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(Special thanks to those present and future members of the Detroit branch who contributed considerable time to help put out this Bulletin.)

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TASKS AND PERSPECTIVES

by Brian MacKenszie

Part I

World Capitalist economy: the course of destabilization

For several years the IS has pointed to the growing destabilization of the world capitalist economy. In particular this was described as an end to the post-war boom that seemed to last, with only slight interruptions, from the late 1940's through the late 1960's. By 1968, growth rates in most of the advanced capitalist countries, and in the bureaucratic collectivist sphere as well, were slowing down; unemployment was on the rise even in countries like Germany and Japan, where unemployment had been negligible; and even in the midst of an international recession in 1970-71 prices kept rising at unprecedented rates. To be sure, the destabilization proceeded unevenly. While growth rates for industrial production sank to the point of near disappearance in the U.S. and Britain, and fell for Italy, Japan and other, France and Germany seemed to be doing better than ever--at least until 1971. This unevenness of course, only expressed itself in sharpened competition and in the growing monetary crisis. Universally, profits or profit rates were falling up to 1972. Country after country turned to wage restraints and price controls of one sort or another. Only in the U.S. did either of these have much effect at all. On the basis of these events, the 1972 Tasks and Perspectives Document of the IS concluded:

"The outlook for the present period is for a much slower rate of growth and higher levels of unemployment than in the past decade--a period of slow stagnation punctuated by a series of crises and recoveries. The low average rate of profit prevents any significant upturn, and the arms economy at its present level slightly higher can prevent a cataclysm."

While this is largely based on the U.S. economy, it would in fact represent the general course of the world economy, given the position of the U.S. in that system. The picture is one of uneven decline, but without the possibility of "significant upturns." Yet, even before that document passed the July, 1972 convention, the world economy was entering, by all accounts, a very significant upturn. The growing rates in industrial production and GNP, in 1972-73, have been spectacular in nearly all the advanced industrial nations. Unemployment has dropped dramatically in Europe and Japan and significantly in the U.S., Canada and Britain. For the first time in memory the U.S. economy is operating at near capacity. Similarly, the rate of investment throughout the industrial nations is high. The recovery of late 1971, turned into the galloping boom of 1972-73, on a world scale. While, it is obvious that we can't exclude significant upturns anymore, the real question is whether or not the current boom undermines the past analysis of the I.S., i.e., the analysis that world capitalism is in a period of destabilization and growing crisis.

First of all, the present boom bears many of the characteristics of the crisis as generally described by the I.S. That is, while growth rates are up and unemployment down, inflation is even worse than before; the monetary system continues to need regular, unwelcomed adjustment; and whatever capital is generated is not sufficient to even avert the decline of social and public services around the world. Most important, however, because it originates in the system of production itself and not simply on the market, is the seemingly uncontrollable inflation. By the first Quarter of 1973, inflation had reached record proportions in practically every industrial capitalist nation, except the U.S. In Europe and the U.S., government officials and business leaders have begun to express alarm about the boom-caused inflation. Tentative steps have been taken both here and abroad to slow down the boom. Given the possible failure of government action, particularly in the U.S.--due to Nixon's paralysis over Watergate, a recession is widely expected for some time in 1974 in the U.S. This would, of course, set off a world-wide decline of one degree or another. Most leaders of the capitalist world are afraid, in other words, that rampant inflation will eat their boom alive.

The analysis we have put forth of the basis of the long post-war boom centered around the permanent arms economy. The arms economy, by destroying capital, helped to off-set the tendency of the rate of profit to fall by keeping down the overall organic composition of capital. Also, the arms economy produced technological "spin-off", significant enough to advance productivity internationally. Finally, the arms economy maintained relatively high levels of employment and therefore, high levels of consumption. But, its very "positive" aspects contain new problems. Thus, if waste production helps to off-set a declining rate of profit, it also holds down overall growth rates. Its very costs brought about a reduction in research and developing (a very expensive means of underwriting productivity), and a subsequent slowing of the post-war technological "revolution". This, in turn, contributed to a decline in the efficiency of capital, and the ability of technological improvement to off-set the falling rate of profit. Finally, high employment and consumption levels contribute to inflation, as does the expense of arms production itself. Thus, by the mid-60's in the U.S., and shortly thereafter in Europe and even Japan, the "positive" effects of the arms economy wore off. Attempts to solve the problems by increasing arms expenditure only brought worse inflation. Attempts to cut inflation by inducing mild recession (Nixon's Game Plan #1) did get a recession but were unable to reduce inflation. It was largely this inflation against a background of relative decline of the U.S. in the world economy as a whole, that brought on crisis after crisis in the international monetary system. Profit margins were battered from every side and stagnation spread throughout the world economy.

From our analysis of the destabilization and of the effects of the arms economy generally, it would follow that certain conditions could produce a temporary boom. These would have been an expansion of productivity sufficient to raise profit rates; some subsidy of investment through an increase in arms spending; a resulting increase of production in the capital-producing sphere (full capacity production of the current variety is very unlikely on the basis of consumer goods production alone). The international capitalist class, of course, has been aware of its own crisis in productivity for some time. In most industrial countries they have attempted to improve labor productivity through various forms

of work re-organization, speedup, etc. Labor productivity is generally more efficient in Japan and Europe than in the U.S. Any breakthrough in the situation caused by productivity increases would have to originate in the U.S. This, in fact, happened in 1971. A rather dramatic increase in productivity in 1971, did not produce a large increase in production, but in profits. Production of materials and equipment, i.e., capital goods, had been down in 1970 and did not rise at all in 1971, but profits reached the highest level in years in 1971. These profits laid the basis for the rapid expansion, particularly in capital goods, in 1972-73. They were produced not by technological improvements, to any significant extent, but by speed up and longer work hours. Unit labor costs fell dramatically in 1971, unit profits rose dramatically. Nixon, added fuel to the recovery by significantly expanding arms expenditure in 1972 at the close of the war. The arms increase seems to have been in the heavy production sphere. Further, by actually holding down inflation during 1972, he gave U.S. business a breathing space on the world market. Revaluations adversely effect the U.S. but the relatively slower inflation rate in the U.S. than in Europe or Japan for 1972, opened opportunities for U.S. producers. In spite of competition, the international nature of the economy meant that the U.S. recovery helped to generate a similar recovery in Europe and Japan. By mid-1973 most industrial capitalist economies are running at full heat, with inflation gone mad.

In general, while the prediction made in the 1972 T & P document was somewhat off, the analysis of the destabilization of the world capitalist economy remains valid. What needs adjusting is the general description of the period, in economic terms. Rather than one of slow stagnation punctuated by minor ups and downs, it is likely that the world economy will see a constant short-term repeating cycle of booms and recessions. The likelihood of spectacular booms is not great, however, because of the limits on productivity increases. It is possible, however, that the coming recession will be used to rationalize considerable inefficient capital and that, as bourgeois economists are already predicting, the recession of 1974-75, will be followed by a recovery of 1975-76. This new 2-year "business cycle" reflects two facts. First, it is increasingly the government that attempts to induce booms and recessions. That is, the economy now requires constant attention, rather than episodic intervention. But the tools at hand are still rather crude, at least in most capitalist countries. This means "push-pull" tactics in an attempt to keep things on a smooth course. Rather than a smooth course, however, "pushes" tend to get out of control before the "pull" can work, and vis-versa. In effect, the capitalists and their governments are simply trying to solve the various instabilities now emergent in world capitalism by playing one contradiction off against another. From a solely economic standpoint, they can go on doing this for some time. Secondly, the period of obsolescence of new capital is much shorter than in the past. Thus, the continuing period of destabilization will be characterized by short-term cycles in production and employment, continuing inflation of varying degrees, and expanding and increasingly ruthless state intervention in the economy and labor relations.

The period of the next year or two is far easier to predict. The boom of 1973 will reach its peak in the summer 1973 and a decline will begin to show in some sectors of the U.S. economy. A recession can be expected in 1974, probably lasting through most of 1975. All of this will occur first in the U.S.,

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but will inevitably spread throughout the advanced capitalist world. While a full-scale digression is more or less ruled out by the size of the arms economy, the degree of the recession will depend in some measure on arms spending and on the success of current attempts to exploit "new" markets such as Russia and China. The main economic effects of the Common Market will continue to be on the new member states, Britain and Denmark, who are experiencing increased inflation, particularly in food prices. U.S. capitalism has already penetrated the Common Market sufficiently not to be effected by its expansion. Similarly, the Common Market countries cannot hope to escape the recession for long. Contrary to the hope of the capitalist planners, the recession is not likely to reduce inflation by much. Thus a new round of revaluation, productivity drives and wage-price controls some time in late 1974 or early 1975.

The Political Effects of Destabilization

The destabilization of the world capitalist economy, accompanied by stagnation in the Stalinist countries, has of course shaken the stability of class relations throughout the world. Both capitalist and Stalinist industrial countries have seen significant mass upheavals. Even in large areas of the "Third World" the years of peasant revolt have given way to working class action, though this has seldom taken an independent proletarian course yet. While the mass strike movements in Europe represent a clearer step toward the revival of a working class revolutionary consciousness, the events in countries like Bolivia, Quebec, Chile and even Argentina represent the potential for working class intervention toward the road of permanent revolution in the less developed, or colonial, nations.

The heart of new developments, however, is centered in the advanced industrial nations of Europe, North America and Japan. Not only are economic developments in these countries determinant for the rest of the world, but it is here that instability in class relationships must develop to open up the perspective of world revolution.

The destabilization of class relationships flows from both the problems of the world economy and even more particularly, from the measures taken by the ruling classes to alleviate or counter-act these problems. In particular the universal growth of direct state intervention in labor relations is an attempt to increase productivity and hold down wage increases. World inflation, for the past several years, sparked an international offensive by the working class to regain real wages lost to price increases. The politically explosive events of France in 1968 and Italy in 1969-70 were both preceded by widespread strike waves, beginning around 1967, for higher wages. In virtually every nation, economic strike waves have become a major political issue. This is certainly the case throughout Europe and in the U.S. and Canada. Already, in some cases, the political nature of these strike waves have produced political crises, in particular in France, Italy, and Quebec. While this is not yet a general phenomenon, it does point to what the future holds in store. For the present, it is an indication of a relative loss of confidence on the part of the capitalist classes of most industrial nations, and a growth in the combativity of the world proletariat.

The decline of self-confidence among political elements of the ruling class proceeds from the increasing difficulty in adjusting, let alone repairing, important aspects of the business system, above all the world monetary system; their inability, in most countries, to gain the cooperation of the rank-and-file of labor for their economic programs; and the general defeat faced by European and American imperialism in the past several years. As was pointed out in the 1972 T & P, this relative lack of confidence expresses itself in the U.S. by the lack-luster character of liberalism today. In Britain it can be seen by the defeat of the Labour Party, the inability of the Labour Party to defeat entrance to the Common Market, and by the inability of the Tories to prevent the dislocations produced by entry.

In general, the program of reforming capitalism grows less tenable for the capitalists. With the sole exception of the U.S., the capitalist rulers of the industrial nations were not able to restrain the workers' fight for higher wages.

While these confrontations, in the past couple of years and recently, have not generally turned to open political battles, they have been small defeats for the capitalists. Only this year were the capitalists able to win partial victories in the recent bargaining rounds in Britain, Italy and Denmark. Finally, the almost universal tradition among the capitalist ruling classes about the current production boom indicates a genuine loss of confidence in their own ability to control things.

At the same time, this loss of confidence is a relative one, not an absolute one. Pompidou, pale reflection of De Gaulle that he is, was able to defeat the CP-SP electoral coalition. The government of Italy changed after the 1970 mass strike, but it remained a government not significantly effected by the "working class" parties--much less by the working class. In general, the ruling class is not yet so worried that it is turning to drastic solutions: e.g., Bonapartism or Fascism. The growing intervention of the state is on the basis of the wishes and program of the industrial and financial bourgeoisie, not over and above its desires.

