that was the beginning of the end of his party.

In the United States the Marxist movement over the year has suffered from the theory of American exceptionalism. The first inventor of that theory in the revolutionary movement were the Lovestonites. Their type of organizers: "for" the workers went with the theory and anticipated both the Stalinist planner and the intellectual planners that came with the New Deal in this country. Now he and his cohorts swarm all over Europe as the "voice" of labor - that is of the State Department version of it. Shachtman, in inventing the theory of bureaucratic collectivism and yet trying not to say that humanity was foredoomed to that, had to resort to the theory of exceptionalism. For the premise of it is the skepticism and pessimism of the capacity of the proletariat to achieve a new socialist order. Luce of the Time-Life-Fortune combine says he has found a "new" capitalism that will escape the laws Marx said it would follow to its own doom. And all the little radical groupings, so characteristic of this country where there is no mass Labor Party to attract the petty bourgeois to its side, flourish in their own stagnation.

We are finished for good and all with that which now calls itself Trotskyism. We are not forming a third Trotskyist tendency in the United States. The two existing wings typified by Cannon and Shachtman are in their very essence one. It is the world struggle of the two great masses of capital in America and Russia which keeps these two wings of Trotskyism apart from each other today. Neither bases itself on the opposition of the proletariat to capitalist barbarism which we have analysed and detailed so carefully. Both want some intermediate stage, some helping hand from a section of the labor bureaucracy, until they can arrive at the head of the masses. The WP chose the more recently expanded labor bureaucracy developed in the CIO and in the British labor officialdom. The SWP, guarding old traditions, chose the conquests of the Stalinist bureaucracy. They are unable to give up bankrupt political positions because this involves not ideas, but a conception of themselves, of their own role, of the gaps in the social crisis which they expect to fill. Note how the WP jumped at the opportunity

to do some propagandistic and organizational work for Keuther; note the SWP's panting eagerness to do the same for Tito. Howe and Widick justify this by saying that Keuther is an unfinished personality. The SWP bases its politics on the view that Tito's personality is also unfinished and it looks eagerly at Mao for a crisis in his. The accusing fingers pointed at each other are that of a man looking at his own image in a mirror. That the SWP and WP cannot live with each other is less significant than their compatibility with sections of the labor bureaucracy. The crying shame of the whole business is that neither bureaucracy has the slightest use for these unprincipled fragments who have just enough principle and past to prevent them making the full steps. Both are doomed.

The point is that we could take what seemed to them strange organizational steps - voting for Phachtman at one point; against him at another; leaving him not on general political resolutions which we had carefully worked out through the years but on "the unity question" - precisely because we had a perspective about the new society inherent in the present and because we carefully watched and learned from our rank and file. The same type of organizational behavior made us leave the SWP. Again, it was not the "war" or "socialism" in general, but the particular degeneration of the party. Precisely because of that the decision to leave was unanimous. Not only that.

This is also what happened: in the WP there were some petty-bourgeois elements who had stuck to us when the ideas were abstract. Contrast their actions with the contributions of our rank and file. The petty-bourgeois elements preyed on our grouping as they prey on all revolutionary groupings because there is no mass Labor Party in which they can express their opposition to capitalist society and yet maintain their own petty-bourgeois social milieu.

We spoke before about the two parts of our AMERICAN WORKER pamphlet. Both parts revolved around what Marx had called "alienation of labor" by which he meant that labor as the capitalists have it set up for the workers in the factory is "not free, but coerced, forced labor." While barely tolerating the analysis of Romano, these petty-bourgeois hung onto the expression of "alienation of labor" and made this into a way of life, an attitude not alone to capitalist labor, but to the discipline that the worker must of necessity impose upon these intellectuals if it is to maintain itself as a genuine proletarian tendency. It wasn't open as yet, but the resistance to proletarianization was clear. They alienated themselves not only from work, but from workers. Those who did go into the factory were clock-watchers and the minute the bell rang they ran not alone out of the factory, but away from their shmates. We will meet this type again when I describe the vampires that are on the fringe of the movement. Suffice here to say that these no sooner got into the SWP than they alienated themselves right out of our tendency.

This type taught us one thing - we cannot be free from the petty-bourgeois so long as we are part of a society that has no mass Labor Party where they can play the big shots. So long as that is true, we must be ever vigilant to see that it does not over

dominate over our own third layer - the rank and file worker, the Negro, the woman, the youth.

Secondly, and most important of all, we were in our independent existence able to create the form for this third layer to express itself and bring out all the new qualities within it.

We spoke of the youth pamphlets. The Negro too was able to express himself in a manner that was a landmark in the history of the working class movement in this country. Of the proletariat, by the proletariat, for the proletariat - that is what that publication represents and that's why it was the first book our party embraced.

As a matter of procedure of gathering material - whether it be on the CIO or the Woman Question, both of which we plan to publish - we begin from what our individual worker has experienced. This does not require knowledge or learnedness. The theory of state-capitalism creates certain essentials regarding the nature of the epoch and the type of revolt inherent in it. Then this worker with full confidence that it is his instincts, impulses, inspirations which are the very basis of the new society, goes to other workers, in and out of the party, and in his own style, tells the story.

Take the question of the Woman's pamphlet.

The new quality of the woman pamphlet.

We have already spoken of the conflict of our rank and file woman with the women leaders in the SWP. We must now consider what one young woman did, once she had confidence in our leadership and, above that, confidence in herself that she had gained in breaking with the old organization. She began to speak with her shopmates and neighbors with a view to getting from them their views, checking her analysis against them. She had lost all hesitancy about the "non-party" person the other group tried to instill in her. Instead she realized that is exactly where the elements of the new society were.

Although she was neither a scholar nor a Marxist she sat down to write all this up. She knew now the new would not come from books but from life.

She was not only encouraged to do this, but was assured that it would then not be "politicalized" and have all the life squeezed out of it. That was it that was new in the everyday life of the woman worker and proletarian housewife and what was new in her thinking?

This pamphlet is called: a Woman's Place

It begins with a description of the single woman who wants to be sure she will not be the household drudge that her mother was, and who when she hears the married women talk, says, Hey, you're scaring me. You'll make me an old maid.

"Then it goes on to consider the married woman who finds housework a never-ending job that is monotonous and repetitious, and the whole "inhuman setup" when children come and it is taken for granted that the whole burden is necessarily that of the woman. "The way the house is set up you have no control over the hours of work, the kind of work, and how much. That is what the women want to control."



But everything revolves around the factory. The hours her husband works determines her whole schedule and how she will live and when she will work. "There is no need for a foreman or lead girl at home. It is the way a woman lives and the work that she must do that keeps her toting the mark. It is this way of life, also that teaches her discipline."

It goes on to show how women are breaking down the isolation of the home by creating strong ties with other women. It is the only group life a woman can have and she makes the most of it.

"Women are organized and would know just what to do if they decided they wanted to do something about the way things are run. The women in a housing project in San Francisco organized to halt the rise in prices. They saw the government wasn't doing anything about it so they took matters into their own hands. They held meetings and demonstrations and distributed leaflets. No one person organized it. The fact that it started in a housing project is no accident. The women made price lists up of every store in town and bought at those stores that had the lowest prices only. The whole city knew about it and papers had many articles on it. The name that was given it was Mama's OPA."

But stressed the pamphlet, the most universal organization of women is the action that women take in their homes. Each woman in her own home is making a revolution. No matter how much a husband tries to understand the woman's problems, no matter how well they get along, women fight the way they are forced to live and want to establish a new way of life. "They will, as they have done before, make their own way independent of men and yet work with men. For it is they who understand most clearly what these new relations in the home are to be. It is they who point the way most clearly to a new unity between men and women even as they wage a bitter battle with their husbands."

