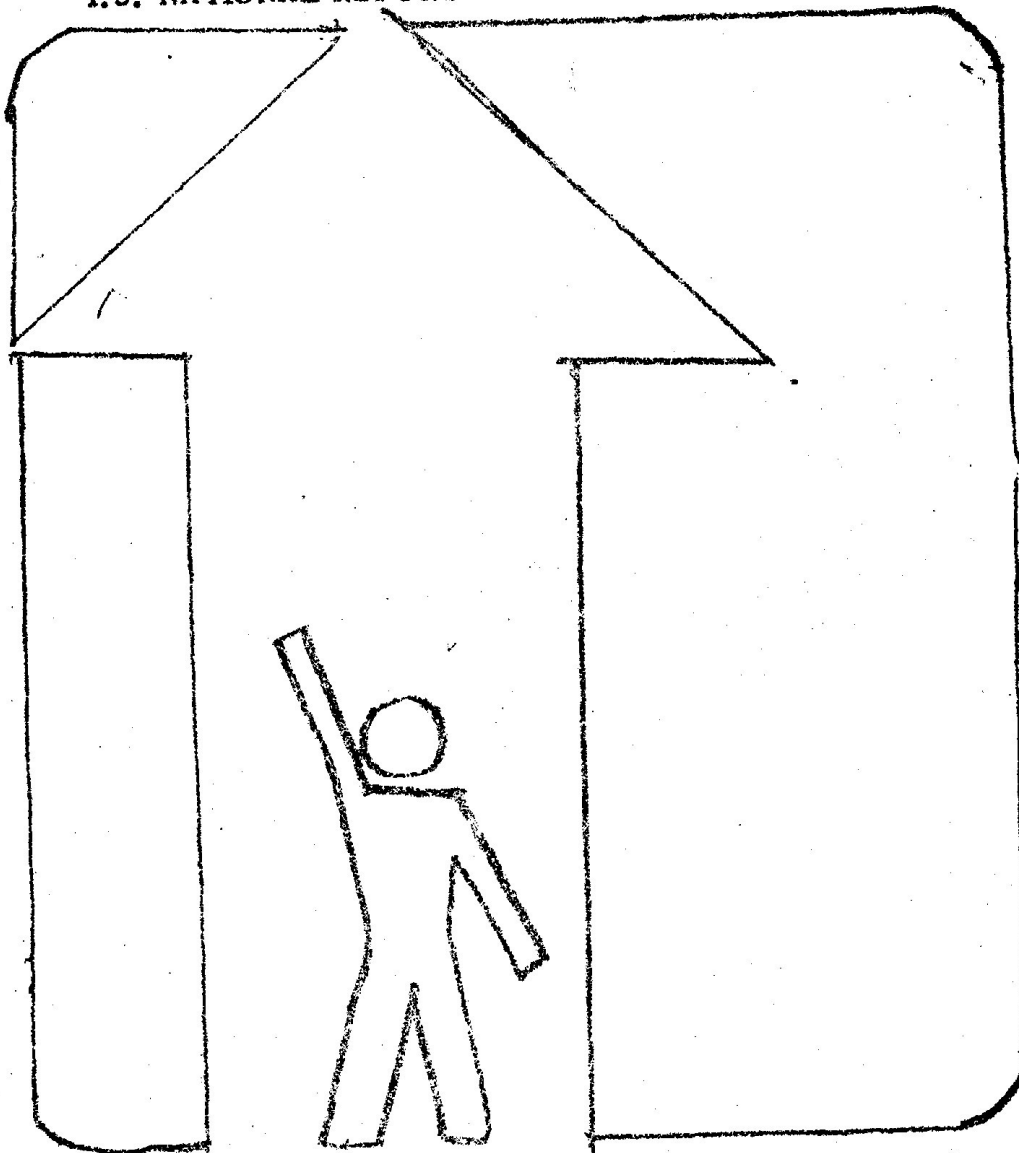


I.S. NATIONAL REPORT



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I. THE PRESENT CONJUNCTURAL SITUATION IN THE U.S.

The class struggle in the immediate situation is slow moving. At the same time, however, contradictions are heightening, particularly in light of the rapid inflation seen in the last few months, which we predicted at our last NC meeting. There is ample evidence of extreme frustration among large sections of the workers. Their wages are being slashed by inflation and higher taxes. Their jobs are becoming even more back breaking as the bourgeois pressure for increased productivity intensifies the already appalling speedup. The "social wage" of the workers is steadily worsening with the degeneration of the cities, education, transit and the whole environment.

Phases I, II, and III represent a variety of techniques designed to accomplish the same task raising both the rate and mass of profits for the capitalists. The intensity and means of controls fluctuate and vary, the goal remains a constant. Relatively low increase in new, real capitalization and technological advance means that increased productivity must come from speedup, overtime, workforce attrition in order to maximize surplus value. While a somewhat looser control of wages for highly organized labor is in evidence this is subject to the Administration judgement of the economic state at any given time. Prices and taxes - making the oppressed, the workers, and the lower middle classes foot the bill - will be comparatively unrestrained in practice. Unemployment will remain chronic and at least constant and the jobless will grow more desperate.

The burden of the capitalist onslaught falls most heavily on the oppressed strata while it hits the working class as a whole. The package of budget cuts on education, welfare and other social services plus poverty and inflation falls upon the most victimized. The calculated stocking of divisions amongst the exploited through racism, sexism and the like exacerbate the situation.

The flip side of the same coin is the growth of the already leviathan state and its controls, regulations and repressions. And within the state the growth of the more authoritarian executive arm accelerates. Not only has Nixon succeeded in enhancing his power vis-a-vis the Congress but he has increasingly disciplined even the executive branch. These are initial steps in the direction of a quasi-Gaullist authoritarianism. Repression grows.

... in authoritarianism is a step in the direction of Bonapartism (where the state seems to stand above the classes and to some extent balances between them in order to protect the capitalists.)

At present the tendency continues but within the framework of both formal democracy and certainly with and not above the bourgeoisie. Fundamentally this is possible only because the system does not yet face an overwhelming challenge from the working class. The relative docility of labor and the collaboration of the labor bureaucracy enables the authoritarian trend to continue. Paradoxically, the same class collaboration makes Bonapartism as yet unnecessary.

The Internationals, the locals, the AFL-CIO are entwined by the state and the corporations. The bureaucracy accepts the necessity of capitalism and so acts as a brake and disciplinary agency over the working class. The lack of an alternative leadership leaves the workers in a state of anger, frustration, and fear. Workers are cynical about their present leadership, the Democrat "friends of labor" - but are also cynical about their own power and capability. They do not as yet trust any alternative leadership, program or strategy. Stable rank and file organizations have failed to develop.

Under these circumstances, there is the likelihood of and an already visible trend towards outbreaks of militant activity that are highly localized and easily isolated. The policy of divide and conquer, rendered easier by the lack of alternative leadership, programmatic strategic and organization, is being pursued with a vengeance. A few recent wildcats, born in desperation, point toward this trend. While a deliberately cautionary policy against premature explosions thus is warranted, it must be linked to a broadening of the now isolated struggles and the heightening of the struggle against the expanding bourgeois onslaught. These are objectively imposed tasks, regardless of our own ability to effectively carry them out at this time.

All evidence demonstrates the increased scope of the international crisis of both capitalism and Stalinism. While America is still strong and hegemonic over most of the world, its power is slowly ebbing. It can still export its own crisis but its allies and partners are faced with class struggles of their own. In many cases, e.g., Britain, France, Italy, the situation is far more critical than here. The U.S. can press them only so far lest it spur a working-class upsurge that would have a lasting impact even at home. The crisis here deepens steadily and while ups and downs are still inevitable, the trend is downward.

The gap, noted above, between the enormous objective pressures upon the workers and their consciousness and state of alternative organization means the likelihood during this period of a profoundly abrupt explosion. No one can fix a date, give an assurance or measure the outcome of such an event. Suffice it to say that if no real alternative leadership is present the opportunity

for real advance is diminished. The possibility of a historic defeat looms in the next period unless such a leadership emerges. It is to the building of such a leadership that we must rededicate ourselves.

## II. THE ROLE OF THE IS AMONGST THE OPPRESSED.

Any policy designed to create such a leadership must begin with seeing the need for unceasingly propagandizing for and agitating for a class-unified struggle at every level. The assault on the working class is accompanied by a ruthless policy of fostering division and isolation within the potentially revolutionary strata. The increasingly centralized attack is under the helm of an increasingly centralized state. A program must be based upon the need for unity and a political attack against the strike. All socialist work within the unions as well as other strata must conform to these imperatives.

All our work must be geared to the idea that the only program that meets the real interests of workers and oppressed is the revolutionary socialist one. Class unity and politics must be achieved on the highest common denominator of interest - a socialist society that meets the objective interests and real aspirations of the exploited. Reforms, trade union demands, democratic demands must be unceasingly wielded by revolutionaries. For any real and lasting gains in these areas cannot be achieved under the leadership of reformers, unionists, or even radical democrats. Only through socialist revolution organized through a political struggle that unifies the exploited on a class conscious program can they be achieved.

For these reasons, revolutionaries prosecute their struggles for such demands in such a way as to channel them into class unifying demands, a transitional program.

Class unity does not take place on an arithmetical basis. The fulcrum of unity is those whose needs place them in the most exploited and oppressed conditions. Their needs are those most demonstrably close to the objective needs of the class as a whole, that is, for a new system. No relative privilege gives them any stake in the present.

However in concrete history oppression does not necessarily result in self-recognition, consciousness and assertion. However the most oppressed layers cannot be neutral. When they are inert, they help prevent the struggle from broadening to a class-wide struggle. If only the relatively well-off and well-organized sectors are in motion, the struggle is divided, sectional, localized. But if the masses of the oppressed go into motion, the struggles of all the layers can much more readily be linked.