In response to destabilization and the policies of the ruling class, the working class of the advanced industrial countries has continued to fight aggressively. Only in the U.S. was the government able to restrain, temporarily, the activity of the workers in defense of their living standards. In Europe and Japan, the workers have broken most wage restraints and managed, by militant struggle, to keep wages ahead of prices. A brief period of retreat in Europe in the early Spring has been followed by more aggressive action by the workers following continued inflation.

To accomplish even this, however, strikes have often had to be massive actions by large sections of the class. In most cases, however, the strike movements of recent times have not been political in character. Further, although generally partial victories in which the traditional leadership has been forced into action, these strike movements have shown that the reformist and Stalinist leaders still have hegemony.

The period of the post-war boom laid the material basis for a reformist consciousness among the workers of the industrial nations. This consciousness has been deeply engrained and scarcely challenged for a generation on a world scale. This meant that for over twenty years, the masses of workers, even the most politically active, followed reformist leaderships, not simply because they were deceived, but because they came to share many of the reformist assumptions of those leaders.

The current response to the destabilization of capitalism reflects how deep this consciousness is. The world economy has, itself, undermined to a growing degree the material basis of this consciousness and forced a militant response by the workers of almost all nations. At the same time, the workers even though more militant and aggressive, continue to follow their reformist leaders and to share many of their assumptions. Thus, even in an upheaval such as France of 1968, the mass of workers continued to follow their traditional leaders. The persistence of this consciousness means that the problem facing revolutionaries is not, as in the days of the early Comintern, a crisis of revolutionary leadership. The workers are not now revolutionary in sentiment. Today's is a crisis in the consciousness of the world working class. The period of destabilization has produced

however, growing numbers of workers who have moved to the left of the CPs and SPs. To a lesser degree, numbers of these workers have even moved toward various revolutionary organizations. The development of this, as yet small, but still significant layer of revolutionary workers in Europe, Japan, and Canada (at least Quebec) signifies, for us, the end of political stability and the beginning of the decline of reformist consciousness. The revolutionaries, and advanced militants, must intervene in struggles in such a way as to raise that consciousness so that a break with reformist leaders will become possible on a large scale.

The 1972 T&P defined this period as one "entering a pre-revolutionary period". By itself this formulation is too vague. What must be said is that this is a period of destabilization moving toward a pre-revolutionary period in so far as the reformist consciousness of the most militant layers of the working class, on a world scale, is transcended through mass upheaval on a general scale; and in so far as this is reflected in the development of an organized revolutionary leadership, firmly rooted in the working class and capable of contending for leadership of the class against the social-democracy, bourgeois reformist parties, and Stalinist parties.

By "organized revolutionary leadership" we mean, simply, revolutionary workers' organizations on a scale significantly larger than the political sects and groupings now on the left wing of the labor movement. The period to come is pre-revolutionary, as opposed to revolutionary, because we do not expect the revolutionary layers of the class to be massive enough to pose situations of dual power. To put it another way, the subjective desire for the conquest of power among masses of workers will be prepared by a pre-revolutionary period of general (which does not mean constant, or universal) mass upheaval. Today is not a pre-revolutionary period because the mass-upheaval, depth of political instability, and level of workers' revolutionary organization that would characterize such a period is, as yet, lacking.

Nonetheless, the destabilization is the process that lays the basis for the development of such a pre-revolutionary period. When that will happen, how fast, these are questions that can hardly be predicted with accuracy. What we are certain of, and what informs the tasks of this period, is that it will happen, i.e., that a longterm stailization of the system is very unlikely.

PART III

General International Tasks: A First Approximation

The nature of the current crisis and its consistent character in all the advanced industrial capitalist nations points to certain tasks that are common to revolutionary socialist in these nations. While we will not attempt, here, to take up the tasks of revolutionary socialists in the less developed nations or in the Stalinist world, we believe that the centrality of the industrialized capitalist countries to the world system and its crisis, justifies posing some general tasks for the advanced countries. Further advances in the economically underdeveloped world depends, in large measure, on political breakthrough in Europe, Japan, or North America.

The relative weakness of the working classes in the less developed nations, alongside the rise of petty-bourgeois elements based on the state or state-related functions, and the continued domination of Stalinism and reform, has inhibited the workers from fulfilling the tasks posed by the perspective of the permanent revolution. Aggressive support from a growing revolutionary workers movement in the advanced countries, along with a decline in the influence of Stalinism and reformism, can break this pattern.

Generally, revolutionary socialists in the industrial capitalist nations face a similar political situation: one of isolation from the masses of workers and only tentative (though important) penetration of the more advanced, active elements among the industrial workers. This initial penetration, of course, coexists with, and is deeply related to, the persistence of the reformist consciousness of the past 25 years. The process of implanting revolutionary socialists among the advanced militants, whether done by "colonization" or by recruitment of those militants, is part of the same process of overcoming remnants of that consciousness among the militants and generally combating that reformist consciousness among the workers.

The undermining of that consciousness, as it relates to our tasks, is only possible on the basis of participating in and providing leadership for the struggles of the class. Whether we are speaking of the U.S., Quebec, France, Britain, Italy, Japan, or any other industrial country, the revolutionaries in fact, are finding success, precisely in so far as they are active leaders in today's struggles. If it is clearly a task of revolutionary socialists in the advanced nations to cohere revolutionary workers' organizations--a party where possible, organization dedicated to building a party where not-- in this period, it is equally true that this cannot be done unless the organized revolutionaries of today are present in the struggles of the class. Today revolutionary socialists worthy of the name, from our point of view, are organized primarily in propaganda groups or even sects. The task, for all, in this period--indeed, a pre-condition to entering the next-- is that these groups and sects be transformed into genuine workers' organizations.

In this period, and probably for some years to come, it will not be possible to build full-blown parties in most countries. Nevertheless, we distinguish between a propaganda group or sect and a genuine revolutionary socialist workers' organization of some proportions and definitely rooted in the class. This is the goal and the primary task of the IS and its international collaborators in the period of destabilization.

The IS has noted often in the past that the rank-and-file revolt so central to our perspective in the U.S. is international in scope. We have pointed out that this revolt has an essentially universal character in the advanced industrial countries, in spite of the different political levels of the revolt in various nations. It is a revolt, in the first instance, against the effects of a declining capitalist system on the living standards of the working class. It is also an increasingly open revolt against the actual policies of the traditional labor leaderships--though not always a direct attack on these leaders, per se. This international rank-and-file revolt is the movement, or potential movement, in which we expect the revolutionary workers' organizations and parties to be born, through a fusion between today's organized revolutionaries and the most advanced militants.

The specific form of the rank-and-file rebellion varies from country to country, and is politically very uneven. Nonetheless, its general course has been remarkably similar throughout the industrial capitalist world. Inflation and speed-up sparked a shop-floor based, and largely unorganized, rebellion--including the remarkable growth of unofficial strikes, throughout the heavy industries of the capitalist nations. Invariably, this shop-based revolt was local and isolated even in terms of direct action--leaving aside the question of organization. Toward the end of the 1960's this rebellion often took a broader form: unofficial strikes on a national scale at least within leading industries. In a few places, these even erupted into national strike movements with political implications, but this is not yet typical.

Furthermore, the response to wage controls and various forms of incomes policy has been primarily local and partial, even though very militant. The outrageous role of the labor bureaucracy in nearly every country where wage restraints and productivity dealing has become common--which is true in most--has forced the rank-and-file rebellion and the revolutionaries to see the union, not just the shop floor or industry, as a central arena for political struggle against the bureaucracy and their policies. In Britain, the shop stewards and militants have had to pay far more attention to internal union affairs than in the past. In Italy, the Comitati Unitari of Base, for a long time doggedly independent of the unions, have begun to fight within the union's shop floor and local committees. In a number of other countries the rebellion has a more open political form within the unions. In the U.S., while at a much lower political level, the fight is increasingly within the unions--although at the moment it is very disoriented organizationally and programmatically.

While the ruling class is certainly attempting to integrate the unions and their bureaucracies into the state apparatus, they have not succeeded by a long shot. Trotsky's predictions, made in his unfinished essay, "Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay," have by no means been fulfilled. Indeed, the resistance of the workers to statification and bureaucratization, even where and when their political consciousness has been extremely low has been great enough to retain most of the forms of democracy and independence, and even a good deal of the content (i.e., the real content possible under bourgeois democracy) It is not the question of union democracy in the abstract that has led the workers, nearly everywhere, to defend the unions from total bureaucratization and statification, but their elemental fight to defend their living and working standards.

As this struggle intensifies, the urge to democratize--that is, make more useful--their unions is met by the equally intensified struggle by the employers and their states to achieve the opposite. Thus, increasingly the unions become a focus of political struggle, even where the current impulse toward struggle is economic and local in consciousness.

Today's Marxist program must deal in more detail with, and recognize the centrality of, the unions than did, for example, Trotsky's 1938 draft, "The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International."

If the agitational idea of rank-and-file organization within the unions has an international character, so do most of the central grievances that have produced the rank-and-file rebellion. Inflation; speed-up and productivity drives; unemployment; and state intervention directed at controlling the unions--all have been the major issues facing worker militants in the advanced industrial capitalist nations. As already noted, the response to these issues has been largely local and partial in nature. That is, workers have responded to wage controls or inflation by demanding higher wages rather than demanding additionally that prices be controlled, wage restraints and state intervention abolished, etc. There are already some exceptions to this, but so far it remains the general pattern.

Thus, the actual agitational work of revolutionaries has been limited, generally, to pushing these partial responses to their limits. This is part of the task of developing the self-confidence of the class, as well as pushing today's struggles to their limit. It is a policy that genuine revolutionaries will have to continue for some time yet. At the same time, the universal nature of the issues and sources of rebellion makes it possible for the revolutionaries to advance certain transitional demands--even though these may have a largely propagandistic character for the moment. In particular, relevant forms of the sliding scale of wages and hours (e.o.l., 30 for 40, etc.), workers' control of work speed and organization; jobs for all; open the books; nationalization of those industries unable to grant a decent wage and decent working conditions; tax the corporations and banks for necessary social and public services, are some of the most relevant.

These demands should be fought for and presented as additions to, or ways of achieving, the partial demands of today. Along with tactical, organizational, and analytical ideas these demands are a part of the way we point to the need for broad, class-wide, struggle against the conditions of the crisis and attacks by the employers and the state. While never shirking from taking leadership and responsibilities for the partial and day-to-day struggles of the class, the revolutionaries should use every opportunity to point to the need for broader and more political struggle, even to win immediate demands or reforms.

It is in this way that we can work to build revolutionary workers' organizations and parties in each nation, and thus begin the task of reconstructing an international socialist party based in the world working class.

PART IV

The American Scene

As the dominant capitalist power, the U.S. and its economy follows, or rather leads, the course of economic destabilization already discussed. Now at the height of a two-year boom, the American economy is headed toward a recession. As of the middle of 1973, with the boom still moving ahead, the auto companies--a leading indicator of economic trends--have opted for few modifications of the 1974 models and a short change-over period in production in the expectation that sales will level off or drop next year. The mood of the ruling class is clearly pessimistic. This mood is by no means limited to the economic outlook.

Bourgeois politics in the U.S. have reached their lowest point since the 1920's. Reflecting the relative loss of confidence on the part of the ruling class, both bourgeois parties appear before the public in a state of shambles. Watergate, of course, crowned a series of overt acts of corruption by actually making it dangerous to be a part of the Nixon administration. Already unable to control inflation, Nixon faced an enormous set-back in his drive for increased Executive power. Crucial posts have gone un-manned and those that are filled attract only non-entities. Not only his political reputation, but his ability to intervene in an increasingly desperate economic situation have been undermined. The political confidence large sections of the bourgeoisie had in Nixon has been shaken. The seemingly stable Republican Party, with its dreams of a "new majority", is in serious shape once again. Perhaps most importantly, the administration that had actually succeeded in restraining the labor movement for nearly two years because of its decisiveness, has lost a good deal of its authority, both with big business and with the labor bureaucracy.