What was most important about that pamphlet, as about all our publications by the rank and file, is that it was written by a worker for a worker and we are confident that it will be recognized as such. That was what we wanted to build on when we broke. That is what we are building on. And that is what will be proven by our paper.

SECTION IV \*--- OUR ORGANIZATION AND OUR PAPER

We will now make a sharp and deliberate break in our story. We have come to our own organization as it is and as it proposes to function. It is necessary therefore to sum up what the principles are upon which our organization is based. By what do we live? In general, it is, of course the accumulated experiences of the workingclass and workingclass movements. The reason a break is needed here, however, is that we wish to make clear that although Marx and Lenin have written most profoundly, we recognize that history moves on. The circumstances under which Lenin worked and from which he drew his ideas of a party have now passed. Lenin, as we saw, sought to build a party according to certain principles because the Social Democracy refused to seize power. We live in the epoch of state-capitalism and, far from being faced with the problem of the Communist Parties refusing to seize power, we see them seizing power and crushing the workers movement. It is clear that no small vanguard party can overcome these monsters. Only a vast mass party of millions can. Only the workers can build such a party. If they want it, they will build it and if we have capacities and talents in that direction, they will recognize us. But they do not need us to tell them what to do. We are not telling the workers what they "should" do, but because our whole conception shows that only in them lies the future and salvation of humanity, we are telling them what we are and what we propose to do.

First, the foundations of our ideas are those of Marx and Lenin because they spoke in terms of class solidarity and consciousness and world conceptions or internationalism. But we have our own traditions in the United States.

I \* The Abolitionists

That is precisely why we chose to make a deliberate break in our story here and just at the point where we began to tell who we are and what we propose to do. We break our story to go back over 100 years and show the roots of true Bolshevism in the Abolition Movement. This, the most amazing development of our country's history and the most outstanding example of what Marxist history knows as Bolshevism was born in America 83 years before its birth in Russia. Being American, it was no accident that it centered around white and Negro relations. It was the question of slavery which brooked no compromises either on the part of the Bourbons who established a hateful totalitarian society, or among the Abolitionists who sought to establish entirely new human relations. When we have finished telling this story, the question of white and Negro relations in the Marxist movement right here, will have an objective, and thoroughly American, point of reference. It is only under those circumstances that our own history and strivings will be fully understood, for each country must solve its own problems.

One hundred and twenty years ago the Negro slave was the laboring class of this country. American prosperity depended on Southern cotton. Southern cotton depended on the slave's labor. Of all the things wrong in this young country, slavery was the most concrete. The slave lived under the whip. He moved in the chained

offle. When fleeing he was pursued by dogs. When caught he would lose an ear or a nose to mark him as a run-away.

More than cotton and cruelty, the bondage of slavery produced the most intimate bond of the human kind. More was the closest contact with other slave laborers, knowing one another, trusting each other strengthening each other. Slave revolt was inevitable. For the master to keep his slaves from fleeing was impossible. When the slave came North he brought the war with him. Now it was on a larger stage. Those whites who helped the slave flee and protected him at his destination took on the same human qualities as the Negro himself.

Garrison, Phillips and others were talented white intellectuals: speakers, writers and propagandists. Abolition organization began when these surrounded themselves with the bitterly militant ex-slaves.

It was they who decided the difference between one organization and the next.

The first issue was whether the Negro was an American. The Colonizationist Society said, No. The free Negro was an African and should be returned there. The Negro slave was a Southerner and should be kept hard at work there. Garrison destroyed the colonizationists for all time, both in the United States and in England.

The second issue was whether there ought to be immediate freedom for all slaves. Some said time will take care of it. Garrison said men will take care of it. The gradualists said the slaveholders ought to be reformed. "It is the reformers who have to be reformed", was Garrison's reply. His strength was that he always brought the question home, while everyone else put it out of sight in Africa, the Southland or the millennium.

Anti-slavery was an ever growing war. New layers of the population were entering into it all the time. Some began to insist that anti-slavery was the business of a specialized group of people: the churchmen, the charity giver, the social worker. Garrison drew together the different fragments of the anti-slavery movement on the central principle that the whole nation was involved in anti-slavery, however unaware of it. This was not his head. He proceeded to publish a paper which became famous all over the United States. For the ex-slaves, the Liberator was the means by which they spoke to each other and to the whole country. The slave-masters recognized in the Liberator the spirit of the slaves all around them who were not allowed to read or write.

Everyone recognized that abolition had finally come home from England, from Liberia, from missionary and Bible tract societies. It was the beginning of an American movement.

Others debated issues in the anti-slavery movement. The ex-slaves did not have to debate anybody. They voted not with their hands but as an immovable body. "They have risen in their hopes and feelings to the perfect stature of man; in this city (Boston), every one of them is as tall as a giant." Again, Garrison writes that an opponent "...is trying to influence our colored friends... but he finds them true as steel, and therefore angrily tells

them that he believes that if Garrison would go to hell, they would go with him."

This constantly moving relationship between the ex-slaves, who were the base always, and the other layers of the movement, is the sole secret of their success. This unusual - and typically American movement had no trade union posts, no government patronage, no party favors to offer anybody. People grew in this movement at a time when growth was the greatest hunger of the country as a whole. Inside this movement, the different elements of the population were brought closest together, making for the sharpest clashes and the speediest developments.

Since Garrison's specialty was fighting anti-slavery close to home, the climax came when white women brought anti-slavery right into their homes. It began simply on the masthead of the Liberator. A woodcut showed a kneeling slave woman. It was entitled "Am I not a woman and a sister?". The slavemaster claimed he was protecting Southern womanhood. The Abolitionist claimed that slavery had turned the South into one huge brothel. The most intimate human function of childbirth had become planned public breeding of slave laborers. The Liberator opened the question up for the Northern women to decide for themselves. They looked into their own lives. Here too, industry had made sexual relations and childbirth the mere reproduction of factory workers. These women tied their lives to that of the slave and enlisted completely behind Garrison.

Once more this new relation broke up old patterns. Abolition had revolutionized relations between the slave and his master, Negro and white, and now between men and women. The movement broke in half. The world anti-slavery convention which forbade women's participation, saw the conservatives on the floor pleading with the abstaining Garrison in the balcony to come down. He never did. During the Civil War, upper class British anti-slavery fell apart and deserted the North, leaving this field clear for the British workers. It took twenty years to show the class issue involved.

It was Wendell Phillip's wife-to-be who recruited him to the movement. "Don't shilly shally, Wendell", she told him. He never did. He scored in deadly style on every political target. He finished up the flag-waving, spread eagle style of speaking for all time. When he spoke to thousands, it was as if he was sitting at each man's elbow holding a personal conversation. When drowned out by a screaming audience, he spoke to the newspaper reporters below him until he obtained quiet. The most social medium possible was the one for him. He believed that the man who jumped up to speak from the back-row created often more interest and excitement than the platform speaker. He believed that the theatres brought out more of men's true feelings than the churches or colleges. He lived the greatest part of his life on his feet in the midst of his audience and they loved him for it. He was not an exceptional man but an American of a new type produced by a new social power. "Let no one despise the Negro any more - he has given us Wendell Phillips," said one listener. Of all the anti-slavery speakers, he was the most popular with workers and trade unionists.

The best selling book of the 19th century, next to the Bible, was a book written about a Negro slave by a white woman. Anti-slavery was the Bible of the 19th century. As a book, Uncle Tom's Cabin isn't very much and as a play even less. It was read and played countless times because it was the meeting point of two layers of the population who had never met before. The American people were reading and acting out their own lives with the greatest passion and feeling. A stunned Harriet Beecher Stowe could only proclaim that "god wrote it". With the help of a hundred years we can more rightfully claim that it was produced by the concretely new relations inside the anti-slavery movement.

