

SPARTACIST LEAGUE

INTERNAL DISCUSSION BULLETIN

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Call for the Third National Conference of the Spartacist League, dated 24 August 1972.

II

Materials from the Enlarged Third Plenum of the Second Central Committee, 5-7 September 1971:

- Introductory Note on the Materials from the last Plenum.
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- Economic Appendix by Joseph Seymour, 30 August 1971.
- Theses of the Communist Working Collective, 19 August 1971.
- Draft Spartacist League Trade Union Program.
- Theses on the Women's Liberation Movement by Joseph Seymour, 3 September 1971.
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- Statement by Moore-Stuart, submitted to PB no.53, 15 July 1972.
- Motion on Moore Oral Report, adopted by PB no.53, 16 July 1972.
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SPARTACIST
Box 1377, G.P.O.
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August 1972
whole no. 15
One Dollar

CALL FOR THE THIRD NATIONAL CONFERENCE
OF THE SPARTACIST LEAGUE OF THE U.S.

24 August 1972

To all Committees and
Members of the SL/US:

The Political Bureau hereby calls the Third National Conference (ninth national gathering of our tendency) to convene in New York City on Friday, 24 November, and to continue through two more days of Thanksgiving weekend, Saturday and Sunday, 25-26 November.

PROPOSED AGENDA

The PB proposes that the Conference agenda include the following points:

- (1) Organization of Conference including adoption of agenda and creation of commissions on special sectors of work and organizational questions;
- (2) Local and fraction reports; Conference credentials report;
- (3) Transformation of the SL with emphasis on press policy and perspectives, international movement, trade union policy, woman question--in the context of internal SL obstacles and strengths in implementation--and including reports from relevant commissions;
- (4) Report from RCY National Committee;
- (5) National Organizational Report including fraction and regional concentration perspectives and strengthening the national structure and press;
- (6) Review of Organizational Rules and Report from Control Commission;
- (7) Election of new Central Committee and Control Commission.

PRE-CONFERENCE DISCUSSION

The SL pre-Conference discussion period formally opens with the publication of this Internal Discussion Bulletin containing this Conference Call and the Memorandum on the Transformation of the SL adopted at the last Central Committee Plenary meeting. A substantial extension and elaboration of the Transformation Memo has been drafted and is presently being edited for introduction into the Conference discussion. The attention of the membership is also directed to the recently issued Internal Information Bulletin no. 14 (June 1972) which contains information and analyses relevant to the forthcoming Conference. Accumulated material for several more Internal Bulletins is already on hand--on the split in the German Trotskyist movement, on trade union policy, on the internal situation, as well as other material.

The Internal Bulletin is open to all members to write on subjects listed in the proposed agenda or on other questions. To insure the publication of any long and/or last minute material, the PB directs that any document over forty single-spaced pages in length, or in the last month before the Conference any over twenty pages, or in the last week (i.e., on or after Saturday, 18 November) over five pages, or within a day of the Conference any document at all, must be previously negotiated and arranged for with the National Office. All copy is to be submitted typed and double-spaced.

Every local body of the SL has the responsibility of scheduling ample formal time in the pre-Conference period for oral presentation and discussion of all subjects in dispute within the organization.

ELECTING DELEGATES

The PB establishes the following uniform rules for electing delegates to the National Conference:

Only full members of the SL in good standing and who have paid their Conference assessment may vote for or run as delegates. To qualify as a full member that comrade, if new, must both have been admitted to full membership prior to the meeting at which voting takes place and have been admitted to candidate membership prior to the date of the opening of pre-Conference discussion, i.e. prior to the date of this circular. Good standing is defined as not being in arrears in sustaining pledge, i.e. a member must be fully paid up for the month prior to that in which voting for delegates takes place.

The number of delegates' votes at the Conference from each local will be determined at the time of voting for political positions and delegates in each local or organizing committee. Proxy voting by absent members in the election of delegations is prone to ambiguity or manipulation and should not be encouraged. For example, if the member's absence is for reason of work, then evidence that the worker would be fired for the absence from the job should be required to validate a proxy vote. If the comrade claims illness then concrete evidence of incapacitating illness must be presented. Vacations are manifestly voluntary absences. Moreover an unambiguous written statement of position must be presented by the absent member. It is impermissible for locals, factions or anyone else to place binding instructions upon delegates as to positions or votes to be taken at the National Conference. To proceed otherwise would fundamentally undermine the purpose of a Conference. The delegates must be free to change their minds in the course of debates.

Each member voting for a position shall be represented by one third of a delegate. Only those members voting for a position defined by a national or local written document, statement, or amendment shall be counted in establishing the number of delegates' votes from the local. Negative votes, abstentions, not voting or absence from the meeting do not serve as affirmative positions upon which to elect delegates. The local as a body shall certify the results of the elections. Unresolved disputes together with full documentation should be referred to the National Conference for final decision. Comrades who have recently moved between localities shall vote, in

person or by proxy, in the local body that they were members of during the majority of the pre-Conference period.

Alternate delegates may be elected in numbers not exceeding the number of regular delegates. Since the members and alternates of the outgoing Central Committee will be proposed as fraternal delegates at the Conference, they should not run for regular delegateships if other qualified comrades in their localities and holding their positions are available for election. Members-at-large may not vote for delegates, but they may be made delegates by proxy. Active m-a-ls may also be recommended for fraternal status at the Conference.

The PB is recommending to the RCY that the incoming National Committee of the RCY send a delegation of five with full votes to the SL National Conference.

FACTIONAL DIVISION

Factional division in selecting delegates must be based upon counterposing written declarations of position against one another in voting. After the vote for defining positions those who voted for each position shall caucus separately to select their delegates, following which the local as a whole shall certify the results and issue delegates' credentials.

The members' votes for each position must be compacted into the closest approximation to one full Conference vote for each delegate. Every delegate then shall cast no more than $1 \frac{1}{3}$ nor less than $\frac{2}{3}$ full delegate's vote at the Conference. If comrades in a given local and holding a common position are unable to send to the Conference the full number of delegates they are entitled to they may appoint proxy delegates from other locals. Such proxy assignment must also be certified by the local committee from which it occurs. In particular, while no solitary supporter of a position in a local committee may, by that comrade's own vote alone, be a delegate, since delegates casting only $\frac{1}{3}$ of a full vote are excluded, that comrade may grant by proxy his $\frac{1}{3}$ delegate status to a comrade in another locality who holds the same position and who is not already casting $1 \frac{1}{3}$ delegate votes.

In general: (where n is 1, 2, 3, 4....)

- (1) for a faction of $3n$ members in a local there will be n delegates each with one full vote;
- (2) for $3n-1$, there will be $n-1$ delegates with one full vote each and one other with $\frac{2}{3}$ of a full vote;
- (3) for $3n+1$, there will be $n-1$ delegates with one full vote each and one other with $1 \frac{1}{3}$ full vote.

In the election of delegates: in the case of $3n-1$ comrades voting for a position, that successful candidate who gets least votes would be the one with only $\frac{2}{3}$ of a delegate vote; in the case of $3n+1$, the candidate getting the most votes would be the one with $1 \frac{1}{3}$ of a delegate vote. In the event of ties where differentiation

is needed or if some candidate(s) fails to get an absolute majority of votes for the available delegateships, run-offs must be held. In no case will "bulleted" ballots be counted, all ballots must show votes for the full number of delegate slots available.

To take a complicated, hypothetical example (of a Local Committee with 35 members):

(A) 5 members are either still candidate members at the time of the meeting at which the vote for positions and delegates takes place and/or had not been admitted to candidacy prior to the date of the Conference call; 2 full members are not in financial good standing at the time of voting; 3 are absent from the meeting either without good cause or do not send in proxy votes; 4 comrades abstain on the vote for defining positions; and one does not vote--none of the above can either vote for or be a delegate.

(B) 13 comrades vote for one position--they elect 4 delegates casting 1, 1, 1 and 1 1/3 votes respectively. (not e.g. 5 delegates with 1, 1, 1, 2/3, 2/3 votes each); 5 comrades vote for another position--they elect 2 delegates casting 1 and 2/3 votes respectively; one comrade votes for a nationally declared tendency and assigns his 1/3 delegate vote to an otherwise qualified tendency supporter in another area; finally one comrade votes a position unique to himself and lacking even one other cothinker in the SL is not entitled to get that position on the floor of the Conference to command the time and attention of the delegates.

This system of representation is both a fairer and more sensitive refinement on that formerly employed in the SL and generally in the socialist movement in the U.S. In particular with a three-way division in a local, under the old system in some cases an equitable allocation of the delegates was impossible. And, more seriously, any widely, but thinly, spread tendency was severely under-represented at the Conference.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

1. The PB has voted a ten dollar Conference assessment upon all members, full and candidate, to be paid by the time of voting on positions and delegates. The principal purpose for this money is to assist in the travel expenses of delegates from more distant areas, thus tending to equalize the burdens involved. Therefore, this money is to be forwarded immediately and in entirety to the National Office by the locals and members-at-large. Sympathizers attending the Conference shall also pay the assessment. Those comrades who also attend the RCY Conference held just prior to the SL Conference may deduct the RCY Conference assessment from that paid the SL so that no one be required to pay a double assessment.

2. All SL and RCY members are invited and strongly urged to attend the National Conference as visitors. Sympathizers may be invited to attend by local committees or, subject to review from the National Office, by organizing committees and members-at-large. Attendance by representatives of other tendencies should be handled by the Political Bureau. In view of the national growth of the SL and RCY,

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accomodation in NYC comrades' homes can be assured only for delegates. While some additional private housing will likely be available and every effort will be made to house comrades and friends, non-delegates should be prepared to pay for hotels or personally make other arrangements.

3. At the Conference only regular delegates or seated alternates and fraternal delegates will normally have speaking rights. All delegates with speaking rights will have equal time to speak in the rounds whatever their status or the weight of their vote. In voting, delegates or their seated alternates will cast decisive votes; fraternal delegates will cast consultative votes. Standard Leninist practice is for sessions on organizational and personnel questions to be closed to all but full, seated alternate and fraternal delegates.

-adopted by Political Bureau
meeting, No. 55,
24 August 1972

INTRODUCTORY NOTE ON THE MATERIALS
FROM THE LAST PLENUM

The last Plenum took the following action on the documents introduced to it and consequently this is their current status:

The general line of the Transformation Memo was adopted unanimously along with the recommendation that the PB expand point 6. (on the impact of the world crisis on social relations and the class struggle in the U.S.) in the light of the plenum discussion.

The general line of comrade Seymour's economic addendum, deleting the last paragraph, was adopted, also unanimously.

The CWC Theses were unanimously adopted, "holding over for additional discussion the three theses on the black question for further research and discussion, hold over section 42 to be put in historical context; point on caucus to be added, points 83 and 84 to be put in historical context."

The draft Spartacist Trade Union Program was received too late to be discussed and consequently any action on it was deferred. It currently has therefore no formally defined status. Informally it has won wide general acceptance in the SL. A number of suggested improvements and extensions have been proposed over the past months. The trade union commission plans an extensive reworking prior to the coming Conference. The draft which is undated and unsigned was written in late August-early September, 1971, just before the Plenum. It was written by comrade Kinder in consultation with Nelson and Jennings. The draft was based on the NYC revised Workers Action program originally written in the Bay Area.

The "Theses on the Women's Liberation Movement" were highly controversial at the Plenum, but in the absence of any counterposed position were not voted, being accepted instead as a contribution to a continuing discussion.

The "Comments on the South" which proposed to center our Southern regional work on New Orleans, led in discussion to general recognition that given the structure of the South, no single center would serve, but rather that we must look toward building bases in two areas-- Atlanta and Houston.

National Office
23 August 1972

internal--for members only

Memorandum to the CC on the Transformation of the SL

1. The tasks facing the Spartacist League and the capacity of the SL as a revolutionary Marxist organization have both been qualitatively transformed through an interacting process. The crisis and breakdown of the post-World War II configuration of the world capitalist system, dominated by American imperialism, has been marked by the catastrophic consequences of the American involvement in Vietnam, the French general strike of 1968 and the definitive collapse of the "American century" with Nixon's new fiscal and economic policies, which mark the forced abdication by the U.S. of the role of world policeman and the reversion of American imperialism to merely the strongest of several competing units. These developments have of course also been conditioned and paralleled by the political decomposition of the deformed workers state bloc, above all the Russia/China split.

These developments have uniquely been continuously noted, analyzed and conclusions drawn from them for the proletarian struggle in the press of the SL over the past several years, and in a comprehensive fashion in the 1969 resolution, "Development and Tasks of the Spartacist League."

2. The working class internationally has now recovered from the destructive consequences of the second World War, the primitive effort and failures of the proletariat at the end of the war to assert its power through the framework of massive nationalistic Stalinist and social democratic movements, and the ensuing subordination of the class struggle in many lands to the pervasive anti-Communist mobilization organized and led by U.S. imperialism. A whole new generation of young workers has grown up unscarred by earlier defeats but innocent of earlier hard-won lessons. Skeptical of what it knows as "the establishment," it demonstrates in a sharply increasing way great spontaneous energy and combativity. While as always these struggles are fought out within the framework of given national states their international impact is frequently not only immediate but extends decisively through the "Iron Curtain" which despite the intentions of capitalist imperialists and Stalinist bureaucrats alike goes not to bedrock but only cuts across surface phenomena. The demand "Workers of the World Unite!" has never had greater validity.

3. Thus the stage is being set for a new round of intensified class struggle quite capable of challenging and overthrowing the power of the bourgeoisie, and the objective conditions for the building of mass revolutionary parties and for the rebuilding of the Fourth International necessary to consummate such seizures of power by the proletariat is not only objectively highly favorable but crucial in the period which we have entered.

4. The decisive defeat of the proletariat would lead in a direct fashion to the third World War fought with nuclear weapons. With the re-emergence of qualitatively sharpened inter-imperialist rivalries and the corresponding breaking up of the American-imposed system of military alliances, the earlier deterrence imposed by the Russian nuclear shield (the "Workers Bomb" so sneered at by left social democrats) to a nuclear third World War is lost. In the previous period the qualitatively greater contradictions of capitalist imperialism

were counterposed to the lack of urgent expansionist drives by even the deformed workers states which together with the powerful Russian military capacity combined to produce a relative global stalemate. This equilibrium is being superceded by a vista in which the earlier class-differentiated blocs are being absorbed into inter-imperialist power rivalries and the earlier tendency of nuclear military capacity by the deformed workers states objectively to buy time for the proletariat to regroup is undercut. The initial impact of new and major revolutionary workers struggles can be expected to cut across these power blocs and refocus general capitalist hostility on the existing workers states as well, as felt sources of the "red menace."

In the new situation, the bureaucracies of the deformed workers states, despite their qualitatively greater vulnerability to social upheaval, cannot and do not deter an inter-imperialist holocaust but acquiesce to the game of great power politics. Thus the political revolution destroying these bureaucracies is central to the struggle against imperialist war. The vague outlines of the new alignments are already taking shape: the U.S., China, West Germany, England vs. Russia, Japan, India, France, Italy. The outcome of this projection represents at a minimum a terrible setback to human culture and possibly fulfilling the negative alternative of Karl Marx's "either socialism or barbarism" with the obliteration of the human species.

5. Not only has the proletariat acquired renewed capacity for struggle, but it has become urgent that this struggle result in new seizures of power shattering the capitalist system. Hence once again the subjective crisis of leadership within the workers movement comes to the fore: put more concretely the whole outcome hinges upon the struggle to rebuild the Fourth International of powerful sections--mass revolutionary parties.

6. The impact of this world crisis upon social relations and class struggle domestically in the U.S. has been initially contradictory. The freshening of struggle has first shown itself in rebelliousness among sections of the essentially petty-bourgeois youth and student milieux, together with violent outbreaks, bitterness and an inward-turning by the Black section of the population in the face of an apparent hopelessness to improve their lot within a nation which, from their vantage point, appears not only implacably racist and hostile but unchanging. The white sections of the proletariat and lower middle class, also increasingly burdened and disgruntled, and themselves reflecting a conclusion drawn from several decades of social stagnation--that little more can be extracted from the ruling class--react with hostility to the demands of the Black people and with sometime hysteria to the rebellious youth contemptuous of "educational advancement" which has been taken by large sections of the American proletariat as the key to personal emancipation, i.e. class advancement.

7. The most evident of these antagonisms is that of Black vs. white but throughout the productive process the tendency is very strong for one group of workers to seek to advance themselves at the expense of another, and this tendency extends beyond antagonism within the national framework alone: thus Mexican is pitted against Black worker in the Southwest, American auto or steel worker against German and

Japanese, longshoreman against teamster, American against foreign seaman.

8. Thus domestically the central axis for the intervention of Marxists must turn on assisting and transforming appetites in the mass for a larger share of economic and social gain at the expense of other sections of the population into an interlinked and concerted struggle for social gain at the expense of the ruling class, a struggle which tends to go toward the expropriation of the bourgeoisie. Powerful objective forces press in this direction, but if the revolutionists are not present to raise those demands which manifestly unify the class by benefitting all its sections, especially the most oppressed, and at the expense of the bourgeoisie, the working people will be deflected by capitalism's lieutenants, the trade union bureaucrats, the revisionists and reformists, the petty-bourgeois nationalists.

9. It should be stressed that in the U.S. too there is now throughout industry a young generation of workers of great demonstrable militancy and indifferent to the anti-Communism which paralyzed their fathers and older brothers and which led to the present desperately conservative and undemocratic labor movement, which is grossly incompetent even in giving a pretense of serving the workers' needs. This union apparatus has now been rendered unstable and can be shattered. Again, whether it is replaced by slicker fakers or by revolutionists depends in good part upon the revolutionists themselves.

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10. The Spartacist tendency had its genesis within the Socialist Workers Party when in early 1961 it crystallized initially around the Cuban question, upholding and insisting upon the validity of the permanent revolution, on the necessarily dominant role of the proletariat in achieving a workers state such as that created by the Bolshevik revolution, and on the necessary role of the revolutionary Marxist party in leading that proletariat to victory.

11. In late 1962 with Healy's connivance Wohlforth split away a minority. At the end of 1963 the tendency underwent expulsion from the SWP. With the first issue of Spartacist in early 1964 there were perhaps twenty-five more or less solid supporters. Over the next two years the tendency grew rapidly, nearly tripling in size by the time of the Founding Conference of the Spartacist League over Labor Day 1966. But there were several weaknesses despite or within this growth and despite the considerable theoretical, programmatic and political development of the tendency.

The main mass work of the Spartacist had been in the civil rights movement North and South. This ended with the defeat and disintegration of this movement and the Black Nationalist freeze. Additionally much of the numerical growth of the Spartacist tendency was of a miscellaneous character, individuals joining on a rather loose catch-all basis because we loomed large as a Trotskyist group to the left of the SWP at a time in which radicals were beginning to recognize its rightward swing. Finally, the definitive rupture with the Socialist Labour League's International Committee, while it resulted within the

U.S. in a small immediate accretion of forces from Wohlforth to us, was discouraging because it indicated that we would have to endure national isolation for an undefined but not short period of time.

12. Through 1967 our membership levelled off and dropped a little, and there was little systematic involvement in mass work. Our most notable failure was our inability to intervene in a systematic and large-scale way in the SDS despite our own recognition since 1965 that this was the prime field for youth and student work. The weakness of the National Office created more overt sources of dissatisfaction through lack of regular production of Political Bureau minutes and especially over our poor press regularity and frequency. The attempt to improve the situation adopted at the New Year's 1968 Plenum was however overtaken by a factional explosion which preoccupied the SL leadership and cadre throughout 1968.

13. That year of factional struggle created the SL as it is presently shaped and completed the pre-conditions for our present transformation. Notably, the main factional discussion material and summaries which have been assembled in four membership bulletins constitute for us our own "In Defense of Marxism," defining again the thinking and tasks of Marxist revolutionaries. A new layer of comrades came to the fore in that struggle and today constitutes a precious enrichment of our leading cadre.

In the aftermath of that struggle we transformed our attitude toward membership from one of coaxing marginal members to keep functioning as a sort of a favor to one of aggressively purging such people with a ruthless attitude of "better less but better." Ross, Ellens and Turner added all together took out of the SL only some fourteen people, but from a high of a nominal seventy-five at our Founding Conference, with the individual drop-outs, factional losses and our own purging we managed to reduce our membership to around forty by the middle of 1969. Ellens claimed that our membership was a half social democratic and Turner asserted that we lacked a collective leadership. By the time we were through fighting them we had developed a hardened Bolshevik membership and a new collective leadership. In short, for the first time the SL had created a homogeneous, developed cadre.