Whether the oppressed layers of the working class provide the leadership needed is a function of specific history and strategic strength. In the United States at this time the possibility of Black workers playing this leadership role is real. The severity of the current attack falls hard on blacks in addition to and because of the historic victimization. The recent history of the black struggle in the US has given blacks a far wider consciousness than white workers and a self-confidence only now becoming apparent. Additionally they labor in key industries, on the assembly lines, do the work that keeps the cities going. They have pivotal strength of enormous proportions lodged at the heart of the economy.

They face not simply surface racism and discrimination but the underlying results. They face the full brunt of all the problems of decaying capitalism. The "special" democratic demands that past and present black leaderships have placed in the forefront (as opposed to demands which unite the class and which ultimately point to a struggle for the surplus product) only begin to alleviate the problems of the masses of oppressed. They are only an illusory "solution" if they are not channelled into class unifying demands as a central focus. This is because the general oppression of the masses is inseparably linked to the exploitation of their labor power and because purely democratic demands call for equal rights to a share of a shrinking economic "pie," rather than to the power to create a pie large enough to allow real equality, i.e., expansion of production possible only under socialism.

A class program best fits the needs of blacks and is not simply a mechanism to gain the support of whites although it can and must accomplish that as well.

At present, the black movement is still largely tied to the Democratic Party. The black bourgeois democrats, whether appearing as radicals or conservatives, leading the existing black organizations, show little indication of moving towards a break with the D.P.

At the same time, however, there is a small but growing sector of blacks who are exploring inter-racial, international forms and concepts of struggle, and a growing disillusionment with the moderates in the D.P., the old "integrationism," and black nationalism. On a larger scale, the beginnings of tendencies in a class direction can be seen in the recent East Harlem struggle against school budget cuts, where there was a transcendence beyond ethnic-centered politics, the tendency to view the question of community control as irrelevant or even counter-posed to the question of adequate, quality education, and an openness to a policy of reaching out to the white teachers and others.

Though we can count on a growing respect on the part of whites for blacks' power and leadership, there are also big counter-tendencies on the part of whites in the direction of increased racist hostility toward blacks. This is consciously exacerbated, of course, by Nixon's budget-cutting policies and racist propaganda, by which he seeks to whip up racist sentiment in order to diminish the chances of a class confrontation. This can be expected to continue.

The central leadership role of blacks in the class struggle dictates a high priority on centering our work more and more among black workers and oppressed. A corollary of our central task of furthering our implantation in the working class is that we establish firm roots in its potentially most revolutionary strata.

While blacks have this central position as a result of historic struggle, location, and oppression, revolutionary policy for reasons outlined above dictates the necessity for sharply increasing work amongst Chicanos, Puerto Ricans and other minority oppressed. Women within these strata as well as from other exploited layers must also be a focus.

The recent meat boycott, albeit with a wrong strategy, demonstrated clearly the awakening consciousness and anger not only of middle class and workers but of the housewives in particular. Housewives and women workers (who frequently take the conservative and oppressive attitudes of the family and household with them to work) can be a critical factor in the class struggle. If conservative, they can break a class movement, if radical they can accelerate it a hundredfold.

The enormous response to the boycott heralds for us the opportunity to intervene in an as yet inchoate movement which must be linked through class-wide programs and demands with the organized working class.

The increased anger of the unemployed and the veterans must also find expression in demands and organization linked to the organized center of the class in the labor movement.

A critical avenue to the oppressed is through the prisons. Those cast down to the depths of degradation by capitalism are developing both struggle and consciousness within the penal institutions and a sizeable number are moving toward revolutionary ideas. Involvement not only permits us access to their important struggles against unbelievable conditions, but is a source for future cadre in black, latin and unemployed movements.

## III. GENERAL TASKS OF THE I.S.

The tasks of the present situation are geared to the central long-range task of this period - creating a revolutionary leadership of the working class. The various organizational forms which we put forward to advance the struggle are algebraic: in our propaganda they are all presented as vehicles for building a revolutionary leadership, for which we pose our conceptions of transitional program and our goal of socialism. However, the groups whom we address generally fill these forms with their own content, (just as an  $x$  variable in an algebraic mathematical formula can be filled with various numerical values); that is, these organizational forms are interpreted by the groups whom we address as vehicles for a level of leadership that falls short of revolutionary leadership. We neither ultimatistically counter-pose our conceptions of leadership to these various organizational forms and the leaders they in fact serve at present nor do we simply support these organizations while making muted "constructive criticism" without explaining fully our conceptions of what is needed by objective conditions.

Our central contribution to the class struggle is the building of a revolutionary party, a leadership for a united working class assault on capitalism. The flip side of this coin is our contribution to the development of class consciousness. While presenting our fight for a revolutionary leadership in algebraic terms - i.e. in terms which are meaningful to the people we address by their applicability to struggles less advanced than the revolutionary struggle we are preparing for - is a necessity so that we can fight together with workers of less advanced consciousness, we do not hide our clear, unambiguous position. "Algebra" is not a shell game. Our press, our propaganda, our agitation, our union work (where security permits) is typified by an honest statement that only through socialist revolution and leadership is real social gains of a lasting nature possible. For example, we pose a labor party to those workers who do not yet accept the need for a revolutionary party, and we propose our transitional program for the party. At the same time, we make clear the need for a revolutionary party and ask the most advanced to join the IS.

As the workers move into struggle more rapidly, sections of the bureaucracy will tend to split off and oppose the status quo. Their function (no matter the "consciousness" of the bureaucrat) is to respond to the left pressure of the ranks and to coopt the movement. However a dialectical contradiction is set up whereby many not fully conscious workers are thus set in motion to the left because they see power in the left bureaucrats that they do not yet recognize in themselves.

We do not call for such a development nor desire it. Given the obvious balance of forces we have little choice and cannot pose ourselves as a functional alternative in any immediate sense. Thus we may at times offer "critical support."

Our strategy applies to the emerging reformist currents in the unions. The fact that the reformist leadership may come "sociologically" from the bureaucracy or ranks is not central. It is a function of what program and strategy they put forward to the ranks that matters.

We neither call for a reformist leadership in a union nor for a reformist party. We put forward our program and the need for a revolutionary leadership algebraically so as to enable us to relate to the ranks drawn into struggle by such developments. In coming times this will be "critical support" as a tactic. In the future it will be "united front." The fundamental task is the same. The tactic and strategy varies with the relationship of forces.

Thus the tactic of critical support is neither ultimatum nor support with mild, minor criticisms. Rather it is a tactic designed to win away the base of the reformists and centrists through the means of our program (which can be presented either through propagandistic or agitational forms, depending on circumstances and our resources) which can become clear to the ranks only through struggle. Involved in the struggle we inject our program into that struggle through support for what we have in common with the rest of the movement while criticizing in precise terms where the struggle is being misled, restricted, and held back from a class-wide approach united around the transitional demands. In general we seek to lead the class struggle; otherwise we cannot pose ourselves seriously. However, we do not pretend to have the forces to actually lead today. Rather we pose the conceptions upon which we wish to build the forces that can put us into the leadership.

In engaging in these efforts there is no prescription in advance that can dictate the "art" with which the tactic should be applied. Whether the tone be encouraging or hostile is a function of the situation but the counter-position between our program and the reformist illusions and program is always clear.

The question arises as to how we relate to a rank and file leader who is moving rapidly into agreement with us. Can that be dealt with in the same terms as the MFD, Schrade, Dempsey, Schaeffer, or the future reformist, centrist, Stalinist currents we will have to deal with? Clearly not. Though the same general principles apply in all cases. But with rank and file leaders moving in a leftward course, our application of the principles is patient and welcoming.



Trotsky's resolution to the Comintern on the strategy of the United Front was not marred by the conceivability that a group entering the united front would do so with its leadership and all.

Other important conceptions relating to our industrial and other work in the next period are handled elsewhere on the NC agenda and need not be detailed here.

Suffice to say that our central long-range - but always governing - task is the building of a revolutionary party, a leadership based upon a transitional program for the conquest of power. As the working class fits itself for power through struggle, so does the revolutionary group. We are a small embryo which must grow, theoretically, practically, numerically, etc.

We are in a period where we must harden our cadre. This can occur through the struggle, both physically and ideologically. Only a group with clear ideas forged in conflict can test those ideas and provide leadership. Confused ideas or imposed differences can only lead to a shattering on the first real reef of the class struggle.

#### IV. IMMEDIATE ORGANIZATIONAL PROBLEMS.

A. The I.S. is a propaganda group whose propaganda role has never been clarified. Even those in our industrial work who believe that we must initiate struggle on a minimal basis are forced to begin with written exposition of conceptions about what the problems are and how they can be solved. This is propaganda.

The problem with propaganda on such a level is that it is incapable of telling the workers much they don't already know other than a few facts and figures. Since minimal struggles offer few solutions by themselves, and the workers instinctively know this, propaganda alone on this level merely enforces the cynicism and demoralization which we are trying to combat.

What we must learn to do is to present propaganda which clearly presents over time our full program, both on the questions of the general nature of socialism, but more importantly at this juncture on our general conceptions of the unfolding of the class struggle.

Our road to the working class is through the advanced layers. Unless the full revolutionary strategy is presented (as far as we understand it) we miss this critical layer. It is to this layer we present our strategy of how we wish to reach and engage with less advanced layers. At this time an advanced layer "is in the process of becoming." This layer is asking for a fundamental solution to fundamental questions of society. That is the way we must pose our

answer along with a strategy of reaching the less advanced (so that they will become advanced through struggle) so we can attain our goal.

In addressing ourselves to the question of propaganda, we do so because of the severe problems of the I.S. in this area. To believe however that because of our efforts in this direction - and because the I.S. is a propaganda group - that nothing else is necessary, is to pose a disastrous road. Both propaganda and the agitation for clear immediately understandable ideas are necessary. Both must feature our interventions into the living struggle as well as our "general education work."

