

EDITORIAL STYLE POLICY

draft

Compiled from issues of SPARTACIST, and supplemental to Labor Action manuel ("Writing for Labor Action"). Where style has not been consistent through all issues of SPARTACIST some attempt has been made to use the more frequent usage.

A. Hyphens:

1. A number of words are hyphenated when used as adjectives but not when used as nouns. Some of these are: working-class, middle-class, ruling-class, rank-and-file and popular-front. (Example: a working-class party; a party of the working class.)

2. "Petty-bourgeoisie" is hyphenated as well as "petty-bourgeois."

3. "New Left" is not hyphenated even when used as an adjective. This also applies to "civil rights" and "trade union." (Example: the civil rights movement.)

4. We also hyphenate "-year-old" as in "20-year-old man."

5. "Counter-revolutionary" is hyphenated.

B. Capitalization:

1. "Black" as a substitute for "Negro" is always lower case except in the phrase "Black people." The term "blacks" is never used, as it is derogatory; in such cases use "Black people," "black workers."

2. "Viet Nam" is two words with two capitals, although the adjective is "Vietnamese." "North" and "South" are also capitalized in this context.

3. "Communist," "socialist" and "democratic" are capitalized only when they refer to the SP, CP, DP or their members. Confusion may also be minimized by using the full term: "Communist-Party-dominated" rather than "Communist-dominated."

4. "Party" is capitalized whenever it refers to a specific party. This may seem obvious but is different from style used by at least some other organizations.

5. "Stalinist," "Trotskyist" and other such words taken from proper names are always capitalized.

6. "New Left" is capitalized even when used as an adjective. (Example: New Left ideas.)

7. "Army," as in "the Army," is always capitalized. (An alternate policy we have at least considered is to use upper case when the Army is an active entity--as in Army policy, the Army is out to get me, etc.--and not otherwise--radicals in the army. This is probably too confusing.)

8. "Revolution" is always capitalized when it is used for a specific revolution and in direct proximity with its modifier. (Examples: October Revolution, Cuban Revolution.) It is not generally capitalized when separated in the sentence from its modifier. (Example: The Cuban people must mobilize to defend the revolution.) Exception: For some

reason, it is always lower case in "Vietnamese revolution."

9. "Century" is lower case, as in "20th century."

#### C. Abbreviation:

1. The months of the year are not abbreviated.

2. Any abbreviation used must be spelled out at least once in an article, the first time it appears, and may be abbreviated thereafter.

3. When using initials we do not use periods. Thus: SWP, USSR. Exception: United States is abbreviated "U.S."; "P.O." not "PO" in the local directory.

4. Abbreviations use capitalized initials only. Thus: AFL, not AFofL. Exception: United Secretariat is "USec," not "US," "U Sec" or any other variation. This rule also does not apply to states, which have standard abbreviations.

5. "NYC" is an authorized abbreviation for New York city.

#### D. Italics:

1. In some type sizes, italics are replaced by bold face. In either case, they are indicated on the copy in the same way, by underlining.

2. All publications except SPARTACIST are italicized. SPARTACIST is written in small caps.

3. Long direct quotes running a paragraph or more should be inset in the column. They are always italicized, unless the quotation is so long that the italics would disrupt readability (a full column or more).

4. Foreign words used are in italics. Since this has the unfortunate consequence of making them stand out on the page, they should be used judiciously.

#### E. Apostrophes:

1. Apostrophes are omitted in the following common phrases: workers party, workers state, workers democracy, workers power.

2. Apostrophes are used to denote membership in organizations whose names are abbreviated. Thus: CP'er, SDS'er, SWP'er, not CPer.

3. Labor Action style in decades is to omit the apostrophe ("in the 1930s"). Since we have violated this very often we should adopt "1930's" as our style. This does lead to the difficulty of "the '30's" which can be solved by writing out, as follows: "in the thirties."

#### F. Quotation Marks:

1. Long quotes should be italicized and inset, as noted above. Use quotation marks regardless of whether the quotation is inset. Each new paragraph of the quotation should begin with quotation marks, with no quotation marks appearing at the end of any paragraph except the last.

2. Periods and commas always go inside quotation marks. Thus:  
He said "help."

3. Other punctuation marks are either included inside the quotes or placed outside them depending on whether they belong there. Thus:  
He said "help!"; Wohlforth wrote, "The SWP is still a revolutionary party"!

4. Sarcastic quotation marks are double quotes ("). Examples:  
"Arab Revolution," "progressive." Single quotes (') are reserved for quotation marks inside quotation marks.

5. Do not change style inside quotations to conform to our style.

#### G. Parentheses:

1. Punctuation marks go inside or outside parentheses, depending on whether the material in the parentheses is a complete sentence. If it is not, they go outside the end of a parenthetical expression. Example: This is dangerous (and wrong).

2. No period is required for a reference given after the end of a sentence. Example: We have always fought this policy. (see SPARTACIST #11, May-June 1968)

3. Editorial comments or clarifications inside a quotation must use brackets ([ ]), not parentheses. Brackets are also used for introductions to articles.

#### H. Other Style Matters:

1. "Working people" is two words.

2. "Per cent," not "%."

3. We always use the European date system. This also means the elimination of the comma between month and year. Example: 3 May 1967, not May 3, 1967.

4. Non-Arab residents of Israel are called "Hebrews", not "Jews."

5. We ordinarily use "ist" for anything remotely resembling the follower of a theory. Thus: Posadist, Pabloist, Guevarist, Maoist. Exceptions: Wohlforthite, Healyite. Other exceptions may be made when common usage is the "ite" form: Castroite, Bukharinite.

6. "Guerrilla" is spelled with the two r's.

7. We hate the word "progressive."

#### I. Subheads:

1. We have a definite policy in favor of frequent subheads. They should occur at least once per printed column, which is to say about once per typed page of copy.

2. Subheads should be catchy. Some good examples: Healy Wiggles, Instant Stalinism, An Army of Beatniks, Blood and Gold, Israeli Apartheid, Ever Upward with William F. Warde

3. Subheads should be assertive, and if possible use the political point of a paragraph rather than a neutral reference to its subject. For example: Oppose Federal Infiltration, rather than The Government's Role. Other Examples: Replace Mage, SLL Capitulation Expected.

4. Subheads should preferably not be unquotable out of context, for example "Marxism Outmoded", even if the subsequent text makes it clear that some opponent is being paraphrased and attacked. Such subheads can sometimes be salvaged by quotation marks or a question mark at the end. This policy applies even more stringently to headlines.

J. More General:

1. No attempt is made here to deal with most matters of lay-out, many of which do not go into operation until the very end of the copy-to-printer process, such as page numbers and the like. Likewise no attempt is made to go into questions such as type size or style, headlines, advertisement copy, etc. But a few less technical style matters are given below.

2. We give credit for photos and cartoons lifted from other publications.

3. Policy on signed and unsigned articles is given in PB minutes.

4. Ads other than fraternal or SPARTACIST ads must be marked "advertisement."

5. The end of an article is indicated by a little black box. These should be put on copy submitted to the printer, as the printer resists them steadily through all stages of paper production.

6. Style corrections are not to be made on galleys. This means style must be correct and consistent before copy is submitted to the printer.