If the Republicans insisted on demonstrating the meaning of political destabilization in the grand style, the Democrats hardly emerged as an alternative. The debacle of the 1972 Convention and election merely reflected the vacuum of leadership in the Democratic Party. This lack of leadership is, itself, a reflection of the lack of a believable program around which to rally the traditional labor-liberal-minority group coalition of the Democratic Party. In programmatic terms, the Democrats are essentially unable to distinguish themselves from the Nixon administration. This fact, of course, only demonstrates the lack of real alternatives available to bourgeois parties. State intervention is now a fact of life: the money for welfare and reform programs is extremely limited, and the likelihood of spectacular successes in imperialist foreign policy are diminished. Thus, the actual programs of conservatives and liberal look more and more alike each year. Attempts at developing a new leadership for the Democratic Party boil down, increasingly, to matters of style. The likelihood, of the Democrats producing leaders able to inspire confidence in a program, no matter how vague, is slight, indeed. This is not to say that the Democrats, led by Ted Kennedy or Muskie or the likes, could not win in 1976. American parties are too built into the governmental and legal structure of the system to fall apart or disappear as a result of internal crises. Furthermore, lacking a real alternative, and seeing a labor

party as unlikely in the next couple of years, the masses will probably remain loyal, if only by default, to the Democratic Party. Political cynicism, however, is certain to reach an all-time high in the U.S. Whether this cynicism will help or hinder the development of a revolutionary workers' movement and of sentiment for a labor party is difficult to predict. The current relative weakness of the two major bourgeois parties, however, makes the labor party slogan even more imperative.

The Watergate scandal produced a situation that would have been a governmental crisis in Europe, or under a parliamentary system. The fact that the Democrats have been relatively silent on Watergate is only the sign of how many skeletons they have in the closet. But, in truth, the Watergate affair also revealed the utter and complete impotence of the left. Indeed, it revealed the virtual non-existence of the organized left. Not one organization of the left had the size or authority to mobilize any significant sentiment around this crisis. As it is currently organized, the left cannot offer a direct alternative to political cynicism. To put it another way, while Watergate will aid the process of undermining working class confidence in bourgeois politics, the left will not be able to use Watergate as a direct way of growing. Thus, the left in the U.S. is, as yet, unable to build its credibility on the basis of intervention in general political issues of this sort.

Furthermore, while struggle by blacks, latins and women continues on a local and sporadic basis--all too often under the hegemony of bourgeois liberal leadership--the mass movements that characterized the 1960's are clearly absent from the scene, and are not likely to appear in the same form or soon. Thus, the organized revolutionary left does not even have an active mass arena in which to spread its ideas, and which could even popularize a limited number of its political ideas--as did the black, anti-war and women's movements. This means, more than ever, that the revolutionaries must be active in today's industrial struggles and in the trade unions, i.e., the political arenas of the working class struggle as it is today. Today, this is not only the best place to root our ideas, but virtually the only one that offers consistent possibilities.

While the unions are the primary arena for socialists today, and in the future, that can not mean that the issues we intervene on are limited to the trade union or industrial struggles themselves. The nature of the crisis of the system, in the short run and the long run, dictates that we intervene on a full range of political issues, from N.E.P., to Indochina, to Watergate, to the collapse of social services. Even where our intervention on broader social issues is limited to propaganda, it remains an important task. In particular, it is our view that the future leadership of the movements of the oppressed, as well as of the movement of the working class as a whole, must arise from the working class. These leaders will receive their training in the day-to-day struggles of the class. Our intervention, in both agitational and educational forms, can play a role in this training. As we have stated in many past convention documents: we are not indifferent to the program and class content of the movements of the oppressed. As with the broader class struggle, we take an active and responsible position on the direction of these movements. To this end, we put forth not only the broad strategic notion of revolutionary class struggle, but tactics and programmatic demands for these movements as well. The collapse of the mass movements of the 1960's, under

the leadership of both conservative and ultra-left petit-bourgeois elements, points to the need to root the struggles of the oppressed in today's class struggles. Concretely, this means to call on working class black, latin and women militants to take the lead in the movements of the oppressed in society.

The absence of mass movements of the oppressed, the mass anti-war movement, and the student movement has given the American political a superficially conservative appearance. Yet, in reality all of the issues and social realities that brought these movements forth remain unresolved. As a current issue, the war in Indochina is clearly dead. But there is no peace in Indochina, even if the number of U.S. ground troops is relatively small. While the rhetoric and style of the movements of the 1960's seems to have become a part of American culture--black and women's liberation, it seems, can sell cigarettes and bank loans--the social realities are unchanged for the vast majority of the oppressed. Only small numbers of black, latin, and women petit-bourgeois elements have actually benefited. And even though racial and sexual segregation have broken down at the edges, little change in relative material position can be seen. Indeed, while some reforms are possible, and those mostly marginal, the special oppression of blacks, latins and women--each different in its specifics--are too built into American capitalism to be resolved under that system.

For the revolutionary socialists, therefore, the primary question for the movements of the oppressed, even their ability to win immediate reforms, is the question of class composition and political direction. It is for this reason that we grant full support to these movements, even in their decline or disintegration, and to their aspirations. In this context we advance programs designed to rebuild and strengthen those movements. In American politics, for the past 15 years, this general approach has been the dividing line between the real revolutionaries and the sectarian phrasemongers.

At the same time, the very course of destabilization and of the international class struggle indicates that American politics, and we do not mean just the electoral dance of death periodically conducted by the Democrats and Republicans, will be increasingly centered on the relationship between the organized working class and the ruling class and its government. Movements of the oppressed, student or other declassé or petit-bourgeois movements will arise in this context and will make political choices in the context of this context of major class forces. In so far as, "economics" and "labor relations" become the dominating political issues in the U.S. in the next few years, non-working class movements will have less latitude, less room to maneuver between the major class, add therefore less time to choose sides. Movements with non-working class leaderships are likely to arise in a period of intensified and politicized class struggle; but if the crisis of the system continues, even at its current pace, they will soon choose sides. In reality, however, an intensified class struggle will most certainly produce movements of the specially oppressed within the working class, and, in so far as the proportions of the struggle grow, they will have greater social weight, greater ability to win concessions, than the petit-bourgeois leaderships. These class differences will not always or immediately be reflected in the "program" of various movements or groups. Petit-bourgeois elements may well advance a more ostensibly radical program than working class leaders. Nonetheless, our primary orientation is toward the proletarian sections of the movements of the oppressed. In today's political scene, these leaders are

by and large absent. We base our perspective on the observation that these leaders of tomorrow's movements are now being trained in today's industrial, economic and trade union struggles.

The growing predominance of open class struggle in U.S. politics is already reflected in the continuing importance of NEP and of economic and labor policy in general. If Watergate is one of those spectacular exposures of corruption that punctuate American political history, NEP is far more representative of the trend of political issues. So far, the initiative in this political class struggle has come largely from the ruling class. Until very recently, the response from the ranks of labor has been minimal, while that of the bureaucracy has been nearly total capitulation. In fact, as with the movements of the oppressed, the general working class movement is, in a certain sense, without leaders, or at least leaders who will lead. It is our contention that a new leadership, a rank-and-file leadership, is now being created in the industrial struggles of today, and the past few years. This explains in part both the general militancy of the past several years and the relative lack of resistance to Phases I and II of NEP. Before discussing the state of the labor movement, however, it is necessary to discuss in detail NEP.

The Contours of NEP

The contours of NEP fit the crisis well. Markets were to be protected from foreign competition, capital investment encouraged by a 10% tax credit, the rate of inflation slowed down (but not frozen), and wages tied to productivity. The ratio of capital, labor costs and profits was to be changed, in fact, reversed. Those, like George Meany, who accepted the essentials of NEP but demanded controls on profits to make things "equitable" either do not understand, or are lying about their understanding of, the real purpose of NEP. Secretary of the Treasury Connally replied to Meany that controls on profits were "not practical." Nixon went even farther and said that profits shouldn't be controlled because it was growing profits that would expand production and create more jobs. Whether or not it will create jobs in the long run, it is true that profits are required to expand production. That is capitalism! That is what planning, wage controls and NEP are all about. Mild restraints on dividend payments could be allowed because they actually encourage investment by forcing the retention of dividends as internal profits. The Democrats who sponsored the Economic Stabilization Act of 1970, which is the legislative basis of NEP, also understood this. The Act stated that the President was to have the authority to "issue such orders as he may deem appropriate to stabilize prices, rents, wages and salaries." Profits were purposefully and conspicuously excluded.

In the bourgeois press and no doubt in the minds of most workers, NEP was seen simply as "wage-price controls." It is in fact, more than this even in its purely domestic aspects. Even as "wage-price controls", however, the class bias of NEP is apparent. Phase III was the give-away in this regard, when prices began to rise faster than at any time in recent history. Even the mass outrage of working and middle class consumers, as expressed in the meat boycott, could wring little more than remedial action from Nixon. Basically, wage-price controls are always wage controls. This was the experience under the War Labor Board and Price Commission during World War II. Prices were allowed to increase faster than wages. From January, 1941 to September, 1945, basic wage rates increased 24% (most of this before controls in 1942.) During the same period prices rose 33%. The actual increase in average weekly earnings was 49.9%, but most of this was due to the enormous amount of overtime worked during the war and the increase in piece-rate work. A similar pattern emerged in NEP as a whole.

The average wage settlement in 1972 was well below that of 1971. The Pay Board began cutting back settlements in January, 1972. The drop for first year increases was from an average of 11.6% in 1971 to 7.2% in 1972, in private industry. For the entire life of the contract, the annual increase fell from 8.1% in 1971 to 6.6% in 1972. Prices rose 3.5% in 1972, but by the first quarter of 1973, consumer prices were rising at an adjusted annual rate of 9.6%, indicating a pattern similar to WW II.

As during WW II real income moved ahead of prices, at least in 1972. According to the 1973 Economic Report of the President, real average spendable weekly earnings

(adjusted for taxes and inflation) grew by 4.1% in 1972. But in the same year, manufacturing workers worked an average of nearly one hour longer than in 1971. (.3 hours) Almost all of this was overtime (.7 hours), at time and a half. This means that for manufacturing workers, and undoubtedly for others as well, a large part of the increase in weekly earnings (over half in fact, i.e., 2.4% out of 4.1%) was due to nothing but working overtime.

The fact that NEP is essentially a system of wage controls and productivity bargaining is further revealed by the actual movement of wages under NEP's various Phases. The year before NEP saw an adjusted annual rate of increase in wages (including second and third year increases under existing contracts) of 6.9%. Under Phase I this adjusted annual rate dropped to 3.1%--most of which must have been increases under existing contracts) of 6.9%. Under Phase I this adjusted annual rate dropped to 3.1%--most of which must have been increases for exempted jobs and industries. In the first three months of Phase II, known as the "bulge", wage increase shot up 9.5% (at the adjusted annual rate). This was due to the settlement of several major disputes which were regarded as the end of the last, pro-NEP, bargaining round. This included the east and west coast longshore settlements, the miners' settlement and, as a result of a court suit, the aerospace settlement. These were, however, the last contracts allowed with increases in the 10-15% area. Even here the increases allowed were justified by major concessions on productivity and working conditions by the unions. The Pay Board only began rejecting and modifying contracts in January, 1972. From February, to December, 1972, the adjusted annual increase rate for wages fell to 5.6%, i.e., nearly to the Cost of Living Council's 5.5% guidelines. Thus, even a large portion of the average increase in real wages for 1972 (the 4.1%) was due to atypical settlements made in January.