Abolition was the new dimension in the American character. In a society falling to pieces from slavery on one side and industry on the other, the integrated, willful personalities of Garrison, Douglass, Phillips, and Brown were the form of revival and reorganization of the American and his world. Only revolutionists know the quality of American individualism.

Garrison began the Liberator with these fateful words: "I will be as harsh as truth - as uncompromising as justice - I will not equivocate - I will not excuse - I will not retreat a single inch - and I will be heard!" Those who thought they were listening to one man's boasting were mistaken. It was the particular stamp of the movement toward the American Civil War. One man speaking and everyone recognizing through him the nature of their times and their own true nature.

"I wish to say, furthermore, that you had better, all you people at the South, prepare yourselves for a settlement of that question, that must come up for settlement sooner than you are prepared for it. The sooner you are prepared for it the better. You may dispose of me very easily...but this question is still to be settled...the end of that is not yet." This was John Brown speaking in 1859. Everyone was listening now. In 1861 came the greatest civil war mankind has ever known.

The American, constantly organizing his own life in new surroundings, would do the same with his country if he felt he were able. Anti-slavery developed the average American's disdain and contempt for government bureaucracy to its highest pitch. "No man in America has ever stood up so persistently and effectively for the dignity of human nature, knowing himself for a man, and the equal of any and all governments. In that sense he was the most American of us all."

Thoreau is speaking about John Brown and about every American. He is not afraid to draw this to its conclusion: people govern their own lives and those of that portion of humanity closest to them. Government bureaucracy manages dead things, busily protecting itself from the self-governing mass.

The future of the country is no riddle and no uncertainty. The new passions and energies could be found deep inside the anti-slavery movement. No where else. That was Garrisonian Abolition.

11 - The Socialist Movement

There was no such unambiguous stand, and hence no new relationships set up in the socialist movement until after it split into two, and Bolshoivism (Communism) initiated the white chauvinist trials that we described earlier. The period is important not only because a new revolutionary force was found in American society but because a new method of establishing relations, a new attitude toward the relationships established was hammered internally, inside the revolutionary party.

In this lies the total conception of the problem. To establish a truly human relationship between whites and Negroes meant not only to break from bourgeois society but to conceive and to practice the new relationships symbolic of socialist society.

It was no accident that as the Communist Party degenerated, as the epoch of state-capitalism in its Stalinist form dominated the policy and the life of the once revolutionary party, so the relations between whites and Negroes deteriorated along with it, and separate branches of whites and Negroes appeared right within the C.P. in the capitol of this imperialist land.

But here something horribly new appeared. It wasn't only that relations between whites and Negroes reflected the prejudices of capitalist society. It was that the relations between Negroes and Negroes, between Negro leaders and the Negro masses, went one step lower than that initiated by the talented tenth or careerist type of Negroes. The C.P. spread its corruption everywhere and killed the positive features of the Negro rebellion. It created such types as Benjamin Davis - a combination of a hack and a hatchetman - who could counsel the Negroes to stop their fight for their rights here in America because Stalinist Russia demanded Glass peace precisely in the decisive period of war where all decisions are final.

Leon Trotsky had a total concept in of the Negro role in the revolution, and of that of the vanguard party. For that reason he demanded not alone a general attitude, but specific, concrete sensitivity to every phrase in which any prejudice was in any way implicit. Right in the midst of the struggle of his party threatened with split he took time out to make an issue of the supercilious use of the word, "Hottentot," by a leader of the opposition, James Burnham. He did not mince words to expose the chauvinist implications in the use of the word, and the fact that it could come only from a party that was not indigenous and was not an integral part of the mass movement, but thought it could make revolutions from its 14th street offices in Manhattan or the Bronx. And this is exactly what overtook his own party. This concept of doing it from the outside and from above, left its skin so tough that when it found itself holding a convention in a hotel that barred Negroes, it continued with the proceedings as if nothing had happened. To it the "theses" it would issue from that hall were more important than the example of its own callousness. From then on the relations of whites and Negroes in its party degenerated in the same degree as its politics.

3 - Counter-revolution within the revolution.

When we reach state-capitalism, one-party state, cold war, hydrogen bomb, it is obvious that we have reached ultimates. We are now at the stage where all universal questions are matter of concrete urgency for society in general as well as for every individual, for the internal life of the party as well as of its external relations. State-capitalism is itself the total contradiction. In it are concentrated all the contradictions of revolution and counter-revolution. The hardest thing for an old radical is to see that this means him and his party. And yet the most revolting incident I have ever witnessed occurred right in a so-called revolutionary party, the U.P. This incident shall never be forgotten because it is an "incident" such as disintegrates a proletarian party. As Lenin put it when he spoke of the differences between Stalin and Trotsky, it may be a "trifle" but it is the kind of trifle that might bring down the dictatorship of the proletariat.

This is it. One Negro member who happened to write that he agreed with our tendency committed some minor infraction of discipline. It was a question of putting down "the line" and disciplining him. But so great was the leadership's animosity of our tendency, that they might just as well have brought rope and fagot. They forgot that the particular individual was, after all, just an average Negro steel worker, one of less than a handful, in a sea of white faces staut with the purpose "to put him in his place". The whole convention was suddenly converted into an armed camp. No, they had no real arms, nor state power, but so hostile was the atmosphere, so shrill the speeches, so categorical the line, that I wondered how T. braved the gang-up and rose to defend himself instead of just running, (Not running, walking) out of the nearest exit. But our worker was made of sterner stuff than these wild petty-bourgeois, and stood up singly (We knew nothing of the incident.) not alone to defend himself but to proclaim his association with the tendency. The house broke loose with hysteria. Not a single leader rose to tell this dominant white society of petty-bourgeois to calm down. It ran its course but finally was referred to a smaller committee for action.

There I sat on the platform - I was about to debate Coolidge on the theory of the "Negro Question" - wondering what is the use, what is the good of theory when a so-called revolutionary organization can come so close to evoking a lynch spirit. This was some 3 years after the dispute around the Harlem and Detroit riots and we were moving to a showdown. We know that what was actually involved was nothing less than the road to the American revolution and that we broke on that with these petty-bourgeois phrasemongers.

II Relations of Various Layers in Our Own Organization

Contrary to all other radical groupings who began by issuing manifestos of what the workers "ought" to do, we took a general political decision first to examine ourselves and the history of other organizations and we said, let us find out about ourselves. We examined ourselves for a year and a half, and now we propose to do some very simple things. They are only two in number. Nevertheless, they are totally unprecedented in the radical movement in America. These are:

One. We hold to public view not just our policies, but our internal relations: between ranks and leaders, between leaders and leaders, between ranks and ranks, between the organization and its periphery outside. We do so because we do not believe that we are immune to the prevailing character of the epoch of state-capitalism and therefore wish to submit ourselves to a constant check both by our own rank and file and also by the workers outside. They are the only ones whose role in production and hence whose mentality is completely, utterly and totally opposed to the barbarisms of capitalist production and social relations. Our relations reveal, we hope, the problems the workers themselves are probing with methods of their own. We both, in different ways, are clarifying for ourselves the politics of our age.

Two. We propose to publish a paper that is of, for, and by the workers but which at the same time incorporates within it the history, experiences and principles of 100 years of Marxism, which is the theoretic expression of the struggles and aspirations of the world workingclass as a class. We hope thereby that in its pages there will be a living, breathing, vibrant American workingclass whose voice everyone abroad will wish to hear as much as the masses here. Heretofore, the only American voice the European and Asiatic masses have heard is that of the State Department and the labor bureaucrats swarming all over Europe and deceiving the workers there as to the conditions of the workers here. When bureaucrats like Walter Reuther and Irving Brown and Lovestone go to Europe and Asia they go to Europe and Asia to tell how the American workers and free enterprise - as if these two opposites were one unity - have created the most wonderful state and living conditions. They tell them nothing of the struggles the workers have with these bureaucrats right here in this country that is even greater than what the British workers have there with Attlee and their big labor bureaucrats.