Failure to intervene in living struggles and to take initiative where possible is contrary to both the possibilities and necessities of our times. Failure to intervene agitationaly and organizationally renders our propagandistic useless. We live in a period in the life of our organization where a turn into the physical struggle of the workers is an absolute necessity. A tendency that does not accomplish this task is doomed to be a debating society.

In the present situation we will find both "lulls" and "ups" in terms of the struggle. A cadre is forged during both developments. We do not loosen or slacken during the "lull" but remain organizationally poised to intervene as soon as the struggle permits. We have the opportunity to intervene in hundreds of ways - union situations being the most notable. The recent boycott should have set off at least probes as to how to involve ourselves in a movement where we disagree with the tactic but welcome the growth of consciousness. An initiative-oriented role in terms of Wounded Knee support and demonstrations has brought us into real relationships with oppressed groups in certain locales. Active intervention in prisoner work also has and can provide real opportunities. Comrades trained only by conceptions of student mass struggles may miss smaller but very significant opportunities.

B. Internal problems abound in the I.S. Here it is only necessary to mention a few salient ones.

The central agreed upon ideas of the I.S. have never been fundamentally clarified.

Differences have existed from the beginning of our organizational existence but have rarely been sharply posed. Therefore, groupings declared and undeclared have been in constant but unclear clash. In the past several small tendencies formed, put forward their politics and left our ranks. Because they were not adequately responded to, the organization gained little clarification in the process.

The National Secretary believes that an advance has been made in the direction of clarification. The differences have always been present and any false sense of unity based upon smudged discussion cannot lead to a serious hard cadre formation. As a leadership we have put forward a series of positions that have resulted in clearer counter-positions as a by-product. Our line is to that degree more testable as to its correctness or incorrectness when the struggle opens to a point where more lessons can be learned.

The heated character of the dispute is related to the continued lack of fully developed politics. Clearly more organized and less ad hoc forms of groupings would be more responsible as the differences develop before our eyes.

An old fold saying has it that a "patient can die from such improvements." We do not believe this is true of the IS. We are in a period where the actual struggle of the class will accelerate to a point where the lineups of today will be tested not simply in theory but in practice. Fluid changes are always possible in such times. We believe the IS is fluid and serious enough to congeal its ideas in more profound and sharper forms so it can meet the struggle more adequately.

After the last convention there were two major groupings. A majority formed based upon the documents passed by the convention. It felt that the perspectives were sharp enough to indicate a general direction but insufficient to lay the basis for an organized caucus. Its general politics at that juncture can be culled from the convention documents. It felt that in general it opposed the Minority (the past leadership; later the Transformation Caucus based upon Convention amendments) because of its past failure to lead, give a perspective or clarify the politics of the I.S. On a political level it felt it had at least a degree of agreement on the importance of basing one's work on a transitional program, opposition to what it felt was the minority's "workerism," "minimalist and trade unionist" conceptions of politics, "its obeisance before black nationalism," "the lack of a social presence" conception, etc.

Within the majority there were even at that point discernable currents and differences albeit not clearly delineated ones.

As politics has been developed from the N.O. the differences within the majority have if not grown at least have become more clear. The majority comrades on the 7 member NAC constituted 4 - Landy, Tabor, Hobson, and Finkel. The differences between the first three and the fourth comrade have been readily apparent. Consequently only a rare politically differentiable motion, position, or strategy

has passed with all 4 concurring. This has meant practically speaking that there was leadership reigning but not ruling and therefore not subject to a clear responsibility for leading since its positions rarely passed.

Off the NAC the same differences became apparent as well between the Brian M., Gay S., Ilene W. and Bill H. strand in New York and Landy-Tabor-Hobson. They felt in the MFD discussion that the Landy-Tabor-Hobson position might be leading the IS in possibly "dangerous" directions. They made their critique of our course the first section of their document while running for the New York Exec in a contested election. These acts amongst others were not only their right but their duty in indicating the differences they felt with our active delineation of our views.

At this point it would be well for the various positions to formally organize themselves based upon cleare-cut political statements since political differentiation has crystallized sufficiently for any other course to be unprincipled and covert. For myself and Cdes. Tabor and Hobson, we consider the tendency we initiate to be within the Majority but in an organized relationship to other groups and individuals within the Majority. Our statement of tendency will make clear our estimate of agreements and disagreements as well as differentiation from the Transformation Caucus. We take this Report to indicate the above material because it directly affects the leadership of the I.S.

#### V. SOME PROPOSALS.

A. 1. Maintenance of the policy of industrialization in priority industries established by the convention. Request that all branches (except industrial midwest) canvass their memberships to beef up the new and promising Cleveland branch which still has our priority for colonization. (For detail on industrialization see Industrial Secretary's Report to this NC.)

2. The Black-Brown Coordinating work under Don Cane has gotten off to a promising start. Authorize the issuance of a bulletin under his aegis with the political guidance of the NAC.

3. The Women's Commission has been functioning for a short period of time with a functionary, Shelly Landau. Authorize the periodic appearance of a bulletin under the aegis of the Commission with the political guidance of the NAC. Work with Industrial Coordinator to intensify women's industrialization.

4. The past NC adopted a position favoring propaganda for a labor party based on our full program which we deem transitional in character. The labor party demand was coupled with the idea that it be based upon the rank and file. Associated in our literature and activity with this demand was the call for a Congress of Labor and the Oppressed to initiate it. (Whether this position even though adopted received sufficient discussion on the NC and in the organization so that the line is really "internalized" is questionable; therefore it is raised again here.)

5. Our priorities in terms of recruitment are workers, blacks, and latinos. ((See Insert below.))

6. Propaganda line stressing that blacks take the lead in the class struggle become more accentuated and dominant as our approach.

7. Continue to attempt a black prisoners' defense case campaign. Expand our prisoner work by urging more branches to get involved. Expand the prisoners' literature fund now being initiated and laying the basis for a tour in connection with this work.

8. Propagandize more fully in our press and publications for the necessity of a revolutionary leadership in the unions as one aspect of our propaganda for the necessity of a revolutionary leadership in the unions as one aspect of our propaganda for the necessity of a revolutionary party. Neither development is imminent or should be posed in that fashion but the idea **must be** propagated directly and indirectly. Mere assertion is insufficient, the idea must be developed.

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\* ((Insert after point 5 above))

a. We must seek out avenues for contact and joint work with these workers, strike support, boycott, prisoner defense committees, unemployed work, etc.

b. We must intensify our recruitment efforts. We urge the branches to assign comrades to devote time to recruitment of workers, (esp. black and brown) contacts. We should begin putting out literature in Spanish.

B. 1. The fulfillment of the task of giving clear leadership to the I.S. demands the clearest majority possible on the NAC. Therefore the NC is requested to reorganize the MAC so as to give a clear mandate to the tendency initiated by Landy, Tabor, and Hobson. This would define responsibility for leadership in a more clear-cut fashion.

2. Instruct the NAC to reorganize the Editorial Board of Workers' Power to give a safe majority and editorship to the same tendency leading the NAC.

The above stated proposal we believe to be the best answer to the clouded problem of leadership responsibility in the I.S. at the moment. We are willing and anxious to demonstrate the efficacy of our political line.

The other alternatives open to the NC are less satisfactory in establishing clarity. (1) Maintenance of the present situation. (2) a 'triumvirate' committee of six. (3) A leadership based upon a Transformation Caucus - Brian M.,-Gay S.,-Ilene W.,-Bill H. bloc. (4) A clear majority to the Brian M., Gay S., Ilene W., Bill H. grouping.

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## BRIEF INDUSTRIAL DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Since the general analysis and method that guides my approach to our work is set forth in the National Secretary's Report and elsewhere, I will not go into that here. Instead, I will discuss some specifics of our industrialization and colonization efforts and make some suggestions to further progress in this arena and in the coordination of our labor work in general.

Colonization. The colonization of midwest industrial cities is central to our orientation toward implanting ourselves in strategic sectors of the economy and the labor movement. At the present time, we have succeeded in establishing the Detroit and Chicago branches as centers with capacities for self-sustained growth through recruitment. Cleveland, our next priority, now has a stable nucleus of comrades, significant contacts and some excellent recruitment prospects. Furthermore, we have gotten some M/L's to commit themselves to moving there and are expective to do so. Despite our relative successes to date, Cleveland remains our chief national colonization priority. (Future targets are St. Louis, Mo.; and a major southern city still to be determined.) The colonization of New Jersey, to be handled by the N.Y. branch has been slow to get off the ground, and efforts should be stepped up.

Industrialization. In this sphere, our achievements have been modest over the past months, largely because of difficulties in finding openings in decent positions. Generally speaking, we can report progress in two areas: IBT and AFSCME/public employment. In the IBT, we have a presence in 6 major cities, and a number of comrades have gotten, or are in the process of getting, Class 1 licenses, which will increase our mobility within the industry. In AFSCME we have a presence in 4 cities, most of which is in hospitals, while in at least one other city we have a presence in public employment that is organized by a non-AFSCME union.

In other priority sectors we have remained more or less stable: UAW (a slight increase), APT (about the same), while in other sectors we have declined: CWA/telephone and USWA/steel, mostly because of a conscious decision to transfer people into other industrial locations or into other industrial locations or into other work.

The present economic upturn which has had some positive impact on the employment situation makes it essential that we step up our efforts. Since it is not clear how long before unemployment statistics start heading up again, comrades who are "considering industrializing in the future" are urged to take the necessary steps now, while jobs can still be had, while comrades presently "floating", etc., are urged to do likewise. Branches should establish coordinators or sub-committees of the execs and/or labor fractions to oversee and coordinate this work.

Women. We have still failed to make sufficient progress in the industrialization of women comrades. Although women comrades are located in every priority area with the exception of one, they are in many cases industrialized singly. I will be working with the Women's Commission to further the industrialization of women. For the present, we should consider UAW, CWA, AFSCME as our top priorities for women comrades.