Equally important under NEP as the question of wages in productivity. As already noted, it is productivity that is the central problem in the current crisis of world capitalism. It is low productivity of labor that allows the rate of profit to fall, in spite of attempts to off-set that decline by such methods as the arms budget. Productivity rates and profit rates declined together from 1966 to 1970. Naturally, by tying wages to productivity the government hoped to encourage the acceptance of speedup by the workers. Additionally, the Productivity Council set up by Nixon in 1970 and beefed-up under Phase II, was set to work on publicity campaigns to convince workers to work harder. But the cutting edge of the government's side of the productivity drive is the use of wage controls to weaken the incentive to strike.

For several years before NEP, workers in various industries have been able to use national contract strikes, or even strike threats, to back up local resistance to speedup and deteriorating working conditions. The bureaucracy of the unions have consistently refused to fight speedup either through the use of the national contract or by direct action. But in a period of intense inflation, and, therefore, enormous pressures to strike for wages, they were often forced to lead strikes. Workers were able to use contract expirations and strikes as a focus around which to hold the line on local working conditions. They did this in many ways, of which contract rejections and wildcats following the "official" strike are well-known examples. With rigid wage controls and, in effect, the statement by the government

that even if you force the company to grant a sizable increase we will reverse it, much of the incentive to strike is removed, even for the ranks. Given already stiff employer resistance, it was clear that as far as strikes went the government would back the employers. Finally, it was becoming clear that wildcats, particularly isolated ones were not getting results, since the union leaders had the final say over the contract or local settlement and could in the end usually have their way. Thus, with NEP, it appeared that the chances of winning anything by striking were even more uncertain than before. In fact, strike activity in 1972 dropped to the lowest level in over a decade.

The impact of NEP and the employer productivity drive of 1971 were immediate and spectacular. They produced not only a "recovery," but a reversal in the relationship of wages to profits. Unit profit increases kept up, while unit labor cost increases dropped. That is what NEP is all about!

This phenomenon laid the basis for expanded production, employment and, above all, profits in 1972. While profits had stagnated or even fallen through 1970, in 1971 after-tax profits rose from \$40.2 Billion to \$45.9 Billion, a 14% jump. In 1972, they rose to \$53.1 Billion, that is, by nearly 16%. As we have seen, the increase in wage rates decreased in this period, while productivity rose abruptly. All of this is to say that the "recovery" was financed from the sweat and paychecks of the working class.

It is worth noting that the expanded employment and lower unemployment rates produced by the "recovery" are of a very particular kind. The number of employed workers rose for all racial, sexual and age groups, and the unemployment rate fell for all. But the number of unemployed workers actually rose for blacks, women and youth in 1970. The only group which experienced a drop in the number of unemployed was white males. So far as employment in manufacturing goes, the 1971-1972 recovery did not even make up one-third of the jobs lost in 1970. As the point of NEP is to expand profits and production with the minimum amount of labor, the future looks bleak for black, latin and women workers, in the long run. The profits now being made are destined for technological improvements meant to replace labor.

Employment has grown and unemployment dropped for all groups, though blacks and women still have the highest unemployment rates, of course. What most characterized Phase III, however, was the reappearance of rampant inflation. Prices rose at the highest rate in a decade during Phase III. This inflation threatened the relative gains made by the U.S. on the world market under Phases I and II, and also threatened to hasten the coming recession. Thus Nixon surprised many by pulling a price freeze in the middle of the Watergate scandal. Interestingly, Nixon did not freeze wages. He stated that, at that time, wages were not responsible for the inflation, and he was correct about that. What he didn't say, but was certainly courting on, was that the labor bureaucracy was expected to hold the up-coming settlements to the 6 to 8% level--a level that has been acceptable to Nixon for some time, even though the formal 5.5% limit remained in effect.

Clearly, Nixon had good reason to believe that the labor leaders would through for him. The bureaucracies of most unions are pushing 6% settlements. Settlements closer to 8% will be heralded as great victories, but in fact will barely keep wages at par with prices. At any rate, phase IV, scheduled for late August, will probably put a definite lid on wage settlements for 1974. It is likely that Phase IV will include more far-reaching moves against the unions, however, than just wage controls.

In terms of the class struggle, NEP to date must be regarded as a victory for capital against labor. Until April, 1973, the employers and the government had the complete cooperation of the labor bureaucracy and the relatively passive acceptance of the workers themselves. Indeed, the 1973 Economic Report of the President, reported that contrary to their expectations of rank-and-file resistance, 1972 had been "a year of unusual industrial peace." The first quarter of 1973 appeared quite similar.

More importantly, for the ruling class, however, was that they had achieved their major economic goals, i.e., holding down of wages, speeding up of productivity increases, the growth of profits, and the advancement of investment in capital equipment. The only goal that was not achieved, of course, was price stabilization. Even here, however, Phases I & II provided a temporary slowing of inflation which was enough to encourage investment. Phase III represented the destabilizing of NEP both in that prices ran away and that rank-and-file leaders had emerged once again.

T&P (U.S. Tasks)

The Tasks of the IS in American Politics

The major task of the IS in the coming year is, of course, the continuation, consolidation, and intensification of our intervention in the labor movement. It is central to our analysis of the crisis of capitalism and of the role of a socialist propaganda group in fighting for a revolutionary party that the bulk of our political tasks, including propaganda tasks, will be carried out in the labor movement. It is here that socialists can have the greatest impact, over time, and it is here that the core of the future revolutionary party is to be found. We recognize that we must make hard choices and set clear priorities for our work if we are to play the role demanded of us. For this reason we choose, without apology, to center our work as an organization in the labor movement. Even in discussing in our press and publication the important aspects of the crisis and the social movements that exist or arise outside the organized working class, we direct ourself primarily to the advanced militants in the unions. While few social problems facing the working class as a whole are limited to industry, much less to the unions, they are virtually all reflected there. In any case, it is our estimate that it is in the organized labor movement that we can have the greatest effect on any issue, today. Only a mass, or semi-mass party could carry on general agitation in society at large.

Nevertheless, other social movements do exist, other issues do demand our attention - even if our intervention on them is limited to propaganda and the written word. The current crisis of destabilization necessarily brings in its wake a deepening social crisis. Urban decay, persistent cut-backs in public and social services, a national housing shortage, the decline of mass transit available to the working class, unemployment, inflation, etc. While the mass movements of the 1960's have completely disappeared, and are not likely to revive as yet, and certainly not in their past form, sporadic movements and campaigns arise with considerable regularity. The meat boycott was one of the more massive campaigns of recent years. Though based on a misleading tactic, the meat boycott pointed to the enormous anger over inflation, and the fact that for the first time in years large sections of the working and lower middle classes actually felt a decline in their living standard. More localized, but more frequent, are the various forms of resistance to the realities of ghetto life. Among black and latin people rent strikes, consumer campaigns, anti-police terror campaigns, short campaigns for jobs or job training programs are common. Most of these, however, are led by "organizers" or forces close to or part of one or another government sponsored poverty programs. In some cases, they are led by elements similar to Jesse Jackson in Chicago, or the WFO staff. All of these leadership elements are not only reformist, as was the leadership of the past mass movements, but timid beyond comprehension and utterly entangled with the Democratic Party. Lacking a mass base in motion, they do not even have the apparent independence, nor do the groups they lead have the potential volatility of the earlier mass movements and their leaders. At this point, only a fairly coherent working class movement could give real life to these sporadic campaigns and out-bursts of activity and resistance.

It has been and remains our perspective for these movements that black and latin workers should take the lead in revitalizing ghetto based movements and workers, generally, the lead of movements against inflation, etc. This is in line with the need to address ourselves primarily to the worker militants. At the same time, however, we do propose programmatic ideas and directions for these movements -- at this point largely in our press. Our proposals to these movements are determined and guided by our overall program for the period, and not simply by the momentary tactical needs of these movements. We have never, and do not propose to start now, presenting our programmatic ideas for these movements in opposition to the minimal demands or tactics of direct action they currently employ. Nor are they presented as a sine qua non for our participation, where participation is possible, or political support. Nevertheless, our analysis of the period points toward certain directions we must propose to most community or consumer based movements or campaigns in the coming year: including community based movements for jobs, housing, day care, etc.

We urge these movements to rely on their own activity and not to place any faith in the politicians of the Democratic or Republican parties. We are not opposed to making demands on those parties or on the government generally -- on the contrary. But we do assert that such demands are most effectively fought for when the politicians find themselves confronted with an independent movement. We call on the ranks of these movements to demand independent action by their leaders and to demand that these leaders break with their political bosses. In short, we wish to expose these leaders. We state consistently that we do not believe leaders who are tied to capitalist politicians can carry out a militant fight. Given the sporadic, disorganized, and non-mass character of these various campaigns and most social action today, the call for independent political action by these groups themselves makes no sense. Further, it is our analysis that political action independent of the capitalist parties can, with few exceptions, only become effective if it emanates from the labor movement. Thus we call on these various movements or campaigns to orient toward the labor movement; that is to call on the unions for support in their fight for housing, day care, jobs, job training, etc. Each of these issues, and many others, can easily be shown to be in the interests of labor. The political concept we put forward is the labor party. It is, after all, precisely these broad social issues, all of which concern the working class as a whole, that only a labor party can effectively fight for. While we should also attempt to give concrete tactical advice to any current struggle, our primary relationship to such struggles, today, will have to be propagandistic and educational.

The reason for emphasizing a turn to the labor movement and the labor party is, of course, to prepare the militants, both in the unions and in these community based struggles, to play a role in building a working class movement that is not limited to the shop floor. This is, today, a propaganda task. To attempt tactical intervention in these movements with any regularity would dissipate our resources, and impair our ability to play that role in the labor movement where our intervention can have the greatest effect. We must not lose sight of this fact.

In addition to these community based movements, there remain the remnants of the organized black, latin and women's movements. The specific perspectives for these movements and organizations are spelled out in considerable detail in other perspectives documents, and no attempt to reiterate them will be made here. What is important here, is to place them in the context of our overall tasks.

The black liberation movement, the various black organizations, and the persistence of a high level of radical black consciousness and the centrality of racism to everything that happens in the U.S. makes the question of black liberation a priority concern of the IS. For us, black liberation is second only to, and even central within, our direct labor work. The course and pace of the class struggle in the U.S. has been deeply affected by the role of black workers. Indeed, no revolutionary organization that fails to recruit and hold black working class and intellectual cadre, will be able to play a leading role in building a revolutionary party in the U.S.

Though the specifics will be dealt with in a separate document, it is central to this perspective that the IS propose a strategy and program for the black liberation movement. Our intervention in that movement and around the issues posed by racism will be a political intervention, and not simply a statement of support. Both our size and the actual state of the black movement today means that the bulk of this political intervention will take the form of propaganda. The major exception to this will be in the labor movement, where we put forth a program for black workers that is both agitational in part and propagandistic. This program is spelled out in the labor section of this document.

The recruitment of black workers has a special importance to us. But like the recruitment of workers generally, it is a long term task. To prepare the IS to recruit and hold black workers in significant numbers, we must recruit and train black intellectual cadre today. This means that one of the priorities of the IS is to recruit young black intellectuals off campuses around the country. Educational and forums that can attract and interest blacks should be heavily publicized at campuses with large numbers of blacks. Further, those campaigns we do conduct or participate in outside our direct labor work should be designed with an eye to involving black students or youth. In particular, our current prisoner work and activity around Third World legal-political defense cases should be geared to involve blacks. This work should, therefore, be viewed as a national priority in our external work for those not involved in direct labor work. It is part of the general black liberation work, which we view as a high priority.

In general, the same is true for the various oppressed latin groups in the U.S., particularly Chicanos and Puerto Ricans. Beyond consistent propaganda about the oppression of and movements of these Latin groups, we should seek a modest intervention in areas of central importance to Chicanos and Puerto Ricans. In both cases this may involve direct work by a small number of comrades in important political defense cases. Additionally, the Prisoners work, in particular the Book Fund, can be used to make regular contact with Latin organizations and defense cases. Nationally, the Farm Worker campaign can provide a focus for reaching and involving in joint work Latin activists.