Nobody has told the European workers one word about this. This is the great vacuum which this paper hopes to fill. We have had a little experience in the internal paper we mimeographed, CORRESPONDENCE, every two weeks. Now we are moving toward the printed word and an expanded voice.

#### 1 - The Life of Our Grouping and Relations In It

Our 18 months of existence as an independent grouping came to a climax this January with a meeting of the leadership which was open of course to the membership. The political report of that gathering revealed the following achievements and projects:

- (1) We have existed and extended our influence among a periphery of workers and revolutionary petty-bourgeois which has made possible our first publication.
- (2) The publication of the life story of a Negro worker was a landmark in the history of the American workingclass movement for it was a story of the proletariat, for the proletariat, by the proletariat which has not seen the light of day previously.
- (3) We have published CORRESPONDENCE--every two weeks which, with all its shortcomings, is the basis for the method we hope to use in publishing the paper as a workers paper.
- (4) On the press are all the pamphlets with the new



qualities our third layer has displayed in its struggle in the SVP and which first now find expression in: a) The Woman's Pamphlet, b) The Youth Pamphlet, c) The struggle against the labor bureaucracy. (5) The establishment of a school which was called together for the purpose of educating the intellectual Marxist leadership of the organization. Other schools assemble to educate the pupils. Ours assembled to educate the teachers.

The report mentioned the achievements, but spent its time, effort, and analysis not on these. Quite the contrary. The whole attitude and aim was to expose the weaknesses of the organization, and particularly its leadership. This type of exposure had nothing whatever to do with the supercilious attitude so characteristic of other groupings of "We could have done more, were it not for these obstacles over which we had no control". No, this was very much the opposite. It stressed that the weaknesses are organic, that is to say of the very organism of the party as expressed in its leadership. This is not to be classed over and kept sacrosanct as do other radical groupings imitating the bourgeois method. No, this is to be faced squarely and faced not with an attitude of "let's do more, be more active"--considering our number, we have done much too much already--but rather with a proletarian, or if you wish, an Abolitionist, attitude of reorganizing ourselves. This means recognizing not only that the center of all our theories and activities is the worker in general, on the outside, but that internally the basic source of progress of the organization, in its ideas, in its theories, in its next concrete steps, for theoretical advance and organizational method, comes and can only come from the third layer in the organization.

It is necessary to be both theoretic and concrete. Our troubles stem from the prevailing character of our epoch and therefore we must look at that first of all. The theory of state capitalism as the theory of the modern world has revealed the relationship between the stratification of production and the revolt of the masses. From that flow all other relations--between the political party and the workers, between the union bureaucracy and the mass. The theory of state capitalism could only have been born with the existence of state capitalism. But two decades before the theory the problem was posed.

It was first posed by Lenin in 1920. Three decades before it became the problem of the world as a whole, it had already become the problem of Russia precisely because there the workers had already achieved state power, and you had to get down to the bedrock of the economy. Since that was in utter chaos at the end of a world war, a civil war, and an attack on all fronts by world imperialism, the question was: what to do.

In pamphlet #1 you saw the different answers given to this problem as it appeared concretely in Russia by the different tendencies within the Russian Communist Party--the answers given by Lenin, Trotsky and Shlyapnikov. At the beginning of the section on our theory in this pamphlet, we restated the aspects of the situation in general to the objective situation. What we now wish to do is to move over to its application to workers organizations, particularly ours.

We do this for two reasons: (1) The world and national situations explain us, but we also explain the world situation. In the activity

and analysis of ourselves therefore we illuminate the world and national situation. (2) It is the problem faced by every workers organization, whether it has power like Stalinism, is struggling for power like the British Labor Party, or is like ourselves, a small organization trying to clarify workers' politics.

#### A-The Triangle

Internally an organization has the shape of a triangle. At the sides of the triangle are the political, intellectual leadership and those with considerable trade union experience while at the base is the rank and file.

Lenin was the first to pose the relationship between ranks and leaders, as well as between the party and the masses on the outside, as a triangular relationship.

In those days the Bolshevik party consisted more or less of three formations:

One, the party, and particularly the party leadership, Bolsheviks, intellectuals for the most part or workers who had become Bolsheviks and associated with the leadership on an equal footing. They constituted the leadership of the revolution.

Two, there were trade unionists who were leaders of the party but they were so for the most part because they were leaders in the trade unions.

And three, there were the masses of the workers, the rank and file, with no experience.

It was posed not as a 1:1 relationship of ranks and leaders, but as a triangular relationship of ranks, leaders and trade unionists, whether or not these were also in the leadership, because with the achievement of state power there was a split between the workers organizations and workers interests.

That was the now that appeared only with the conquest of power. That was the quality that was unknown before the Russian Revolution. That is what is now known. The fact that the old radical so-called vanguard groups still refuse to answer that question, still persist in saying we have not yet reached 1917 and until we do we won't know shows how far behind they are the workers the world over who instead ask the question: after power, what? Must it be Stalinism?

That is exactly what Lenin was warning them about from 1920 to his death in 1924. If, he said, we do not work this relationship out correctly, it is not only that the party will be in a mess with the trade union leadership and the masses. For a workers state to be in a mess on that relationship means the end of the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is by no means an easy problem as the other two would like us to believe. It is not: we have the state power, let's use it even if that means to militarize the workers. Nor is it: it is a workers state, therefore just leave the workers alone and, in effect, be away with political leadership. There were many times when the only proletarian line consistently followed was the line followed by the old

Bolsheviks whose origin was that of the petty-bourgeois and whose occupation was that of intellectual, political leadership. That is because the workers aren't just the workers in steel or auto or textiles, but the workers as a class with a future of liberating all of humanity. So that whereas the relationship between party and the mass must be a correct one or the workers' state collapses, the simple truth is that without a correct analysis of the internal relations of party leadership, trade union leaders and the ranks, you will never solve anything.

Lenin said that it was an undoubted fact that Soviet Russia was a workers state. Nevertheless, the workers must have a way to protect themselves against their own state and the trade unions were one such organ. But at the same time, the trade unions must become "schools of communism", a transmission belt to the party. The party leadership represents the ranks, but the ranks must have a way to be militant in expressing their attitude to the leadership and be as severe as is necessary. They must be free to say, "We don't wish to work with this and this bunch of bureaucrats." And finally the party must always be ready to submit its work to be checked by the non-party masses.

That is the simplicity, profundity and vision of Lenin in 1920. That is the problem facing us today, in our organization.

#### B-The Triangular Relationship in Our Organization

We too are divided into three groupings, no matter what the shades are between. These are:

1) The trained party leaders, the intellectuals, the ones who organized the theory of the organization and also did the practical work to correspond to the organizing and popularizing of the theory.

2) Also in our organization there are the workers in the trade union organizations and those closest to them.

3) There is the rank and file worker, the third layer, those who represent the masses outside, mostly young people, the women, rank and file Negroes, and the youth.

That is what our organization consists of. And the relationship between them seems now to be the key to our future progress. Before we go a step further, we have to clarify, we have to clarify what that relationship is in general.

We have to recognize that it is a constantly shifting relation.

We have to learn to establish what precisely it is at each particular moment.

The layer of the leadership, the union elements and the third layer. That is what we have to learn to see the organization as, a whole constituted of these parts.