Fractions. Our efforts to establish functioning national fractions have not been successful. Of the total, only one (the IBT) can be said to be functioning at all. The others have no functioning steering committees or coordinators or have failed to organize necessary communications. In part this is the result of limited resources and the breadth of the country. In part, it has been the failure to find individuals with the time and experience to carry the necessary responsibility for this work. I have attempted to maintain contact with a number of individuals and fractions through my own correspondence, but this is obviously not a substitute for actual national coordinating committees.

One result of the failure of the fractions to get off the ground has been a virtually complete lack of coordination in our labor work. There have been few perspectives written that offer guidance in day-to-day work, for example, and few experienced people capable of giving advice on a day-to-day basis. Our established practice has been to allow each fraction to commission, discuss, and adopt its own perspectives in the context of the labor perspective adopted at the last convention. Unfortunately, with only some partial exceptions, the fractions have not produced completed perspectives, while the NAC has hesitated to intervene directly. The result has been a reinforcement of the centrifugal tendencies in our work.

As a step toward more coherent functioning, we are considering the following proposal: (1) that where national fractions exist, the fractions select steering committees, or if that is impractical a coordinator to work with the industrial director in drawing up perspectives and coordinating and supervising the work of the fractions; (2) that where no fraction exists, a coordinator be selected by the NAC to work with the industrial director to establish communication and coordinate the work; (3) that where the fractions fail to meet and adopt perspectives, that the NAC have responsibility for developing at least the outlines of proposals for this work. (Note: it should not be necessary to explain that the NAC has authority over the functioning of the fractions between meetings of the National Committee. As noted above, however, the NAC has hesitated intervening directly in this work, except when specifically asked, preferring instead to attempt to have this intervention occur through fraction steering committees, coordinators, etc. This has not been effective and as a result fractions have functioned in an almost completely autonomous manner, not exactly the model for a disciplined organization.)

Rank and file publications. Our work in these publications, in many areas central to our intervention, has been extremely disappointing. Although we have increased our knowledge of the specific characteristics of the labor movement in given industries and locales, we have generally failed to put forward a consistent political orientation. For the most part, our writing is limited to a discussion of local issues (often one specific work place) and approached from a trade-union point of view. Rarely are more political questions discussed and almost never do we attempt



to put forward a viable strategy. We should be utilizing the specific events and developments of the various unions, workplaces, regions, etc., where we are active as a means to discuss as concretely as possible (1) the present capitalist crisis and what its relationship is to the employers' offensive, (2) the role of the labor bureaucracy, its relationship to the corporations and to the capitalist state, (3) the need for a struggle against the state, for smashing the wage controls, for building a labor party based on a transitional program, (4) the centrality of struggles around the transitional demands, the need for a class-wide response, etc. In addition, we should seek whatever means at our disposal to explain the relationship between present struggles and our overall goal of building a revolutionary party. In other words, we should be seeking to explain the seriousness of the emerging crisis, expose the role of the labor bureaucracy, and demonstrate the need for a class-wide struggle against the state and for a revolutionary leadership of the working class.

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*[Faint, mostly illegible text follows, appearing to be a list or series of notes.]*

AMENDMENTS TO NATSEC REPORT: SECTION 5A  
Dave F.

1. Add to point 3 (Women's Commission):

The Women's Commission is instructed to pursue its efforts to obtain writers for two pieces of literature: a basic women's liberation pamphlet directed toward working class women, based on the women's liberation perspective passed by the NC; and an analytical-educational pamphlet on the question of black women, based on the WL and BL perspectives passed by the convention and NC. (Note: the latter pamphlet is not conceived of as a "special introductory pamphlet for black women"; the basic WL pamphlet must be aimed at them as well as working class women in general, and include our program and strategy for the self-organization of black women to fight their special oppression. The pamphlet on black women, on which the WC has held one preliminary discussion, should contain a fairly full analysis, based on our theoretical and programmatic approaches to black and women's liberation, of the position of black women in society, in the work force, and in the black community, and the relationship of women's liberation to black liberation.) Further, the Commission is instructed to solicit full theoretical documents on women's liberation from all points of view in the organization, in preparation for the Convention. These documents should be prepared from the standpoint that the position adopted by the Convention will become a basic piece of external I.S. literature as well.

2. Substitute for point 4 (labor party):

The necessity of independent political action by labor to form an independent political party of the working class, should be a central focus of the propaganda in our press, and remains central to our rank and file union activity and intervention in other working class and oppressed movements. We seek to raise this conception whenever it contributes to raising consciousness, linking the IPA conception to immediate critical issues as appropriate--the political struggle against the wage controls, the struggle for trade union independence from the state, the struggle against imperialist foreign policy, to enforce safety rights and fight to expand those rights, etc.

In more general propaganda, the labor party demand can be raised in connection with a fuller set of transitional demands, including nationalization of basic industry under workers' control and a workers' government. In this period, however, it is our view that in our daily work and in our rank and file bulletins the call for IPA can be linked chiefly with programmatic demands based on more limited struggles against the corporations and the union bureaucracy--even though most militants, even the best, do not yet share our views on this issue. In this connection, our work at the recent UNC conference in arguing for opposition to all Democratic candidates, despite the over-all failure of the conference and the extremely small rank and file audience, was a very modest but nonetheless significant success. It was of particular importance that our comrades clearly exposed the role of black Democratic politicians, in opposition to the opportunist demagogery of members of the C.P.

3. Add to point 5 (recruitment):

c. Branches are instructed to provide political back-up work for industrialized comrades, by establishing classes and other forms for the political education of worker-contacts in industrial arenas. This is a pre-condition for effective recruitment of even small numbers of workers from industry. Classes, discussion groups, etc. should be organized in consultation with industrialized comrades, who should not

however have to carry the organizational burden of setting them up and convening them.

d. Our goal is not the recruitment of workers on the basis of minimal politics. We win our contacts to our full politics as the basis for joining the I.S. We cannot have illusions about transforming ourselves into a mass organization through accretion in this period. Accordingly, we reject the notion--implicit in our functioning in the past though rarely explicitly argued for--that workers should be recruited to the I.S. on a minimal "class struggle" basis without arriving at agreement with us on political questions, especially questions of the liberation of oppressed groups, an understanding of basic ideas of Marxism, the principles of the third camp, etc. While it is understood that we do not expect workers to join the organization as "intellectual sophisticates," we differentiate this sharply from norms of political agreement on which we recruit workers as others to our full politics.

4. Substitute for point 6:

Our propaganda stresses that black workers must take the lead in the struggle to defend themselves and their communities. They must do this through their own self-organization and through wielding their power in the unions. In the course of fighting for union action around the needs of black people, we advance the idea that black workers can and will (1) take the lead in the class struggle as a whole, as the demands made to defend black people pose the need to smash the entire anti-labor corporate and state offensive; (2) lead a fight against the union bureaucracies, especially black union bureaucrats whose toadying to the racist International leaderships leads them to sell out all black rights. In line with our Convention Black Liberation resolution, urge that black workers draw the conclusions that flow from this analysis, i.e. that they organize to play the leading role in the class struggle, that they take up a classwide struggle against unemployment, wage controls, etc. and for working class independent political action.

5. Substitute for point 8:

We propagandize fully in our press and publications - as we have generally failed to do in the past - to explain how our rank and file agitation and program is related to our perspective for building a socialist workers' movement and a revolutionary party. In our press, we show why we believe that the emergence of a militant rank and file opposition movement in the unions, and the role that socialists play within that movement in working with militants to develop program, strategy and tactics for struggle, can give rise to a socialist layer of working class militants who must be forged into the central cadre of the American revolutionary party. In rank and file bulletins, we formulate political ideas in a manner that attempts to lead workers in a socialist direction, in terms that speak directly to the consciousness of militants engaged in struggle. We link the rank and file program to broader political ideas, explaining our view that the changes that workers want to win today can be won through workers relying on their own strength and organization, by making alliances with other workers and oppressed peoples, and by independent political action to fight for social changes that are desperately needed in this society. Through such propaganda in rank and file bulletins we will show militants the relevance of our socialist politics and begin to win the best of them to us.

6. Add a new point \_\_\_\_\_

## 6. Add a new point 9:

The tense and difficult internal situation in the I.S. today demands certain exceptional measures to safeguard the mutual confidence and loyalty of the several political tendencies and currents inside the organization. In no way do we wish to abandon any aspect of our functioning as a disciplined organization with an interventionalist line. On the contrary we want to improve our functioning in this respect, and to create a leadership which will provide a consistent line to be put forward as the organization's line and to be tested in practice. Similarly, we do not regard our press as primarily an arena for internal discussion and controversy, but rather as an interventionalist socialist propaganda newspaper with a clear political line. Nonetheless, the current factional situation demands that political clarification and intervention be combined with measures by the leadership to ensure comradely relations and the broadest possible discussion of all questions in dispute. Toward this end the NC issues the following instructions to the NAC:

a. The priority task of the NAC in the next period is the preparation of the Convention and the organizing of pre-Convention discussion. Deadlines for documents must be rigorously held to, absolutely without exception, so that adequate time for amendments and counter-documents, and full discussions of these in the branches before delegate elections, is assured. If the NAC finds this to be impossible it must postpone the Convention for a period not to exceed three months - not at the last moment but in time for the organization of proper pre-Convention discussion.

b. Fractions, industrial and otherwise, must function externally on the basis of the clearest possible political line and are obligated to account for this line to the NAC and other appropriate bodies (execs, fraction steering committees, etc.). At the same time, the role of the leadership is to win the fractions to its point of view politically, by demonstrating the efficacy of its own line in practice first and foremost in those fractions where it has the effective political majority. While the leadership must hold all fractions responsible for a full explanation and evaluation of their perspectives and successes or failures, the organization as a whole demands of the leadership that its point of view not remain on paper but be carried out most consistently by those comrades in the organization who agree with that viewpoint.

c. While the central task of the newspaper remains that outlined by the previous NC motion - the consistent propagation of the line and program of the organization - the editorial board and NAC are instructed to organize, in the next period, series of discussion articles for the press on major questions of controversy. All points of view are to be represented in such articles. The purpose of this is twofold: to allow the leadership to present its views consistently in the paper as a whole; and to allow (and if possible force) all tendencies to put their views forward in a manner suitable for external rather than just internal polemical use. Such discussion articles, as part of the pre-Convention discussion as a whole, should help to alleviate suspicions and fears of political suppression which exist in the I.S. The topics on which discussions are to be organized include: (i) transitional program and its use; (ii) theory of women's liberation; (iii) socialist trade union perspectives; (iv) International perspectives; (v) other topics which the editorial board may select.