The IS must develop and clarify its analysis of the precise social position of Chicanos and Puerto Ricans, vis American capitalism. Thus far, our line of the Puerto Rican people is the better defined of the two. That is, the Puerto Rican people are a nation, and not just an oppressed minority in the U.S. We support the movement for Puerto Rican independence and national self-determination, within the context of the permanent revolution perspective. We have yet, however, to define the precise nature of the oppression of the Chicano people of the U.S. Clearly, this must be done soon. Our practical line for both groups in the U.S. is consistent both with an internationalist outlook and our attitude toward oppressed social groupings in the U.S. That is, we urge Chicanos and Puerto Ricans living in the U.S. to join and participate in the class struggle here -- without any way dropping their own special demands.

As with other movements, the short lived, but influential mass movement for women's liberation has waned. In its place remain, as already noted, a few large reformist organizations, and scores of small and dispersed radical groups of women. The mass movement that did arise, however, rapidly transformed the thinking of millions of women from unconscious passivity to various forms of a "womens rights" consciousness. That movement also made women's rights and equality a general political issue in the U.S. Just as it affected bourgeois politics and mass social consciousness, the women's movement transformed the Left. Virtually all left-wing organizations in the U.S. moved from total neglect, and therefore de facto male chauvanism on the women's question to one or another stance (or posture) favoring women's liberation. The IS has been no exception to this fact. Now, however, that the mass women's movement has declined the formal position of many groups on this question is beginning to fall into disuse. It is essential that this not happen in the IS. The recent split in the IS saw a minority (the "Revolutionary Tendency") develop a highly elaborated and articulated retreat on precisely this question, among others. The RT represented capitulation to the growing sectarianism of the Left at the moment and the slow but growing retreat of the Left from a principled support of women's liberation within our own ranks. It is essential no further retreat of this sort occur. For the IS the question of women's liberation remains a central area of concern. As a political priority, even if one limited primarily to propaganda at the moment, women's liberation follows only our direct labor work and the question of black liberation.

A good deal of our agitational and educational work on women's liberation will take place within the labor movement -- which is discussed elsewhere. At the same time, however, we must direct our ideas at what remains of the radical wing of the women's liberation movement. We wish to direct its attention to working class women and propose the programmatic ideas as well as tactical steps for doing that. Although we expect the possibilities for action or organization are slim for the coming year, we put forth the idea of rebuilding the independent women's movement as an aggressive, independent mass movement, fighting both for the immediate rights and demands of women: and for the long-range goal of women's liberation. As loyal and aggressive advocates of such a movement, we point out, along with our support for immediate and democratic demands, that only socialism can destroy the material base of women's oppression. At the same time, we point

to the need for a strong working class women's movement to fight for the special needs of women in the context of the proletarian revolutionary alternative.

Whether a mass party or a small propaganda group, the socialist movement must always seek to renew its ranks with youth. The youth of the working class, and even student youth, have always proved to be among the most radical and aggressive elements of the revolutionary organization, as well as of the class. The IS has fallen behind on this matter since the student movement collapsed. Today, there is no possibility of large scale intervention on campus. Nor would this, in itself, be a desirable direction for the IS. Our primary task remains implanting ourselves in the working class and its struggles -- and the urgency of that task is even greater now. Nevertheless, we must guarantee that our press and publications, i.e., our regular propaganda, reaches high school and college students with regularity. It is our estimate that, although there is no movement among students, there is a significant residue of radical and even pro-working class sentiment in the high schools and campuses. We cannot orient our paper toward the immediate concerns of students except to a very limited degree. The paper and the theoretical journal must reflect our actual priorities -- labor, the crisis of destabilization, black and women's liberation, etc. It is, however, precisely those students interested in broad social issues that we want most to reach in the coming year. This is better done by our primary orientation toward advanced worker militants. In this way, we demonstrate to radical youths our seriousness about building a revolutionary party in the working class. The theoretical journal should, of course, be of interest to serious left-minded students. Thus, our publications should be used to reach consistently and recruit radical students to our politics and organization.

Though the IS will have other political work outside of the labor movement, these are the primary non-trade union areas we must concentrate on in the coming year. The contours of the period, and the size of the socialist movement point to the fact that socialists can gain the greatest visibility (though not publicity) by working in, educating within, influencing and leading the rank and file movement that is developing today in the heart of the class struggle. No gimmicks or get rich quick schemes can substitute for this work and this perspective. Without in any way limiting our political concerns, we reaffirm that all of our immediate tasks in U.S. politics are focused around our intervention in the labor movement, the highest priority and most urgent task we face.

THE CRISIS IN THE I.S.

The recent faction fight has forced us to confront the fact that serious problems still exist in the organization -- problems that must be overcome if we are to transform the I.S. into a serious national cadre organization based in the working class. We have, of course, made important steps forward since the days of the ISC: industrialization of a significant portion of our membership, establishment of a presence in the midwest, a much greater understanding of the labor movement than we had in the days of the 'struggle group' conceptions, and a commitment to building a democratic centralist cadre organization. But we have also left many crucial things undone -- or done them only partway -- and we are now paying the

Our biggest problems since the founding of the I.S. have been our failure to develop a stable set of politics and our lack of experienced leadership.

Because of the break in our tradition, very few of our members have had experience either in the labor movement or in our predecessor organizations -- the Workers Party, the ISL, even the revolutionary opposition in the SP. Those that did were, with exceptions, reluctant to assume national leadership positions in the I.S. Since the founding convention, therefore we have faced the problem of an inexperienced leadership. Furthermore, we have never assembled a national leadership that accurately represented the actual political tendencies in the I.S. (because of the inability or unwillingness of several comrades to serve on the NAC and NC). As a result, the elected leaderships have generally lacked authority in the branches, and the regionalism of the ISC has perpetuated. The faction fight is, in fact, the first decisive break with the old tradition of tendencies based on geographic lines.

All tendencies, furthermore, have failed to one degree or another to put forward clear perspectives that could guide the organization's work. Much of this has been due to our failure to take pre-convention discussion seriously. Because documents have been written at the last minute, the positions that are passed at conventions have often been only hazily understood by the delegates. After conventions, the documents have usually disappeared for months and the national leadership has failed to fight for its line in the branches. A similar problem has existed with the NC, although there was some improvement in the continuity of attendance and in preparation for NC's this past year because of the development of national disagreements. But it is still rare for debates to be well organized in advance so that the actual disagreements are clearly focused.

Between conventions, lines have often been developed hurriedly in response to crises, have changed frequently, have often been unrealistic and out of touch with the needs of the branches -- with the result that even when the leadership has tried to lead, it has often failed to win the rank and file to its line. And in the past year, of course, we have suffered from the further problem of an unstable hastily developed majority that fell apart because of the total change in politics of much of its leadership. The result of this impasse during the past year has been that the adjustments needed in the perspective passed at last year's convention were not made. Because we were wrong about the rapidity with which opposition to the N.E.P. would develop, and because the national leadership did not recognize and try to deal with this problem, much of the membership was demoralized and left prey to the appeal of sectarianism.

The leadership has also failed to educate the membership in the fundamentals of our political tradition. The "shared assumptions" of the I.S. have become just that -- assumptions -- rather than living theory that is being developed and understood by the membership. Because the post of educational director has become a sinecure for the minority, virtually nothing has been done to develop an internal education program for the membership. Because we have not had a theoretical journal, little theoretical work has been done, and our tendency has nowhere near the theoretical following or reputation among the left that it should have. Little

time has been spent in reexamining our past, in studying the accomplishments of the Workers Party and the degeneration of the ISL and the rest of the Trotskyist movement -- with the result that a large minority was able to dismiss the entire tradition of our tendency almost overnight.

We have had setbacks in other important areas, too. Our publications program is stalled and Workers Power a reflection of political confusion. We have little or no presence in the black movement, and our recruitment of blacks has been an almost total failure. Recruitment in general has fallen off: the organization has not grown in size, though new people have been recruited, and the proportion of women is lower today than it has ever been before. A few years ago, we began to recruit small groups of industrialized radicals and we thought our prospects for growth in this area were good, but we have been unable to sustain this sort of recruitment. In particular, we have failed to confront the re-emerging Maoist groups -- to a large extent because of the development of sectarian "orthodox Trotskyism" among much of last year's majority -- and as a result, many of the collectives we had hoped to recruit have been temporarily sucked back into the Maoist orbit. And, of course, recruitment from our trade union work has been painfully slow, both because of our lack of experience and following in the unions and because our own internal problems have placed barriers in our way.

The confusion and lack of clarity in the political perspectives has exacerbated many of the problems experienced throughout the organization, both among industrialized and non-industrialized members. Most of our membership was recruited from and trained in the student movements of the late 1960s and early 1970s, and the problems we face today are far different from the ones we learned to deal with a few years ago. Our members have industrialized with enthusiasm and dedication, but without a thorough understanding of what it means to be a socialist in the working class today. Our non-industrialized members have generally been cut off from participating in actual struggles because of the death of the New Left and the setbacks in the black movement.

In the student movements, being a socialist was in many ways much simpler: socialist politics were openly debated and had at least a verbal connection to campus militancy, one's attitude toward women's liberation, the NLF, and so on. But in the trade union today, socialist politics are not openly discussed, organizing is in some ways far more difficult, the issues that can be raised and the ways of raising them very different. As a result, the perspectives and the discussions of the I.S. have often seemed to have far too little connection with the work of our industrialized members, while industrial work has been mystifying and 'apolitical' to others. The place of non-industrialized comrades in the organization has been unclear; some have felt useless and looked down upon, and there have been tensions in many branches over this problem.

None of the solutions thus far have solved these difficulties -- not the circles, or the assignment of non-industrialized comrades to labor fractions, or the RT fetish of program. The solution must be political, and far more fundamental: the development of a line that is accepted by the membership and that clarifies the relationship between the work we are doing today and our long-term goals,

both in terms of socialist revolution itself and the strategy for building a revolutionary party in the working class. And, along with this, the development of a leadership that acts like a leadership and is respected by the ranks, and systematic education and thorough political discussion to give our members the background to understand the tasks and perspectives of today.

We unhesitatingly reject the charges of the Revolutionary Tendency that the present difficulties of the I.S. are due to fundamental problems in method, to "liquidationist" or "reformist" tendencies, and so on. We remain convinced that we are on the correct path and that our overall perspectives are going in the right direction. The "solution" offered by the RT was no solution, only a retreat to a sectarian graveyard. We are a small tendency only beginning to reenter the working class movement; our problems are due above all to our inexperience and to the isolation of the revolutionary movement from the working class over the past two decades, and there is no magic formula that will cut through the problems our situation poses. We are confident however that the difficulties we face can be corrected over time if we are committed to correcting them. But at the same time we recognize that unless a far greater effort is made to create a leadership, a serious long-range perspective and a cadre committed to carrying out that perspective in a disciplined fashion, the current shams of the I.S. will return to plague us again and again.

REBUILDING THE I.S.

In the past few years certain conceptions about the nature of the I.S. have been generally accepted in the organization: we are a propaganda group, not a discussion circle or small mass party; we are in the process of transforming the I.S. into a nationally disciplined cadre organization based on the struggles of the working class; we define ourselves as a working class tendency not only because we have members in the trade unions but because of our politics; we expect to play a major role in the creation of a future revolutionary party in the United States and internationally. Yet within these broad outlines, much remains to be clarified and debated.

As we have seen in the debate with the RT, the term "propaganda group" can cover widely differing conceptions about the tasks of socialists in this period. The RT put forward (more or less clearly) the idea that the sole task of a propaganda group is to propagandize around the long-range tasks of the working class (their idea of transitional program and revolutionary leadership). We reject this conception. We define ourselves as a propaganda group because our influence in the working class today is still minimal: our role is still primarily to put forward our ideas and try to win militants to them, not yet to lead many actual mass struggles. But that does not in any way mean that we ignore the immediate tasks facing the working class today. We believe that the experiences of militants in the struggles they are in today, and the role that socialists play in those struggles, will be essential experiences in the creation of a future socialist cadre in the class. For socialists to ignore the strikes, the contract demands, the other immediate questions facing the class today would be suicidal and would isolate us from the very people we wish to win to us. And for socialists to hold

back from seizing opportunities to actually intervene and provide tactical and strategic leadership in such situations would be equally abstentionist.