14. By the time of our second National Conference over Labor Day 1969 we had completed the slow, painful process of laying down in written form the essential programmatic basis of our tendency. Program is not completed in a month or a year; it grows out of the conscious synthesis by revolutionists of their experience in struggle as analyzed in the light of Marxist principle. Indeed it was only in 1928 in the period of the decline of the Communist International that the CI after nine years of effort adopted a program as such. The programmatic base of the SL encompasses the material printed in Marxist Bulletin #9 covering the international question, Black question, American question and organizational rules, codified in the period 1963-69.

15. The pick-up of our involvement in social struggle in the U.S. first involved us in a notable way in the student youth field. Fol-

lowing our intervention in the June 1969 SDS split convention we finally began in a systematic and, for us, massive way to intervene in SDS. By New Year's 1970 the Revolutionary Marxist Caucus was formed. As reflected in its present name, it was simultaneously to be a caucus in SDS and, initially rather loosely, an organization of Trotskyist youth.

16. The piecemeal increase in our trade union work led on the West Coast to the production of the irregular printed paper Workers' Action, which was moved to New York and more regularly produced with a more directly political line.

17. Another area of social unrest became evident, women's liberation, and here too our comrades wherever they were around the country found themselves compelled to intervene as a pro-working-class, pro-socialist, anti-feminist contingent. The highest expression of this involvement has been the production from the Bay Area of the newspaper Women and Revolution.

18. The variety of SL-led caucuses, factions and committees in sections of the mass movement has given us a considerable organized periphery, approximately defined by the Mensheviks' old definition of party membership, i.e. individuals who agree with and work under the direction of the party. This has not only given us a greater organized force in comparison to SL membership but has tended to elevate the quality of membership in the SL itself.

19. Our electoral line in 1968 anticipated our work of the next year but was largely drowned out by our own factional preoccupation and by our marginal impact on the rest of the radical and especially the labor movement. Our call for a Labor-Socialist presidential ticket in opposition to the SWP candidacy, our attacks upon George Wallace which almost alone among socialist critics recognized the valid grievances he was catering to with racist demagoguery, in the context of our attack upon the petty-bourgeois elitism and ideological tail-ending of left-liberalism by the Peace and Freedom Parties--i.e. the IS, PL and the CP--and the little model Assembly campaign through CIPA which we ran in New York City were the major points in this work.

20. We have never found a suitable organizational embodiment nor made other than individual recruitment directly from our revolutionary working-class oriented opposition to the Vietnam war. Our refusal to give political support and confidence to the NLF or North Vietnam while resolutely standing for their military victory, our opposition to class-collaborationist Pop Frontism first expressed organizationally in our 1965 break with the 5th Avenue Peace Parade Committee, our opposition to draft refusal, and our constant propaganda for labor political strikes against the war in opposition to endless peace marches and the individualist confrontationism which these gestures breed have however given much content to our mass work in student, labor and women's liberation arenas.

21. Thus almost every aspect of struggle and motion has found us compelled to intervene, and in a way qualitatively at variance with our self-designation as an unstable sub-propaganda group. Since our

intervention has been as a vanguard nucleus while the reality of our forces has been as a sub-propaganda group, in the past three years we have found ourselves functioning under great tension and vastly overextended. The PB has been moving since the beginning of this year to resolve this contradiction by a series of measures to make the leap and resolve the desperate contradictions inherent in our present functioning as a reversible nucleus of the vanguard party.

22. The key is our national center; we have program, cadre and mass involvement. The objective opportunities and demands upon us are great. We are determined to concentrate into the center and so organize our national work as to make this leap possible. When this projection was made it appeared that we would make this shift at the cost of creating a new and ironic contradiction--namely a considerable weakening of our forces in the leadership of local committees and the withdrawal of comrades from important mass work. But we determined on this course nonetheless on the assumption that if our prognosis was correct and our determination steadfast we would win fresh forces.

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23. The erstwhile Trotskyist movement internationally has felt the impact of the crisis and the new challenges. The United Secretariat has both experienced a number of splits to the left and developed a sharp clash between its leading European sections centered on the French Ligue Communiste on the one side and the American SWP on the other. The U.Sec.-SWP antagonism arises essentially out of the divergence between the continuing Pabloist, essentially centrist appetites of the U.Sec. (recently directed at student youth as the springboard of revolution) and the SWP which uses Marxist "orthodoxy" as a cover for their ambition to become the new party of reformist socialism in America.

24. The International Committee, essentially a bloc of the British SLL and the French OCI, together with their respective satellites, teeters on the edge of an open split. The central SLL-OCI difference, which is of some years' standing, has been sharpened intolerably by the new opportunities for building the world movement which the Lambert group is energetically pursuing. The SLL considers that the Fourth International has been rebuilt and that they are it--a posture of sectarian pretense. The OCI accurately subtitles its identification of the IC as "for the reconstruction of the FI." Despite our agreement on this point, we have several serious differences with the OCI: (1) their use and justification of their own violence (in circumstances other than of self-defense) or that of the state against other radicals; (2) their approach to radical youth programatically independent from the vanguard party, i.e. treating student-centered youth as a sort of a separate revolutionary class, i.e. conciliating essentially petty-bourgeois youth impulses; and (3) pretending for years that their bloc with the SLL was a bona fide democratic centralist international organization and hiding from the world movement their many substantial differences with the SLL in order to maintain that bloc.

25. In the context of the instability of the self-styled "Internation-

tionals," a process of several splits among national sections, particularly from the U.Sec. and its periphery, continues to be evident, producing independent groups which are in rapid motion away from or towards one or another of the loosely-defined tendencies of the existing international Trotskyist movement. It is essential that the Spartacist tendency become a pole of attraction in the sorting-out process taking place. The question being posed by these opportunities is whether the IC, possibly reorganized under OCI leadership, will continue to be the main recognized repository of anti-Pabloism, or whether a process of internal differentiation within the sections and supporters of the IC, combined with the accretion of new forces, will produce the political clarification necessary to pose the fight against revisionism on a theoretically and programmatically correct and principled basis.

This perspective--which is nothing less than the perspective of rebuilding the Fourth International through political struggle leading to a process of splits and fusions--requires not only the intervention of the SL in the international arena, but also reciprocally the continued strengthening and development of our work domestically to provide our tendency with the political authority needed for us to have a significant impact on the international movement.

26. One of the principal failures in our current work has been to effectively implement the decision arrived at last winter between our delegation to Europe, the British RCL and the German IKD to launch an international discussion bulletin, for our part at least directed toward the crystallization of an essentially homogeneous international tendency of revolutionary Trotskyists to fight for the reconstruction of the Fourth International. A complicating difficulty has been that the IKD and especially the RCL have chosen to take a somewhat exclusive approach to the bulletin, limiting invitations to participate in it only to those national tendencies which they know fairly well and which meet particular but ill-defined criteria, rather than throwing it open to all those tendencies claiming to be Trotskyist and standing for example to the left of the U.Sec. However, our main problem has been the press of domestic work such that the comrade assigned to spend at least half his time on the international movement has been compelled to spend half his time away from the center over the last period. It is therefore proposed that an editorial staff of some five comrades experienced in the international movement and/or able translators be established at the Plenum with a collective responsibility for the early production of this bulletin.

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27. In recognition of the unlocking of the existing radical tendencies in the U.S. under the impact of objective events we have raised beginning with Spartacist #14 and pursued through the last eighteen months an active regroupment policy centered upon Progressive Labor in view of their sharp turn against the Stalinist states and nationalism in favor of a crude proletarian revolutionary orientation. But our regroupment orientation has deliberately had a wider character; among the main U.S. tendencies we have noted a certain polarization in the SWP-YSA (now loosely crystallized in the Proletarian

Orientation and Communist factions) and a bulge to the left on the part of the International Socialists (discovery of the working class, for the military victory of the NLF, formal avowal of Leninism on the organizational question). It is not now possible to foresee where this process will end or where it will lead.

28. Account must be taken of the alignment of the ostensible revolutionary organizations at the National Peace Action Coalition in New York in July, organized by the SWP-YSA with some CP support. This conference was the first overt realization of the Popular Front the SWP has been striving for. U.S. Senator Vance Hartke and Victor Reuther, head of the UAW's International Department--i.e. key elements in the liberal Democrat-labor bureaucrat bloc which actively ties the American workers movement to bourgeois politics--accepted invitations to speak. The SWP rammed these celebrities' participation down the throats of the conference, and when their speeches, particularly Hartke's, were vehemently shouted down from the floor, the conference marshals--SWPers, CP trade union goons, led by the SWP's Fred Halstead, assisted by Workers Leaguers--with deliberate brutality smashed and evicted the protestors. Harry Ring's apologia in the 16 July Militant did note accurately how the radical groups responded to this festival of class betrayal:

"The only one of these groups ["political sects" attending the conference, i.e. Labor Committee, International Socialists, SL, Workers League] that supported the motion [commending the marshals in evicting PL-SDS] and offered to help with defense of the meeting was the Workers League. Members of the Spartacist [sic] League actually joined with the PLers in the disruption and were evicted with them. The National Caucus of Labor Committees and the International Socialists took evasive positions."

Ring however did not make clear that even some of the CP-influenced elements at the conference were so anxious not to be associated themselves with the marshals' brutality that they sought unsuccessfully to get the conference to disassociate from the guards' violence.

This division of the tendencies, ranging from revolutionary through centrist to reformist, and sealed in blood, crystallizes the main lines of division within the radical movement over the next period and defines possibilities for regroupment in that period.

29. The "crisis of Maoism" (steps toward Peking-Washington rapprochement) has disoriented and disorganized U.S. pro-Maoist movements and presents the SL with opportunities for influencing and polarizing previously inaccessible Maoist groups and collectives, especially those individuals and groups which had already implicitly challenged "Maothought" by seeking to discover in Maoism a consistent revolutionary proletarian strategy for the advanced countries.

30. Already we note several results from our regroupment orientation, in addition to the recruitment of individuals from in and around the radical movement attracted to us because of our recognition (in distinction to self-styled revolutionaries like PL and the Workers League) that regroupment is at certain junctures a vital part of

the building of the revolutionary party. We are in the process of formally consummating an evidently deeply-based fusion with the comrades of the Communist Working Collective, a Los Angeles ex-Maoist formation; at least a portion of the comrades of the Boston "Mass Strike" group have adopted a fusion perspective with the SL; and also in Boston we have won SL supporters from among members and leaders of the PL-led University Action Group. Including the fusions, in the last four months we will have had a more than fifty per cent increase in direct SL membership.

31. The experienced forces won which in good part are a direct accretion to the SL cadre, taken together with the extremely valuable recruitment of younger comrades to the RMC, give us the human resources sufficient to ensure the strengthening of our center, the production of our press, the extension of our trade union work, the development of a Trotskyist youth league and the consolidation and extension of the SL geographically into more regional centers in the country.

32. In viewing the SL as the nucleus of the vanguard party there is however a vital weakness. In the period through 1968 we suffered the attrition and loss of essentially all of our Black comrades. Without a Black component playing a creative and leading role in the SL it is impossible in this racist country in either mass work or effective general propaganda to have much impact on Black workers or militants. And without the mobilization in revolutionary struggle of the Black section of the proletariat, under some conditions in a relatively leading role, a successful social revolution cannot be realistically projected.

We now have an opportunity in one area to win Black comrades. This work must be pursued at the highest national priority and, if it is to have revolutionary significance, without a trace of conciliation to Black Nationalist inclinations nor of personal patronization. Within the party we do not and will not know any social divisions. Our continuing struggle as revolutionists is "to be in, but not of" this society. Side by side with this adamant inter-party attitude we must take account in our propaganda and mass work of all of the special sensitivities, prejudices, particularities and antagonisms of the oppressed and exploited if these are to be overcome in the course of struggles which aim to channelize all discontent against the ruling class.

33. The spectacular split in the Black Panther Party presents the new generation of Black activists with hard evidence that Black Nationalism even in its most leftist, anti-"porkchop" embodiment, cannot provide a way forward for Black revolutionaries in the U.S. Whatever the organizational fate of the BPP, its former glamorous appeal among wide masses of Black youth, which insulated the overwhelming majority of Black radicals from the impact of multi-racial radical politics, is shattered, and the most thoughtful and dedicated of these youth are again potentially reachable by the SL through its general propaganda and work among this stratum.

34. As we have recognized from our inception, a regular and frequent press is central to our existence as a propaganda group. Now that the SL also finds imposed upon us the tasks of, and key elements in the capacity to be, the nucleus of the vanguard party, the inability to resolve our press question would reduce us to a mockery. We have recognized that we could either liquidate all our other publications (Workers' Action, RMC Newsletter, Women and Revolution, trade union journals) into the Spartacist, thus in imitation of the Workers League retreating from actual mass involvement for the sake of pretense, or we could undertake a tightly regulated expansion centering around Workers' Action.

35. The Political Bureau has opted for the latter and in agreement with the CWC has worked out the following proposal: that we go over to an 8-page tabloid, subtitled a "Marxist working-class monthly, published by the Spartacist League." The PB proposes that the new paper be called Workers' Vanguard and that the early issues note that it incorporates Workers' Action and that special emphasis be given the fusion with the CWC.

The name Workers' Vanguard is appropriate to the kind of paper we intend. From the vantage point of the vanguard it is appropriate to treat the struggles of all of the oppressed and in a fully Marxist fashion, while centering on the class struggle. The July-August issue of Workers' Action was intended to be transitional in its character, and the first monthly issue, September, is meant to be representative in all but the new name of the kind of paper we aim to produce.

36. The Spartacist will continue with approximately its recent frequency as "An Organ of Revolutionary Marxism, published by the Central Committee of the Spartacist League." It will have a special area of responsibility toward the international movement and for theoretical material. But all of the SL-directed publications should have an overlapping of content with the new Workers' Vanguard. It is important that the struggles for example in the fields of youth work and women's liberation find expression in the new main organ. It will be necessary for the CC to tightly regulate the size and frequency of the other publications to ensure above all that WV is not undercut.

37. The step of producing and effectively distributing an 8-page monthly has and will require a drastic reorganization of the center and the SL as a whole. In view of the magnitude of the changes involved it is likely that we will find it more difficult to stabilize our monthly than we will in going over to a paper every two weeks, which is the indicated next step for a formation of our relative size.

38. The actual production of the paper rests on several considerations which must be met. One of course is copy. A considerable proportion must be produced in the localities. The branches will have to encourage and direct qualified comrades to write frequently, freeing them when necessary from other responsibilities. The authorization of particular articles in this context is the responsibility of the editors.

It is the intention of the PB that comrade Benjamin be the Managing Editor of Workers' Vanguard with an Editorial Board of Benjamin, Gordon and Treiger, with comrade Rogers as Circulation Manager and comrade Miles as Production Manager; Spartacist with comrade Gordon as Editor and an Editorial Board of Cunningham, Gordon and Robertson, with Rogers also as Circulation Manager. We intend to continue producing Spartacist in a metal shop on the much cheapened basis that we have arrived at; WV is to be offset, composed by us and printed in an inexpensive unionized commercial shop. An early capital expenditure required is a composition machine freeing comrades from the onerous double setting now required.

39. Our own small offset press is intended especially for the production of pamphlets, which are otherwise now financially impossible to produce, as well as miscellaneous printing. Our own shop, managed by comrade Kinder, is intended to evolve into a commercial shop in order to partially subsidize SL production. About two-thirds of the essential equipment cost has been met; some \$1500 more is still required.

40. Second only in priority to the drive to establish our press on a new basis is our calculated and systematic extension of our trade union work. We propose to appoint a national trade union director available at least half-time, partly for the purpose of consultation with our developing fractions but most urgently in this period to direct and assist in the actual creation of fractions. We have no lack of dedicated comrades eager to undertake this work, and who in any case must hold jobs, nor do we lack knowledge of the indicated priorities of one field over another. What generally appears impossible is the actual placing in the indicated spot of the indicated comrades, a task made doubly difficult given the present recession. The failure under present conditions to tactically implement fully our strategic proletarian perspective would be nothing other than a denial of that perspective. Therefore every resource and ingenuity must be brought to bear in a fully conscious and calculated way to achieve this vital aim.

Put quantitatively, about fifteen per cent of SLers in the past period have been active unionists. By active unionists we mean those comrades who are in a position to and do produce written agitational material within their plant; industry or union. Through the period of our growth, the proportion of active unionists must climb.

41. The two operative words in all SL mass work undertakings in this period remain "concentration" and "exemplary." "Concentration" is to say that we must continue to carefully select our arenas and strongly supervise our allocation of forces so as to maximize our impact. One comrade isolated in e.g. a union is viewed largely as an individual with personal politics; a fraction of at least two comrades is potentially able to achieve a division of labor and constitute a pole of attraction for militants in struggle.

In addition to work which offers a possibility of direct and more or less immediate recruitment of individuals and groups to the SL, we also undertake, in a carefully selected way, exemplary work

among sections of the masses, in order to both generate program concretely through interaction with struggle, and as an essential part of our propaganda--i.e. demonstrating the capacity of our political and programmatic line to focus and lead mass struggles despite our inability, through the limitations of our forces and roots in the working class, to directly vie for leadership of the class as a whole. Thus in these situations we will work with militants who accept our full transitional program for that struggle without necessarily being immediately recruitable to the SL directly through this work.

Any definition of "propaganda" which excludes this element of seeking to offer real revolutionary leadership in a few key situations is mere pretense in favor of an alien appetite; any assertion that an organization such as the SL can be primarily "agitational" ("conquest of the masses") rather than propagandistic in the sense here defined is crackpotism, utopianism or, worse, completely cynical. It is not an accident that the SL--virtually alone among radical organizations in refusing to style itself an "agitational party"--is already involved in more and better mass work than any other group of comparable size.

42. Our determination to implant ourselves in the working class should not be taken as a syndical deviation. Given our marginal propagandistic situation student-centered youth work is not only no less necessary for our existence but interacts closely with our proletarianization campaign. To separate either one from the other would be a major political deviation. Less emphasis is being placed here on the development of the RMC because it is easier and further advanced.

The principal internal obstacle in the consolidation of the RMC is just the opposite of the difficulty experienced in 1958-59 in the founding of the YSA. Then, the founding youth cadre, though few, were very experienced as socialist youth: local organizers, editors and national leaders. But the parent SWP politically undercut the development of a revolutionary youth group by its increasing departure from a Leninist regroupment policy as it pursued, and sought to get the YSA nucleus to pursue, elements moving to the right in the Stalinist milieu. Moreover, significant sections of the party were suspicious and obstructive to the creation of an organizationally separate national youth formation at all. The RMC development was undertaken with the initiative and encouragement of the SL central leadership, and throughout the period of the RMC's dual role as a caucus in SDS and a Trotskyist youth formation, the SL materially supported the RMC and assisted in the development of clear Bolshevik politics. However, through the present, but decreasingly, the absence of an experienced youth cadre has been at every turn a serious handicap. Already one can see in talented and dedicated young comrades of 18-22 the future RMC leadership.

43. The main tasks for the RMC are the development of an experienced center with a regular administration, and the creation of more RMC local chapters. Of special priority is the development of a functioning RMC chapter in New York City.

44. It is the intention of the SL to replace the present interim national organizational relationship with the RMC (the RMC Bureau being simultaneously the Young Bureau of the SL appointed by the PB). In place of this temporary expedient we want to develop at the upcoming RMC Conference and party Plenum a jointly agreed resolution regulating youth-party relations in the fully Leninist mode worked out in the period of the first four Congresses of the Communist International codifying the relationship of the youth league to the party as "organizationally independent but politically subordinate"--i.e. autonomous. This necessarily requires, for the creation of a living communist youth group, rather than a front group of young epigones, that the Youth comrades, party and non-party alike, play a real and full if subordinate role in all discussion and decision-making in our movement as a whole. Correspondingly the youth organization as a whole must be a disciplined part of the movement as a whole in carrying out the decisions it helps arrive at.

* * *

45. Over the next period following the new general allocation of forces already agreed upon with the CWC, we expect that both the Bay Area and Boston locals will become sources for personnel assignment elsewhere, that New York will experience colonization in only for specific functional reasons and will otherwise be kept pruned. The stabilization of a viable Los Angeles branch is our main additional regional priority, followed by the intention to put sufficient additional forces into Chicago to give us a local there. A local in Chicago not only means filling in the largest single gap in our national extension as well as incidentally backing up our student work there, but it also gives us the basis to undertake union work in the industrial core of the country. Our Southern perspectives have been indecisive partly because of the objective lack of one dominating regional center among Atlanta, New Orleans, Houston.