"BUILDING THE LEADERSHIP": THE FRAUD AND THE FANTASY

David F.

As a member of the national Majority, I would like to strongly urge that the NC reject the political sections (I-IV) of the NATSEC Report to the April NC. Section V of the report contains proposals for the next period, to which I have some amendments which are presented separately. Sections I-IV, however, are not only unsupportable but unamendable. The reason for this is that their starting point and central thrust--namely, that the focus of our trade union work and intervention in other working class struggles should be to fight for the idea of the necessity of revolutionary leadership--is both a fraud and a fantasy.

The conception of "building the leadership" in the Report is a fraud, in the sense that in no way does it reflect either the perspectives documents passed by the Convention on which the present Majority was constituted, nor is it in any way based on the actual labor work of the organization (whether the fractions be led by Majority comrades or others). At the same time, the Report does not provide any concrete critique of either those documents or of our practical work, in order to show where it has departed from previous perspectives. In other words, it either falsifies the perspectives of the organization or else proposes a major change--whose exact content is left unstated, probably because the comrades who propose it do not know themselves exactly what they want or where they are heading--in those perspectives.

The conception of "building the leadership" in the Report is also a fantasy, in the sense that it reflects more than anything else the isolation of the organization from most real struggles to construct a rank and file movement and leadership in the labor movement. It is probably no accident that the position that called for counterposing our program to all reformist programs, in order to show "the necessity for a revolutionary leadership as opposed to any reformist leadership," was first put forward in the discussion of the UMW, where our direct influence is absolutely nil. (This unfortunately does not improve matters any, since the point of view put forward can only reinforce our isolation--not only because it has no political meaning to the militants to whom it is supposedly addressed, but even more importantly because it totally disorients the I.S. in its relation to the real world.) This also helps to explain why the Report substitutes empty abstractions about leadership, and equally empty formulas about classwide unity, for an understanding of the process by which militants can be won to revolutionary socialist politics.

The labor perspectives document passed by the convention put forward a certain assessment of the tasks for socialists in the labor movement, and a certain conception of the use of demands and program (including political and transitional demands) in the course of struggle. This method was counterposed to the method of various sects, of which it was said, "Their's is a totally intellectual method of winning workers to a program." The current NATSEC Report, on the other hand, represents a virtually pure distillation of the latter method. Not, of course, that Sy et. al. do not want to become directly involved in the class struggle. Like the entire organization, they are totally committed to this. The problem, however, is that what they think we should be doing, applied to this period, represents a purely intellectual method. Rather than seeing tactics, strategy, and transitional program as vehicles for advancing the self-activity, consciousness, and organization of the ranks, we are now told that "revolutionaries prosecute their struggles for reforms, trade union demands, democratic demands in such a way as to channel them into class unifying demands, a transitional program."

Whereas, in the past, we viewed transitional demands as a bridge from existing consciousness to the necessity of a broader and more political struggle--

as a means of building the struggle and for establishing the relevance of socialist ideas in the labor movement, from which they have been long absent--the program now becomes defined as the goal of our participation in the struggle itself. This is not a problem of one poor formulation or vague idea in the document. It is expressed repeatedly throughout the document as a whole, as well as all the other documents presented to the NC by its supporters.

Only this disorientation within the Majority, represented by the politics of the NATSEC Report--i.e., the fact that its supporters have adopted a new and highly distorted idea of the problems of program and leadership in our labor work--can explain some of the other conceptions that have been put forward in recent documents. Most notable among these is the idea that the terms "program", "politics", and "leadership" can be used interchangeably. We are now being told that to politicize our trade union work, the struggle for revolutionary leadership should be put forward in our rank and file bulletins. (No doubt some comrades, who may not have been able to keep up with the extremely rapid evolution of this new idea, will accuse me of slander for this. Before getting upset, please refer to Section VA, point 8 on p. 12 of the NATSEC Report and the last section of the Industrial Director's Report.) We have also learned that the Transitional Program (not necessarily the one of 1938, although it isn't stated when or why it changed except on the Russian Question) remained valid through the 1950s (this is to be found in Ron T.'s "On the Transitional Program"). This can only be explained by the fact that the program is now conceived not as a vehicle for building and broadening struggle, but rather as the defining idea of the revolutionary party (or sect--same difference). This, in fact, is the content of Sy's contribution to the recent NAC discussions on program. Finally, only this same disorientation can explain why the fundamental proposition that a transitional program is based on objective conditions and the nature of the period is now transformed into the notion that the program is independent of objective conditions, or (what amounts to the same thing) that the objective conditions of the 1950s were the same as 1938. This is proven by explaining to us that capitalism was not a progressive system in the 1950s. In this way transitional program, like the "struggle for revolutionary leadership" with which it is used interchangeably, becomes an "objectified" intellectual device rather than an interventionist vehicle to be used in struggle.

The tragedy of this, of course, is that a leadership "armed" with this approach to the tasks of the I.S. in the working class can do nothing to confront the very real problems of politics, program and leadership that have confronted our industrialized comrades in their work. The fact is that most of the rank and file bulletins we have produced are filled with nothing but the most apolitical agitation, often pitched at a level below the level of consciousness of the workers they supposedly address, and generally fail to put forward even the rudiments of a direction for struggle. In my opinion, our work in auto is only the most consistent--and therefore the worst--example of this. In one arena after another, our comrades find themselves in danger of entangling themselves in a miserable bureaucratic slate, being forced to take leadership in volatile situations for which neither they nor the workers are prepared, or finding their attempts to establish a rank and file group destroyed by Maoist sectarians who want to construct an all-black caucus under their own hegemony. "Objective conditions" cry out indeed for a "revolutionary leadership"--first and foremost, for a leadership in the I.S. which could provide political, programmatic and strategic guidance to the fractions in these situations. Instead, the organization is asked in effect to choose between the most minimal, apolitical agitational conception of organizing on the one hand--an approach defended and put into practice by the auto fraction leadership, which to be sure also has in

its back pocket a program of several hundred demands which reminds one of the Big Red student program of 1970 and seems to be constructed especially for the purpose of demonstrating the irrelevance of program in general--and on the other hand telling the workers to fight for revolutionary leadership, although Ron T. in his document explains that we will only put ourselves forward concretely as such a leadership in the unions when we begin to attract a few workers.

(Incidentally, I want to make it clear at this point that none of this criticism is directed at Ron T. in his day-to-day work as industrial secretary. Working under difficult conditions, receiving little assistance from the rest of the NAC and virtually no regular feedback or perspectives from the fractions, he has provided comrades in industry with virtually all of the concrete guidance and advice they have received from the center.)

On the questions of oppressed groups, especially black workers, I do not want to get into a long discussion of the politics of the NATSEC report except to indicate briefly that I consider them completely bankrupt (for a fuller discussion of how I think the black question should be approached comrades can consult my amendment of section VA, point 6, plus previous documents, particularly the Coleman-Finkel amendments passed by the Convention and Brian Mackenzie's discussion document in Bulletin #27). In any case, what Sy puts forward here--that black demands pose "only an illusory 'solution' if they are not channelled into class unifying demands as a central focus... (i.e.) demands which united the class and which ultimately point to a struggle for the surplus product"--is a crude caricature of his own Convention document and thus does not particularly merit a special critique here. It is only worth mentioning that the reason for the caricaturing of what the Majority has stood for on this issue, including those in agreement with Sy's resolution as well as supporters of the C/F amendments, lies in the same fundamental disorientation on Sy's part since that time on the use of program and the role of socialists in providing leadership for working class and oppressed people's struggles.

Since the question of oppressed groups will be a big issue at this NC, including heated charges and counter-charges among the various tendencies, a few further remarks are in order here. If evidence is needed for my contention that the minority's rhetorical championing of special Black demands, the right of self-determination, Black self-organization and so forth are mainly for the purpose of internal polemics and lengthy discussion documents, it is conclusively provided by their concrete labor work and their contributions to the newspaper in the recent period. The special problems of black workers receive no attention in our auto work, either in the rank and file bulletins (where only a few anti-discrimination demands occasionally punctuate the articles on speedup and safety, except in the case of the paper published by the caucus which is almost all Black to begin with) or in WORKERS POWER where they are blissfully ignored. (The last article on Black workers in auto that I remember in WP, aside from recent material on St. Louis GMAD, appeared in either #20 or #21, although I haven't had time to check and may have forgotten one or two. This does not count labor-in-brief shorts). If one wishes to compare the much-debated UNC conference articles written respectively by "Franklin Gothic" (Roger Cid) and Joe F., one finds that the former discusses the relationship of black workers to a rank and file struggle in auto while the latter ignores the question. Other articles written on concrete working class struggles by minority comrades--the Tuley High and teachers' strike articles from Chicago, etc--have a more or less pure-and-simple integrationist or fight-racism line. (NOTE: when such articles are edited, particularly on the Black question, they are sometimes rewritten somewhat for emphasis or clarity. The politics, however, are not altered,

at least not intentionally. In all honesty they are not always completely understandable--a remark which is not aimed only at minority comrades.) By way of contract, the articles on Canarsie and East Harlem by NY majority comrades have have much better treatment of Black struggles.