Nonetheless, the long-range tasks of the working class, the transitional demands, the need for socialism and the meaning of working-class revolution are essential parts of our program and thus of our propaganda. While these more advanced concepts can rarely be put forward agitationaly in our rank and file work today, they must be raised in our press -- in Workers Power, in pamphlets, and of course in a theoretical journal as well as in classes and in public meetings. It is this, after all, that makes us a socialist propaganda group -- the fact that we put forward not only what we think needs to be done today, but our broader programmatic conceptions as well, and that we connect the tasks of today with the tasks of the future.

The development of the first approximation of a program must be one of our most important tasks in the coming year. This does not mean simply agreeing on a list of demands from which to choose whatever seems appropriate -- it does not mean that at all, in fact. We must begin by clarifying the basic principles of our politics, what we hold in common: the commitment to socialism from below, to the democratic self-organization of the working class and oppressed groups; our conception of stalinism; our idea of the revolutionary party and its relationship to the class; our understanding of the theory of permanent revolution. An important part of this political definition of the I.S. is an evaluation of our past. While not a part of our program as such, our understanding and evaluation of the history of our own tendency -- our strengths and our mistakes -- and of the rest of the Trotskyist movement is an essential underpinning to our self-definition. We must go on to elaborate our analysis of the nature of the period, both internationally and in the U.S., and our projections for the future, and from this analysis refine and sharpen our perspectives for the period -- our strategy for the working class both here and abroad, the demands we see to be appropriate for the period, including transitional demands.

It is this program that must guide our work; we know there will be mistakes, miscalculations, omissions, and we must revise and update it as our experience increases, as we grow and as our international links become stronger. But we must move beyond the development of year-by-year perspectives if we were to train a serious cadre and move in the direction of building a revolutionary party.

The transformation of the I.S. into a cadre organization based in the working class struggle will depend above all on the achievement of this sort of political understanding and agreement -- not on a monolithic consensus or a mechanical application of a line, but of a shared understanding of the fundamental principles of our politics, along with functional agreement on the tasks facing us today and in the future. It was a weakness of last year's Tasks and Perspectives document that it did not place the task of cadre development firmly enough within this context. Most of the discussion of cadre development and of a cadre organization was approached in organizational terms (which is not to imply that political organization is not a political question). But no matter how clear the understanding of the

need for cadre organization, no matter how dedicated the membership, we will not develop a cadre organization until the membership understands and agrees on the fundamental political tasks facing us as an organization.

The same correction needs to be made to the 1972 discussion of transforming the I.S. into a workers' organization. The conception of "industrializing the organization" presented in the 1972 document approaches the problem in primarily organizational terms, some correct but more misleading. For while it is essential that workers and their families feel comfortable in the I.S., that is not the key thing that will attract them to the organization, nor will an ability to rap about working conditions in a particular plant be the tool that will bring intellectuals and working class militants together into a combat organization. What will make the I.S. a force in the working class movement will be its political approach, its program and its leadership.

TASKS FOR THE YEAR: LEADERSHIP

Building a stable national leadership is one of the major challenges facing the organization in the immediate future. Above all, this means that the leaders of the major tendencies must move to Detroit to serve on the NAC, so that we can begin the process of dialogue and confrontation between the various tendencies that have in the past met only at national meetings a few times a year. While not hiding differences, it is essential to the future of the I.S. that we begin to forge a collective leadership -- that a stable majority and loyal minorities begin to work together to rebuild the organization and overcome the paralysis and inwardness that has characterized the organization during the fight with the RT.

The leadership must begin to develop concrete implementation of the lines passed at the convention and to educate and win the membership to its line by presenting its positions forcefully in the organization, both through internal written debate and through Workers Power. This requires a much greater commitment to writing than has characterized most of our leadership in the past -- and to presenting positions in clear counter-position so that the membership can intelligently follow the debates.

The NC must begin to assume the role it is supposed to play, as the national body that supervises the NAC between conventions. As such, it must include the actual leadership of the organization, which it has not in the past. NC debates must be organized well in advance; the NC should review the work of the NAC and implement and develop convention lines, rather than the haphazard, poorly focused discussions it has had in the past.

The most important area in which the national leadership must begin to exert its authority is in direction of our industrial work. The parochialism and political disagreements in the IS in the past have resulted in conflicting lines being put forward within one industry in almost all cases. The NC and NAC must begin serious national discussions of our work in all priority unions, in order to establish clear political lines and win the membership to carry them out in disciplined fashion. Essential to this is the development of national fractions in all priority industries, with regular exchange of information and perspectives discussions,

and the continuation of the labor bulletin on a more regular basis.

In spite of the financial crisis now facing us, it is essential that other staff work not be cut back, such as the establishment of the Black and Latin department, and Women's Commission, the publication of regular bulletins for both, with the perspective of establishing more publicly oriented newsletters in the future.

DISCIPLINE

The official position of the I.S. on discipline has come a long way since our founding convention. As we have moved toward the self-conception of a cadre organization, we have accepted a theory of discipline that is basic to democratic centralism: that the responsibility of the membership is to carry out and test the national majority line, while individuals are free to abstain from or verbally disagree with lines they oppose. Yet in fact discipline is used rarely, and almost solely in highly factional situations. The norm in the I.S. is still for local fractions and branches to do as they please -- while perhaps taking note of the national line with more interest than before. This situation must change. It is impossible to assess and change a perspective if it is not being tested; impossible to develop a national organization if work is not nationally directed and co-ordinated. We must begin moving toward the reality of discipline.

Our conception of discipline is the opposite of the stalinists': we are not attempting to create a mindless membership that marches toward a destination someone else had chosen. Our belief is that discipline rests fundamentally on political understanding and agreement, on a common commitment to carry out majority decisions and change them in a democratic fashion. It is this conception of discipline we wish to implement, one in which lines are carefully arrived at after thorough discussion on a national level, are carried out in a directed but flexible way so that comrades' credibility is not destroyed, and are frequently reviewed and adjusted as necessary. We believe that this conception of discipline is essential to the development of our leadership and the creation of a cadre of potential leaders throughout the organization.

EDUCATION

The RT's wholesale rejection of the politics of the I.S. must be attributed in part to our failure to develop a national education program that could provide systematic unified political and theoretical training of our membership. The only progress that has been made in the past, in spite of repeated motions calling for a national education program, has been the production of a few individually prepared reading lists. In the coming year it is essential that a unified national education program finally be set up, so that we can begin the process of developing a cadre that really holds common political conceptions on a fundamental level, is capable of overcoming the regionalism and parochialism that has characterized the IS, and is able to take on other political tendencies in the working class in a confident and aggressive manner.

The education director must be mandated to accomplish the following in the coming year: (1) a review of education currently going on in branches; (2) the development of a national basic education program for all new members that will instruct them in the fundamentals of our politics; (3) the preparation of study guides on basic topics of our politics, such as the nature of stalinism, U.S. working class history, the nature of capitalism and imperialism today, black history, women's liberation, dialectical materialism, marxist economics, the Russian revolution, China, and so forth; and (4) the preparation of detailed annotated reading lists for more advanced classes and reading in important areas.

In addition, the education director should work closely with all branches to see that ongoing educationals and study groups are being scheduled both for new members and on a more advanced level for more experienced comrades. National and regional educational camps such as the one held after the 1972 convention should be scheduled again, as they greatly aid the process of national education as well as enabling the membership to discuss questions other than convention perspectives beyond the local branch level.

RECRUITMENT AND CANDIDATE MEMBERSHIP

While reaffirming our commitment to build an organization that permits broad disagreements within the framework of organizational loyalty and respect, it is necessary for us to review our recruitment policies at this time. We cannot guarantee against future splits and faction fights by more careful recruitment, but we must approach the question of recruitment of individuals and tendencies in a more serious manner. At present, the only requirement for joining the I.S. is substantial agreement with the Program in Brief, plus a theoretical willingness to accept the discipline of the organization -- theoretical because it is so rarely demanded yet in fact. We believe that the organization must change its policies at this point and establish a period of candidate membership in the branches in which prospective members work with the organization, attend its classes and carry out many of the responsibilities of members, though without paying dues or having voting rights. Only in this way can the organization seriously approach assessing potential members as future cadre -- which must become one of the criteria for membership.

Candidacy should be seen as the beginning of the process of membership. In order to become a candidate member, a contact should have a broad enough understanding of and agreement with the politics of the organization so that he/she can be reasonably expected to become a full member within a maximum of six months. Candidates should be assigned to work with a more experienced member, both in arena work and in regular reading and political discussion, and should be under the close supervision of a membership secretary or committee. Candidates should be voted into full membership when they have demonstrated an understanding of and ability to defend the basic politics of the organization, and when they have demonstrated that they can work with and carry out the line of the I.S. in practice.

In the past it has been objected that candidacy is an undemocratic procedure. We disagree. The I.S. is a voluntary organization that expects a high level of dedication from its membership and thus has the right to demand a demonstrated commitment on the part of prospective comrades. Working with an organization is far different from simply agreeing with its ideas intellectually, and developing loyalty to an organization is a process that takes time even for those who are working with us in a particular industry or arena. Part of the process of developing a cadre organization must be a high standard of recruitment -- not to turn away prospective members, but to train those who join in the best way, from the beginning.

Program and the current period

The program of the IS is far broader than its annual take and perspective document or any list of demands and slogans. In fact, our program includes our basic principles, our analysis, our strategy and tactics, as well as the various demands and slogans, and conceptions we put forth in our agitation and propaganda. To date, this program does not exist in codified form. Rather it is spread out in various documents, pamphlets, articles. That we need a codification of our basic Marxist program for today is incalculable. Just as our perspectives documents provide the context and guidance for our specific activity or propaganda, so our program, taken as a whole, must become the commonly held and understood context for our annual perspectives. Lacking a commonly held program, the IS must initiate and arrive at basic agreement on its program.

A Marxist program for the second half of the twentieth century must reflect the lessons of the century; not only what the Bolsheviks learned from the collapse of the social-democracy and what the Trotskyists learned from the decay of the Comintern into Stalinism, but what we have learned from the degeneration of the Trotskyist movement in the post-war era. To a large degree, each struggle to revive Marxism and the revolutionary movement from its previous degeneration involves the resurrection of the "old" fundamentals. Yet, where this process has had a living reality, resurrection has, in fact, produced a genuine step forward for the revolutionary movement, its method and program. The formation of the Third International and its early years represented both the reassertion of the traditional ideas of revolutionary Marxism against the reformists, centrists, and ultra-left sectarians. In formulating the method we now call the method of transitional program, the early Comintern proclaimed what Marx had always fought for; that the socialists, even in fighting for the daily needs of the workers, never accept the limits of the capitalist system. The old "minimal-maximal" program of the social-democracy was not the "old Marxism," but a degeneration of that method. At the same time, the early Comintern's reassertion of Marxist method represented a step forward in that it expanded the application of that method, in a conscious fashion, in the light of the experience of the movement.

Similarly, the Trotskyist movement sought only to revive the principles and method of the early Comintern in the face of Stalinist degeneration. In doing so, however, it not only reasserted the transitional method and refined it, but rescued the very idea of proletarian democracy from the blows it had received at the hands of Stalinism. For us, the method of the Third Camp represented primarily the reassertion of everything fundamental to Trotskyism. But once again, an attempt to preserve the fundamental principles of the past also embodied a step forward for Marxist method. Today, we are faced with the task of reasserting the principles of the Third Camp, i.e., or revolutionary Marxism, in the face of the degeneration of that movement in the 1950's and 60's.