46. At this point in our development money has become our most serious bottleneck. We have suddenly jumped from spending roughly \$10,000 per year to approximately double that, with no significant immediate change in our income! We have gotten through the summer by virtue of \$500 in special donations, a \$500 loan and a \$5-15 surcharge on Sustaining Pledges, which is to be extended through the balance of this year. Following the Plenum it is vital that comrades being newly integrated into branches be brought fully up to SL norms of financial performance.

47. A new major source of income will be from sales of the new monthly. If we are to have effective circulation of the paper, the branches must sell it far more intensively in the much briefer period available per issue. Each comrade will find that he will have to go on sales several times a week or more. In the aggregate this will result in several hundred dollars additionally per month to the National Office.

48. The RMC has been completely financed out of the SL treasury. We intend proposing the following financial arrangement to the RMC National Committee: that all RMC members pay whatever uniform dues

are set by the RMC; that dual RMC-SL members pay the whole of their normal SP to the SL; and that a regular amount be given the RMC by the SL in accordance with the budgeted RMC needs.

49. In this period of many-sided expansion and growth, we must not lose sight of the necessity to maintain the SL as a centralized, highly responsive national collective. Locals must run intensive and systematic educational programs, perhaps modelled on the set of three educational series and reading list developed in New York and the Bay Area several years ago (I-Basic Marxism; II-Leninism and Trotskyism; III-Theoretical and Political Positions of the SL). Any tendencies toward personal or organizational polarization within locals or failure of locals as a whole to follow the national lead must be examined closely and rectified; or, if on examination they reveal the kernel of political differences, they must be fought out on a political rather than an organizationally disintegrative basis. Incidental loss of national cohesiveness or incipient political departures will tend to be arrested both by a more frequent press and by the continuation of frequent national gatherings and tours.

50. The comrades must understand that in the broadest sense we are and will remain a propaganda group. Lenin noted in 1920 that the British Communists, with several thousand members and in London and especially on the Clyde a certain industrial base, were but a propaganda group, even as they passed through a time of great social strife; that until the British Communists had cracked open the British Labour Party and stood at the head of a section of the class they would not yet be a revolutionary party. Our task is above all the propagation of our full program made concrete by and addressed to our fellow militants in every sort of struggle.

If we are able to achieve over the next period the historically modest aims set forth in this memorandum we will however have consolidated ourselves as the nucleus of the indispensable vanguard party, and that National Conference of the SL which acknowledges that achievement might well consider adopting the name of a Party in the same spirit that we now take the name for our press of Vanguard: as a deliberate assertion of our intentions and our determination.

--22 August 1971; general line
adopted by the PB 23 August;-
extensions incorporated 24
August.

ECONOMIC APPENDIX

--submitted by Joseph Seymour

Nixon's wage control policy marks the first major qualitative change in the relationship between the U.S. state and the labor movement since World War II. In the absence of effective policing machinery, the 90 day freeze is more a test of will of the labor movement than a serious wage control policy. With this policy, the U.S. joins all major capitalist countries in attempting to impose direct state control of the labor market. Such a policy has not been ultimately successful in any state maintaining bourgeois democracy. The most successful experience of capitalist wage control occurred in the early years of De Gaulle's semi-authoritarian rule. There is no reason to believe that the U.S. government will be able to impose effective long-term wage control, although in the immediate period it will undoubtedly hold down real wages.

To the extent that money wages are, in fact, held down, this will moderate the inflation with some time lag. Despite the restraints on real wages, the changes in fiscal policy (which are contractionary, on balance) and steps taken against foreign competition, there is no reason to expect a significant expansion of production due to the over-capitalization of American industry resulting from the investment boom of the mid 60's. The next few years should witness the continued stagnation of production, accompanied by high, if not rising unemployment.

The U.S.'s competitive devaluation and turn to protectionism will spread the American crisis internationally in the classic manner. Despite retaliation and imperialist expansion into non-U.S. markets, there is no way that Western Europe and particularly Japan can avoid powerful contractionary pressure on their economies. The long Japanese boom is over, presaging the breakdown of Japan's paternalistic labor system, which is based on guaranteed employment geared to a rapidly expanding export market.

Despite its qualitatively weakened economic position, the U.S. retains a virtual monopoly of military power in the capitalist world. Therefore, the very real economic conflicts between the imperialist powers will not immediately manifest itself in the breakdown of traditional alliances or in military-diplomatic maneuvers. This awaits the effective rearmament of Germany and Japan.

30 August 1971

THESES OF THE COMMUNIST WORKING COLLECTIVE (LA)

I. PABLOISM, INVERTED PABLOISM, AND THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

Pabloism

1. Following World War II, the International Trotskyist movement was thrown into a profound theoretical, political, and organizational crisis. Large numbers of Trotskyist cadre were physically destroyed through the joint efforts of the imperialists and Stalinists. World capitalism underwent a relative stabilization due chiefly to Stalinist and Social-Democratic betrayals of the revolutionary working class upsurge following the cessation of fighting. In addition, Stalinist and petit-bourgeois leaderships were successful in overthrowing capitalism and establishing deformed workers states in Eastern Europe and China. All these factors posed very sharply to the Trotskyist movement the problem of building independent proletarian vanguard parties.

2. The Pabloite revisionist trend emerged as an attempt to make the Trotskyist movement more "effective" by accommodating it to the existing "left" movements in the world. The role of Trotskyists was essentially confined to that of pressure groups upon these formations, integrating themselves into whichever forces seemed to have the most potential and hoping that these groupings, under the influence of the objective march of events and prodding by the Trotskyists, would be forced to adopt a revolutionary orientation. For this reason, Pabloism can be called a liquidationist tendency. Thus, during the 1950's Michel Pablo and his International Secretariat pursued such policies as liquidation ("deep" entrism) into the social-democratic and centrist parties of Western Europe, the national bourgeois and petit-bourgeois formations in the colonial countries, and the ruling Stalinist CP's of Eastern Europe.

3. Fundamental to the Pabloite world perspective is the theory, borrowed from Stalinism, that the world balance of forces has shifted in favor of socialism, resulting in a "new world reality" in which the tide of revolution is irreversible. For this reason, Pabloism can also be characterized as empiricist. This conception has gone through several variations. Around 1950, Pablo forecasted a Third World War, launched by imperialism to regain the upper hand, which would lead to the final downfall of capitalism and Stalinism. In 1953, the International Secretariat claimed that the isolation of the USSR had ended, eliminating one of the fundamental conditions for the bureaucracy's existence and leading to the imminent demise of Stalinism. More recently, the Pabloites have declared that the colonial world is the main center of revolution in the world, that the anti-imperialist struggles there are uninterrupted and irresistible, and that therefore the working class can come to power there with a "blunted instrument" instead of a Leninist proletarian party. Thus the problem of overcoming the crisis of proletarian leadership, the central problem of the world socialist revolution, is avoided, or else left to be resolved by the "objective process" going on in this "new world reality".

4. Although the Socialist Workers Party had broken with the Pabloites in 1953, by the early 1960's it became clear that the SWP was moving increasingly toward the revisionist methodology it had once opposed. This regressive trend most openly manifested itself in the SWP majority line on the Cuban revolution: support to Castro's governmental bureaucracy in the hope that Castroism would be transformed into Trotskyism. On the organizational level, the SWP's abandonment of a revolutionary proletarian line became definitive with the "Reunification Congress" of 1963, in which "minor" political differences were overlooked in order that the SWP could carry out an unprincipled reunification with the International (USec). In fact, the main political resolution passed at this Congress included all the basic theses upon which Pabloism was based: the change in the world balance of forces, the centrality of the colonial revolution, and the end of the USSR's isolation.

5. Since the 1963 Congress, it has become obvious that, although Pablo has been discredited, Pabloism the method dominates the entire USec. The European sections have carried the "colonial epicenter" theory to its conclusion and have called for armed struggle based on rural guerilla warfare and entrism into the Castroite organizations of Latin America. At the same time, the SWP has moved sharply to the right, becoming little more than a support group for black nationalism, petit-bourgeois feminism, bourgeois liberal pacifism and the Cuban bureaucracy. (This is true although now the SWP claims that the Cuban revolution has degenerated--implying it was once undeformed.) The main work of the SWP and its youth group, the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA), is building anti-war demonstrations based on single-issue politics--a plainly reformist and Popular Front approach. Thus all tendencies within USec, from the ultraleftist adventurism of the European parties to the reformism of the U.S. section, adopt the liquidationist and empiricist Pabloite method.

Inverted Pabloism

6. Another international tendency which adapts to the methodology of Pabloism, despite proclamations of representing the only anti-Pabloite international trend, is the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI), principally led by the British Socialist Labour League (SLL). The SLL, in its analysis of Cuba, uses the same objectivist premises of Pabloism and in so doing fails to grasp the critical difference between the establishment of a state, led by a Bolshevik-Leninist party, where organs of power are democratically administered by the working class (soviets) and the formation of a workers state which from its very inception is ruled by a Bonapartist bureaucracy. With this method they cannot adopt a correct attitude toward Stalinist and petit-bourgeois leaderships. They are forced, in order to maintain a firm "stand" against the Pabloites' capitulation to these leaderships, to categorically deny the possibility that, under certain conditions (the most important being timely material support from the Stalinist camp), these leaderships can in fact establish deformed workers states. This position leads them to conclude that Cuba is not a deformed workers state but some form of "statism" (despite the fact that the Castroite leadership of Cuba has expropriated the bourgeoisie, set up monopoly of foreign trade, and established the rudiments of a planned economy). From this it is

clear that the methodological approach of the SLL and its followers can be characterized as inverted Pabloism.

7. This reaction of the SLL and its co-thinkers to Pabloism ultimately serves to reinforce the Pabloite current, for it cannot effectively deal with Pabloite accommodationism in a theoretical way. In essence both trends equate the deformed workers state with the road to socialism. Pabloism does this explicitly, by its support of Castroism and its one-time veiled support of the Chinese bureaucracy. The inverted Pabloites begin with the same premise, and are forced therefore to deny the fact of a social transformation in order to avoid giving this type of support. A correct Trotskyist appraisal of strategy and tactics toward these bureaucracies must start with the understanding that they are an obstacle to building socialism, thereby ruling out any possibility of support, however critical, to these leaderships, and removing the basis of the ICFI's Pablophobia.

The Fourth International

8. With the development of capitalism into imperialism the basic tendency of capitalism to weld all areas of the world regardless of their level of development into a common economic system which dominates and subordinates to itself each of its parts is greatly reinforced. The hegemony of imperialism over world economy tends not only to level out the various stages of development of one area as compared with another, one country as compared with another, but simultaneously increases the differences between them and sets one up against the other--thus greatly aggravating the contradiction between the further development of the world productive forces and the national-state boundaries. This dynamic of imperialism inevitably leads to wars for the conquest and redistribution of markets and to the wholesale destruction of the productive forces on which human culture is based. The continued existence of imperialism thus threatens to plunge mankind into barbarism. It is on this basis, "on the insolvency of the national state, which has turned into a brake upon the development of the productive forces" (Trotsky), that the internationalism of communism ultimately rests.

9. The proletariat is the only class capable of destroying international capitalism and constructing a communist society which would forever eliminate all war, exploitation, and social inequality, thereby creating the conditions for the limitless development of human civilization. However, without the leadership of a communist party the proletariat cannot come to power and establish a genuine workers state in a single country. Further, the international proletarian revolution can only triumph if it is led by a revolutionary communist international, i.e., a world party of the proletariat. This has been completely verified by the experience of the October revolution and by the subsequent defeats the international proletariat suffered at the time when all the necessary conditions for successful world revolution were present except for a revolutionary international which could lead the insurrection. Finally, to attempt to construct a revolutionary party separate from, outside of, or opposed to the struggle to build an international can only mean capitulation to national narrow-mindedness which is inseparably linked

with reformism. Thus any communist organization which does not take the fight for the construction of a communist international as its strategic starting point must inevitably degenerate.

10. The Fourth International which was founded by Trotsky in opposition to the degeneration of the Stalinist Third International no longer exists. The advent of Pabloism has destroyed the Fourth International to the extent that revolutionary Trotskyism finds its programmatic continuity only in small disunited groupings scattered throughout the world and which for obvious reasons cannot lead significant sections of the working class in struggle. Consequently, the main international focus of revolutionary Trotskyism must be directed toward the conducting of programmatic discussions with these organizations in order to achieve the theoretical clarity necessary for an early regroupment which would result in an international revolutionary tendency which would thus become a pole of attraction around which future and more complete communist regroupment could take place. Only by using this method is it possible to start the rebuilding of the Fourth International along the lines of the 1938 Transitional Program.

11. To lay the basis for the complete reconstruction of the Fourth International, it is necessary to decisively defeat Pabloism through ideological confrontation in all arenas of the class struggle. Such a victory over revisionism would carry Marxist theory forward and thus provide the necessary foundation on which genuine international unity based on democratic centralism could be built. As for now, however, it is important to stress that the battle against Pabloism has not yet been won.

12. Although an international revolutionary tendency has not yet been fully crystallized, the process of revolutionary communist regroupment can and must be started. Sufficient clarity on the basic questions posed by Pabloism has to a large degree been reached thus opening up the possibilities for principled fusion of national and international organizations. It is to this task, to the rebuilding of the Fourth International through a process of revolutionary communist regroupment, that the Communist Working Collective is dedicated.

II. STRATEGY IN THE UNITED STATES

Crisis in Revolutionary Leadership

13. "The objective prerequisites for the proletarian revolution have not only 'ripened'; they have begun to get somewhat rotten. Without a socialist revolution, in the next historical period at that, a catastrophe threatens the whole culture of mankind. The turn is now to the proletariat, i.e., chiefly to its revolutionary vanguard. The historical crisis of mankind is reduced to the crisis of the revolutionary leadership." (Leon Trotsky)

14. Capitalism has long outlived its progressive historical functions; the historical conditions for socialist revolution were long ago achieved. However existant the general objective prerequisites,

there is lacking the subjective prerequisites, the revolutionary leadership essential to lead the working class to power.

15. Within the general period of capitalism's decay conjunctural crises regularly occur. This downward zig-zag pattern will continue until the proletariat seizes power and eliminates the capitalist system. The bourgeoisie will not fall from crisis, no matter how serious, but must be overthrown by the conscious action of the proletariat.

16. Unless a Leninist vanguard party is able to lead the proletariat to the achievement of its historical task, i.e., seizure of state power and elimination of capitalism, the proletariat will be crushed, as in Germany, by fascism.

The Bolshevik-Leninist Party

17. "Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class." Only the proletariat is capable of leading all the oppressed and through proletarian revolution eliminating classes and class struggle.

18. In order for the proletariat to see itself as an independent force capable of overthrowing the capitalist system it must break with the bourgeois ideology of the capitalist system that encourages passivity and maintains the heterogeneous nature of the class, i.e., setting one section of the class against another.

19. The essential understanding of the capitalist structure as a whole and the social relationships between all classes, i.e., socialist consciousness, can only be initiated into the working class from without.

20. "Organization is the only weapon of the working class." (Lenin) Therefore, what is needed is a revolutionary party with a program and strategy based on the theory of dialectical materialism.

21. The primary task of the revolutionary party is organizing the working class to seize power by developing socialist consciousness, uniting the divided forces, and leading the working class to power.

22. The party is a conscious vanguard in revolutionary action representing the general interests of the working class.

23. A revolutionary party is an organization capable of lending energy, stability and continuity to the political struggle.

24. It is essential that the revolutionary party be a democratic-centralist organization composed of a selected membership of revolutionaries dedicated to Marxism.

25. Members of the revolutionary party are trained to become professional revolutionaries. This concept was first developed by Lenin.

26. The tasks of the party are to basically apply the strategy and tactics of the first four congresses of the Third International and the Fourth International to the American experience.

27. Inseparable from the Leninist conception of a party of professional revolutionaries is the existence of a central political organ, i.e., a regular party press. This organ openly expresses the political line of the party.

28. The main purpose of the party organ is that of a collective organizer. To insure flexibility in adapting to changing conditions of struggle and respond to fluctuating moods of the masses. It will serve to weld together the diverse forces and will guide the revolutionary movement in practice.

29. The existence of a regular party organ will strengthen and consolidate the movement by reporting with a consistent line the news of the labor movement to dispersed regions.

30. Our forces are small, so there can be no pretensions that we are presently capable of leading systematic mass movements. Today the main activity is one of propaganda and not of agitation and conquest of the masses.

31. The immediate tasks are struggling with and winning over present participants in the revolutionary movement, including individuals, but primarily through intervention in ostensibly revolutionary organizations.

32. The main tactics of building a party at this time is one of regroupment. This process is carried out by intervening in left organizations with a revolutionary line to create splits, then fusing on the agreement of a common revolutionary program.

33. As the contradictions of world capitalism intensify bringing about renewed militant class struggle, the various political tendencies based on the petit-bourgeoisie are thrown into disarray. As the need for a working class alternative becomes more evident, conditions become favorable for developing a Leninist vanguard party by intervening in ORO's with a revolutionary program.

34. Along with propaganda certain exemplary practical work is necessary. The purposes are developing cadre, gaining experience in the trade union movement and other arenas to begin to build roots in the working class, and "most important, serve to focus and concretize our propaganda line". (MB #9 part II)

Transitional Program

35. The purpose of the transitional program is to link the conscious demands of the working class to the realization of the need for proletarian revolution.

36. The Transitional Program eliminates the distinction between the old minimum and maximum programs. Social Democracy divided its program into two parts, separating the democratic tasks from the socialist tasks. The Transitional Program proposes one program that defends the democratic rights of the workers as necessary steps in educating, preparing and leading the proletariat to a socialist revolution.

37. The Transitional Program consists of a system of transitional demands reflecting the present conditions combined with the level of consciousness of the oppressed masses, and which if carried out would result in the dictatorship of the proletariat.

38. The proletariat is educated and wide layers of the class are brought into the revolutionary movement through a systematic process of engaging in struggle for demands which cannot be won without stepping outside of bourgeois means of struggle.

39. In contradistinction to abstract slogans of calling for the dictatorship of the proletariat and socialist revolution, the Transitional Program guides the proletariat through class struggle to the realization of the need for socialism.

United Front

40. The task of the communist party is to lead the proletarian revolution. In order to summon the proletariat for the direct conquest of power the communist party must base itself on the overwhelming majority of that class.

41. There is a constant need for united action of the working class against capitalism. Communists must support and build this unity of action for the defense of vital interests of the working class.

42. To build the United Front, the communist party presents to the various tendencies and parties of the labor movement a program for joint action based on the conscious needs of the majority of the class. This tactic publicly pits the rank and file of the reformist organizations against their leadership for the purpose of winning this rank and file to the leadership of the communist party. Dragging the reformist organizations into the arena of class struggle, publicly confronting them with the issues of class struggle, mercilessly exposing their inevitable betrayals, and thereby breaking the masses from them is the only way to gain actual leadership of the class.

43. The communist party must not subordinate its independence or its program to the united front. It must demand freedom of criticism and struggle within the united front. The slogan is "March separately, strike together."

44. We must wage an irreconcilable struggle against all Popular Fronts or blocs between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The Popular Front subordinates the independence of the proletariat to the bourgeoisie, sacrificing the revolutionary program for certain

minimum demands which are acceptable to the capitalist order. An example of a Popular Front is the SWP's NPAC, which puts forth a program of a so-called "independent perspective" based on the classless demands of "self-determination for Vietnam" and "Out Now", and includes representatives of the capitalist class (Senator Vance Hartke).

45. The so-called United Front from below rejects any unity between the Communist Party and the reformist working class organizations. Refusing to approach the leadership of the reformist organizations with proposals for a joint struggle the 'United Front from below' precludes unity of the class and isolates the workers within or supporting the reformist organizations from communist leadership. The 'United Front from below' was the greatest factor in determining the defeat of the German working class by fascism.

Soviets

46. "Soviets is the highest form of the united front under the conditions in which the proletariat enters the epoch of fighting for power."

47. The soviet is based on all strata within the working class. The demand of the soviet is that the workers organized in the soviet should take state power. The struggle within the soviets is over the question of how the workers can take power. Here again the communist party does not subordinate either its organization's independence nor its program but fights to win the entire working class to its program.

Factory Committees

48. Factory committees are elected by all factory members and by their very existence pose the question of dual power within the factory. They generally develop in time of continued class struggle, i.e., work stoppages, etc.

49. Through the factory committees the workers gain a sense of dealing with the conflicts with management themselves rather than relying upon the labor bureaucracy.

50. The importance of factory committees is that they directly reflect the interests of workers and transcend the distinction between the organized and unorganized. By their very existence they pose the question of who rules in the factory.

TRADE UNIONS

51. Trade unions are the organizations based on the workers consciousness that unity is needed to struggle against the employers in order to secure a better existence under capitalism.