Now the leadership inside this triangular relationship has done sufficient not only in the past but in recent times to establish its claim to continued leadership and to have that respect from the ranks

which a leadership must have in order to lead. It not only organized theoretically and practically until we left the old organizations, it not only led with skill the struggles within the old organizations so that we took from them everything we could and left them nothing. It has been responsible for all our projects. I don't want to take anything away from the proletarian authors but the leadership saw what was necessary and took the necessary steps. The leadership has something else to its credit. Our solitary proletarian pamphlet, it had to intervene and protect that proletarian pamphlet, it had to intervene and protect that proletarian from being smashed to bits by first and second layers and even from some of the third layer. So if that pamphlet is what it is, it is because the leadership was on guard to protect the writer. So in general, both in the theory and concrete activity, the leadership has shown where it stands in regard to the ranks and its capacity to guide the organization in the correct way.

It is true the leadership has these accomplishments to its credit, but it is also true that the leadership is in grave danger of slipping into the same pit that the leaderships of the old organizations have fallen in. Our isolation from the masses impelled us almost at our birth to "rush to organize" the workers before even we had ourselves organized. It is true that the attempt was squashed before ever it was put into effect, but it is a fact to note, not to forget. Secondly there was a tendency to return to other organizations for we have in our organization every social type in society in general and every tendency in the revolutionary movement since its inception at the birth of capitalism. Since this nearly corrupted a whole branch of the organization, we here print the method of analysis we used to end it.

A-Tobin

In contrast to that we had the proletarian elements, trade unionists and all, in the leadership who fought these petty-bourgeois tendencies. But they learned more on the proletarian outside than the proletarian in our ranks from whom they were not able to elicit what the school was able to elicit.

The old radical parties should be a warning as to what may become of the layer that does not fully accept the political primacy on all matters. We had one such example in our own ranks. From the very start of our state capitalist theory I referred to Tobin, one of our first three exponents. It was not by accident that he thought Shlyapnikov right. He had the right instinct theoretically because that is what he was as a social type. He took proletarianization seriously and gave up his engineering job for a factory job. It was however not the beginning of his Americanization of Bolshevism, but the beginning of his ruination. He thoroughly forgot that he was not a proletarian and that a few years work won't make it so, and he affected all the mannerisms of the "worker-Bolshevik" without ever once, however, bringing a single proletarian to the party, or even have a single proletarian speak for himself in our paper.

He was always talking "for" them, though. When the time came to break with the corrupt petty-bourgeois grouping called the Workers Party, he opposed the move. Then he decided he would take the move to the S/P but "on his own" and not with the tendency as a whole. He did come back to the tendency when we broke from the S/P, but he had learned

nothing in the process, and so right off the bat began back on the leadership-anti-leadership battle instead of sensing the complexities of the triangular relationship. And of course he had to be the speaker "for" the ranks against the leaders, although he had not a single rank and file with him. And now he is out of the movement altogether.

Were he an individual, not a tendency, it would have been sheer nonsense to take up a minute of our time with him. But although he had no one with him in the movement, he represented something, something alien, it is true, but since it has its objective roots, it will be sure to reappear. Therefore let us consider this anti-leadership type of whom there had been many in the movement.

We are not talking of a justifiable anti-leadership feeling on the part of the masses who have had all they could stomach of bureaucratism from the capitalists, politicians and labor bureaucrats. They are the first to overcome it when they join the revolutionary movement precisely because they know it as a class phenomenon and see that it is not that in a revolutionary movement. Neither are we here concerned with the petty-bourgeois type which, in doubting the leadership of the revolutionary movement, actually doubts the historic mission of the proletariat because that type too is easily detected.

We are talking about the type, like Tchin, who spends many years in the movement, totally devoted and self-sacrificing, who has fought many a battle against Bohemianism and for proletarianization. That is in general. But in particular he does not listen to the lowest layers in the organization, or in the proletariat. He soon gets to demand some "leadership privileges", first against the ranks. Then within the leadership, he demands "equality" among the leadership, which thereby evades the question of the politics of the revolution, and attacks those who, as the Mensheviks said derisively of Lenin, will think of the revolutionary movement 24-hours a day.

This too existed in Russia. Natalia Trotsky told of one incident during the greatest period of trial of the young workers state when this 24-hours a day thinking of the revolution became working for it in practice on the part of Lenin. He had to get away or collapse under the weight of responsibility, get away to relax. He decided to go fishing one afternoon, but in the party of co-leaders that went along there was one who did not feel that Lenin should have more "his way" than others and so changed some plans to which Lenin had been accustomed to. The result was that Lenin lost all ambition to go fishing, and remained behind, reading, and once again tense.

This is what was the end-result of the "equality" of leadership, which is equality of nonsense, whether it actually shortens the span of the leader's life or is just a persistent reminder that "I too am here." The ways out of the movement are varied.

But our trade unionists, though they may lean toward that type, are not themselves that social type. Not at all. The whole profundity of the triangular relationship is the realization that the party is a whole made up of those three parts. The alienation of either of the three formations breaks up the whole of the party and that of the masses outside. The whole point therefore is to work out a correct relationship between the three, without each of which we could not exist. The basis of our activity remains the working class in the labor movement and in the unions. To those and from those trade unionists remain what Lenin called transmission belts. In turn, it is up to them also to become full politics so that in the trade unions where our trade unionists function they act as propagandists, not as administrators

III Intellectual Domination or the "Reign of Terror"  
in the Youth

Once again, we turn to the prevailing character of our epoch, the oppressiveness of state-capitalism, this time as it relates to the youth, precisely because they are the least corrupted, always in revolt against the shibboleths of the age, and yet cannot escape it.

First, the positive qualities the youth have brought.

a) The Group as a Whole

This generation of youth is distinctly different from the generation of the '20s and of the '30s that have tended to Marxism, or in any case rebelled against things as they are. It is so different that it becomes necessary to analyze it not alone in relation to other radical parties, but in relationship to our own party. We do that very openly before the public in the manner in which Lenin made party building an open task, not only of the paper but in the paper.

Let us first of all make perfectly clear that we are concerned only with the generation of the '40s and not with that of the '30s, by contrasting the two right at the start and then leaving the '30s aside.

The locked-out generation went in for big, mass demonstrations: against being permanently unemployed, against fascism, against war. They held congresses important enough to command the appearance of Eleanor Roosevelt and John L. Lewis. This generation seems to be quiescent and is not a "joiner."

Those of the locked-out generation who came to Marxism were interested in "fundamental problems". They studied Marx's Capital, if not all three volumes, then the first in any case. But that generation treated Capital as "culture" rather than as production truths. Many of them went to Bohemianism. And when the revolution didn't come on the "appointed day" they became wildly individualistic and turned to Existentialism. Not just those soul-sick intellectuals outside the Marxist movement, but many in the U.P..

We had to leave them be, and we did.

This generation, on the other hand, though called the Beat Generation, has, as Holmes has so profoundly described, "so distinctive an individuality that it has no need for imposed eccentricity." Al-

though it seeds no revolution around the corner, it does not consider itself "lost."

On the contrary it has a sense of community and is searching for a new belief that would demand total involvement.

It keeps its mouth shut now, but that does not mean it accepts. It simply refuses to take things at face value. After all, it has been used long enough and is being collectively uprooted in a cold war that is as global as the hot one was.

Even LIFE and TIME, with their sweeping generalizations about 28 million youth, as if they were all one mass with no social layers between them, is forced to admit that, although quiet, it is weighing things, without being cynical. That is true on the campus, or at home, or at work, or even in the army. It is not they who are confused; it is their elders who do not know what they think.

Thus the most surprised of all were the teachers when they were confronted with the overwhelming fact that it was just their demand for higher wages that brought on these explosive demonstrations of the youth. It couldn't have been "just that", they knew. After all, they had been feeling the hostility of the youth day in and day out, and yet here was the same youth defending their rights. What scared them most of all was the doings of these youth. Here were raw high school kids behaving like an experienced mass working class movement; bold, violent, confident. All authorities - school, city hall, police - were scared as witless as the labor bureaucrats when workers wildcat and take to the streets.