Thus, we of the IS trace our history back to the origins of the prolet-

arian socialist movement in the 19th century through the unbroken chain of revolutionaries who have preserved and, even more importantly, pushed forward that movement down to today, even though at times these revolutionaries were no more than a handful. Thus, our program stands on the Communist Manifesto, the First International, the early Second International and its revolutionary current, the first four Congresses of the Comintern; the program of the Left Opposition, the 1938 Draft program of the Fourth International, and the world view we call the Third Camp. But, we do not stand on these in the sense of uncritically accepting the words, specifics, proposals, or formulations associated with the major documents representing each of these developments. We stand on the principles and method. We approach our own past critically.

For the period we are in and those we face in the future, we look particularly to the method of transitional program and of the Third Camp world view--in particular its emphasis on the self-activity of the masses and the relationship of the vanguard party to that activity, its analysis of Stalinism as a new class society, and the three cornered world struggle between the two major ruling classes and the international working class. In stating that we stand on the transitional method, we do not mean that we stand on any of the specifics of Trotsky's 1938 analysis of the world situation. On the contrary, we assert the essential correctness of the Permanent Arms Economy analysis for the post-war era. Nor do we see the current period as revolutionary or pre-revolutionary, as already explained. But we do hold to the two major methodological propositions of the transitional method: that we base our program on the objective needs of the International working class and not on the limits of capitalism or the momentary consciousness of the class; and that ~~ix~~ an important section of any marxist program for today, as well as the future, must include a system of transitional demands that can serve as a bridge for consciousness. We recognize that today, unlike in 1938 or in future periods facing us, that this bridge will not carry workers directly to ~~x~~ the struggle for state power. This is primarily because the masses of workers are not, today, prepared to struggle for such a program of demands. Nevertheless, this aspect of the program has central importance to us. In particular, it is in the current period that we can begin to educate the advanced militants in the working class in the method of transitional program and in the importance of fighting for such a program as the only way, over time, of achieving many of the goals they have set for today. We do not, of course, counterpose transitional demands to immediate or partial demands by any section of the class. Rather, we propose them as an extension of today's demands and, in many cases, as demands and tactics that can win today's minimal demands.

Many of the most central programmatic ideas for this period appear elsewhere in this document. We will not repeat them here. Here, we ~~x~~ wish only to put down some of the most important programmatic ideas and demands in slogan form that the IS should use in its agitation and propaganda in the coming year. In other words, this is not a transitional program, though it contains transitional demands; nor is it the full program of the IS. It is

Program and the Current Period

a part of the IS program and is, we believe, consistent with the method of transitional program.

I. The Economic Crisis: The destabilization of capitalism has produced a direct attack on the working masses, above all, in the form of inflation, wage controls, speed-up, and unemployment. The workers must not pay for the instability of capitalism. We counterpose to ruling class attempts to stabilize prices by reducing labor costs the demand for the Control of Prices and Profits Not Wages. In the face of inflation we demand and fight for an automatic Cost of Living Escalator, not only in union contracts but also for those on fixed incomes (welfare, social security, etc.) We call on the unions to fight for Wage increases with no price increases. We demand Jobs for All. The labor movement must fight for 30 for 40 and against all productivity deals or attempts at speed-up. We call for massive public workd to rebuild the cities and put the unemployed to work. These public works should be paid for by Reconverting the Arms Economy and by Taxing the Corporations and Banks! If employers cannot provide jobs of decent income, we open the books. If they cannot pay, we call for nationalization under workers' control.

II. The Social Crisis: The crisis of the world capitalist system has also produced a growing social crisis. The cities we live in, public and social services we depend on have declined and decayed. The social existence of the urban masses, particularly black people, has grown worse. Urban decay has already followed many white workers to the suburbs. Every new government policy breeds despair and further misery. The working class must fight back. Jobs for all, already mentioned, and the demands to rebuild the cities, for public works to be paid for by the corporations and banks and by reconverting the arms production toward the needs of people, would push back decay. But these demands would also would the ruling class. For the oppressed sections of the working class, resistance to this decay is an urgent need. We call on black and latin workers to take the lead in demanding that the labor movement, as well as the movements of oppressed, fight for these demands. In the social crisis, the current system of taxation and public funding is a social wedge between the oppressed and the better paid and organized sections of the working class. We demand that no income under \$12,000 be taxed. Tax the rich with a sharply graduated income tax--confiscate all income above \$50,000.

III. For Social Equality: The IS demands complete equality for all people, particularly the oppressed minorities, national groups and women. While racism, sexism, and other forms of chauvinism will only end with socialism, we demand equality today. End all forms of

racial, national, and sexual discrimination. Jobs for all blacks, Latins, native Americans, women. Preferential hiring for the oppressed. The IS asserts the right and the urgent need for the independent organization of oppressed people to fight for their own needs. We demand an end to police terror in the ghettos.

IV. Strengthen and defend the labor movement. To defend the interests of workers effectively the labor movement must expand its strength. The unions should launch an aggressive campaign to Organize the Unorganized. Rather than the current random organizing, unions should organize along industrial lines. Strengthen bargaining through coordination in contract round and use of coalition bargaining. Defeat and repeal all anti-labor legislation. Build solid shop floor organization by fighting for the principle of a steward for every foreman.

V. Fight Imperialism East and West. Immediate Withdrawal of U.S. troops from all foreign countries. Disband N.A.T.O., C.E.N.T.O., S.E.A.T.O., etc. The working class has paid in income and blood for every imperialist adventure by the U.S. ruling class. Not only must we oppose further or current wars, but the policies that cause them. We say, end foreign aid, which is nothing but a gift to support other ruling classes. No trade and tariff wars. In particular, we call for total withdrawal of U.S. troops, advisers, and aid from Indochina. We assert our support to all struggles for national liberation. We call on the labor movement to support those liberation movements on our very doorstep; Independence for Puerto Rico, support the radical labor movement of Quebec for national liberation and economic justice.

VI. Defend Democratic Rights. From anti-strike laws to government spying, the U.S. government is undermining existing rights. As socialists we defend democratic rights and fight to broaden them. No infringement on the Right to Strike. End Government spying on its political opponents. Free all political prisoners. Give prisoners the Right to Organize.

VII. Build a movement for a Labor Party. The American working class needs its own political party more than ever.

While by no means the totality of our program or the limits of the ideas we will present in our press and publications, these demands and slogans will be propagandistic in form.

The State of Labor

NEP brought to an end a four year, unbroken wave of rank and file resistance characterized, above all, by a high level of strike activity. Wildcats, even nation-wide wildcats, and contract rejections had forced the labor bureaucracy themselves to call and "lead" many long and at times even militant strikes by 1970. The last actions of this four year strike wave actually occurred under NEP. The miners and long shoremans on both coasts struck and won considerable wage increases under NEP. Yet, these strikes were the end of the old strike wave and not the start of new resistance to NEP.

As the 1972 Labor Perspectives pointed out, the long-standing strike wave and the growth of organized rank and file opposition put enormous pressure on the bureaucracy. The top level bureaucracy was under direct pressure from the employers and the government. Between these two layers, the rank and the top international bureaucracy, the secondary leaders were caught in a squeeze. Less insulated from the ranks, i.e. able to be ousted by elections in many cases, the secondary leaders began to appear in the leaderships of opposition movements. This fact broke the monolith that had been the labor bureaucracy and opened the door for even greater rank and file struggle. This process was, in part, interrupted by Phase II of NEP. That is, the disorientation of the ranks and of their rank and file leaders in the face of decisive government intervention led to a drop in direct action and a temporary loss of self-confidence. Thus, the pressure was off, for a while, and the secondary leaders relaxed their opposition to the top bureaucrats. This is one reason why the leaders of the big international unions were able to capitulate under Phases II and III. For the moment, power seemed to flow back to the bureaucracy, just as it did to the ruling class for that period. The result of all of this was that some national rank and file oppositions that had existed collapsed, while others failed to grow. None of these opposition organizations (TURF, UNC, UAC, RTV, etc.) had been organizationally or politically strong enough to weather even a short-term closing of ranks by the bureaucracy and a demoralization among the ranks of the workers. The collapse or limiting of these organized rank and file oppositions was also a victory for the ruling class.

The major exception to this pattern was, of course, the Miners for Democracy. MFD managed to keep the loyalty of many secondary leaders and of the ranks. In the coal fields there was no slacking of the struggle. That is, the strike of fall 1971 was not ended until the Pay Board OKed the agreement. The fight against black lung and rotten working conditions did not decline in the mines to the degree it did elsewhere; though of course, it did not cease altogether anywhere. Thus, while not a rank and file organization, MFD maintained an active mass base up to and through the election. Additional organizational stability came from the liberal outsiders who "helped" MFD, notably Joe Rauh. Both the campaign of the MFD and its victory, as mixed a blessing as that is, are important because they helped to maintain the continuity of rank and file opposition. The negative side is that the Miller leadership has so

rapidly adapted to the methods of the industrial union bureaucracy.

Reflecting the general temporary decline in rank and file activity and organization, black rank and file worker organization has also declined. The origins of this decline, however, are additionally connected to the dispersion of the organized black liberation movement in the U.S. The political cul de sacs into which both the moderate^s and the ultra-lefts led that movement, played themselves out in industry as well. What once promised to be a movement of radical black caucuses of the DRUM sort is today a sprinkling of Maoist sects. The leadership of black workers in the unions has fallen largely to secondary bureaucrats, in so far as it takes an organized form. Black caucuses led by black union officials, usually at the secondary level, are quite wide-spread. As the rank and file struggle re-emerges these secondary leaders will come under the same pressure from below as their white counterparts. As a result, some of these black caucuses may become membership organizations with a rank and file base. One form or another of black workers' organization is almost certain as the struggle intensifies.

Women in the labor movement had no previous tradition of self-organization in the unions. Yet, a generalized "Womens' Rights" consciousness continues to exist. As with blacks, the bulk of organized or even semi-organized activity around womens' issues has come from women secondary leaders. Rather than women's caucuses, however, it has tended to take even more "official" forms; for example, conferences on women's problems sponsored by the union. Most generally, struggles around women's issues are little more than resolutions at conventions. The major intervention of working class women in the crisis of the system has been the meat boycott. There is no doubt that countless working class women, housewives and workers, turned that very "managed" proposal into a movement for a brief period of time. While the tactic was utterly wrong, the meat boycott showed that working class women can intervene on a mass scale. We have tended to rule out such mass action in the past. The nature of the crisis and the growth of general working class resentment, however, make spadic mass action of this sort a possibility for the future. In many areas the leadership of the meat boycott was women union bureaucrats. In the future, movements of similar proportions could be led by women rank and file militants.

In general, the pressure on the labor bureaucracy from below was at a low for the past year and a half to two years. The leaders of those unions involved in the 1973-74 bargaining round were free to act on their own perspective. Thus, as the bargaining round opened in early 1973, the leaders of every major industrial union stood for a program of complete capitulation. The most extreme version of this was I.W. Abel's no strike pledge, made a year in advance of the expiration of the Steel steel contract. While not formalized, this was by and large the program of the labor bureaucracy as a whole. Of course, in auto there might have to be a token strike, but it was common knowledge that there would

be no serious confrontation by labor in 1973-74 if things were left up to the top leaders. Phase III, with its rampant inflation, as well as a couple of years experience with productivity drives in many industries, upset this plan.

As soon as the bargaining round opened in the spring of 1973, wildcats began to reappear as a part of the collective bargaining process. The first outbreak was in rubber, with the wildcat of the Firestone workers in three cities. This was followed by the Goodrich strike--clearly forced by rank and file pressure--and by a wave of wildcats in auto in early June. (There will have to be material here on the steel and auto elections in June). In short, the ranks, began to assert their power once again. As yet, this power, has been too disorganized to have a major effect on the outcome of bargaining. It has, however, won certain small concessions and, most importantly, helped to revive the self-confidence of the militants.