52. Only through struggle for the communist program within the trade unions can communists expose union bureaucrats and win the majority of the class. To turn one's back to trade union work or sectarian attempts to build pure red trade unions represents capitulation in the struggle for the leadership of the working class and a betrayal of the revolution.

53. Communists must also oppose syndicalism and trade union fetishism resulting in attempts to subordinate either programmatically or organizationally the revolutionary party to trade unionism and to the interests of professional labor bureaucrats.

54. Policy towards trade unions must be based on the fact that labor bureaucrats represent the class enemy inside the proletariat and trade union membership represents in general the better paid minority of the proletariat. Demands must be put forward to link the organized with the unorganized and unemployed.

55. Trade unions have a contradictory nature. They are organizations of the working class which must be defended and strengthened. On the other hand the labor bureaucracy represents the principal agent of the bourgeoisie within the labor movement and must be overthrown. The trade unions must be won to communist leadership and be used for proletarian revolution.

Tactics of Communists Inside Trade Unions

56. The primary slogan for work within trade unions is for complete and unconditional independence of trade unions in relation to the capitalist state. Independence must be defined in class terms. "Independence from the influence of the bourgeoisie cannot be a passive state. It can express itself only by political acts, that is by the struggle against the bourgeoisie. This struggle must be inspired by a distinct program which requires organization and tactics for its application. It is the union of program, organization and tactics that constitutes the party. In this way, the real independence of the proletariat cannot be realized unless the proletariat conducts its struggle under the leadership of a revolutionary and not opportunist party."

57. The second slogan is for trade union democracy. Independence from the bourgeois state is a prerequisite for actual trade union democracy. Gone forever are the days of neutral trade unions. The choice of trade unions is either fulfilling the role of political police for the bourgeoisie or struggling on the basis of a revolutionary program. The fight for independence of the working class and democracy within trade unions must be on the basis of a transitional program relating the conscious needs of the masses to the goal of seizing state power.

58. The CWC opposes any interference of the bourgeois state into union affairs. Workers must "clean their own houses" and not rely on so-called neutral government commissions in fighting for union democracy, i.e., forced arbitration, congressional investigations into corrupt union practices, etc.

59. The principal method of working in trade unions is building communist-led fractions within the locals of the various unions. These fractions will put forth transitional demands and actively struggle for the leadership of the union on the basis of these demands.

60. Since a majority of the proletariat is unorganized and is drawn

only episodically into struggle it is necessary to demand that the existing labor unions organize the entire working class.

61. In a period of labor upsurge ad hoc organizations must be built embracing the organized, unorganized and the unemployed, i.e., factory committees, strike committees and soviets.

Strikes

62. The greatest weapon the working class possesses short of political revolution is to withhold their labor power, to strike, a right won through years of struggle.

63. The bourgeoisie has never accepted the right to strike and has outlawed sitdown strikes, wildcat strikes, and sympathy strikes. Through court injunctions the bourgeoisie has periodically suspended the right to strike. The initiative for strikes has been taken away from the union membership and a system of class collaboration between the capitalists and the union bureaucrats has been substituted. It is necessary that the membership fight to regain control over strike action.

64. Strikes concretely expose the capitalist dependence upon the working class and the class nature of the bourgeois state. Ultimately strikes pose the question of political power of the workers.

Transitional Demands

"Shorter work week with no loss of pay, sliding scale of wages"

65. "The two basic economic afflictions, in which is summarized the increasing absurdity of the capitalist system, that is, unemployment and high prices, demand generalized slogans and methods of struggle." (Leon Trotsky) The capitalists' and reformers' answer is to place the burden on the 'back of the workers'. Today we see calls for 10 hour days and wage controls. Our reply must be "Employment and decent living standards for all."

66. We propose a sliding scale of wages, an automatic rise in wages in relation to every increase in consumer prices.

67. Unemployment is the greatest danger to the proletariat. The proletariat is faced with its own disintegration. The unemployed are cut off from their class organizations and production. If allowed to continue in isolation they are potential recruits for fascism. The organized proletariat must offer clear-cut revolutionary solutions both programmatically and organizationally.

68. We demand a shorter work week with no loss in pay. This is based on the assumption that the productive forces are capable of full employment. All available work should be divided up amongst all those desiring to work and be paid at their previous highest standard of pay. The capitalists are responsible for unemployment, they have to pay for it.

"Abolition of business secrets"

69. We demand that individual industries open their books to their workers. This would reveal the amount of national income appropriated by the exploiters, show corrupt practices and oppose the bankruptcy of the capitalist system

"Workers control"

70. Generally the slogan of workers control over production relates to a revolutionary period and coincides with the rise of soviets. The demand for workers control arises when the capitalists are unable to produce without the consent of the workers but the workers are temporarily unable to seize state power.

71. Workers control is dual power in the factory and directly corresponds to the dual power of the soviets.

72. By exerting control over production the workers learn skills for the future proletarian state.

73. Workers control is only a transitional measure which must directly proceed to the revolutionary nationalization of industry.

"Expropriation of separate groups of capitalists"

74. In a transitional period it is also important to demand the expropriation of certain key industries, vital for national interests, i.e., corporations holding monopolies on raw materials, war industries, etc.

75. The differences between this transitional demand and the reformist slogan of nationalization are:

- a) we reject indemnification
- b) we agitate against reformist nationalization schemes which actually serve the interests of capital
- c) we call upon the masses to rely upon their own revolutionary strength
- d) we link expropriation with the seizure of power by the workers
- e) we demand expropriation of industry under workers control

76. We demand the expropriation of the private banks and credit system to create a unified system of investment credits. If state power is in the hands of the proletariat, this system would operate by rational planning corresponding to the needs of the entire people.

"Imperialism and war"

77. Communist policy must be based on an uncompromising attitude toward imperialism. It is necessary to publicly expose such abstractions as "defense of the fatherland", collective security, national defense, etc., as formulas which subordinate the fate of the working class to the interests of imperialism.

78. We call for labor strikes against the Indochina War.

79. We demand confiscation of military profit and expropriation of war industries under workers control.

80. We demand complete abolition of secret diplomacy.

81. The basic slogan is for the victory of the Vietnamese revolution.

Workers (or Labor) Party

82. The slogan of the workers party has immediate significance. The widespread appeal of Wallace within the working class demonstrated a desire of large sections of white workers to break with the Democratic and Republican parties. If a party had existed with a working class program much of this dissent could have focused on integrated class struggle rather than racism and demagoguery.

83. The slogan of a workers party must be a slogan to polarize the class around a revolutionary program. The party is built on the working class through struggle against the bourgeoisie and its political police, the trade union bureaucracy. We do not call for but struggle against a reformist workers party.

84. The slogan of a workers party is used to expose the labor bureaucracy. Because of the opposition within the unions a few bureaucrats support the idea of a labor party, qualifying this support by saying that now is not the time. At the same time these bureaucrats are desperately seeking to get deeper within the bourgeois parties. We call upon these labor fakers to fulfill their promises around a revolutionary program.

85. During a period of intense class struggle when the labor bureaucracy is faced with its own destruction there is the possibility that certain labor bureaucrats will form a labor party. This would create an enormous convulsion within the bourgeoisie and the labor bureaucracy. The purpose would be to politically contain the revolutionary movement of the workers. We would not support such an attempt and would enter the reformist party with a revolutionary program in order to split it along class lines.

86. We would base ourselves on the revolutionary movement of the workers and use our position within this party to oppose any attempt to betray this movement.

III. THE NATIONAL AND BLACK QUESTION IN THE U.S.

The National Question

87. The national question arose with the bourgeois mode of production.

88. The nation-state is the natural political-economic unit of early capitalism.

89. "A nation is an historically evolved, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a community of culture." (Stalin) All these characteristics must be present for a nation to exist.

90. The determining characteristic of a nation is its common economic life with regard to itself and its separate economic life with regard to other nations.

91. The national question exhibits two tendencies under capitalism. First, the formation of nations, the emergence of national movements, and fight against national oppression and the formation of national political states. Second, the breakdown of national barriers, the extension of international intercourse into a world market and a worldwide economy leading to the assimilation of nations.

92. Both tendencies are universal laws of capitalism. The first tendency predominates in the early phase of capitalism; the second predominates in the later phase of capitalism when conditions have become ripe for socialism.

93. The formation of the first nations in western Europe coincided with and were a result of the developing productive forces which had outgrown their local, feudal integument. These nations were welded together out of local tribes and various races and formed the first modern political states--nation-states.

94. The formation of political states in Eastern Europe and Russia exhibited a belated and combined development. These states were multinational in composition with the later developing, weaker nations oppressed by the earlier developing stronger nations.

95. In the greater part of Asia, Africa and Latin America, the national question took the form of a colonial question with the dominant Western powers (including Japan) inhibiting the independent political-national development of the colonies.

Solution of the National Question

96. The right of self-determination means the right of political secession. This right can only have meaning in connection with a material foundation which can guarantee genuine independence. For this reason the right of self-determination has been applied exclusively to nations and some pre-national tribal formations and not simply to any groups with some special interest.

97. The right of self-determination is applicable to those nations which are forcibly contained in a multi-nation state and is in essence a transitional slogan to international consciousness.

98. The right of self-determination found its greatest applicability in Russia and Eastern Europe. It served in Russia to undermine the national bourgeoisie of the oppressed nations, defeat the Great Nation chauvinism of the Russian workers, grant equality to minority nations, and thereby solidly weld together the workers of all nations of the Tsarist state into a single multi-national workers state.

99. In the colonial countries, solution of the national question requires a struggle for independence and the right of self-determination has little significance.

100. In the advanced capitalist countries the application of the right of self-determination has relevance wherever oppressed nations, no matter how small, are to be found. We disagree with those tendencies that assert that self-determination may be applied to every group, class, caste, or sex with specially defined needs or interests; we also differentiate ourselves from tendencies which 'a priori' deny the existence of a national question in the advanced countries and confine this question to the colonies.

101. The resolution of the national question in the imperialist epoch is bound up with the worldwide ascension to power of the working class. Without worldwide revolution, successful revolution in a single country will inevitably degenerate and be reversed and self-determination will become a hollow phrase.

Blacks and the National Question in America

102. Prior to the Civil War, the American political state embraced the American nation and an embryonic multi-racial Southern nation..

103. The national question was resolved through unification and assimilation by the more progressive system of Northern capital, aborting the maturation of an independent Southern nation.

104. The potential sources for national development during Reconstruction were rooted, not in the former landed aristocracy, but in the multi-racial peasantry located primarily in the Black Belt (former plantation South) and in the small farmers in the surrounding territories.

105. No such development occurred. The century-long gestation typical of Russian development never existed among the Southern peasantry. The very existence of the Southern peasantry (including the former slaves) emerged only after capital had established its hegemony over the whole of the Eastern regions of the United States. Further, the racist divisions of the peasantry effectively prohibited a "peasant war" and national unity; the historic associations of any form of "Southern" independence with reactionary rule and outmoded economic forms tended to discredit a separatist solution.

106. This path of development was essentially excluded by the industrialization and mechanization of agriculture. The consequences of these technological developments has been the dispersion of the Negro population through a series of mass migrations to Northern and Southern cities. Instead of national development, the pattern of segregation has been repeated and institutionalized in the big city ghettos.

The Racial-Caste Question in the United States

107. "From their arrival in this country, the Negro people have been an integral part of American class society while at the same time forcibly segregated at the bottom of this society." Today, "the Negro people are an oppressed race-color caste, in the main comprising

the most exploited layer of the American working class." (Spartacist)

108. The Afro-American was denied the classical avenue of national development through the amalgamation of races and tribes. The Negro people were forcibly extracted from their tribal development, shipped to the South, deliberately divested of their social and cultural heritage, and taught the common language--English--and a mode of life to fit their new slave status in the American economy.

109. The Negro slaves formed a racial-caste-class stratified horizontally at the bottom of the plantation economy.

110. The period of Reconstruction marked the beginning of Negro class differentiation within a continuing although challenged framework of caste separation. This process was considerably arrested after Reconstruction with the institution of Jim Crow and with 75% of all Negroes remaining as tenant-farmers on the old plantations.

111. The Black Belt area of the South, comprising the old plantation lands, is not now and never was a nation. The area is multi-racial with a slight but declining Black majority. It is part of the common economic life of bourgeois America, sharing a common language and culture, and consisting of territory contiguous with the North and West.

112. A big Black bourgeoisie did not develop in the South. Instead a miniscule, racially identifiable bourgeoisie restricted within the confines of a common economy did barely emerge. The absence of a bourgeoisie is a further condition militating against a strictly national development.

113. The existence of a bourgeoisie would not necessarily have constituted the Negroes as a nation so long as the other criteria were not fulfilled. Under those conditions, the caste hypothesis would still prevail with this modification: the Negroes would constitute a caste differentiated into classes parallel but subservient to the "superior" white racial caste. In this instance a Black capitalist class could give impetus to what might become a national movement.

114. The impulse to a separate national existence may conceivably arise under the following circumstance: "It is possible that fascism will come to power with its racial delirium and oppression and the reaction of the Negro will be toward racial independence." (Trotsky) If this circumstance is coupled with a weak and irresolute proletariat and a Black petit-bourgeoisie (a much smaller stratum than among the Jews of Europe) gains leadership, then a Black Zionism would develop. Since this condition stretches the limits of our hypothesis, we conclude that:

115. The solution to the Negro Question does not lie in the direction of independent statehood and the absence of a nation makes the right of self-determination inapplicable.

Solution of the Racial-Caste Question

116. The end to racial-caste oppression lies in the struggle of the

entire working class to abolish capitalism and build an egalitarian socialist society.

117. Due to his position in the productive process, his militancy, and his experience in the class struggle and the struggle for equal rights, the Black industrial worker will play a pivotal and leading role in the struggle of the working class as a whole for socialism and racial equality.

118. The fight for complete equality means the elimination of racial segregation, discrimination and prejudice. It means full equality at the workplace and in society in general. It means the abolition of the ghetto. These goals, though democratic in character, cannot be fully attained except through the overthrow of capitalism by the working class. Therein lies the permanent character of the Negro people's struggle for freedom.

119. The demands for "self-determination for Black communities" and "Black community control", while rooted in the severe racial oppression of the ghetto, actually serve to divide the working class, sow illusions about the state and thereby facilitate the continuation of bourgeois rule. While consistently upholding democracy for racial minorities, we must expose the divisive and utopian character of these slogans.

120. We support democratically achieved mutual assimilation. We oppose "forced assimilation" by the American bourgeoisie based on the superior white caste values. Without the intervention of the working class, an integration movement led by the bourgeoisie and stressing pacifism and reformism will only produce its nationalist antipode.

121. The factories and the armed forces (workers in uniform) are the most integrated sectors of American society. This adds still another reason why the creation of the proletariat by capitalist production prepares the seeds of its own destruction.

122. "A transitional organization is needed at the point of production and in the process of labor, where black and white workers come into contact in their class role, to prove in action that unity against the class enemy is possible and necessary, and to make available to the working class struggle the immense revolutionary potential of Black workers." (Spartacist)

123. It is essential that a single, unified, multi-racial vanguard party of the working class be forged which will act as its General Staff in battle against the well organized and powerful American bourgeoisie. It is also important that such a party devote special attention to the development of Black Trotskyist cadre.

124. A successful international socialist revolution will lay the basis for an eventual fusion of the various peoples and races into a human species elevated to a far higher plane in the evolutionary scale than we can yet imagine.

IV. THE WOMAN QUESTION

"According to the materialistic conception, the determining factor in history is, in the final instance, the production and reproduction of the immediate essentials of life. This again, is of a twofold character. On the one side, the production of the means of existence, of articles of food and clothing, dwellings, and of the tools necessary for that production; on the other side, the production of human beings themselves, the propagation of the species. The social organization under which the people of a particular historical epoch and a particular country live is determined by both kinds of production: by the stage of development of labor on the one hand of the family on the other." (Engels)

Women in Pre-Class Society

125. The root of women's oppression lies in primitive communal society with the division of labor based on woman's biological function.

126. The tasks of each sex in the division of labor differed according to the specific tribe or clan. Generally, men played the roles of hunting, fishing, mining, etc., and both sexes participated in horticulture with a limitation on the woman's side. However, because of women's procreative functions, the lot always fell on her concerning childbearing, child-rearing, and general domestic tasks. The household was the general sphere of women's activity.

127. However, the situation of the female's biological state did not directly lead to oppression. At a time when childbearing was necessary for the drawing of the human race out of ape existence, woman's fertility was a valuable asset to the clan and highly spiritualized. Women's role, usually very hard, was so not only because she was a woman, but because she was a savage and a barbarian, where humanity in its lower stages was still struggling for survival and attempting to produce a stable existence with a low productivity of labor.

128. Men's role outside of the home gave them the position of warriors and protectors of the nucleus of the clan, i.e., the kinship groups based on descent in the female line.

129. On the whole in primitive society, women were respected and accounted for not because of any moral code or idealism, but in so far as their usefulness corresponded to the economic structure at any time of a given community. "The significance of the biological factors has varied in different eras, depending upon the economic, social and religious organization of society and the extent of its scientific and technological knowledge." (B.J. Stern)

130. With the rise of technology and the development of private property on the man's side (the surplus of social wealth in cattle, slaves, tools, etc.) the division of labor between the sexes, previously elementary and determined by the struggle for existence, had now taken a new form when carried into civilization. The man's sphere increased as the woman's decreased; the domestic labor of women became an extremely menial and unproductive job, relegated to

the background and dependent on man.

131. With the break-down of the clan and kinship groups, resulting from the growth of private property, came the growth of the state needed for the suppression of the new social class--the slaves.

The Family and Class Society

132. With the domestication of animals, the development of agriculture and the advent of private property came the need to transfer this property through inheritance. From this flowed the transition to the male line of descent, the paternal law of inheritance and the monogamous form of the family. In order to insure the wife's fidelity and thereby the paternity of the children, she was delivered over unconditionally into the power of the husband.

133. Under class society the development of the productive forces during the period of rising capitalism assigned to women, young persons and children of both sexes a brutal but decisive role in large-scale industry. Because they formed a cheap, unskilled labor force, they were employed by the capitalists to break down the high paying craft industries, the bulk of which were men.

134. The struggle of the working class to remove women and children from their super-exploited position resulted in concessions from the bourgeoisie. The restrictions made on female and child labor constituted a progressive step in the developing factory system.

135. The development of large-scale industry laid the basis for the destruction of the economic dependence of women on the family.

136. Capitalism is dependent upon the bourgeois family as a system of isolated cells in order to insure the continued exploitation and subjugation of the proletariat.

137. Just as the productive forces pound against the national boundaries of capitalism, the family as an isolated unit is a fetter on the productive forces where only socialization will allow them to further advance.

138. The family is the main social institution of women's oppression.

139. The nature of capitalism prevents the release of the potentialities of new technology and social institutions for relieving the burdens of the masses of women. Women today remain the childbearers and are in the main individually responsible for the rearing of children and the fulfillment of household duties.

140. The inherent contradictions of monogamous marriage give rise to adultery and prostitution as part and parcel of the double sexual morality which allows to the man, in marriage as well as before, what the woman for economic reasons must be denied.

141. In the present period of decaying capitalism, women in the main constitute part of the reserve army of the working class. When they

are engaged in production, working women frequently are super-exploited--that is, being paid less for the work identical to that performed by men and first to fire, last to hire.

142. The degree of exploitation and oppression suffered by non-white women is double in capitalist society because they are women and at the same time part of a color-caste minority; if they are working women they are additionally subjected to class exploitation on the job.

143. Throughout history, class lines have cut across sex lines. Within each class, however, women have been at a disadvantage as compared with the men, i.e., women occupy the position of an oppressed caste within each class. Women of the ruling classes, however, have enjoyed privileges denied to the men and women of the oppressed class.

Proletarian Revolution and Socialism

144. The emancipation of women is not possible except through communism.

145. The movement for the liberation of women is bound firmly with the working class movement for revolution and at the same time has its own separate quality of dealing with women's special oppression. Only by the annihilation of the power of the bourgeoisie can women begin to transform their position in society. "The proletarian cannot achieve complete liberty until it has won complete liberty for women."

146. The socialist revolution is impossible without a large number of working women taking part in it.

147. Proletarian women in production, like working men, possess a great economic power as commodity producers. Housewives--"domestic proletarians" play the role of maintaining the bourgeois system of private domestic industry, thus their position in the economy does not wield direct power as that of working women. The drawing of housewives into productive labor is an important part of the revolution.