It was not just the teachers wages, they knew. It was definitely something else, they knew. But what? What was it?

This quiescent generation in 1948 joined the Wallace movement and now staged the greatest demonstration of high school youth ever seen in this country and it wasn't led by any radical group. The radical groups were as surprised as the authorities had been.

What was it? It is impossible to get the answer from sitting in offices - whether they be the plush ones of LIFE, the bare ones of the school, or even those of a radical party.

The only way to get the answer is to study those who come to you, with whom you are in contact, whom you see every day, live with politically, observe. In this respect a small movement has an advantage in that the people who come to it are not just individuals but social types. If you begin by not treating them as a whole, but viewing them layer by layer, then you understand more than the few people who have joined. A study of them is, in fact, the imperative basis of working out the analysis of youth as a whole.

We have already mentioned their leader, the intellectual who had begun the study of youth movements. He is the only one who at least, in looks seems to resemble the generation of the '30s: a New York, Jewish intellectual. But even he isn't. It wasn't Marxian economics that he showed an interest in, as did the generation of the '30s; it was the political movements as a whole, not merely the Marxist one but the Hitler totalitarian one as well.

The ranks too were of different layers. The proletarian one did not turn to the labor movement, but to a layer with whom he had had contact as a kid and which had never been touched by radical groupings: the gangs. The student strike revealed how organic to this generation of youth was organization. No one had to teach them that. They knew it long before they reached high school, as grammar school kids in gangs. This feel for revolt and organization characterized the youth, including the middle class youth.

There was a proletarian young woman who did not let them lose sight of the negative aspect of gang-type of youth since she had seen the zoot suiters come in as strike-breakers in her shop. She wrote a piece "There are Youth and There are Youth" for the youth section that gave it a new direction. This paper, with all its failures, is as different from the youth section in old radical papers as life is from theses.

One young woman with a parochial school training began to look at youth differently and her analysis of dope addiction even among grammar school kids turned their attention to a much younger layer. As a result, a 12-year old Negro girl from the slums of Harlem was brought around to the organization.

These new qualities that they brought with them are now reaching one stage of concretization in the publication of two pamphlets: one, a youth's own ac-



court of his rebellion, at home, in school and life in youth house; the other, a study of the student demonstration, not as a political analysis so much, as a record of doings.

Nevertheless, our youth is in a crisis. And it is this we must analyze. If there is one thing our one year's independent existence has taught us, it is that the problems of the epoch and the problems of the organization cannot be separated.

#### b) The Youth Leader

Their leader is young, 19. He has not had a chance to be corrupted. He has not had any opportunity to get tired (although the leadership of the party did their best to make him so). He is active, energetic.

He has no material basis for bureaucracy. He has no aspirations to be a great leader. Nevertheless at the School which the leadership organized, it came out that after a year of his leadership the other members of the Youth could sum up their experience with him under the phrase "Reign of Terror."

He put nobody in jail. He couldn't. He banished nobody. Nevertheless at meeting after meeting, they were conscious that they were being subjected to a harsh and unmitigated tyranny.

Why?

Simply because that is the prevailing character of society today.

It is not in his psychology nor in any tendency to dominate or any of that sort of psychological nonsense. In every sphere of society capitalism has reached the stage where all leadership is organized and dominating. You vote and having voted, you sit down and wait to see what they are going to do for you. It is so in society, it is so in the unions, in all sorts of political life. He didn't have to learn that.

We are all that way, all the intellectuals are that way. The only ones who are not that way are the workers on whose back all this domination and organization takes place.

He knew no other way except to get the line and

to bring it; and the ranks, having heard some attacks on anti-leadership, didn't want to show petty-bourgeois indiscipline. Between them both they reached the impasse.

First there is the domination in society. Then there is the experience of the SWP. Above all, there is the isolation from the masses. That is what sent the old organizations to their doom.

Now this exposure of the reign of terror was not undertaken for exposure's sake, nor yet to say; Well, if even this uncorrupted youth could not escape the corruption of the age, who can escape it? We have not ignored personal responsibility either. What we have done here is to bring it into the open so that we can test the solution, which (1) does not lie either in proclaiming the character of the age nor in making the youth the scapegoat, (2) Rather, the relationship between the epoch and the youth will lead (3) to a conception of the party as a totality. The party is a whole composed of the three formations of leaders, unionists and youth, in which each in turn is composed of various layers. It is never a question of individuals, but of social types, layers, tendencies, and trends.

The party is a whole and the relationship between its parts is a marriage without the possibility of divorce or separation, not because of Catholic rites but because therein alone lies movement forward for the organization. The task of working out the relationship is a task not of the leadership alone, but of the ranks as well. It is a relationship, moreover, that is not a static one, but a constantly shifting one, and to know what it is concretely at each precise stage is to prepare oneself for the rapidly shifting relations when the struggle of the working class becomes total.

It is precisely because we were turning to the masses by preparing to come out with a printed paper and some documents telling who we were that the idea of our School originated.

#### c) The School of the Third Layer

We had decided that although we had a basic proletarian theory, the only way that we could know what the workers wanted, was to ask the workers in our organization what they thought. That is the way

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the idea originated, of a school where the pupils would teach the teachers instead of the teachers the pupils. It was a school primarily for the third layer to express itself. If it happened that internally too, some problems such as the reign of terror were revealed, that we had not known, it only proves once again the close relationship between external and internal problems.

The idea was to write what we have to say in a way that the workers will be able to read from cover to cover. That means that what you have to say is what workers want to hear. When that is done workers will be able to see that there are people who understand politics and that politics is something that corresponds to actual life.

We have to prepare a way out to the working class. We sent for our rank and file to come to the School and teach us something. They taught us not only politically but organizationally. But that is not sufficient.

We have to go somewhere where we can feel the American working class day by day, and be close to those members of the organization who live and work among the workers. We move to the labor center. The intellectuals, the Bolsheviks, the center is going to take the first big step towards creating a leadership in which the union elements, men already proved as leaders of workers, will begin the task of becoming party leaders. Politics, forces, intellectuals, union leaders, third layer - we have to bind them all together. The test of it all will be the paper.

Internally, the test is how thoroughly the leadership bases itself on the third layer.

The youth leader says, I don't know what to do. I listen but I don't know what to do.

What to do?

We have to recognize that the basic source for progress of the organization, in its ideas, in its theories, in its next concrete steps, for theoretical advance and organizational method, comes and can only come from the third layer in the organization.

It is a very difficult thing to accept. It is a terrific struggle to prevent the intellectuals imposing their ideas and knowledge and experience and everything else upon the proletariat in the organi-

zation. Until we clear that away, we are not going to burst out into the new.

Once the third layer accepts and understands the role of leadership there must be in it the militant determination to express itself and challenge the leadership on what it wants to say, and how it wants to say it. There must be no more Reigns of Terror. "Reign of Terror" is a phrase we are using because we all understand what it means. It can be called: intellectual domination.

We have to make up our minds to get that correct relationship between the leadership and the ranks. That is a marriage without any possibility of separation or divorce.

Of course we have the same idea and belong to the same grouping. We are not trade union bureaucrats. We are bound together by profound ideas. Yet on this issue fundamental class attitudes are involved.