The picture is not entirely one-sided, however. In our teachers work in Detroit, where a small opposition group in which we are active has had an ongoing debate over the issue of community control and the Black question, a leaflet produced under the direct guidance of leading Majority comrades in agreement with Sy's viewpoint, putting forward the program of a small grouping consisting of our comrade and close I.S. contacts for the union election, contains an otherwise excellent discussion of the crisis and demands to solve it without a single sentence, line or word on the questions of racism or the Black community. On the whole, then, little is to be gained politically from another round of accusations about who is not interested in the struggles of the specially oppressed groups. Everyone in the organization has an intense interest in these movements and recruiting from them; the point is that neither the rhetoric of the minority nor the primitive "class unity" concept of the NATSEC Report offer any political vehicle for this.

Naturally, this general indictment of the NATSEC Report and the role of the NAC in general is hardly a defense of my own role. I take full responsibility for my own share of the confusion which has emanated from the NAC in the past months: both in failing to clearly indicate my differences with the other majority comrades on question where we have voted differently, and for going too far in accomodating to their new point of view on others. Whether or not I remain on the NAC following the NC, this statement signals an intention to wage a vigorous struggle--both within the Majority and in the organization generally--to clarify my point of view and fight for it. It is my view that many comrades in the new tendency whose formation is announced in the NATSEC Report, possibly including its leadership, can be won to a careful re-examination of the politics which constituted the core of the Majority at the Convention and to abandoning the disorienting conceptions they have developed, in favor of a careful development of the Convention perspectives and their patient application to our labor work. The main danger at this point is that the "Building the Leadership" fantasy has developed so rapidly, so unchecked by experience and contact with the real world and the working class--an isolation which inevitably affects the political perceptions of all of us--that this leadership may be unable to control its own further evolution or to confront the political disasters to which its present course is leading.

At the same time, it is also crucial that comrades in the minority be won--through their own experience and through discussion--toward a programmatic approach to intervention in the working class as outlined in the labor perspectives document, an approach they currently reject as "programitis" or as being suited only to a pre-revolutionary situation. Needless to say, I do not believe that this can possibly be done on the basis of the conceptions in the NATSEC Report. It is my perspective that a long period of experience, education and debate will be needed before the organization is fundamentally united on the practical and strategic tasks facing us in the working class. As the telephone documents indicate, it took at least 18 months for a small group of comrades in one arena--a group which began with relatively close general political agreement--to develop a conscious and worked-out direction for their practical work. A longer period than this will be necessary before a thoroughly self-conscious and confident perspective is worked out by the I.S. as a whole. It is critical that in the coming period,



the clearest and most precise possible debate and evaluation of our work be combined with an atmosphere of openness and mutual loyalty which permits the scientific testing of ideas in practice and which does not cause comrades to be paralyzed by the fear that any mistakes or failures will instantly become points to be scored in a faction fight.

Finally, it is my particular responsibility to account briefly for the newspaper in the recent period. As comrades will note, the NATSEC Report proposes a change in the editorial board and editorship to give Sy's tendency control over the paper. Under the circumstances that exist at this point, and the difficulties facing this tendency as it attempts to lead the organization, this may well be the correct course. Nonetheless, it is also necessary to mention that over the last several months, not because of individual irresponsibility but because of pressures of other work, Sy's point of view has not been represented on the editorial board (Chris has been on a leave from the staff until the last couple of weeks, and Sy quit coming to E.B. meetings). The result is that the paper has been virtually the responsibility of the staff during this period. This helps to explain why the paper has not reflected any clear line for most of the period since the last NC.

The specific examples of confusion and lack of clarity in the paper reflect by and large the confusion on the NAC, and do not require a special discussion at this point. We have, however, improved the quantity and quality of our coverage on labor and Black questions, and begun women's coverage as well--mostly as the staff has enlarged and gained experience.

Lastly, comrades will note that one of my amendments to the "proposals" section of the report contains a proposal that the paper in the next period contain a series of discussion articles on topics of controversy from all points of view in the organization. I am not sure that this proposal is workable, and perhaps it should be dropped. I would like to see some discussion of it, however, since I believe that under the current circumstances a responsible leadership would in fact attempt to organize such discussions in the press as part of the pre-Convention discussion. I am for the leadership, however it is constituted, controlling the press and making the paper reflect its line. I also believe that under the current situation we need a "safety valve" to counter suspicions that some views might not be given expression in the paper or might be suppressed generally. It would also be a good idea if advocates of certain views--especially that of "building the leadership" in the NATSEC Report--were put in the position of having to show what these views look like when they are put forward to an audience of working class militants.

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#### A BRIEF POSTSCRIPT

As comrades will note, both from the above discussion and from the NATSEC Report which I am attacking, most of the concrete discussion of the question of "building the leadership" will revolve around the trade union questions. At this point, it is in our labor work that the notion that the central thrust of our work is to fight for a revolutionary leadership has emerged.

There is some evidence, however, both in the speed with which this still-evolving notion has developed and in certain other positions which crop up occasionally--such as Margaret's view of the role of the vanguard in the workers' state,

put forward in the motivation to her women's liberation amendments--that the debate over leadership may take on a broader and more fundamental character than simply trade union perspectives in a given period. The question of leadership is, of course, the question of the relationship of party to class. In that sense, it is indeed the fundamental question that has confronted Marxists, at least over the last 60 years. When we hear formulations, if only tentative ones at this point, which suggest that the role of a propaganda sect is the same as that of the party, except that one is propagandistic and the other agitational; that the role of revolutionaries in the working class in principle is to fight for leadership of the mass organizations of the class, irrespective of the political influence of their ideas; that the organization of oppressed groups is a step forward only insofar as it advances the struggle for revolutionary leadership rather than in its impact on the consciousness of oppressed peoples themselves; and that the working class in power rules through its vanguard, then we are entitled to ask whether the whole question of party and class is coming up for debate.

In my opinion, the whole approach of Sy's tendency is heading with lightning speed toward the thorough substitution of the consciousness of the vanguard for the consciousness of the working class. Whether this direction is carried through to its implications, which are disastrous theoretically and politically, depends fundamentally on whether the I.S. develops a sufficiently close relationship to the class struggle, and in particular to the real struggles to build new, militant rank and file leadership groupings in the labor movement, to provide a real test of the validity of our political ideas in contributing to this process.

MINUTES  
OF  
NATIONAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
APRIL 20-22, 1973

April 20 Evening Session; Chair: Mike P.

1. Seating of delegates (all present), consultative votes, and 1 representative with voice but no vote from Bloomington, Austin - San Antonio, and Cleveland (branches organized since the convention) (all present).

2. Steering Committee: Sy and Joel.

3. Speaking rights to others. (a) Bruce L. for entire NC PASSED  
(b) other: Don C.

4. Permission to tape record requested for Seattle Branch.  
MOTION (John W.): all use to be decided by National Organization.  
Explanation by Cal: tape to be used for Seattle branch members only, then to be destroyed. Speaker against: Dave F. FAILS 8-9.

5. Agenda.

MOTION: Adopt agenda for 1st two sessions only. PASSED.

MOTION (Rod): adopt entire agenda now. FAILED.

MOTION (Jack T.): only one session tonight: Nat. Sec. Report (minus organization proposal) PASSED.

6. National Secretary's Report.

Presentations: Sy, Dave, Joel - ten minutes each.

Sy accepts amendment by Don C.:

AMENDMENT: P. 12, pt. 7 second sentence should read

" . . . involved, where opportunities exist and where this will not interfere with other work by the Black and Latin

f ractions until they are capable of taking on additional tasks." ACCEPTED.

AMENDMENTS by Dave F. Sy accepts #1 and #3, rejects 2,4,5,6.

MOTION: To suspend the rules and allow Carl to be seated for Steve Z. for remainder of session. PASSED.

STATEMENT ON NATIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT (Mike P.; concurred with by Ken P.) The National Secretary's Report is nothing short of a travesty. Almost the whole of the document and presentation consisted of a rehash and update on his side in the factional debate. Such debates are required at an N.C. and most session will take these up. But something else is required in a National Secretary's Report: A report on the state of the organization as a whole. This includes organizational questions: Has our membership grown or declined?

What is our financial situation? (I have heard rumors that we have already spent all fund drive money.) What about pamphlets? What about the newspaper? What about field organizers? New branches?

Politically the national secretary's report contains no political direction for the organization as a whole. How do we relate to the upcoming contract rounds, the Farmworker-Teamster struggle? What political discussion other than factional ones should be organized within the national organization? Why has there been a decline in the industrialization of the organization? What if anything should be done about it?

Now, national secretary is a political position and the politics of the national secretary would naturally be integrated into discussion of these questions. But there is barely any mention of these problems let alone a serious attempt to deal with them.

The national secretary is not elected merely to give a factional leader economic support and a title to carry on the factional debate within the organization. The National Secretary and staff are also expected to provide some direction for the organization as a whole.

What Sy states as his major accomplishment for the I.S. is the clarification of politics by organizing his own political faction. Further Sy's main organizational proposal is to give a majority to his tendency based on a document issued the day of the NC which bases itself on the first 4 congresses of the Communist International and Trotsky's Transitional Program.

I assume no devious motives on Sy's part. It is a political question. For Sy, the National Secretary, to identify the accomplishments of the organization and its staff with the organizing of his own faction is a sign on the road to a split whether Sy is conscious of it or not. The National Secretary's Report is both a travesty but even more a tragedy for the I.S.

MOTION (Mike P.): The National Secretary is asked to provide (a) a written membership report and (b) a written financial report at tomorrow's evening session. (a) PASSED. (b) FAILED.