148. Women in the "democratic" countries, such as the U.S., are not liberated, but the class differences and forms of oppression are all the more clear and distinct. "All 'democracy' consists in the proclamation and realization of 'rights' which under capitalism are realizable only to a very small degree and only relatively." (Lenin)

149. The family must inevitably wither away with the wholesale transformation into socialist economy and the raising of the standard of culture and education of the working class. "You cannot 'abolish' the family; you have to replace it." (Trotsky)

150. The replacement of the family is not possible except on a level of the productive forces high enough to accommodate for child-care centers, laundries, social dining rooms, etc. on a mass scale to liberate women from domestic work.

151. A large conscious effort on the part of the masses is needed for the transformation of the family.

152. Socialism means the abolition of classes and the complete equality of men and women. Socialist economy means the dissolution of generalized want and the disintegration of the family.

153. The Russian Revolution attained a great step forward in the role of women by completely abolishing legal inequality and striving to develop social institutions to destroy the family.

154. Stalinism betrayed women in the Soviet Union. While upholding proletarian property relations of nationalized industry, expropriation of the capitalists, etc., the political rule of the bureaucracy implemented the Thermidor in the family as a "base for bureaucratic and authoritarian aims." (Spartacist) Because of the low economic and cultural level in Russia and the hostile forces acting on the proletariat, Stalin's theory of "Socialism in one country" served to consolidate the family and retreat to bourgeois models under the guise of the "new proletarian family." This policy is characterized by the CPUSA's position on the family.

155. It is necessary to fight Stalinism while still upholding the proletarian gains of October. In all Stalinist countries, only the overthrow of the parasitic bureaucracy will bring the working class back into political power and reinstate a revolutionary perspective on the emancipation of women.

Strategy

156. In order to insure the fulfillment of the revolutionary work of the Communist International and of its parties, it is essential to construct an international communist women's movement.

157. "We must rouse the broad masses of women in capitalist countries to consciousness and should for that purpose strive to build a non-partisan international women's congress." (Lenin)

158. The development of revolutionary consciousness among the broad masses of women and the winning of these women over to the proletarian class struggle under the leadership of the communist party can be achieved only through a nationally based women's transitional organization.

159. Such an organization must be based on a transitional program and transitional demands which will bridge the gap between the objective conditions and the needs of women, and the class struggle for state power. The proletarian vanguard party must afford the women's transitional organization political leadership.

160. In this period, which is marked by a rising consciousness among women, it is imperative that the vanguard party intervene in the women's liberation movement with an alternative organization i.e., women's transitional organization and transitional program. The decision to participate in existing women's organizations is a tactical question and rests on programmatic points.

161. The relative backwardness of women in society as a whole requires special attention to developing women cadres within the party.

162. Whether or not to admit men into a women's transitional organization is a tactical question rather than a principle. However, we must include male cadre in those party fractions assigned to deal with the organization of women.

163. The struggle against feminist tendencies i.e., the need for a separate strategy of women's revolution as a means of abolishing the sexual oppression and exploitation of women, is a struggle against the main obstacle in the women's movement. The fight for the emancipation of women must be indispensably linked with the principal aim of the workers' dictatorship. By supporting feminism, a petit-bourgeois trend, the SWP continues to hamper the development of a working class orientation in the women's liberation movement.

--adopted 19 August 1971

DRAFT SPARTACIST LEAGUE TRADE UNION PROGRAM

I. TRADE UNIONS AND THE STATE

The trade unions in our time can either serve as secondary instruments of imperialist capitalism for the subordination and disciplining of the workers and for obstructing the revolution, or, on the contrary, the trade unions can become the instruments of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat.

--Trotsky, Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay, 1940

The period of the Vietnam war and the growing domestic and international economic crisis has ended not only the longest continuous boom in the reactionary period of capitalism, but also the "American Century"--the period of imperialist domination of the world by the U.S. The Nixon economic program, which is a declaration of war on both the American working class and the international trade rivals of the U.S., is a codification of the interests of the U.S. ruling class for the next period. These are chiefly that the American working class must be made to pay, by force if necessary, for the inefficiencies of American capitalism, so that the U.S. bourgeoisie will be better able to compete with its international rivals. This series of events has dispelled a number of illusions, not the least of which was the illusion growing out of the post-war boom that finance capital had been replaced in its commanding role in the economy. Also smashed is the illusion that the class struggle was dead, leaving the unions to a permanent position of peaceful, business-like pressuring within the system for piecemeal reformist crumbs, which would be endlessly forthcoming from the bountiful table of Americanism.

The trade union bureaucracy went through two basic reactions, one following immediately on the heel of the other, to the sudden declaration of the new reality. First came the shocked and frightened realization that the calling off of the "normal" process of collective bargaining--banning of strikes, abrogation of contracts, etc.--threatened the very existence of trade unionism as such, thus putting the continuation of the bureaucracy itself into question. This led to blustery cries of protest from most of the major leaders, although the head of the Teamsters union declared his cooperation immediately. Second, however, was an immediate attempt to find a new peace with the capitalist state, which led Woodcock and Meany, heads of the two major federations and the most representative spokesmen, to flip 180° in a matter of days and call for cooperation and for a wage control board which would have these bureaucrats as "labor" representatives. This merging of the unions with the state power to more efficiently discipline the workers, which is the goal of the ruling class itself, is entirely consistent with the social position and practice of the trade union bureaucracy.

The experience of the post-war period confirms the prognosis made by Trotsky on the basis of the lessons of the 1930's, that in the age of imperialism there is no longer any room for independent trade unions in the context of the capitalist system. Imperialism is characterized by the dominance of monopoly finance capital, which

concentrates economic control into giant combinations and eliminates competition at the lower levels, transferring it to higher, chiefly international, planes. This causes a tendency of the trade union bureaucracies to "grow together" with the capitalist state. Based entirely on the reformist concept of attempting to improve the bargaining position of labor through collective sale of labor power to the capitalists, and seeing no longer any room to maneuver as there was in the period of free competition, the trade unions are forced to bargain at the highest levels on the terms of the monopoly capitalists. These terms are harsh: the trade union bureaucrats must cooperate fully in the disciplining of the workers, and must actively support the predatory imperialist aims of the bourgeoisie. The trade union bureaucracy, for its part, having accepted these conditions, has no other recourse against the power of monopoly capital than to compete with the capitalists for the favor of the capitalist state itself. This reformist course only prolongs a meager existence for the trade unions; it is inevitably doomed to lead to complete state control over the unions. In this, the fascists invent nothing new when they militarily subordinate the unions to the capitalist state. They merely draw to its ultimate conclusions this tendency, which is inherent in imperialism, usually with the aid of the liberals. Thus trade unionism as such is not only reactionary but ultimately impossible. Only the program of revolutionary proletarian internationalism, aiming at the overthrow of the capitalist system itself, can ensure the independence of the trade unions, lead to the ouster of the traitorous bureaucracy, and enable the unions to really struggle for the interests of the workers.

Just as trade union independence has become less and less compatible with imperialist capitalism, so workers' democracy within the unions increasingly has succumbed to tight, bureaucratic control. As they are forced more and more to be the policemen of the bosses, enforcing the contract, side-tracking grievances, expelling dissidents, etc., the bureaucrats cannot afford to allow a free competition of different ideas and programs within the union. Some say that these tendencies mean that the unions are no longer unions, that they no longer have any "progressive" character whatsoever, or simply that it is futile to try to struggle within them against the bureaucracy; therefore, the workers' movement must be based elsewhere, drawing strength from the unions perhaps, but lying fundamentally outside them and hoping to by-pass the struggle against the bureaucracy. No conclusion could be more disastrous. Revolutionists of course prefer a free and open arena within the unions, just as they prefer bourgeois democracy to fascism, since this way it is easier to test out various programs in practice and win the workers on the basis of experience. It is not possible to choose the conditions under which we must struggle, however. In Russia it was necessary to work in unions and phony "factory committees" set up by the Czar's government in order to reach the mass of the workers; in a fascist country it is necessary to organize within the state-controlled unions, even if only in a conspiratorial manner. To abandon the struggle within the mass organizations of the working class, no matter how minimal their defensive, economic role has become, is a sterile, ultra-leftist course, a cowardly surrendering of the field before the battle is joined, and is incompatible with the Spartacist League program.

Just as the SL opposes sectarian substitutionism, however, it also opposes the opposite, opportunist deviation to which ultra-leftism gives rise. The Spartacist League always intervenes with its own program, never as the hand-maiden, informant or coattail rider of some clique or faction of the trade union bureaucracy. The SL opposes on principle the opportunist impulse to advance prematurely into positions of power within the union on the basis of combinations or alliances, however critical, with one section of the bureaucracy against another, whether in local union elections or on the plane of federations. Thus SL members and caucus supporters in a radical municipal white collar union in New York, whose own slate had been eliminated in the initial vote and faced with a run-off election between two candidates representing different wings of the bureaucracy, called for abstention while opportunists (black nationalists, CP, Workers League) supported the "lesser evil" bureaucratic choice. Similarly, the SL had this to say on the formation of the ALA: "The SL opposes the formation of the Alliance for Labor Action (ALA), the ostensibly 'progressive' breakaway from the conservative AFL-CIO. The ALA, initiated by Walter Reuther and based mainly on the United Automobile Workers and the Teamsters, is being sold to rank and file unionists as an organizational step toward militancy and, especially, to increasingly active black workers, as a break from "lily white" mainstream unionism. In actuality, this move is an attempt by a section of the union bureaucracy, especially Reuther, to mollify tremendous rank-and-file discontent, while establishing an outside base to challenge and simply replace the Meany bureaucracy for international leadership of the AFL-CIO. The split avoids the necessity for internal struggle against the manifestly insupportable positions and practices of the Meany leadership, leaving everything basically as it is, pending an eventual return. The 'liberal' Reuther could do a much more effective job for the ruling class than the rigidly anti-communist and conservative Meany in dealing with, for instance, the French general strike. A union leadership which was seriously interested in defeating Meany and Co. politically ..., would have taken their fight to the membership inside the AFL-CIO and would not have left until physically thrown out. But such a process would have unleashed a force that would also unseat Reuther himself... We must oppose any attempts by other labor fakers, like the Livingston leadership of District 65, to lead their members into this fake-militant dead-end, and insist on a program of irreconcilable struggle to oust the entire Meany-Reuther-Hoffa bureaucracy." (Development and Tactics of the Spartacist League, 1 September 1969.)

The chief task in the trade unions, as in society in general, is determined by the historical crisis of proletarian leadership: to politically expose and defeat the current traitorous leadership, and replace it with one committed to proletarian principles. Thus while revolutionists refuse to choose sides in struggles between differing wings of the bureaucracy, they always support and seek to win over genuine movements of the rank and file against the bureaucracy, even though they may be politically very backward and insufficient. The SL, however, never adapts to such broad movements, but maintains its program and seeks to provide political clarity and leadership. Through transitional forms of organization in the unions, such as the caucus, the SL struggles to win the best of the militants to a full revolutionary trade union program.

The SL trade union program, like the SL program as a whole, is based on the experience and lessons of the communist movement, as codified primarily in the decisions of the first four congresses of the Communist International and the founding conference of the Fourth International, and most directly on the document produced by the latter, The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International--The Transitional Program (1938).¹ It is not, however, composed of a rigid orthodoxy and stale reiteration of the demands of the past, but on a living adaptation of the principles and central thrust of the historic program of the communist movement to the realities and class struggle issues of the present period. This entails an unbreakable adherence to the underlying lessons of the struggles led by Marx, Lenin and Trotsky, and a wariness lest any "adaptation" to "new realities" be a cover for a revision of the basic tenets of Marxism, but it also requires a constant, creative re-working and re-application of the demands of struggle, i.e., the methods by which the basic principled goals are to be fought for. Thus the call in the Transitional Program for a workers' and farmers' government is outdated by the virtual elimination of the small farmer as a social factor and the fact that U.S. agriculture is dominated by giant capitalist operations, so that the chief contradiction is between capital and labor, as in the rest of the economy, rather than between small producer and big capital.

The SL program does not accommodate to the current level of consciousness or mentality or mood of the workers, nor is it based on the conception pushed by all reformists, but also by many misguided revolutionists, such as Progressive Labor or trade union opportunists like the Workers' League, that the struggle can only be built around those demands which are capable of leading to immediate victories. It is to be taken for granted that the level of consciousness of the workers is an important tactical consideration bearing on the question of how the program is to be presented, and that revolutionists always support all genuine actions of the oppressed, however minimal or partial in terms of goals, to better their condition. It is precisely the task of the revolutionists, however, to point the way and provide leadership for the struggle to go beyond the level of minimum demands, which can never break through the pattern of accommodation with the capitalist exploiters, and raise the consciousness of the workers to an awareness that the only solution to the problems of their exploitation lies in the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist class and the building of socialism, through the political power of the workers themselves.

A transitional program is thus not composed of demands which "can be won" under capitalism. Rather, it is based on the application of aspects of a revolutionary, socialist program to the current situation in a manner that exposes the inability of capitalism to satisfy demands of the working class arising from the social crises generated by the anarchic capitalist system itself. The "realizability" of these demands in a particular instance depends then on the relationship of forces, which will only be decided by the struggle. It expresses the objective, scientifically determined needs

¹ For a full elaboration of the Spartacist program, see: Statement of Principles of the Spartacist League, Black and Red: The Class Struggle Road to Negro Freedom and Development and Tactics of the

and tasks of the working class in its attempt to deal with the present situation in a truly revolutionary way. It is only upon this course that permanent gains and real victories, victories which bring the ultimate goal of socialism closer, by raising the level of struggle, can be attained.

The trade union program is never a comprehensive program for the class as a whole. In addition, because of the pressure of day-to-day struggles, trade union cadre are particularly prone to opportunist deviations. Hence it is important that trade union activity be closely supervised by the communist party. The aim is never merely to disseminate anti-capitalist propaganda among the masses, but to build trade union fractions that carry out the policies of that party in particular, as a necessary component of the struggle for leadership.

The Spartacist League expects and welcomes the fact that such a program necessarily entails a constant state of tension, of struggle between itself and its environment, especially in the context of the labor movement. The SL rejects all paths which, based on a tired unwillingness to struggle, lead to an accommodation of its forces with the trade union arena. It is always necessary for the revolutionist to counterpose to the narrow view of the path of least resistance for struggle within the individual union the world-historical view of the interests of the working class as a whole and to counterpose to the temptation of illusory "immediate gains" the alternative of a long, slow base-building for the communist program. The SL seeks not simply to recruit numerous trade union militants into its ranks, but to build a solid core of communist cadre in the trade unions!

FREE THE UNIONS FROM GOVERNMENT CONTROL!

No Cops or Courts to Settle Union Affairs!

Especially in the current period of imperialist decline and renewed rivalries, the primary slogan must be for complete and total independence of the trade unions from the bourgeois state. All attempts by the bureaucrats to find new accommodations with the state in its drive to halt the class struggle and chain the working class to the status quo must be resolutely opposed. "Labor representatives" on government wage control boards have no power to "pressure" the state into giving the workers a better deal, since the state is completely the organ of the imperialist ruling class itself. Government price "controls", profit "controls" and labor leaders on the control boards are all part of a facade to create the impression of democracy, fairness and supposed "neutrality" of the state in the class struggle, while in reality the unions are being bound hand and foot by the state. This facade must be ruthlessly ripped away and replaced by the independent struggle of the workers to expose capitalist machinations, price-fixing, rent-gouging, etc., through the trade unions, price control committees, tenants councils, and other independent organizations of the workers. No labor fakers on the control boards!

Especially in recent years, the full implications of the labor laws (Taft-Hartley, Landrum-Griffin, etc.) have come to the fore. Thus the only action of the Nixon government on "civil rights" was

Spartacist League, upon which this document draws heavily. (ed. note: this point could be included in a possible introduction to the finished document).

to back the "Philadelphia Plan" of black liberal attacks on the blatant discrimination in the construction unions, which was an attempt financially supported by the large corporations to destroy these powerful unions (it is noteworthy that this was followed by the noxious efforts of sections of the bureaucracies of these unions to win Nixon's favor by supporting the war, which got them exactly nowhere, since Nixon then imposed wage-price controls prior to the general freeze on - the construction unions!). All laws which in any way seek to control, regulate, or in any way relate to the internal affairs of the unions are reactionary and must be opposed, since the state is never neutral, and will always use these laws to hamstring the left wing, destroy the ability of the unions to struggle, etc. The Landrum-Griffin Act, for instance, has had no effect on gangsterism in the union movement. Its principal effect has been to railroad Jimmy Hoffa, a tough and troublesome business unionist. It will be used even faster against a revolutionary leadership, but probably never against the Mafia!

The SL's policy has always been one of uncompromising opposition to government interference in the labor movement. We are the only tendency which has resolutely opposed the efforts of reformists and misguided radicals to deepen the involvement of the state in the internal affairs of unions by appealing to bourgeois courts to act "impartially" against corrupt and undemocratic union bureaucrats. Thus the SL opposed, while most of the left, particularly the International Socialists, supported a legal suit against Harry Bridges' ILWU under the Civil Rights Act in order to oppose discriminatory practices against a section of the ILWU membership. This appeal to the government only served to hand the bureaucracy a perfect hammer with which to beat and help isolate the left. This unprincipled practice leads to replacing the control of the unions by the "labor lieutenants of capital" with control by the capitalist state itself, completely by-passing the need to build a movement based on the rank and file capable of cleaning house in the unions and replacing the bureaucrats with a qualitatively better leadership.

FOR UNION DEMOCRACY!

For Rank-and-File Control of the Unions!

Second only to the demand for trade union independence from the state is the demand for union democracy, which assumes a more and more crucial character the closer the cooperation of the bureaucrats with the bourgeoisie becomes. Its realization presupposes the complete independence of the unions from the state and the overthrow of the internal regime of bureaucratic policemen of the bosses. It will only be won the basis of the awareness that there is no longer any possibility for a return to the free, democratic, politically neutral trade unions concerned only with the economic interests of the members, just as there is no possibility for return to the peaceful, business unionism of the "benevolent" bureaucrats who assumed that the membership was basically irrelevant to the running of the union. Political neutrality is dead. The only truly democratic unions of the future will be those in which a militant, highly organized movement, deeply imbedded in the rank and file and fully conscious of the social and political needs of the class struggle, smashes the regime of the bureaucratic labor fakers and places in power a leadership

firmly committed to the principles of revolutionary proletarian internationalism.

Thus while democratic unions are generally incompatible with the current period of monopoly capitalism (though it is still possible for isolated small unions and locals to permit a modicum of democracy for short periods), it is not true that a program of struggle based solely on the issue of union democracy is sufficient to lead to a break from the capitalist system's dominance over the unions. Caucuses and "left" oppositions with such limited programs inevitably adapt to the status quo and compromise with the anti-democratic, bureaucratic forces precisely because they shy away from the revolutionary implications of their position in order to unite with all those who espouse "democracy" in the abstract but oppose the more radical political course which is necessary to achieve it. Thus the attitude of the Spartacist League to movements such as the Abel opposition in the Steelworkers union (which is now in power, busy betraying the members in the true spirit of MacDonald), Yablonski of the mine workers, Morrissey in the National Maritime Union etc., is either to polarize the group along programmatic political lines, in the case that it embodies a genuine motion of the rank and file against the bureaucracy, or, which is more often the case, to oppose it entirely if it simply represents the interests of a section of the bureaucracy on the "outs" which wants to be "in".

AGAINST IMPERIALISM AND WAR!

For Labor Strikes Against the War!

The tendency toward national chauvinism and support for the imperialist designs of the U.S. ruling class, on the grounds that some workers at least would benefit--particularly the more skilled and older sections upon which the venal bureaucrats have always chiefly relied for support--has always been strong in the American labor movement. Now, however, it is more vital than ever to the bourgeoisie that the labor bureaucracy be tied to its imperialist program and war aims, since both are fundamental to the survival of the bourgeoisie as a class and neither is possible without disciplined and relatively docile work force. The day the working class rises in open rebellion against the imperialist policies of the government will be the day that all the plans and hopes of the parasitic international capitalists and their war-mongering "defense" industry allies will come tumbling down like a house of cards.

The war in Vietnam, like every imperialist adventure, was, from the first, part and parcel of the American bourgeoisie's war against "its" own people. Not only did the government send--and still sends--the working-class youth to die for imperialist goals in which they had no interest whatsoever, but it also robs the workers through war-caused inflation and bloated taxes and then breaks their strikes; uses savage "law-and-order" lawlessness against restless Blacks and other oppressed minorities; and shoots down in cold blood the innocent students who oppose it. In spite of all the atrocities, both foreign and domestic, the only reason that part of the trade union bureaucracy now tentatively opposes the war--after whole-heartedly supporting it until only recently--is because the American bourgeoisie itself, having attained some of its goals but not others, at much greater expense than it desired, became confused and was divided against itself as to how it should proceed.