The future of the organization in theory and practice must rest upon the impulses that come from the third layer. We knew it in theory particularly when we were denouncing the old organizations for not doing it. But when it comes to ourselves it is something a little harder to understand. It is not what a worker says. A worker says nonsense as much as anybody else. It is that he is judging from a certain position in society and he has certain aspirations, impulses which nobody but himself can have because nobody lives where he lives every day. Furthermore our workers are not ordinary workers. They are the best type of workers because they have got rid of subservience to bourgeois society. So they are in absolute opposition to it, whereas with the ordinary worker, his instincts are covered over with all sorts of bourgeois ideas. With a class conscious worker, on the other hand, his ideas flow freely, if he is sure that he will get a reception.

And those views are the most precious views in the world, wrong as they may be at times. Those coming from the mass are the basis of a new society.

B. The Paper

Upon becoming independent the most important political decision we made was to issue our paper on a decentralized basis. The paper was not to be done at the center except for the editorial. Each local was to be responsible for the writing and production of a section of the paper. It is clear now that if our CORRESPONDENCE Every Two Weeks has existed this year and a half, it is precisely because of this decision. We could break thus sharply with the old tradition of a few people at the center concentrating in their hands the writing and editing of the paper because of our complete confidence that the ranks were perfectly able to do what the leadership had decided was its job alone. Thus the decision to decentralize the production of the paper was part and parcel of our concept of proletarianization -- of what a workers' paper and a workers' party are like.

The very fact that the ranks were to write resulted in a new method of writing. In opposition to the style of bookish intellectuals writing for workers, which characterized the old radical press, our paper would be characterized by the style of one worker writing for another. The very principle by which we set out to write our paper became the most popular expression at the School of the Third Layer. It was: what an intellectual needs at all times is a full fountain pen.

We had before us the horrible example of the papers of the old radical organizations. Trotsky himself made the most devastating criticism of the Trotskyist paper: "As it is," he wrote, "the paper is divided among various writers, each of whom is very good, but collectively they do not permit the workers to the pages of the Appeal. Each of them speaks for the workers (and speaks very well) but nobody will hear the workers. In spite of the literary brilliance to a certain degree the paper becomes a victim of journalistic routine. You do not hear at all how the workers live, fight, clash with the police or drink whiskey. It is very dangerous for the paper as a revolutionary instrument for the party. The task is not to make a paper through the joint forces of a skilled editorial board, but to encourage the workers to speak for themselves."

Ever since 1947 we had been moving in that direction. During the intervening period between the WP and our reentry into the SWP we issued a weekly BULLETIN which was primarily written by rank and file workers. There had never been anything like that in the United States. This was in absolute opposition not alone to the orthodox Trotskyist press, The Militant, but equally to Labor Action, paper of the Workers Party. That paper was governed by the conception that the American workers were backward and it was the task of the leadership to "popularize" Marxism. The popularization consisted of the editors talking down to the workers even as the leadership spoke down to the ranks inside

the party. This was done with typical party-bourgeois arrogance, with the inevitable result that the activity around the paper -- distribution of a million in a single week -- was as barren of results as the articles in the paper were of content.

Looking back through the radical press it was clear that there had in fact been only one instance when the radical press caught the spirit of the American working class. That was the early days of the Daily Worker in the '20's when it first discovered in the "Letters to the Editor" the elemental force of the Working class itself. These letters not only introduced news not covered by the bourgeois press. Above everything, they reflected attitudes that only the workers themselves could describe, because only they felt the total hostility to the capitalist class and its decadent order. In truth, this meant not only that the style of the paper was different, but that the activity of the party itself changed. Where it was to be distributed, how it was to be done, what it is that would form the basis of conversation with your fellow workers to whom you gave or sold it -- all these changed with it. There was thus no division between the activity of the paper and the activity around the paper. The paper was best when it dealt with something in the worker's life. The activity was best when the paper was best. The paper and the activity converged into new contexts and new strata of population -- Sundays among Illinois miners, Mondays at the International Harvester plant in Chicago, or Saturdays on the South Side -- all this activity was in rhythm with the aspiration we had in those days and the conception that the American workers were ready for a new society then.

Along with the politics of the Communist Party and its organizational practices, the Daily Worker soon came to its degenerated end. It was governed by the Stalinist totalitarian concept and went on pounding a line -- a line set moreover in Moscow over which neither the American nor the Russian workers had anything to say. It meant the death of any workers press in this country.

Yet American society is charged with social dynamite. The labor leaders have to fight these workers. If they don't, they are lost. The cleverest of them is Walter Reuther whose life is divided into three parts: in his office, in Washington, and on the plane or train to and from Washington. As with every labor bureaucrat, his main point is that the workers are not ready, not yet advanced enough. In reality he and his machine are the greatest obstacles in the road of the workers in the United Auto Workers. Let me take a second to show this to you on the Negro question. It is on record that when the C.I.O. was formed, it was the rank and file white workers who went to the Negro workers and by frank discussion, social intermingling, etc. won them to union solidarity. The bureaucrats hesitated and lagged behind. Today Reuther will talk by the hour to a Washington Senate Committee about the evils of discrimination. He has a propaganda department headed by a Negro

which periodically publishes anti-discrimination sentiments. But the machine has the whole U.A.W. working class paralysed by its refusal to lead the struggles in the plant. Any serious struggle in the plant automatically brings racial solidarity. But paralysis of struggle in the plant forces the workers to accept, and makes even some of them take advantage of, the racial antagonism, which the company uses day and night. So that the reason why the promise of the C.I.O. to abolish racial discrimination has not gone beyond its wonderful beginning is due directly to the reactionary policies of the labor bureaucracy, not merely on the Negro question, but on the situation of all the workers in the plant.

That then is the political alignment in the United States -- the rank-and-file workers against the labor bureaucracy which is the main support and defense of capitalism, and the whole bureaucratic apparatus which it uses against the people. Analyse each bureaucracy specifically and you find the key to the political situation in every country. In Britain, as I see it, your task is to analyse the relation between the octopus of Labor Party, unions, and cooperatives, and the stranglehold they have on the working class. In the United States, the American worker has another problem. He has had over a century of experience of democratic politics. He has been trained and disciplined in the most advanced and therefore the most savagely exploitative industrial machine in the world. If he makes a little money, he pays for it in the intensity of his exploitation. And today he is revolting against the productive system itself and directly against the bureaucracy. It is the most dangerous situation in the world. For the labor bureaucracy in the United States has no great union or political machine. American workers have not the years of habitual subordination to a labor apparatus. The labor bureaucracy here is feeble beyond belief. That explains the frantic reaction of the American government and the ruling class. Churchill knows he can depend on the labor bureaucracy to keep the workers in England in order. The American bourgeoisie cannot depend on the American labor bureaucrats. The situation in the United States is tense beyond belief.

Yet there is no workers press to express all this. The trade union papers are worse, if that is possible, than the radical press. They are as far away from the workers' lives, thoughts, and activity. There are workers who refuse to pay union dues until the union consents not to send him that paper which has as little connection with his life as the house organs of the companies.

#### The Decision

We have to view the decision to issue a paper on a decentralized basis and to be written mainly by our ranks from two aspects: 1) the demand it made upon all of us to recognize that the workers live a life of their own and have their own views; and 2) what was our specific function if it was not -- as it most certainly was not -- "to organize" and "to lead"? The paper would most certainly not "set a line" the way the old radical press did it -- in truth, it was

the function of the paper to express the total inadequacy of the old radical press and its conception of "politics." In absolute opposition to that it would project the idea of a new society, the elements of which exist right here and now in the relations among workers, their hostility to the society that exists, their struggle for a new form of society.