AMENDMENT TO NATSEC REPORT (Steve K.): Amend to the "Some Proposals" Section: That it is an imperative instruction of the N.C. that all leaflets, minutes, and branch documents, etc., be circulated to all branches and organizing committees. And further that these must be announced and circulated in the branches and organizing committees. These will be circulated centrally through the N.O. Any exceptions for security reasons shall be handled by the NAC. WITHDRAWN.

NC MINUTES

-3-

Summaries: Dave F. 5 min., Joel G., 5 min., Sy L. 10 min.

MOTION (John W.) to table the votes, PASSED.

Announcements. ADJOURNED.

Saturday April 21 Morning.

Seating of Delegates: Marilyn for Barbara for rest of NC.

Agenda for rest of NC:

MOTION (Ken B.): to consolidate women's discussion. WITHDRAWN.

" (Ilene W.): to table Emerson document discussion to convention.  
PASSED.

MOTION (Ken B.): program discussion on Saturday's second session. PASSED.

" (Brian M.): Telephone discussion on 3rd session, same day. PASSED.

REPLY TO STATEMENT BY MIKE P. (Sy L., Chris H., Ron T.) (The following was read to the body by Chris H.) In the heat of the discussion of the National Secretary's Report, a statement was read into the minutes by Mike P., which deserves reply. The statement was a series of accusations to the effect that the National Secretary's report contained only factionalism, with the strong implications that the National Secretary and other officers of the organization have been misusing their offices for faction purposes and a strong innuendo of financial misdealings. Finally the statement strongly implied that the National Secretary and others must be following a perspective of splitting the IS.

These charges can only be intended to lay the basis for a counter-attack in which the development and clarification of political viewpoints in the organization shall be cut short by the creation of a fever-pitch atmosphere of accusations. Unfortunately, all the shoes are on other feet.

The National Secretary's report contains a statement of political point of view. It was further stated that the most substantial accomplishment of the incumbent leadership was to have developed and clarified a political point of view. We stand by these statements. The IS cannot be led by points of view which are not clarified. It cannot be clarified by mush. It is a matter of extreme regret that during two years in office the previous leadership, now the "transformation caucus," presented no coherent point of view, failed to develop the politics of the IS one jot beyond our "historic tradition," and left the politics of the organization no clearer than when they took office. It is a matter of equal regret that the "leadership" grouping around Brian M. in New York has, through the same period,

put forward no coherent statement of perspective or point of view. To put forward a political point of view from the office of leadership could be called "factionalism" only in an organization which has experienced a complete vacuum of leadership up until now, and continues to do so vis-a-vis the alternate "leadership" groupings, including Mike P. To develop such a point of view is the very function of elected leadership. No one has charged, on the other hand, and no one could substantiate if they did charge, any misuse of the National Secretary's, Industrial Secretary's, or other offices by these incumbents. Our entire conduct refutes it.

In financial matters, Mike P.'s statement plays dangerously. As a responsible leader of the organization he knows very well that the sort of financial statement he is requesting could create dangers. We shall issue when available the accountant's statement of the finances of the IS. Now, for the first time since the IS was formed, there is one.

Finally on splits. Mike P is not the first to charge us with wanting a split. John Weber's "Mine Disaster" charges us with wishing to "draw a line of blood" between the "majority" and "minority." When we look at the conduct of leaders of other groupings on the NC, however, it is they who have conducted every argument in a bellow and raised the spectre of split at every turn. It is they who attempt to raise the pitch of the NC so high that there can be no reasonable discussion of the politics. The same will follow no doubt in the organization as a whole.

We state openly that we reject any intention of a split. And there is a good and sufficient reason. Our point of view, the first coherent point of view to be present in the organization in some time, is gaining adherents. We intend to stay right here, convincing people of it. The same is not true of others. If our viewpoint is gaining adherents, the talk of split, must, will, and has come from those who are afraid precisely of that. Their only defense is to short circuit debate by emotional antics. Eventually, it is they, if anyone, who will attempt to solve by organizational means what they cannot solve politically, and those are the real politics which are emerging at this NC.

Womer's Liberation discussion.

Bill H. chairing. Seating of delegates. Steve K. seated late.  
Ted D. seated for Fen P. (Bloomington: Kris K., Cleveland:Cliff)

MOTION: Lynn J. to have speaking rights and presentation time on the basis of her new document. (not voted)

MOTION: To reverse first and second Saturday items. FAILED.

MOTION: Lynn J. to get speaking and presentation time - voting on LJ document to be determined later. AMENDMENT (CH): no voting on LJ document. Amendment ACCEPTED. Motion PASSED.

Presentations: Margaret, Ilene, Lynn (20 minutes each).  
Discussion.  
Summaries: Lynn, Ilene, Margaret (10 minutes each)

Rollcall vote on Margaret B. Amendments (voted on as a block) FAILED 8-13

MOTION: That Brian M. and Mike P. be allowed presentation time  
in program discussion (15 minutes for each of the four speakers). PASSED.

April 21 - Saturday Afternoon  
Rose V. chairing.

Seating of delegates.

Transitional Program discussion.

Presentations: Bruce, Joel, Mike P., Brian (15 minutes each)  
5 minute round.  
10 minutes summaries.

There followed a period of discussion on procedure, whether or not  
to drop the MFD discussion, whether to have shorter sessions  
to allow both time for groups to caucus and to have a discussion  
of both CWA and auto, etc.

MOTION (SL): (a) to hold full CWA discussion tomorrow (Sunday), then  
presentations only on auto, then the organizational discussion. No  
MFD discussion. (b) to adjourn now. No evening session.  
PASSED.

Adjourned.

April 22 Sunday morning. Rod M. chairing.

Seating of delegates.

Agenda: CWA, Auto, Organization remain for the day.

MOTION (SL): Delete auto. PASSED.

Steve Z. seated late.

MOTION (Brian): Give speaking rights to Rusty and George W. PASSED.

CWA discussion. Brian 20 minutes presentation, 5 minute extension,  
4 minute round. Brian 10 minutes summary.

Request by Steve Z. for 10 min. to make a political statement. No opposition.  
(Statement was not submitted to the minutes.)

Revolutionary Tendency requests  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour to caucus.

MOTION: That there be a 40-minute break. PASSED.

Sunday Afternoon April 22

Seating of delegates.

Organization.

Presentations by Sy, Dave, and Joel. Discussion round. Summaries.

ORGANIZATIONAL PROPOSAL (Dave F.):

1. Our proposal is that the NAC be reorganized, with the interim mandate of organizing the coming Convention and of providing guidance, where this is possible on a clear political basis, to the ongoing work of the organization during the pre-Convention period. The composition of the NAC shall be: two comrades representing the Revolutionary Tendency; Joel G. and Jack T. of the Transformation Caucus; and Mike U, Dave F. and Bill H.
2. We propose further that Bill H. assume the responsibilities of industrial secretary immediately upon moving to Detroit.
3. Finally, the responsibilities of the National Secretary - political, organizational, and administrative - will be carried out in the coming period on a collaborative basis by Joel G. and Dave F. jointly. These two comrades share equal and joint responsibility for carrying out the functioning of the NATSEC position, both externally and within the organization.
4. Other divisions of responsibility within the NAC and staff will be tabled to the NAC.

Organizational section of National Secretary's Report FAILED 6-14

Dave F. Organizational Proposal PASSED 13 for, 6 against, 1 abstention

SEE ROLL CALL CHART.

ADJOURNED.



## MOTIVATION FOR ORGANIZATIONAL PROPOSAL Dave F.

The above organizational proposal (see page 6) for resolving the immediate question of leadership in the I.S. is put forward jointly by the NC delegates of the Transformation Caucus together with other NC delegates as follows: Brian M., Rose V., Ilene W., Bill H., Dave F. The political statement and basis of agreement for this proposal is indicated below.

1. The course of this NC, beginning with the National Secretary's Report, and the course of the NAC in the immediately preceding period, have signalled the emergence of a sharp political crisis in the I.S. We are agreed first of all on our assessment of this crisis: that the questions in debate are rapidly becoming the fundamental principles on which the I.S. exists as a distinct tendency within the working class and world revolutionary movements. Although in this debate a wide variety of other differences - from the nature of the bourgeois revolution to tactical and strategic perspectives in labor work - have been discussed, as they will always be discussed in a healthy and democratic revolutionary organization or party in the process of developing a political line with which to intervene in class struggle, in essence and at bottom the I.S. has been faced with a challenge to defend and justify its entire political standpoint and world view, i.e. its reason for existence. This challenge has been posed point-blank by the comrades of the newly founded Revolutionary Tendency.

2. We are further agreed on what follows from this: that the ideological and political fight now posed squarely before the organization can have a progressive conclusion if and only if the leadership responsibility for the organization is assumed by comrades who are willing to meet the challenge head-on, on all question - that is, to state clearly and defend the fundamental principles of the I.S. as a political tendency and to establish theoretically and practically the crucial relevance of these principles to revolutionary intervention in the class struggle in the world today. We emphasize that these principles, which we state below - the revolutionaries ideas of what is known as the third camp - are of fundamental and growing importance in this period. We put ourselves forward to lead the organization as those who are willing and able to defend and democratically win the membership to these ideas, and to prove in practice their validity in the organization's work. We dully understand that the construction of a leadership for the organization is not generally reduced to a question of agreement on fundamentals; nonetheless, we realize that at certain points such a course becomes historically necessary and we make no apologies for it whatever. In particular, we feel no need to apologize to the leadership of the Revolutionary Tendency, which has proposed that it be given a majority to lead the I.S. on the basis of "testing a political

line" but with no principles.

3. Our agreement on principles, briefly stated, encompasses the following:

i) We adhere to the view that the class struggle in the world is one among three class forces: the capitalist bourgeoisie, the Stalinist bureaucracy, and the working class. Our viewpoint is that the societies ruled by Stalinist bureaucracies are bureaucratic collectivist, the analysis whose fundamental outlines were developed by the predecessor organizations of our tendency, in particular the Workers Party. We hold that the emergence of this analysis marked an important step forward for the world revolutionary movement, and is indispensable for any understanding of the collapse of that movement, especially the Trotskyist movement from whose ranks our tendency emerged, following the second imperialist world war.