From the very beginning, the Spartacist League fought in the anti-war movement and in the unions for an uncompromising opposition based on the class struggle, under the slogans, "Immediate and unconditional withdrawal of U.S. troops", "Turn the anti-war movement into the anti-capitalist movement", and "For labor strikes against the war". We were denounced as sectarians for asserting the elemental proposition that the war was a central issue in the class struggle and should be treated as such, not as a non-class question of "peace" which could be fought by uniting all class forces together under the banner of the liberal imperialists, who differ only tactically from the "hawks" and seek an end to the war only on the basis of the continued rule of the bourgeoisie. It is this latter sort of "opposition" which is of course favored by the "progressive" trade union bureaucrats, who, in this as in all things, only tail after their liberal allies. Their sole purpose is to present a "left" bureaucratic face to the workers in order to head off and contain the mounting rank-and-file militancy which is more and more consciously linked to the war question. The Spartacist League does not compromise with these fakers, but instead continues to struggle against them to tie in the political question of the war with the class struggle as a whole, particularly emphasizing the need for working-class action, i.e., strike action against the war and all other imperialist schemes of the ruling class.

The objective situation is changed now, however, since the current period is characterized not by the sole economic domination of the world by U.S. imperialism, which led to the U.S. "policeman" role in Korea, Vietnam and elsewhere, but by the renewed rivalry of the major imperialist powers. This puts the question of Vietnam into a secondary position for the American bourgeoisie, but in its place is the threat of a new world war for redivision of the world amongst the major capitalist powers. The bourgeoisie of the various countries are already preparing for this and have been for some time. This is the absolutely inevitable outcome of the imperialist rivalries; only the class conscious intervention of the proletariat can forestall it. An imperialist war flows directly from the predatory actions of the different imperialist powers, which more and more come into conflict on the world arena. Such a war will sharpen and heighten the class struggle but not change it fundamentally. Thus it is more vital than ever to build a workers movement capable of wrenching the trade unions out of the clutches of the traitorous compromisers who hand them over to any imperialist aim the bourgeoisie can conjure up, and steering them on the path against imperialism and war. Rank and file caucuses must oppose any and all impulses of the bureaucrats to compromise with the new imperialist goals, such as capitulating before the capitalist demands for protectionism which only passes the costs of inefficiency onto the backs of the workers (as in the shoe industry in New England), or generally going along with the Nixon program on "foreign" questions (the 10% import surtax, etc.) in exchange for minor concessions on the domestic scene.

Liberal lies about "defending democracy" are shallow cover-ups. The imperialist bourgeoisie fights a world war only because it must find a way to redivide the world in order to continue plundering it. The proletariat in such a war has no interest in the victory of any side; it has no country! The main enemy is still the boss at home; thus the defeat of one's "own" bourgeoisie is the lesser evil.

All countries, however, are not imperialist. The efforts of the backward countries to free themselves from the yoke of imperialism should be supported by the workers of the advanced countries (though never through the auspices of their "own" government). However, this does not imply the slightest political confidence in the bourgeois-nationalist regimes in these countries. Furthermore, the so-called "Communist" countries have a dual nature similar to the reformist trade unions. Because they represent historic and economic victories of the workers they must be defended against imperialism; at the same time, however, their bureaucratic leaders betray them to the bourgeoisie and must be smashed and replaced by the revolutionary workers' movement.

The SL calls for an end to the draft to hinder the ruling class from mobilizing the population to fight for its imperialist designs. In addition, we favor strengthening soldiers rights so they can resist being helpless servants of imperialism. We call for a serviceman's union, supported by the labor movement, to be organized on an explicitly anti-war and anti-imperialist basis.

FOR TRADE UNION UNITY!

For United Front Defense Against Capitalist Attacks!

Oppose Bureaucratic Divisiveness!

The announcement of the Nixon "freeze" program was a declaration of war on the American working class. The automatic reaction of all the U.S. trade unions should have been to unite and, pooling their resources for the fight, present a common front to the capitalist enemy. Instead, the bureaucrats acted in their usual individual, random manner, concerned only about the position of their own particular union organizations and even then, only about the security of their positions as privileged despots within those organizations. Their initial announcements of opposition were entirely bureaucratic, i.e., not based on any attempt to mobilize or even consult the rank and file. This, of course, is what enabled them to completely reverse themselves in a matter of days. Rank and file workers, however, saw the need to defy the government in a meaningful way and did so by maintaining their strikes in the face of Nixon's threats.

This behavior by the bureaucrats is the inevitable, disastrous result of the previous epoch of reformist trade unionism, in which all that mattered to the bureaucrats was the security of their own organizations (i.e., their ability to dependably collect the dues), and everyone else be damned. Endless jurisdictional squabbles predominated, leading in many cases, such as the printing trades, to the open herding and organizing of scabs by one union to break the strikes and seize the territory of another! Similarly, disputes between craft and industrial modes of organization, and between different crafts, have played consistently into the hands of the bosses. Generally, organization by crafts is more and more outmoded, especially since jurisdictional lines based on crafts that have some validity in one historical period very quickly become meaningless in the next, leaving trade union organizational divisions which only obstruct the effective organization of the workers. Furthermore, craft "pride" is simply used as a tool to divide the more skilled workers from the less skilled. This is especially harmful when it occurs within the

same plant, since it is often used to prevent the presentation of a common front to the employer. The Spartacist League calls for the united front against the attacks of the bosses on all levels and generally, in keeping with the principles and practices of the communist movement, oppose the splitting tactics of the reformists and trade union bureaucrats, from the ALA down to the phony radicals who are ceaselessly looking for one "lesser evil" bureaucratic faction to back against another.

— FOR THE RIGHT OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES TO ORGANIZE AND STRIKE!

Increasing numbers of under-paid city, state and federal workers are finding that they need to organize and strike in order to protect their interests. In the last several years there have been significant strikes by transit workers, sanitation men, postal workers, teachers, welfare workers and others. In the white collar areas, this development is fairly recent. Organizing drives and unions which result from them often have a more militant and democratic character than older unions and are therefore more open and important arenas for work by communist cadres. In many cases, these struggles involve the need to transcend a middle-class attitude of "professionalism" which flows either from the main characteristics of the social role of the stratum involved, as in the case of teachers, or chiefly from the need and desire of the bourgeoisie to erect unnecessary, consciousness-distorting barriers between the stratum and the working class, as in the case of welfare workers. In both cases, these attitudes are based on an obsolete relationship of class forces, and obstruct the increasingly felt need of these former middle-class strata to become proletarianized. True to form, the trade union bureaucracies, in all except the youngest union formations, tend to adapt to professionalism and rely for support on the older, more skilled sections, to the detriment of the younger and more militant layers. This tendency goes hand in hand with the betrayal of these bureaucrats and their sell-out to the capitalist state, which in this case is the employer.

Nowhere is the lack of "neutrality" of the state more evident than in the case of public employees. Not only is the state quite comfortable in the role of capitalist employer, but it unabashedly uses every resource at its command to deny its employees the right to organize and strike. Because of this, strike struggles have been greatly sharpened. In two major cities, San Francisco and New York, virtual general strikes, led by the newer public employee sectors, were deflected by the sell-out betrayals of the union bureaucrats. The bourgeoisie particularly fears labor militancy on the part of the public employees, because these struggles have an almost automatic political and generalizing character about them, and because they strike at the heart of the system, by paralyzing the general staff of the ruling class. It is all the more important, therefore, for the revolutionists to involve themselves in these struggles and bring pressure to bear wherever possible throughout the labor movement for support to the public employees.

It should be taken for granted that cops, FBI agents, military police, professional officers, etc., are not part of the labor movement, but rather are the voluntary, conscious agents of the ruling class in its struggle against the workers, just as plant managers and departmental supervisors, while they may be salaried "employees"

are not workers because they are fundamentally on the other side of the class line. Cops particularly are increasingly conscious of their role as the core of the capitalists' repressive apparatus, as the strike of New York City policemen showed. The SL, unlike opportunist political bandits like the Workers League, does not take sides in an internal dispute within the repressive apparatus of the bosses.

ORGANIZE FOR WORKERS' ARMED SELF DEFENSE!

In the present period the class struggle will tend to become more violent as it heads toward the ultimate showdown between capital and labor. The danger of fascism, i.e., the resort to direct military role of the capitalist class to destroy the labor movement, will once again become imminent. The tendency of the trade union bureaucracy to physically repress dissidents within the unions will increase. Already we have seen what the bourgeois state is willing to do to anyone who dares oppose it, in the treatment of the Blacks and the murders of students. Only the power of the labor movement prevents the same rough treatment of it at this time. The nationwide postal wildcat strike showed how quickly the government will call out the troops to break a strike when it has to, and the Newark teachers strike, in which anti-union hooligans beat several NTU teachers and right wing black nationalists continually threatened pickets, demonstrated the potential for right-wing, anti-labor attacks. The right wing bands and military power of the state can ultimately only be defeated by armed workers detachments, who have the support of the masses of workers.

The first task, then, is to organize the defense of the strike pickets and meetings, etc., and to be prepared to defend the right of all tendencies loyal to the labor movement to exist in the union. Workers self-defense groups should be organized and, wherever possible drilled and trained in the collective use of arms. A new upsurge in the level of struggle, such as a general strike in response to government intervention, should be accompanied by not only the numerical increase in these units, but also their linking up throughout regions, districts, cities, etc. into a workers militia, as the only sure way to break scabbing and ensure the protection of workers meetings, press, etc. Thus is the way prepared for the full arming of the proletariat, which is a necessary part of the workers' revolution and the underlying basis for the workers' state.

Only with the help of such systematic, persistent, indefatigable courageous agitational work, always on the basis of the experience of the masses themselves, is it possible to root out from their consciousness the traditions of submissiveness and passivity; to train detachments of heroic fighters capable of setting an example to all toilers; to inflict a series of tactical defeats upon the armed thugs of counter-revolution; to raise the self-confidence of the exploited and oppressed; to compromise fascism in the eyes of the petty-bourgeoisie and pave the road for the conquest of power by the proletariat.

- Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International (Transitional Program).

II. TRADE UNIONS AND THE ECONOMY

Not only are the trade unions completely incapable, in the advanced period of capitalist decline, of remaining at all democratic and independent of the bourgeois state power except under the leadership of the revolutionary proletarian vanguard, but also, due to the declining rate of profit, and need for the imperialist bourgeoisie to compete on the world market, they are increasingly incapable of even playing an effective defensive economic role for their memberships under the present leaderships. Day after day the bureaucrats sidetrack or actively sacrifice local grievances on the altar of production; consign up hundreds and even thousands of their own members to the army of unemployed without a fight, so that some - the older and more skilled - may get some more money and a great deal of overtime; and bargain away all protections and provisions about safety and working conditions (speed-ups, etc.) so that the employers may make up many times over in increased production what they "lose" when the workers' wages advance to meet the rising cost of living.

These practices are the inevitable results of trade unionism, which has always represented only a minority of the more privileged workers and generally tended to ignore, amidst great pretensions, the rest of the exploited and oppressed. The trade unions have always catered solely to the needs of their own members (and this only partially), completely failing to recognize how this related to the needs of the rest of the working class, growth of the unemployed, needs of women, racial and immigrant minorities other than their own members, etc. The result has been the remarkable decline of the labor movement, to the point at which once mighty organizations such as the UMW and NMU are mere shells of their former selves, narrow-minded crafts such as the construction trades are literally being physically assaulted by the ignored black unemployed who are sufficiently desperate to scab on their more privileged brothers, and new production methods and pools of scab labor are allowed to continuously undermine the hard-won positions, job categories and organizations of the workers.

At the head of all this sits the union bureaucracy, content, fat, and satisfied to draw the full implications of their policies as long as they may also be able to draw their tremendous salaries. They rest on an increasingly narrow base, however, as the recent economic crisis especially has revealed. The bite of inflation and the wide swath of lay-offs has cut deeply into the whole working class, white, privileged and high seniority (and highly educated as well) sectors in addition to the poor, unorganized, low-skilled and minorities. Trade union bureaucrats and certain misguided radicals to the contrary, the working class has no material interest in the class collaborationist, patriotic and pro-imperialist policies of the trade unions. This cannot be said of the "aristocracy of labor", which has traditionally formed the core of the trade union bureaucracy's base of support in the unions. However, this more privileged section of the working class, actively identifying with the interests of imperialism because of marginal material benefits, is limited to a relatively small group of the older, white, male, highly skilled workers and tradesmen.

Some say that because of the inability under imperialism of the unions to even act reasonably well as defensive economic organizations of the class, and concomitantly, because of the bourgeoisie's

increasing inability in crisis periods to grant even the most minimal concessions, that a minimal economic program which advances the class rather than falling backward, ("wages offensive") is transitional", and therefore sufficient, because it is impossible for the bourgeoisie to grant. As in the case of union democracy as a "sufficient" program, nothing could be further from the truth. It may be ten times more difficult for the bourgeoisie to grant simple economic demands now than it was ten years ago, but it is never impossible for them to grant concessions of this kind, even concessions that hurt, if it is necessary in order to help keep the labor movement on the path of bargaining with the bosses and away from the road toward revolution. It is precisely the task of the revolutionists to put forward a program which breaks with simple economic unionism, which hits at the causes of the crisis at its roots in the capitalist system itself, and which qualitatively reorients the labor movement in a revolutionary direction. The SL is never satisfied to merely ride along on momentary moods of militancy which, however massive and rebellious, have nevertheless not broken from trade unionist habits of bargaining for a better material deal within the system, but always seeks to push the struggle further, onto the plane of political and revolutionary consciousness.

CONTROL PRICES, NOT WAGES!

Smash the Wage Freeze!

The liberal pied pipers of the bourgeoisie, who demanded wage-price controls, compulsory arbitration of contracts, no membership ratification of contracts, etc., since the end of the post-war boom, all in the name of "fighting inflation and unemployment", got what they were really after: "They enticed the trade unions into willingly accepting their own bondage; they aided the trade union bureaucrats in confusing the workers while the chains of government control were locked into place on the labor movement. The liberals did their job so well that even the bureaucrats were a bit shocked when the key on the lock was finally turned. One candidly remarked that Nixon's vicious "freeze" (which he happened to be opposing at the moment) was merely an accomplishment of what the Democrats had been calling for.

Needless to say, the wage-price controls are for the purpose of holding down wages as an artificial inducement to a new round of business expansion, and have nothing whatsoever to do with controlling prices. Likewise, the sleeping potions of the liberals and trade union bureaucrats have nothing in common with the program of the working class for fighting unemployment and inflation. The bourgeoisie blames inflation on the unions in order to prepare the public for the smashing of the labor movement, but the workers' militancy has merely been in response to the gobbling-up of hardwon wage gains by the rising cost of living, which has caused a drop in real wages. Now it is necessary, in addition to demanding an end to the wage freeze and strike ban, independence of the unions from all government control and no labor participation on the control boards, to call for independent labor organization to expose price and rent increases and to raise the demand for stringent control of prices of consumer goods and of rents, medicine, insurance, etc. Committees should be set up under the leadership of the labor movement, involv-

ing consumers, tenants, etc., to keep watch over prices, expose violations and agitate for these demands.

FOR A SLIDING SCALE OF WAGES AND HOURS!

For a Decent Standard of Living for All!

In addition to efforts under workers control to curb price increases, revolutionists must put forward the slogan of a sliding scale of wages and hours, which is the solution to the twin evils of unemployment and rising prices. The sliding scale of wages, which is identical to an unlimited cost-of-living escalator clause, means that wages rise in exact proportion to increases in the cost of living, while the sliding scale of hours simply means that all available work is portioned out evenly amongst the available workers, through the mechanism of shortening the work week with no loss in pay. (Any proposal for shortening the work week which eliminates the last point, as in Meany's call for a four day week, is an atrocious betrayal which slashes wages, passing the cost of curing unemployment to the workers.) We demand jobs for all, not guaranteed annual hand-outs!

Both these demands, the sliding scales of wages and hours, should be extended to society at large; in fact, they cannot be fully conceived of in any other context. The sliding scale of wages is the basic first step in ensuring a decent standard of living for everyone by keeping the minimum acceptable wage, which legally always seems to be about ten years behind the times (and at that always eliminates huge sections of workers, such as farm workers, who are apparently presumed to be sub-human) strictly in line with the rising cost of living. The sliding scale of hours, like the scale of wages, can be partially implemented in a single union contract, but its extension to society at large is vital if the hoarding of jobs by some workers at the expense of others is to be fully replaced by an equal distribution of the work, recognizing the right to employment for all workers.

ORGANIZE THE UNORGANIZED AND THE UNEMPLOYED!

For Strikes Against Lay-offs!

Responsibility for unemployment, or rather, for preventing it, begins at home: no union worthy of the name should allow massive lay-offs, whether contractually legal or not (*), to occur within its jurisdiction without launching a struggle of the most serious proportions. Lay-offs must be met with industry-wide strike action to force the re-hiring of laid-off workers.

The responsibility of the labor movement does not end there, however. "Under the menace of its own disintegration, the proletariat cannot permit the transformation of an increasing section of the (*) Richard Nixon has shown us in what little regard the bourgeoisie holds the "sacred inviolability" of the contractual obligation: he has single-handedly revoked the bourgeoisie's obligations at a single stroke. The bosses, of course, continue to insist that the workers continue to obey to the letter all of their obligations!

workers into chronically unemployed paupers, living off the slops of a crumbling society" - Death Agony of Capitalism and Tasks of the Fourth International (Transitional Program). It is one thing to despise the hard-core lumpen-proletariat, i.e., those who, having been unemployed and generally downtrodden by the capitalist system for so long that they have completely given up looking for honest work and have been turned from reasonable human beings into vile parasites: drug pushers, petty gangsters, pimps, thieves, professional strike-breakers, etc. It is entirely another to be indifferent about the process of lumpenization. The working class, for its own survival, must actively struggle for the right to employment, the only serious right left to a worker in a society based on exploitation. In addition, the trade unions have to continually seek out the new pools of potential scab labor and hard, non-union areas, such as the South, and commit all their resources to breaking into them and organizing the workers. The alternative is not merely that employed workers will increasingly regard welfare recipients as their main enemy, when in fact they are honest poor and workers who cannot work or whose unemployment benefits have run out, but that the entire labor movement will be swamped and destroyed by the army of the destitute, which will be unleashed by the capitalists. The ruling class will be the only victor in the war between the employed and unemployed worker!

OPPOSE THE SPECIAL OPPRESSION OF BLACK WORKERS!

Fight All Forms of Racial and National Discrimination!

American Blacks are not a "nation", potential or otherwise. They are a race-color caste, in the main fully integrated into the U.S. economy and working class, but forcibly suppressed and segregated into the bottom layers. However, they are not only the most oppressed section of the working class, but also that section which is most victimized, through ghetto life and permanent unemployment, with the process of lumpenization and forcible removal from the working class. The race question in the U.S. is thus intimately bound up with the question of the right to employment and the survival of the unions. Besides wiping out all forms of racial discrimination in industry and in the labor movement itself, and raising other demands relating to unemployment, etc., the trade unions must pay attention to the special struggles of black and all other racial and national minority workers (Puerto Ricans, Mexicans in the Southwest, etc.) interceding wherever possible to help eradicate the basis for these social divisions and create truly integrated class organizations capable of uniting all of the oppressed.

The up-grading of black and other minority workers into skilled job categories from which they are presently excluded is an important aspect of this task. As in the general case of ensuring a fair distribution of work, however, care must be taken here to preserve the hard-won gains of all workers, not sacrifice some for the sake of others. No worker of whatever color should be made to give up his job for another; rather, the work should be shared equally by shortening the work week at no loss in pay. While union-sponsored training programs, up-grading classes, etc., should clearly be made available to those who need them most, the SL opposes preferential treatment for any section of the working class based on race, and

emphasises instead the struggle against all barriers standing in the way of equal access to all jobs by all workers.

Impelled by both the legitimate grievances and oppression of blacks as workers, and by the mood of petty-bourgeois black separatism which has been prevalent in the black ghettos since the failure of the reformist-led civil rights movement to affect any real changes, the black caucuses formed in many important trade unions have shown a contradictory nature. Sometimes vehicles for militant rank-and-file struggle against the bosses and reactionary trade union bureaucrats, they have also been turned into organizers of black scabbing, dual unionism and simple union-busting. Thus a black caucus in an important municipal strike in Chicago captured leadership of the entire strike and won the backing of the white workers on the base of a class struggle program, while another in a New York city municipal union, as part of a power-play based on a separatist approach, sought in the bourgeois courts to have the union de-certified for failure to sign a no-strike pledge! Similarly, in the UAW, where black workers have shown themselves to be more willing than whites to engage in serious struggle and thus potential leaders in the fight for class demands, black caucuses have ranged from those that saw no difference between the company and the union and called upon blacks to stop paying dues, to one other that dropped all-black exclusionism and came close to adopting a transitional program.