The most important thing, therefore, was to recognize that the workers are thinking their own thoughts. How could it be otherwise? The proof stares us in the face. Suddenly after nearly three hundred years of continuous struggle all over the world and great victories for freedom of speech and free dissemination of ideas, the world seems to have turned its face and its feet backwards. Great organizations and great states arise whose avowed purpose is to prevent the utterance or the circulation of one single idea which they do not approve. America is no exception. In this country today there is more fear and terror about criticizing the government than at any time since the beginning of the Republic. What is happening is that the ruling classes everywhere are engaged in a desperate struggle to distort, confuse, and if necessary, totally suppress these ideas. But to suppress them, they will have to destroy the system of production itself, for it is this that gives rise to them. And the closer people get to thinking their own thoughts, the more savagely the ruling class seeks ways to crush them. The labor bureaucrats therefore are very circumspect in what they do and say, not because the people are backward, but precisely because the people are so advanced. The truth is that there is no anti-war propaganda precisely because the people are so anti-war that no one dares to say anything which might unloose that mighty torrent. That is the United States today.

This is the United States that every American worker recognized. This is the United States that the European worker does not know exists.

Nothing -- nothing -- will make a bunch of European workers -- in England especially -- so conscious of the lies and continuous fraudulence of the American bourgeois propaganda as the actual existence of a periodical which at fixed and recurrent times brings the views of the section of the American working class to the proletariat of the United States and elsewhere. A book, a pamphlet -- all these things do wonderfully well, but there is nothing like a paper for genuine education.

The ultimate success of the paper will depend upon the fact that the periphery as well as the ranks of the organization will keep the paper going. Nevertheless the ranks of the organization have got to make up their minds to take the publication of the paper, the writing of articles, and the editorial work of the paper with utmost seriousness. That is their present function. Their business at the present time is not to think about leading the proletariat -- that comes up as it came up in W.Va., and we will know how



to act. Their business is to live the life of the proletariat, to live the life of the organization and be able to translate this into such form as will constantly increase and develop the ideas of the organization and its influence among the workers.

They have to understand that this is no task for intellectuals as such. It is a task for workers. It is going to be a tremendously difficult task to educate the organization so that the rank and file take the responsibility for the paper and for them to realize that in order to learn to formulate their ideas in an organized way, they are advancing the class struggle at home and abroad.

This then is the second aspect of the paper. In opposition to the old radical press which was a press written by intellectuals "for" the workers, ours would be a paper written by the ranks for the intellectuals and the advanced workers. Our school was a school of the third layer to teach the leaders; now the locals must teach the center to edit the paper. We have made a few steps in that direction, but we are a long way from having achieved it. To assure its achievement with the printed paper, we must therefore go into great detail.

Somewhere among a very active and lively rank and file writing for the paper and writing about what he knows is the outline of the new style and new content we are searching for. It has appeared in our pamphlets. How is this achievement of the third layer to be recognized by the local, to be organized, and then to send on to the center where the paper will be printed, where the final decisions will be made, and yet where the organization remains the editor?

First and foremost the question of the paper is our central activity. This means the question of shop reports, reports by intellectuals, local issues aren't just thrown into the meeting, as a sort of addendum. No. When the local meets, this is its central activity. The reports are discussed, and analysed and sifted there. There the decision is made as to what is to be written up, who is to write it, what is to be sent to the center. This becomes the life of the branch and the whole branch is involved.

That's where our activity begins, first with ourselves, the three layers in our organization, and the total picture emerges. The preparation for this week by week becomes the axis of our activity and everybody discusses the form the material is to take -- whether it should be taken up by a columnist, in an editorial, as an anecdote. Straight articles, interviews, brief editorials, news stories, full-length editorials -- from the very beginning the local not only offers the material to the center but decides the form it is to take. All the various forms of journalism are to be discussed at the branch. Otherwise there is no paper.

Publishing a paper is no amateurish job. That is the basic conception. The locals needn't always write it

themselves, but they have to decide. The organizer is to guide, to elicit, to be aware and study the paper as a whole and help the branch in the discussion, but by and large they will be the editors.

Take a national issue like the steel strike. If everybody writes about it, not only the steel workers (those we have contact with) and not only the other workers we have contact with, say what they think. But also the petty-bourgeois professor with the response of his colleagues, the office girl with the responses there, the periphery that is around our organization -- whether housewives or other strata of the population -- all say what they think. Somewhere there, in what they will do, is a solution to the problem.

The function of our organization is to clarify workers' politics. We stand for a new form of society. There is a very fundamental question here in how this is reflected in the paper. It is true that the paper does not set the line in the sense of program, what the workers are to demand, what they should do in each specific instance, as people do not set themselves up as leaders. But our paper has a line and the difference between the line which flows from those who think of themselves as the leaders and our line in the sense of a body of ideas, doctrines, etc. is that we are to clarify workers' politics and extend them.

We don't only talk and listen to workers; we introduce subjects to workers. We have to get rid of this dashing down of articles and sending in and putting them into the paper. There is no objection to articles being dashed down, but the branch must see them, must have an idea of what is going on, of what is good style, what is not. For example the question was raised of going into a workers' milieu, of going but not knowing what to do. First they listen; then when they have listened for a while and don't know what to do, they get the idea of the old organization, that they have to politicalize, to put our stamp upon it.

What we have to do is to give form to the ideas of the workers. What appears in our paper is not the same thing as the workers say or merely a condensation of what he says. It is organized and formulated, pointed and sharpened. Then the worker recognizes what exists and what he thinks and what he does in a form that gives his impulses and instincts logical organization. And with this logical organization of his impulses and instincts and desires, the impulses, instincts, and desires are no longer what they were before, but have achieved a new quality. And that new quality is what we have to give to it.

Every local meeting, every local member must begin to feel himself not an ordinary worker, but a vanguard in that sense. That is not politicalizing what the workers say. It is something much more profound and difficult.

This is going to put an end to the problem of "milieu." We go to the milieu, yes, but we have to make

something of what the worker says and does there. That is what the plenum report tried to say. What the third layer, what the workers say, has to be organized and given form. It is not a literary question, or a question of style. It is a certain literary result. But first and foremost, it is organized and given form, the form which we as people who stand for a new society have and which first and foremost the average rank and file in our organization has.

The fundamental thing to recognize is that the impulses, instincts and desires of the workers, from the mere fact that they are instinctive, are entangled and permeated always with bourgeois ideas. The problem is how to tear the revolutionary impulses out of this contradiction. And every member of the organization must be aware of what is taking place and be able to see also into the ultimate logical conclusions of what the workers are saying. We have to draw it to that end very boldly. We have to learn to do that. We can't depend on the workers doing that.

Editorializing is one of the most difficult jobs of the day. You can achieve editorial effect in various ways. You can achieve it by mass -- i.e. you give a whole mass of material of a certain kind, just pile it up. You can achieve it in a more subtle form, by variety, anecdotes, letters to the editor, editorial, news story, all dealing with the same subject more or less from the same point of view. Or at a certain stage you take a whole mass of material, take five or six pages of the paper, and you have a whole mass of correspondence which you deal with. You stimulate correspondence. Or you deliberately pose opposing views, ideas you think are entirely wrong.

And then every local is handling this on three levels:

- 1) The material it is handling.
- 2) What has been appearing in the paper and what is likely to appear. Every editor is aware of this a month or so ahead of when the paper is coming out.
- 3) What is happening in the country at large.

An editorial gives a framework so that the tumultuous varied expressions are not without some sense of direction. It is a sort of political guidance from the leadership to the ranks and the periphery. But it would be false to think that the editorial is the summation of the paper.

The whole point is that everybody has to edit the paper. A branch meeting must be a combination of the reporters and the editors. A printed paper has to be done from the center of course. The final decisions are made there. Some of the comments and various things that come in aren't just dumped in. It isn't a question of manipulating or shaping the paper, but we have to begin to edit the paper. We have in mind the current issue and the next few issues as well as what has been in the paper. We all have to do it. The organization is the editor. It has to learn what editing is. That is what we are all going to become -- editors. We are going to learn to edit a paper.