We hold further that this understanding of the world today is not limited simply to an analysis that Stalinist societies are class societies. We hold that working class revolution is needed within both systems in order to establish socialism, the rule of the working class, through mass democratic institutions of the entire class. Further, the two reactionary social systems engage in unceasing struggle against each other as well as against the working class. This struggle is a fundamental aspect of modern politics as well, one on which virtually the whole of the working class movement internationally has foundered for 30 years. There is no progressive significance whatever in the attempt of either system to replace the other as the exploiters of the working class; therefore we unceasingly put forward the independent organization of the working class and of the nations and colonies oppressed by these rival imperialist systems, in opposition to these systems and for socialist revolution to overthrow them.

ii) We hold that the advocacy, support, and building of independent organizations and struggles of oppressed groups in society, as well as mass organizations of the working class to defend its interests, is a cornerstone of revolutionary socialist politics. We hold that the current disorientation and confusion inside the I.S. on this question, and on its relation to our working class program, is expressed most clearly by the documents supported by the Revolutionary Tendency. Nonetheless, this disorientation has much deeper roots in the deterioration of the theory and practice of the I.S. - including all its tendencies and political currents - in the recent period. We intend to win the I.S. theoretically and practically, including in our work in the labor movement, to the independent organization of the oppressed - not as an organizational fetish (as is charged) nor as a crude vehicle for "implementing the revolutionary program," but rather as part of a strategy for raising the consciousness, strength and self-reliance of the oppressed layers themselves and of the entire working class.

Despite many differences of both analytical and political character, which are known to the organization and will not be

hidden, we are in agreement that our basic approach to the organization of oppressed groups is an application of a method fundamental to the third camp viewpoint: that is, the championing of the organization of the masses around progressive demands, even if these be partial, limited demands. We do not merely support the organization of the masses around democratic struggles; we aggressively advocate and seek to build such organization. We regard it as a travesty of Marxism to state that our approach to such organization and struggle is limited to showing their inadequacy and inability to solve the problems of the masses under either capitalism or Stalinism, or simply to arguing that such struggles can be carried through only by a revolutionary leadership with a full program. Struggles around democratic demands, and particularly victories that can be won in those struggles, have a decisive impact in raising the consciousness of the working class and all oppressed groups.

iii) On the fundamental question of the revolutionary party and its relation to the working class, we adhere to the basic views of our tendency historically, which represent the continuation and reapplication of the principles of socialist democracy which were held by Lenin, the Bolshevik Party before its Zinovievist degeneration and eventual destruction by the Stalinist counter-revolution. These were revived by the Workers Party in its fight for the third camp.

Socialist revolution and socialism are different from all other revolutions and societies in the absolutely crucial role of consciousness. Without a conscious socialist working class there is neither socialist revolution nor a workers' state. Socialist consciousness is impossible without workers' democracy; it is through the struggle for democracy as well as the socialist program that the working class transforms its consciousness and fits itself for rule as ruling class.

This is our point of departure for a conception of party and class. There can be no successful socialist revolution without the leadership of a conscious revolutionary working class party. Soviets without a revolutionary party leading them will never achieve power. But the revolutionary party conquers state power through the previous conquest of the masses, through gaining the democratic support of the majority of the working class. This is not a vote once given, valid for all time - the party must continue to lead the class, but the class must be able to democratically control the new workers' state. Coupled with revolutionary leadership there must be workers' control of party and state.

Workers' democracy begins within the party. Centralist leadership must be strictly and democratically controlled by the ranks.

The revolutionary workers' vanguard party, required for the victory of socialist revolution, is created by the working class as part of its process of self-emancipation. The claim of the revolutionary party to leadership is based on the democratic accep-

tance by the workers of its analysis, strategy, proposals, demands and methods of struggle.

iv) While our differences over labor perspectives are crucial and sharp, we are agreed that the essentially literary and sloganistic approach of the RT leads, regardless of intentions, to abstention from our immediate tasks in the workers' struggle. We affirm that the organization of disorganized, inchoate struggle in opposition to the employers and labor bureaucrats is an important development and that revolutionary socialists have an important role to play in this development.

As presently formulated, the basic political conceptions of the RT would in effect prevent the I.S. from fulfilling its tasks in that development. We reject "revolutionary" or "socialist" caucuses in the labor movement as a means for accomplishing today's tasks in the process of building politically conceived rank and file workers' organizations.

4. Our supplementary points of agreement for the practical tasks of the leadership and the organization in the coming period are partially outlined in the amended form of section 5A of the National Secretary's report. Additionally, we state the following:

i) We set as our fundamental task the winning of the I.S. to the basic principles as indicated. Nonetheless, we state clearly that political questions in dispute among the comrades supporting this statement will in no way be swept under the rug or blurred in rotten-bloc fashion. All comrades in the leadership as well as the membership remain absolutely free to fight for their own points of view. We present no facade of agreement on questions where it does not exist. We do not propose to create a worthless sect-life by suspending discussions of practical work, current political questions, etc.

ii) We are committed to a struggle to ensure that the practical work of the I.S. does not cease in the difficult period ahead, and that comrades in industry and other arenas receive the attention, assistance and guidance of the NAC in their work. No artificial impositions of discipline will be made; nonetheless where the NAC finds that a clear political line is indicated it will put this line forward as the position of the organization. We intend to emerge from the political fight without losing the roots we have sunk in crucial situations and without demoralizing the excellent cadre from all tendencies and points of view, who are engaged in the day-to-day work of building and carrying out the work of the I.S. We fully understand, and will defend without apology, the fact that the NAC cannot establish a clear line on

a number of major questions, owing to the fact that the nature of the political situation and the tasks ahead make it impossible for any tendency or clear political grouping to take a majority.

iii) In carrying out our primary task - the organizing of the Convention - our work is guided by two considerations. The first is that we will organize the discussion of fundamental questions in such a way that the standpoint of the worldview and ideology we uphold is clearly defended. The second consideration is that to the greatest possible extent the next Convention will also include a full and open discussion of concrete perspectives for the U.S. and the world revolutionary movement, so that the differences within our alliance are also fully debated and lines of action established.

5. All comrades recognize that the fight ahead is a difficult one. The emergence of a political tendency with some divergences, and in our opinion a direction of departure, from the principles which have defined the I.S. - a tendency which includes wide sections of the best cadre and most respected leadership of the I.S. - poses grave problems for the organization and its future. While we state this frankly, we are absolutely committed to, and will carry out in practice, the creation of an atmosphere absolutely free of "witch hunts," heresy-baiting, or the use of organizational measures to short-circuit political debate. We will wage a sharp, clear, honest and clean fight to maintain the principles of the I.S. We intend to emerge from this fight with an organization whose norms of democracy in the development and discussion of political ideas remain fully intact.

6. We are open in political characterization of the direction of the Revolutionary Tendency based on its current statements of viewpoint, as well as clear in our rejection of its proposal that it be given a majority. As a "line," we believe its conception of leadership and program constitute nothing more than a "struggle" . . . for a slogan. As a political method and logic, however, it would "lead" us to nothing but destruction. The collapse of the Majority group elected at the last Convention, resulting from the transformation of the politics of most of its leadership, demands that the construction of a real leadership for the I.S. begin anew, on the basis of first principles. Politically, we hold that the direction of the Revolutionary Tendency statements and positions represent an attempt - inconsistent and uneven, but emerging with greater clarity day by day - to reconstruct an historically bankrupt method and approach to the world. It is an approach which many sects of different varieties claim to defend: that is, the attempt to elaborate an "orthodoxy" which holds that a struggle for revolutionary leadership of mass organizations of the working class, based on an intellectual use of program as the solution to a supposedly never-ending pre-revolutionary is at all points the central task of revolutionaries in the labor movement and struggles of the oppressed. We hold that this approach, which is usually known by both its supporters and opponents as "orthodox Trotskyism" because of its origins in the degeneration of the world revolutionary Trotskyist movement of the 1930's, produces nothing but isolation and

defeat for an organization which adopts it as its basis for intervention in struggle. It is associated with systematic substitutionalism in theory, including the theory of Stalinist societies as workers' states, and in practice, where it produces both the anti-working class opportunism of the SWP and the Byzantine cultism of the Spartacist and Workers' Leagues.

In previous discussions, we have adopted a point of view, which we continue to uphold, that the I.S. as a revolutionary third camp organization can have a basis for common organization in this period with orthodox Trotskyist tendencies whose basic practice and activity, their commitment to working class revolution under capitalism and revolutionary opposition to the Stalinist bureaucracies, is in contradiction from our point of view with their theoretical views. All the more do we wish to wage a struggle to maintain our common organization with comrades whose views express the world view of orthodox Trotskyism only partially and inconsistently, and who make up such a valuable section of our organization. This, however, requires a struggle, in our opinion, to point clearly to the dangers of the approach they are adopting - not, at this time, moving away from. As we have maintained in the past, such a struggle is carried out on the basis of absolutely full democratic internal life, and the right of every point of view in the I.S. to fight for a majority for its politics.

It is not clear to us whether our political struggle will, or can, be completely successful in maintaining the I.S. fully intact without losses and setbacks. It would be dishonest not to state this. Nonetheless, there is a great deal to win from this fight, from re-arming our cadre and ending the growing threat of paralysis in our branches. The period now unfolding is one of increasing class struggle in both capitalist and Stalinist society, one in which the possibilities and responsibilities facing our tendency take on still greater historic dimension. The test of our leadership will be our ability to bring the I.S. through its present crisis with the strength, cohesiveness, and confidence to meet the tasks of socialist revolutionaries in the next period.

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