If a black caucus is to play a positive role and not a reactionary one of further dividing the class, it must be built on the basis of a program which fights for the class interests of all workers, as well as against the special oppression of black workers. Such a caucus must lead a unified struggle to smash the union bureaucracy and re-direct the labor movement toward revolutionary unification of all the oppressed. This cannot be done by a caucus representing one section only, especially if it excludes others from its ranks solely on the basis of race. The basis for judgement of a caucus, however, especially in the initial stages, is its political program (which includes its actions as well as its words), not its composition or initial basis of support. A black caucus with a class struggle program can play a transitional role in the unions, representing the special needs of black workers in the struggle against discrimination, unemployment, etc., just as any principled caucus is a transitional form standing between the trade unions and the revolutionary vanguard party.

The proletarian attitude to the race question thus has nothing in common with the petty moralisms of the bourgeois liberals or the non-struggle palliatives of the black nationalists, both of whom blame the white masses for the racial discrimination which is fostered and maintained by the capitalist system for the exclusive benefit of the bourgeoisie. Rather, it is based on the understanding that while the struggle for Negro freedom is more than simply the class struggle of black workers, nevertheless it can only succeed through the struggle for socialism to liberate all the working and oppressed peoples. The Spartacist League has no patience with the white-guilt liberal patronizers who despise the workers, applaud any phony with a black face, never criticize, etc. We say instead to the class-conscious black workers: the choice is up to you; either the futile path of petty-bourgeois separatism, leading inevitably to race conflict and genocide for all blacks, or the class

struggle road, which alone can lay the material basis for the final elimination of race hatred!

FIGHT FOR THE RIGHTS OF THE WOMAN WORKER!

The special oppression of women is the oldest form of social oppression and perhaps the most deeply imbedded aspect of class exploitation. The liberation struggle of women is a vital part of the fight for working-class emancipation, in the trade unions as elsewhere. Based in the institution of the bourgeois family, which is central to capitalism, woman's oppression pervades all of society and has always been an important question in the labor movement. Thus despite the early discovery by the capitalists of women and children as sources of cheap factory labor, it has always been more important to the bosses to maintain religion and the family as schools for docility, submissiveness and superstition among the workers than to sponsor alternatives which would have freed women to play a greater role in the labor force. "In short, the family is the key social unit for the maintenance of capitalism: the worker's family by which the labor force is reproduced, the capitalists by which his property (i.e., the congealed life blood of the workers) is transmitted to his sons." -letter of J. Robertson, Development and Tactics of the Spartacist League, p. 39.

The economic aspects of the oppressed position of women provide the most immediate benefits to capitalism. Whenever the bosses need to draw women out into the labor force, they use the ideology of male superiority to justify the super-exploitation of women workers - that is, women being paid less for doing the same work as men. After all, a "woman's place is in the home", "a man has the responsibility of supporting a family, a woman only works because she wants to." The lie is pushed that women are fit only for domestic chores and that therefore their labor is not worth as much as the labor of men. Women make up over one third of the American labor force, but the wages of the full-time working woman average only 60% of those of the average male working full time. Socialists must seek to raise consciousness, pointing out, for instance, that male chauvinism divides the workers, and that lower wages for women mean lower wages for everyone. In Britain, where unions have calculated that wages would increase 11% if women received the same pay as men, equal pay for equal work has become a major union demand. If ignored by the labor movement, and allowed to be steeped in religious and familial superstition by the capitalists, women can become a ready source of anti-union and counter-revolutionary forces; but as part of the labor movement, rather than being "fragile" or "helpless", women can wield workers power as well as men and play a vital and leading role with steadfastness and determination.

Besides raising the slogans of "equal pay for equal work and equal access to all job categories", the trade unions must fight for demands which tend to alleviate the social burdens of women as mothers and unpaid domestic laborers, such as free twenty-four hour child care, free cafeterias at the work place, paid leaves of absence for pregnancy, free abortion on demand, freely available birth control devices and information, etc. The trade unions should lead in setting up price control committees and other worker-

consumer organizations to fight for these demands, but it is important, especially for would-be radicals to note, that the core of the problem is the impossibility of replacing the family as a fundamental social union under capitalism. Thus trade union sponsored co-operatives, child care centers, etc., while they may have some merit in a transitional sense, are entirely secondary to the task of building an anti-capitalist movement of struggle which can reach out to and mobilize the great masses of women behind the banner of working-class power.

Special protective labor laws for women are discriminatory in a certain sense, since they exclude women from some occupations and appear to consign women to a special, "inferior" status. In the main, however, they are concessions which have been wrenched out of the capitalists through struggle, and consist basically of elementary human protections and rights. It is completely backward to advocate their removal in the name of "equality"; this inevitably means a worsening of conditions: the "equality" of oppression. While we oppose those laws that bar equal access to all job categories, the SL seeks simply to extend these basic clauses to men as well.

FIGHT FOR THE RIGHTS OF YOUTH!

Like the black and woman worker, the young worker is often the victim of a double oppression. Often forced out of oppressive conditions in school and onto the job market at an early age out of economic necessity, the youth finds most of the social cards stacked against him. The unskilled young worker, often with a family to support, finds it impossible to get a decent job with any promise of advancement, and must accept the worse, dead-end jobs at the lowest pay and with the greatest chances of getting laid off or fired. Thus it is that the brutal and de-humanizing life of the imperialist army, because it at least offers some economic security, often seems more attractive than the life of a civilian worker.

More often than not, apprenticeships and training programs, whether sponsored by unions or the employer, are used not to train but to provide the boss with a source of special cheap labor for as long as possible. Furthermore, the legitimate rights of seniority have, under the job-trusting policies of the union bureaucrats, been turned into an oppression of younger workers. Many unions allow the boss to hire youths, at low pay, and work them twice as hard as the older, skilled workers, and then fire them just before they are "qualified" to join the union. We demand an end to all probationary periods for union memberships. Furthermore, union regulations often permit various abuses of new young workers. This has nothing in common with protecting the rights of the older workers! Unless it turns its face toward the youth, the labor movement will literally die of old age, unless it is smashed first. Training programs must be strictly for training, under full control by the rank and file on the job, with trainees receiving full pay. The sell-out of the rights of younger workers by the bureaucrats must be broken: fight for the closed shop, union control of hiring, and no victimizations, firings; or lay-offs for any legitimate worker! Apply uniform standards of safety and working conditions, and apply the shorter work week at no loss in pay to accommodate all those looking for work.

The Spartacist League recognizes the vital importance of youth in the revolutionary movement, and seeks to orient these fresh forces into the struggle to revitalize the unions. As many of the older, more privileged workers surrender the struggle, it will be the younger and more oppressed layers who take up the banner. They have the spirit, courage and determination to fight and they see their enemy with the clear vision of youth. We are building for the future!

NO SECRETS! OPEN THE BOOKS!

EXPROPRIATION OF INDUSTRY UNDER WORKERS CONTROL!

The era of free trade and competition has been dead and gone for a long time, but the monopoly capitalism which replaced it has not only failed to eliminate the anarchy of production, but has carried it to a higher plane, concentrated & intensified the unplanned, convulsive nature of the economy and posed the inevitability of crises and depressions of undreamed of, international magnitude. With this has gradually come the awareness on the part of almost all capitalist politicians of the need for controls on the economy of some kind or another. Thus the cold war "defense" budget, carefully turned on and off like a spigot by high level capitalist "planners," was the mechanism by which the post-war boom was maintained, and liberal and conservative alike now applaud Nixon's wage freeze and "special" hand-outs (Lockheed).

The question, of course, is who controls. When workers raise defensive, economic demands, the capitalists say, "That is inflationary," "This is too extravagant," "The economy can't afford that", etc. When the relatively more democratic unions hold discussions on their demands for negotiations, you can always hear the bureaucrats saying, "We can't possibly win this," "The money's just not there for that," etc., etc., ad nauseum. The problem is that neither the bourgeois politicians nor the trade union bureaucrats are the least bit capable, nor do they have the desire, to even know what can be afforded or not, let alone attempt to wring it out of the parasitic exploiters in spite of their howls. The excuse for the secrets of the corporations, that they are necessary for protection from competitors, is based on the dead era of competition; it is a lie to cover up the real purpose of the monopoly corporations, which is to find new ways to bleed both workers and consumers dry in the interest of greater profits. They have no secrets from each other (interlocking directorates ended that long ago), only from society. Workers must demand to see the books, and to themselves oversee and explain to society the debits and credits of the economy, behind the scenes deals and swindles, and the unconscionable squandering of human labor that results from the pursuit of profit.

This first step toward workers' control must be accompanied by demands for the expropriation under workers' control of the key branches of heavy industry and central transport, as the beginning of the reorganization of production for social needs. This has nothing to do with the plans for partial "nationalization" of sectors of the economy by the bourgeoisie itself (heartily endorsed by the labor bureaucrats, who are always eager for new posts for

themselves as "labor representatives"), since the bosses' goals in such cases are merely to preserve a bankrupt section of the capitalist system by passing the debts on to the workers through taxes. When the bourgeoisie and bureaucrats call for nationalizations, our response should be: expropriation under workers' control with no indemnification!

At this point it becomes clear that the heart of the economic ills of society is that under capitalism, production is for profit, not for social use, and that the core of monopoly capitalism, the monopolies themselves and the banks, need to be expropriated in order to reorganize the entire economy, eliminating anarchy and waste. The banks are chiefly important because they already play a heavy hand in organizing, directing and controlling the economy, but they do so anarchically, from the point of view of maximizing profit rather than social production. For this it is necessary to pose the question of the expropriation of the bourgeoisie as a class through workers' power. Any other road necessarily means the loss of the gains of the workers so far, the turning of the worker-controlled industries into impotent cooperatives, at the mercy of the capitalist market; new attacks on the living standards and organizations of the workers, etc. Forward to workers' power!

III. THE TRADE UNIONS AND POLITICS

"The question of the relationships between the party, which represents the proletariat as it should be, and the trade unions, which represent the proletariat as it is, is the most fundamental question of revolutionary Marxism."

--Trotsky, Communism and Syndicalism

The trade unions by themselves are inherently an institution of capitalist society, being for the purpose of defending the workers against the capitalists. Incapable of organizing more than a minority of the workers and completely blind to the fact that the only successful defense of the workers involves an offensive against the capitalists, the trade unions are partial and unsatisfactory even in their assigned role. Left to their own devices, they are completely incapable of perceiving or acting in any way inconsistent with the continued existence of the capitalist system. They have been created or advanced only when thrust forward by the class struggle and revolutionary actions of the mass of workers themselves, as in the sit-down strikes which built the CIO; and even then, the trade unionist leaderships have at once sought to hold back the struggle and find ways to work within the system. Differences between the AFL and CIO very quickly became subsumed under the problem of competition for the allegiance of the Roosevelt government.

BUILD A LABOR PARTY BASED ON THE TRADE UNIONS!

The U.S. is the only major industrial country in the world which has no major party separate from the capitalist parties, claiming to represent the working class. The historical reasons for this situation include the role of the Communist Party in wedding an important section of the labor movement to the Roosevelt administration, especially in the period of the rise of the CIO, when independent working-class committees for political action were being formed, and

the CP's subsequent role as the "left-wing" of the Democratic Party. In addition, the post-war anti-communist witch hunt physically purged the labor movement of thousands of its more conscious and militant elements. The slogan for a labor party has been an important component of the Trotskyist transitional program for the U.S., but in most periods has had a generally abstract educational character because it did not correspond to any strong felt needs of the workers. The Vietnam war, rise of trade union militancy and renewed capitalist crisis has changed that.

The significant support for the racist, right-wing Wallace campaign among Northern ethnic white workers was both an example and a result of the utter disorientation of the U.S. left on this question. While many of Wallace's adherents, especially in the South, were hard-core reactionaries and bigots, many were traditionally Democrats, often former supporters of Robert Kennedy, and union members who were fed up with liberal pablum and responsive to Wallace's "little man" populism. These discontented workers, willing to desert the two major parties, responded to high taxes and inflation by demanding an end to welfare "hand-outs" and to the Vietnam war through victory, reflecting in a racist way their own economic insecurity. Had a class-conscious labor party been present with the forces of the "independent" anti-war campaigns, a significant section of Wallace's supporters might instead have rallied behind demands which cut through the objective basis for racism: decent jobs for all and immediate withdrawal from Vietnam.

The struggle for a labor party based on the trade unions is inseparable from the struggle to replace the trade union bureaucracy with a revolutionary leadership. The bureaucrats are so hopelessly bound up in the mechanism of capitalist politics that the only answer they had to the obvious crumbling of the post-war liberal-labor coalition in the Democratic Party was to seek the favor of the reactionary Nixon government in the middle of a counter-revolutionary war and Nixon's mounting attacks on labor itself! To make as the main axis of one's tactical implementation of this demand the call that the bureaucracy form a labor party, as does the Workers League, is an opportunist adaptation to the bureaucracy at the expense of the rank-and-file struggle which is the slogan's only real basis. Some bureaucrats, faced with complete defeat, may join a labor party "bandwagon" to consciously deflect it, but in general, the labor party can only be built over the political corpse of the bureaucracy.

Some say that a labor party can only be an obstacle on the path to the building of the revolutionary vanguard party, since it will require such a mass upsurge to build it that the mass revolutionary communist party will be able to be built instead and anyway, it will just be immediately taken over by bureaucrats and turned against the revolution. This is a completely ahistorical conception. If an upsurge is powerful enough to form a mass communist party and pose the question of revolution, it will not simultaneously create obstacles to itself. Labor parties, like trade unions, are only created as a result of class advances to serve the interests of the class. The CIO was necessary, even though it was quickly taken over by bureaucratic leaderships because of the lack of a revolutionary vanguard party to challenge the bureaucrats. Later, in times of waning struggle or retreat, these formations can turn into obstacles

if their leaderships are reformist or counter-revolutionary.

Workers need their own party to defend their interests and test in practice the results of policies of working-class leaders and mis-leaders. Revolutionists must always fight for their revolutionary program and leadership, before, during and after the formation of such a party. Even if mis-leaders temporarily win dominance, such a formation will establish a framework in which the political leaders are directly responsible to the workers, who will be the ultimate judges of the leadership, rather than only to themselves, which means in practice to the capitalist system. In those circumstances we will struggle within for our revolutionary program. The formation of such a party in itself would be a qualitative step forward, since the working-class programs of the revolutionists would thereby have a class framework within which to come to the fore and be tested.

BUILD CAUCUSES, FACTORY COMMITTEES AND SHOP STEWARD COMMITTEES!

The initial form of organization of the communists in the unions is the caucus, which is the nucleus of the alternative, revolutionary leadership for that union. It unites members of the vanguard party with those union militants who agree with that section of the party's program for the unions, making clear that it is not simply personal positions, but the program of an organized grouping which competes for leadership with the union bureaucracy. The caucus struggles for union democracy and rank-and-file control of the union. The caucus must expose the union bureaucrats as unwilling and unable to fight for the felt needs of the workers, and must transcend simple bread-and-butter unionism with its program of transitional demands linking proletarian class consciousness with a unified perspective of general social struggle against capitalism. Thus the caucus program is a full, not partial, revolutionary program for its arena, but it is not the same as the full program of the party itself, thereby enabling all those who agree with the revolutionary program for the unions to work together with the communists whether they agree with other aspects of the program or not.

In strikes or times of greater upheaval, caucuses can form the nucleus for the formation of strike committees and factory committees, which deal chiefly with issues relating to the normal functioning of the union, but which are often necessary simply to prevent the betrayals of the bureaucrats, or wage the shop floor struggles around local grievances, firings, work conditions, etc., which the bureaucrats never seem to have much time for.

Factory committees, furthermore, especially if they continue and grow, are especially important because they are an elemental, shop floor organ of dual power, i.e., they are the workers' organization for control over the work process and the factory itself in complete and irreconcilable opposition to the management of the bosses. They are able to mobilize the more oppressed and backward layers of the workers that the union ordinarily cannot reach. They are important and the idea of them should be raised as early as possible, for they form the fundamental basis for dual power on the higher levels later. Lacking them, the workers will be unprepared to seize the opportunity in a general strike or revolutionary situation to set up workers' councils, which are essential organs of

workers power on the national levels. It should be noted, however, that the caucus is not the same as the factory committee; the party is not the same as the workers' council. Factory committees, strike committees, workers' councils are organizations of workers power, which are essential at various periods for the workers' conscious organization and operation of their own struggle and their social and political conquests.

Despite the New Left's lack of interest in the labor movement, it is not surprising that current forms of labor radicalism reflect elements of New Left ideology. New Left commitment to militancy for the sake of militancy combined with a belief in the virtues of decentralization has produced a form of New Left syndicalism. The goal of New Left syndicalism is to break the shop floor from the authority of the international unions. The socialists' goal in the unions is not occasional defiance of the bureaucracy, but rather its overthrow to command the tremendous power of the organized working class for revolutionary ends. Shop floor militancy can be an important element of a left-wing oppositional movement, but only if it is put at the service of all-union, politically based caucuses which alone can provide an alternative leadership to the bureaucracy as a whole. The trouble with the American labor movement is definitely not that it is too centralized. On the contrary, it is too fragmented and a revolutionary leadership would concentrate the entire resources of the movement in support of previously isolated groups of struggling workers.

FORWARD TO A WORKERS' GOVERNMENT!

Revolutionists do not raise the slogan for a workers' government in the bourgeois-democratic sense, i.e., counter-posed to the dictatorship of the proletariat. Rather, it is raised as a means of exposing the false leaderships of the workers, by demanding that they break with the bourgeoisie and take the power into their own hands. In 1917 the bolsheviks demanded that the Socialist Revolutionaries (SR's) and Mensheviks break with the liberal bourgeoisie and take power, refusing, however, to enter their government or carry political responsibility for it. Since these were the major "socialist" parties, their refusal to break with the bourgeoisie and take power had a tremendous educational impact on the masses, who were class conscious, pro-socialist, but unsure of how to throw out the bourgeoisie and achieve workers' power. This experience doomed these false leaderships in the eyes of the masses as worthless, and other experience has confirmed that the parties of petty-bourgeois democracy (including phony "socialists": SR's, social democrats, Stalinists, anarchists, etc.) are incapable of leading the workers to power, that is, of breaking with the bourgeoisie.

"The central task of the Fourth International consists in freeing the proletariat from the old leadership, whose conservatism is in complete contradiction to the catastrophic eruptions of disintegrating capitalism and represents the chief obstacle to historical progress. The chief accusation which the Fourth International advances against the traditional organizations of the proletariat is the fact that they do not wish to tear themselves away from the

political semi-corpse of the bourgeoisie. Under these conditions, the demand, systematically addressed to the old leadership: "Break with the bourgeoisie, take power" is an extremely important weapon..."--Transitional Program.

The slogan for a workers government, then, is not identical to the call for workers' councils, dual power, or workers' power generally, nor is it contradictory: it is a transitional formulation for asserting the generally understood need for the working class to take power in order to expose false leaderships who are unable to act because of their ties with the bourgeoisie. Its application is equally valid in the case of Stalinist popular fronts, such as Allende in Chile, or trade union bureaucratic formations, such as the British Labor Party. The former requires the demand in order to break the cross-class alliance of the workers' and bourgeois parties, the latter in order to expose the bureaucrats in the role of front men for the capitalists, governing in the name of the workers only. In both cases, political support or responsibility for the acts of such a government is absolutely excluded. (In a popular front, no political support, however critical, is possible for the workers parties involved, since by seeking power in alliance with bourgeois parties they have fundamentally subordinated themselves to the ruling class. A reformist labor party seeking power independently, however, may be critically supported in the elections in order to facilitate the communists' intervention in the labor movement to challenge the leadership.

THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

The incessant struggle between capital and labor, of which the trade unions are merely a part, can only be resolved from the proletariat's point of view by the revolutionary destruction of the capitalist ruling class and its replacement in power by the proletariat itself. For this the workers need a revolutionary vanguard party to take up, lead and organize the struggle from the points at which the trade unions leave off. Thus in order to run a strike in one industry, the trade union form of organization is sufficient in most cases, although the sharp eyes of the ranks, including special strike committees sometimes, etc., are usually required to prevent a crass surrender of the field by the cowardly bureaucrats. In a general strike in a whole city or country, however, many more tasks are required than the trade unions can perform: uniting the strike leadership into one central body, organizing the non-unionized masses of workers and oppressed behind the strike, developing coordinated armed self-defense against scabbing, etc., and organizing essential services such as food and other supplies, keeping the hospitals running, etc. Organizing the insurrection, the centralizing of workers' control units, militias, etc., into a workers state requires even more the central leadership of an "active minority" organized into a party and prepared in advance, through struggle, to be able to act swiftly and correctly, at the head of the vanguard of the working class and with the confidence of the mass of the workers behind it.

Thus together with the need to overthrow the union bureaucracy and replace it with a revolutionary leadership is the even more

important need to build, and prepare consciousness of the need for, organs of workers power and a workers vanguard party. The party, in turn, must work in the unions in order to reach the masses of workers and prepare them as much as possible for mobilization for the seizure of power, so that if, by bureaucratic trickery and delaying tactics, elements of the trade union bureaucracy manage to cling to their posts right up until the time of the revolution and even past it, as it is likely that many of them will, their ability to disorient, confuse and hold back the masses will be reduced to a minimum. The bureaucrats, liberals, reformists and even phony "socialists" of all kinds will constantly try to obstruct the work of the party and drive it out of the unions, by red-baiting and other noxious tactics. They will claim, for instance, that the party, because its members hold discipline to the party higher than obedience to the trade union bureaucrats, seeks to destroy the independence of the unions by "annexing" them to itself and destroying them. To this we must respond, "Trade union 'autonomy' means inevitably the victory of 'trade unionist' reformism, and thus of capitalism itself; therefore it is you who destroy the unions. There is no 'autonomy'; there is only the dishonest leadership of the pro-capitalist minority or the open leadership of the vanguard party!"

The trade unions cannot substitute for the vanguard party, nor can the functions of the two be artificially separated, the one "autonomously" performing its "economic" function while the other separately handles the political. The struggle for leadership of the class does not take place in a vacuum. The communists assume this leadership of the class not only by virtue of their militance in the class struggle, but also by consciously counter-posing themselves to the traditional leadership of the class: social democrats, Stalinists, trade union reformists. False leaderships represent the ideology of capitalism within the workers movement, and they cannot be combatted by circumvention. The very essence of revolutionary leadership is that it is built on the basis of struggle within the organizations of the working class for earned authority to lead. Only in this manner can the communists recruit the core of the proletarian vanguard into its ranks, and thereby secure the essential links with which to mobilize the masses. .

BUILD THE SPARTACIST LEAGUE!

The Spartacist League, while not yet a party, is the nucleus of the revolutionary vanguard party in the U.S. The building of the vanguard party in the U.S. depends in large measure on the ability of the SL to root itself in the working class, principally in the trade unions. It is for this purpose that the present program is elaborated.

At our present level of size and influence, the SL is not generally able to shape and direct major aspects of the class struggle. Therefore, the nature of SL union work is necessarily of an exemplary character, demonstrating in practice, although in a limited way, those policies which we will fight for when we can provide direct leadership on a wider scale, and at the same time, giving our comrades the experience and skills necessary to assume that role.

Just as redirecting the trade unions in the direction of revolutionary proletarian internationalism is the only conceivable way of wrenching them out of the service of the most die-hard reactionaries, so the rooting of the revolutionary communist movement in the trade union struggles in this period, through the SL, is the only path by which the historic crisis of leadership of the proletariat can begin to be conquered.

FIGHT FOR REVOLUTIONARY PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM IN THE TRADE
UNIONS!

SMASH THE TRADE UNION BUREAUCRACY!

BUILD THE REVOLUTIONARY VANGUARD PARTY!

BUILD THE SPARTACIST LEAGUE!

Theses on the Women's Liberation Movement

1. Because the oppression of women is deeply rooted in all class cultures and rests upon an institution--the family--central to social and economic life, women have not regarded themselves as an oppressed social group whose condition could be changed.
2. Significant political movements directed at women's oppression have been exceptional. Those that existed were either fleeting movements directed against particularly apparent forms of women's inequality (e.g. the right to vote) or have been produced by transitional organizations established by mass left-wing parties.
3. The existing American women's liberation movement arose out of the effect of the break-up of the New Left on a wide stratum of liberal and radical women political activists. The women's liberation movement reflects the New Left doctrine that members of oppressed groups should devote themselves to independent and exclusive organizations designed to fight that oppression, and that only such independent and exclusive groups can effectively fight that oppression.
4. The women's liberation movement is essentially ideological being directed at publicizing the manifold oppression of women and changing the social and personal attitudes of the women involved in the movement. Direct agitation against the state and other bourgeois institutions (e.g. over abortion reform, equal pay) has been distinctly secondary.
5. In contrast to the black movement, the existing women's liberation movement does not enjoy general sympathy among the female population and has not succeeded in politicizing the women of any significant social group. The existing women's liberation movement is organically incapable of drawing in working class women.
6. The existing women's liberation movement is transitory because it is isolated as a current within the petty-bourgeois left-liberal milieu, having a foundation neither in the sympathy of the female population nor in concrete struggles against the ruling class.
7. The program of Women and Revolution is a correct Marxist program for the woman question, ideally designed to be implemented by a transitional organization staffed by cadre of a mass socialist party. It is unlikely that this program will make serious inroads into the women's liberation movement as such.
8. Because the existing women's liberation movement is an ideological movement whose central premise is the unique capacity of an independent women's movement to overcome women's oppression, a Leninist party cannot fight for hegemony over it (any more than it can fight for hegemony over the exclusionist black movement). To the extent that women's liberation activists are won to the view that the oppression of women can only be overcome through a socialist revolution led by an integrated party, the question of an independent women's movement is transformed from a principled to a tactical one.
9. The SL's goal in the women's liberation movement is to recruit individual activists, who out of a concern for the oppression of women are brought to see the need for the reconstruction of society in conformity with the principles of scientific socialism. The main activities of the Women and Revolution group should, therefore, be propagandistic, at a high theoretical level, rather than agitation over program or organizational maneuvering within the movement.

COMMENTS ON THE SOUTH

- Joe Vetter

1. On p. 13 of the Memorandum to the Central Committee on the Transformation of the Spartacist League, the southern perspectives of the SL are inadequately discussed. First, it is a blanket statement which is only true now, and which has only been true since about June, 1969.

Between 1966 and June 1969, despite the lack of sufficient cadre, the New Orleans SL functioned as a Southern regional center with a small network of contacts throughout the South and intervention in regional activities. In addition, the New Orleans SL, in this period, attempted to act as a co-ordinating body for the rest of the SL members in the South.

2. Because of the break-up of the New Orleans center in summer, 1969, and the resulting relocation of the Southern center to Austin, we have isolated the SL from the centers of the Southern movement, (i.e., from Houston, Atlanta, and New Orleans).

Austin is isolated from the main arena of Southern struggles since it is a combination of a college town and a seat of state bureaucracy. Moving the SL Southern center there has had the same result as moving the NO to Ithaca would have had. The movement in Austin is student based and with the decline of that base our contact with the Southern movement has likewise declined.

3. In terms of the influx of capital and the increase in migration (many from California), it appears that the South and particularly the Gulf Coast between Houston and Mobile will become the equivalent of what California has been over the past few decades.

This will probably result in increased union struggles as workers migrating from other areas face the semi-sweat-shop conditions of an unorganized South.

In terms of the Black movement, we still remain capable of recruiting Black cadre in the South. Nationalism is at its hardest in the South only soft by non-Southern terms.

In addition, the breakup of PL in the South has left us as the only hard revolutionary formation left of the SWP. But the work that the SL (especially in New Orleans) put into cracking the PL group is being still-born because of the lack of our presence.

4. We should regard New Orleans (because we have some experience there and because of its central geographical location) as the place to build our Southern center. The colonization of 2-3 comrades into the New Orleans area (either from outside or inside of the South) would give us a Southern center from which to work on the rest of the South. With the current state of Southern revolutionary politics in a state of transition, our intervention now will be key to fairly easily gaining hegemony over the revolutionary left in the South.

5 September, 1971

Moore-Stuart Statement

The recent events in the SL have given rise to a situation which seriously jeopardizes the elements of inner party life, most importantly an openness which is essential if cadre is to develop through struggle. Our analysis of what has happened contains both an implicit and explicit criticism of the actions of the SL leadership.

The unprincipled resignation of Marvin T., which can only be seen as a political crime, as political cowardice is always a crime--followed, by David Cunningham's own admission, of unprincipled actions, as well as non-actions, made what can only be oversimplified as a tense situation. We believe that this situation was used by the SL National Office to head off, through making it ineffective, the needed rehash and criticism of the functioning of the National Office in the international arena. That such an accounting and criticism is needed, an opinion often expressed by Comrades Moore and Stuart, we regard as still an unassailable position, and we will detail some of our criticisms here.

a) The IDB (International Discussion Bulletin) is a chief bone of contention. Since the European trip of 1970 the SL has been faced with the task of organizing international discussion in a very concrete manner, a commitment undertaken by the SL in conjunction with two European organizations, the IKD and the RCL. In spite of repeated requests from both the IKD and the RCL--including an offer by the RCL to publish the IDB in four weeks if given the material, despite their qualitatively smaller size and resources--not one concrete step has been made by the leadership to fulfill this commitment though all the material has been at hand for at least 8 months. Through this inaction, our relationship with both the RCL and the IKD has degenerated--the non-appearance of the IDB means we have been entirely silent on our political differences with these organizations for the past year except for the 14 March letter, differences which are in no way academic, but crucial to their functioning. It need not be restated that the non-appearance of the IDB is in spite of the expanded CC plenum motion of Sept. 1971 which was to immediately crash out the IDB.

b) The non-support from the National Office in terms of literature from October 1971 to March 1972 to Comrade Moore has been fully detailed in the discussions on the infamous Boston secretariat--though the point should be reiterated that Comrade Robertson knew of the existence of such a 'secretariat' from late August 1971 through to the decision to liquidate it in December 1971, a fact which did not stop him from charging the comrades involved with 'conspiracy.' If there was such a conspiracy, then the non-action of the leadership in breaking it up for 4 months is hardly an encouraging sign.

c) The charge has been made that no information exists on the split in the German movement--the comrades should know that copy for the Marxist Studies on the split in Spartacus-KJO, translated by Dimir and John Sharpe including an explanatory introduction by

Comrade Moore to enable comrades to more easily wade their way through the translated German prose has been ready for over a month. Without the publication of this Marxist Studies, no intelligent and final determination can be arrived at concerning the nature of split in Spartacus KJO in the party and youth as a whole.

d) Various comrades from the National Office have made the charge that a) no reports have been received from Comrade Moore since March (cf. Comrade Seymour) and b) the reports have not made the situation clear. (cf. Comrade Robertson). We request the National Office to append to the documents on this situation the report of Comrade Moore of 26 April and the PB minutes No. 48 (the section dealing with the international report). For ease of clarification we also suggest that the letter of Comrade Stuart to the PB of 30 May also be included in this extension of the available documents.

There are other instances of non-action on the international arena, such things as the Vietnamese pamphlet translated from the French by Comrade Sharpe in the summer of 1971 which has not yet appeared, but some understanding must be given to the question of our admitted lack of resources and manpower to do everything. However, there is a question of priorities:

"The problem is Liz's and also my work priorities. We decided to go ahead and get the Spartacist out as soon as possible even though this means postponing our draft conference document on the woman question.---a serious delay since our National Conference, after a months uncertainty, has again and adamantly been set for labor day weekend by the PB. We thought we have to get out the Spartacist because if not done now the ever mounting pressure of conference preparation would surely preclude its production until sometime after the conference and the contents of the issue is of special international value. Furthermore my own urgent priorities have shoved the IDB down the priority list. We have now, etc.....
 (Robertson to Moore, 30 April 1972. Emphasis added.
 footnote--Comde. Moore wrote in opposition to the Spartacist taking priority over the IDB.)

The main issue that is implicit in the above is that the writing of the document on the woman question precedes in priority the publication of the IDB, that is, precedes our responsibility to the reconstruction of the Fourth International, of which the IDB is an admittedly pitiful small step--but necessary. It is unprecedented in the SL and Communist history for a fraction to be unable to write at least a draft document of its own work and perspectives. Insofar as it does not meet this elementary qualification, it does not exist politically.

The above inactivity of the SL, in conjunction with what we consider to be a misplacing of priorities, the placing of national priorities above international priorities, is a fundamental failure of the SL, we are the only Trotskyist organization even remotely capable of beginning the rebuilding of the Fourth International, and it is our principle duty to do so to the best of our ability. Further.

more, it is only through such activity successfully completed that we have any hope of becoming a viable national organization--national isolation continued over a long period of time will destroy us, inevitably. The above criticisms of the non-functioning of the SL in the international arena have been of long-standing, the return of Comrade Moore from Europe made them an immediate question. That this return coincided with the disintegration of political morale on the part of some comrades, most notably Marvin T., made a tactical opportunity for the leadership to circumvent these criticisms, to avoid a discussion of the non-functioning of the SL in this area, and of the SL priorities in general. We maintain that this tactical opportunity led the SL into a violation of democratic centralism in the following ways.

a) There have been slanderous attacks on Comrades Moore and Stuart--lying, conspiring, deceiving, double recruiting, (especially in the international movement, i.e. building a power bloc with another national tendency against the SL)--for none of which is there one shred of proof, or even indications. What there has been, and what has been used to bolster these accusations, is private opinions, held by Comrades Moore and Stuart about the personal attributes of some of the SL comrades. The implication has been made that such opinions about other SL members are not permissible. In this context we quote Comrade Lenin on Radek:

"[Radek] conducted himself like an impudent, impertinent stupid huckster. If Radek did not understand what he was doing, he is a little fool. If he understood, he is a huckster."

In the same letter he also wrote that Piatakov "doesn't have a particle of brains; he's like a little pig." After a quarrel with Piatakov and Bukharin, he wrote in 1916 (November)

"I have done everything possible for a 'peaceful' settlement. If you don't like it, I'll smash your faces and show you up as little fools before the whole world."

In February, 1917--six months before the fusion, Lenin wrote,

"Trotsky arrived and that scoundrel at once pulled up with the right wing of the Novy Mir against the Left Zimmerwaldists! That's how it is! That's Trotsky! Always himself. Wags his tail, cheats, poses as a left winger, helps the right wingers as long as possible."

Lenin on Lunacharsky: Future Commissar of Education (1912):

"From his convictions and literary tastes, it is obvious that he is simply a poseur. I say candidly, he is a filthy type, a drunkard and profligate. His eyes are fixed on heaven, while his feet searchingly shuffle along the ground. He is a moral gigilo."

What the comrades have to understand is that personal opinions do not, and should not, influence political solidarity on issues--it is not

necessary to 'like' your comrades to be a loyal member of an organization--a distinction which became very blurred in the discussions in Boston.

A point must be made about certain breaches in democratic centralist functioning which have occurred, about which questions have been raised, and there have been no answers--the first, which Stuart asked about at last Sunday's meeting, was "what Saturday meeting" which was being referred to by certain comrades? It appears that an 'informal' local meeting was held without the knowledge of certain comrades--namely Comrade Stuart--and with her deliberate exclusion. That is not allowed, unless the rest of the organization has declared itself a disciplined faction, which to our knowledge has not occurred. If it has occurred, then every person invited to that meeting had to be told that it was a faction meeting--was that done?

Another issue that must be explored is the use of private correspondence. Stuart was told by Comrade Robertson in March that private correspondence is only of interest to the national leadership if activities like financial irregularities or drug dealing etc. are suspected, it is then examined by a body set up for this purpose and anything not to the point at question is disregarded. To use private correspondence to 'prove' the existence of something as nebulous as a 'clique' is rather a departure from the above summarized position. That some of the private correspondence was obtained by rifling the personal belongings of one comrade does not need comment. It stinks. This does not imply that Comrade Moore does not stand by the characterizations expressed in the letters read aloud, they are his opinion, to which he is entitled, as long as he acts like a member of this organization his opinions are only of interest to those who agree with them. That the tone of the criticisms leveled at certain comrades is harsh does not mitigate against his right to express those opinions within the organization to whomever he pleases.

Trotsky, Writings 1938-39, Page 123:

"To appeal to internal party democracy and at the same time to complain about 'tone' does not seem very convincing to me. Democracy is limited by centralism, that is, by the necessity for unity in action. But it is an error to state: Since we have democracy, therefore do not dare to open your mouth too wide or to speak in a tone which displeases us." [emphasis in original.]

(note: Trotsky makes the distinction clear between harshness and intrigue, a distinction which apparently has passed some comrades by in the Marv = Moore analysis.)

That politically knowledgeable people made such a mistake is not creditable, there are factionally experienced people in the SL and they know better. That they have imposed this mistaken conception of inner party democracy on younger comrades is a politically opportunist maneuver. That they have fostered confusion in the ranks of the SL on the differences between a tactical mistake committed in the heat of action (Moore's mistake in Europe) and the question of a principled break of discipline--not following the party line, betraying inner

party material to alien organizations, etc., can not be laid to ignorance of the difference, but to a desire to make ineffective any criticism of the National Office functioning. The above departure from Democratic Centralist practice are, to our knowledge, an isolated instance. As a precedent they are disastrous, and must be repudiated by the leadership. If allowed to stand, they will stifle all inner party activity--most notably criticism, which should be sought, not stifled.

Submitted to PB No. 53,
15 July 1972

Signed: Moore

Stuart

cc: Moore

Vote on Moore-Stuart Statement in
Second Session of PB No. 53, 16 July 1972

Motion: To support the Moore-Stuart Statement.

for: PB: none

full CC: none

alt CC: Moore

fraternal: none

N.O. staff: none

against: PB: Robertson, Samuels (RCY), Kinder, Seymour, Gordon

full CC: Crawford, Brosius, Schaefer (RCY)

alt CC: Salant, Kelly, Jennings

fraternal: D-1124

N.O. staff: Cantor, Russell, Ryan

abstaining: full CC: Cunningham

not voting: none

Motion defeated

Motion on Moore Oral Report of 16 July 1972:

Motion: The PB notes that Moore has declared in his oral report here and in extension of the M/S "Statement," that:

- 1) the Bonapartist Robertson regime is the key issue;
- 2) the transformation of the SL cannot go through because of the regime;
- 3) and in general the regime cannot carry out the line because of the growing split between theory and practice;
- 4) there are no programmatic differences [now], but the program is formal, lifeless; can't be carried out; the leadership cannot be trusted;
- 5) that he regrets he wasn't in the U.S. earlier to "run the lash-up" involving Treiger, Cunningham, et al. because then there would have been politics in it;
- 6) he declares himself to be a minority; and
- 7) therefore, he withdraws his name from consideration for inclusion in the leadership slate for the incoming CC.

Vote on Moore Oral Report Motion
in Second Session of PB No. 53, 16 July 1972:

for: PB: Robertson, Samuels (RCY), Kinder, Seymour, Gordon
full CC: Crawford, Brosius, Schaefer (RCY), Cunningham
alt CC: Moore, Salant, Kelly, Jennings
fraternal: D-1124
N.O. staff: Cantor, Russell, Ryan

against: none

abstaining: none

not voting: none

Motion passed unanimously

Declaration of Faction

POLITICAL BUREAU NO. 53

15 July 1972

Motion by Robertson: To constitute a faction counterposed to the factional declaration, the "Stuart-Moore Statement." The basis for the counterposed faction is: (1) The "Declaration of Principles of the Spartacist League," adopted at SL Founding Conference, September 1966; (2) the operative thrust in sections 18-21 of "International Perspectives," Part III of "Development and Tactics of the Spartacist League," adopted at Second SL National Conference, September 1969; and in "World Trotskyism Rearms" (Spartacist #20, April-May 1971); (3) "Memorandum to the CC on the Transformation of the SL," adopted at Enlarged CC Plenum, September 1971; (4) the thrust of "Cliques, Blocs and the Regime" by Liz Gordon, 30 June 1972.

To constitute this faction exclusively within the Central Committee until the opening of Pre-National Conference discussion, in accordance with the PB decision.

vote tabled on this motion until
after debate on the counterposed
declarations in the second session
of this PB meeting.

Vote on Robertson motion in Second Session of PB No.53,16 July 1972:

for: PB: Robertson, Samuels (RCY), Kinder, Seymour, Gordon

full CC: Crawford, Brosius, Schaefer (RCY)

alt CC: Salant, Kelly, Jennings

fraternal: D-1124

N.O. staff: Cantor, Russell, Ryan

against: full CC: Cunningham

alt CC: Moore

abstaining: none

not voting: none

Motion passed