Past T&P and Labor documents have tended to emphasize the continuous growth of the rank and file movement from 1968 onward. Clearly, the defeats under NEP caused a serious setback in the development of that movement, including its level of organization. While semi-organized opposition continued at the local level in many unions, the embryo national organizations that began to appear before NEP have collapsed or remained isolated. The disorientation in the face of decisive state intervention caught many rank and file leaders unprepared, as well as their followers. In any case, few of these organizations rested on a solid base, an efficient organization, or very much of a shared program. The semi-hiatus created by NEP has set back the process of development of a self-conscious layer of rank and file leaders: i.e. a layer aware of itself on a national scale, as the leadership of a rank and file movement. This kind of self-conscious layer of militants can only be created by an intensified and growing struggle. Until this layer emerges as a self-conscious section of the labor movement, rank and file organization, especially national ones, will be inherently unstable.

Such leaders already exist in small numbers. Nat Moseley, Jordan Sims, Curly Best are all of this type--to name a few. Their commitment to a rank and file movement is a result of their participation in the period of struggle with conscious socialists, including ourselves. As individuals they were able to survive the disorientation of the past year and a half because of the long range views they had adopted. Our estimate, however, is that militants of this training and calibre are few indeed. That vast majority of pre-NEP militants are most likely only beginning to feel any confidence. A large number have probably made their peace with the bureaucracy or simply become inactive. The beginnings of a upturn in the struggle indicate that the militants who survived NEP as militants are slowly coming to life again and new militants are arising. To the degree that these militants become aggressive and the struggle continues to escalate, the secondary levels of the bureaucracy are certain to resume their increasingly opportunist stance.

The experience of NEP, however, makes it unlikely that any new organized opposition movement in the unions will arise on the same basis as before. That is, there is likely to be a recognition that the question of state intervention must be dealt with. Clearly, the "typical" R&F before NEP shunned such considerations as "politics." Even groups that had formal positions on NEP did not organize on that basis. While R&F organizations are more likely to deal with these political questions, however, they will, in most cases, probably turn to old solutions. That is, the militants first response under present conditions is likely to be a new willingness to strike against the government. The way to break wage controls will be direct action on one's economic demands. Additionally, as we noted in last years Labor Perspectives, the secondary leaders and even sections of the militants are likely to turn to increased activity in the Democratic Party. The latter will be put in terms of the need to become more political. In that sense, but only in that sense, it is a healthy response. One of our major educational tasks is to show the militants how to turn these two impulses, direct action and political action, into a winning strategy. Before dealing with the tasks of the IS in the labor movement, it is necessary to examine two problems that were present in various past IS labor documents.

One of our most consistent and major problems with past IS perspective documents has been an overestimation of the pace of destabilization. Our analysis has, correctly, pointed to the narrowing options for maneuver by the ruling class. All too often, however, this has led to formulations or assumptions that this meant the termination of ruling class options. Clearly, NEP demonstrated that for all their problems they can buy time.

While their ability to create "recoveries" continues to be in fundamental contradiction to their ability to provide a decent, let alone expanding living standard for the working class, it should be understood that they can concede elements of a rising living standard -- even if not the substance. In any case, the international capitalist class can certainly keep the system going at acceptable levels for some time. Most predictions of cataclysmic crisis have proved shallow.

While the IS has avoided that extreme, it has, to a degree, made the concomitant methodological mistake: the mistake of basing political perspectives on economic forecasts. As rotten and overripe as the decay of capitalism is, the system still exists and is still able to grow. The emergence of a pre-revolutionary period will not be the result of an economic catastrophe, but of a higher level of struggle, organization and political consciousness of the working class. That depends on a great deal more than the economy -- as important as that is.

Partly because of this, we have constantly overestimated the pace at which the workers' movement would grow and the class struggle sharpen in the US. Additionally, we overestimated the proximity of a pre-revolutionary period, both internationally and in the US. We said, vaguely, we were "entering" such a period. Some took this to mean we were, for all practical purposes, already there. For all of us, this indicated a more or less continuous growth of struggle. In reality, of course, we now know the struggle may develop fairly slowly and very unevenly. We must now accept the corollary of that fact: that rank and file organization will be unstable for some time to come.

Our overestimation of the pace of events was in part responsible for the development and tenacity of the "struggle group" concept. While most versions of struggle groups postulated tactical intervention in the unions, the basic idea was directed at by-passing a stage of prolonged political struggle within the unions. The theory saw the growing shop floor struggle, in particular the fight against inhuman working conditions, as the key to a rapidly developing growth in the class struggle. The analysis overestimated the strength of the labor bureaucracy and essentially sought to by-pass a head on fight in the unions with the bureaucracy. We assumed state intervention would be dramatic, and we were right. But we also assumed that this would simply politicize, rapidly, a continuously

growing movement. It is not that we ruled out temporary set-backs, but that we did not understand the impact such temporary set-backs could have and how they would effect the level of organization. Thus, in the view held by most ISers, the struggle groups, rooted in the shop floor struggle would become politicized -- though not necessarily revolutionary. A national movement of such organizations would be sustained by this political consciousness. In this way, the whole idea of drawn out struggle in the unions appeared as little more than a road block.

Such a conception can rest only on the assumption that the struggle would develop rapidly and consciousness almost as rapidly. In fact, the struggle developed more slowly, and far more unevenly, than we predicted; while the consciousness of the workers developed even more slowly. Specifically, no layer of politically conscious militants developed at all -- only a sprinkling of individuals. Our over-estimation of the pace of events was matched by an over-estimation of the speed at which the consciousness of US workers, in particular, the militants, developed. This misperception was not so much a failing in the theoretical understanding of how class consciousness develops, as in the fact that the organization had no actual experience in seeing the process as it occurs in life.

In other words, as an organization still based in the petty-bourgeois, our knowledge of the advanced workers was purely theoretical. Our ability to understand the reality of class consciousness and of how working class struggle, organization and politics develops has increased and become more accurate precisely to the degree that we have become rooted in the class.

This does not mean that either our turn to the class or our more recent perspectives for intervention in the class are empiricism. Such a view is simply a misunderstanding of the relationship of theory to objective reality. Rather, we have been able to concretize our theory by contact with reality, not static facts, and bring our perspectives in line with that concretization.

The first step away from the "struggle group" perspective occurred in the 1970 Band document's labor section, which was passed with some amendments by the 1970 Convention. (Naturally, there were always comrades who opposed the whole perspective, such as Scott Jacoby. Similarly, in 1969, Mike P. put forth a document which, while accepting the struggle group concept, had more realistic view of work in the unions. These views, however, were not adopted by the organization.) This section accepted the struggle group concept, but noted that the international unions were playing a bigger role and insisted that the struggle groups -- which never existed in reality in the US -- play a more direct oppositionist role in the unions. This position was in effect a half-way

house between rank and file opposition caucuses and struggle groups. The limited but important experience of the IS in auto and telephone particularly that followed that convention led to a general de-facto rejection of struggle groups. At the 1972 Convention the concept was explicitly rejected in the Labor Perspectives. That document dealt only briefly, however, with why the struggle group perspective was not valid.

Our future work in the working class must now be guided by the dual understanding that events may move slowly and unevenly -- even though the destabilization of capitalism proceeds in one form or another -- and that long-term work in the unions must be the central focus of our work in the organized working class. What distinguishes a revolutionary organization from other radical groupings is its ability to adapt its tactics to uneven developments -- that is, to leaps or upheavals and to drawn out periods of the most minimal level of struggle, or even periods of retreat.

The development of motion, consciousness, and organization in the working class is central to the tasks and perspectives of a socialist organization. Indeed, such developments determine the possibilities for the growth of socialist organization on a working class basis. For us, the developing rank and file rebellion in the labor movement is not only a means of transforming the trade unions into militant workers' organizations, but a step toward the formation, still distant in time, of a revolutionary working class party in the United States. The socialist movement is in a shambles throughout the world. And, just as each major step forward in revolutionary organization in the 20th century has been born on a wave of mass upheaval by the ranks of labor, so the resurrection of the socialist movement today is dependent on the rank and file rebellion occurring throughout the industrialized world.

The process of rebuilding the socialist movement is further advanced in Europe, Japan, and a few other countries than in the US. That is due to the long standing, though badly derided, socialist consciousness among the working classes of other countries, the process of linking the intellectual cadres that survived the long era of Stalinist and reformist dominance with the new working class militancy is more developed elsewhere. Nonetheless, the task is the same here; to link socialist cadres with the growing militancy of the ranks of the unions.

In spite of the differences in the American situation, there are important similarities in labor militancy throughout western capitalism. Virtually everywhere the ranks of organized labor have fought against and organized independently of the labor bureaucracy -- regardless of the politics of their national labor bureaucracy. The particular forms of organization and the phases the struggle go through differ from nation to nation, but all countries have in common rank and file initiative and direct action. It was the ability of the Communists to latch on to such a rank and file upheaval following World War I, even where it expressed itself as syndicalism, that made the Third International a success.

On the other hand, it was the failure of the Trotskyists, our forebears, to link up with another such rank and file upsurge in the 1930's that made the Fourth International a stillbirth. Clearly, it will be the ability of the revolutionary socialists around the world to link up with rank and file rebellion that has been underway since the late 1960's that will determine the success or even the possibility of future revolutionary parties.

Despite the enormous differences in consciousness, and the longer and more complicated process of development that this implies for the US, the task is essentially the same. The separation of socialist ideas and organization from the working class in this country requires that socialist intellectuals and cadre enter the working class directly and literally. Our program of industrialization is central to this, or any other, labor perspective. We do not, however, enter industry for the

purpose of an intellectual leadership, or of substituting transplanted intellectuals for indigenous working class cadre. The primary long range task of socialists in industry is to bring socialist ideas, politics, and theory to the working class leadership that is now forming as part of the rank and file upsurge.

Socialist politics, above all those of the IS, cannot be learned and fully internalized outside of struggle. Sectarian propagandizing will never effect either the linking of today's socialist cadre with the most militant workers, or the spreading of socialist ideas in the working class. This is true whether the intellectuals involved hold working class jobs or not.

In our view the sectarian "propagandizing" of the Spartacist League, Workers' League, Class Struggle League, like all of the now defunct sects that preceded them to the graveyard is only a road block. This is not because we oppose socialist propaganda directed to the workers, we do not. Rather we oppose the confusion of the task of socialist propaganda with building a rank and file movement. For us these two tasks are inter-related, but they are not the same. Thus, the Spartacists end up opposing MFD and Morrissey, where they even run their own candidate because these opposition leaders do not have what amounts to a socialist propaganda program. This sectarian mode of behavior is based on a misunderstanding of the role of Marxists in working class movements and our relationship to reformist opposition leaders and the ranks.

Since, as already stated, we can expect to see a number of oppositionists of the Miller-Morrissey type, and other even worse, it is crucial that we understand where they fit in to the development of a real left-wing rank and file movement in the labor movement.

We see the development of an organized rank and file opposition movement in the unions as the central feature of our strategy for building a revolutionary socialist party in the US. This, of course, is nothing more than the contemporary form of the Marxist notion, developed most insistently by Lenin, that the revolutionaries work in the unions, the real mass organizations of the workers. In Lenin's day, in particular in the early years of the Comintern, this meant forming organizations, under communist hegemony, with a broad program that other progressives and radicals could adhere to. The purpose of these organizations was to win the advanced workers to the Communist Party.

In the US the Trade Union Educational League was this sort of organization. In Britain a similar role was played by the Minority Movement. During their healthy, and pre-Stalinist periods, these organizations included many non-CP members. This kind of organization in the labor

movement was necessary in the US and Britain because of the weakness of the CP. At the same time, the revolutionary nature of that period in the early 1920's meant that the program of TUEL and the IM was quite different from the start, though much broader than the program of the CP or Comintern. In the process of building a revolutionary workers' movement here, one of our major goals, must be the establishment of a national organization in the unions, crossing individual unions lines, such as the TUEL or IMI. At the same time, such an organization cannot be willed into existence.

In an article on the Minority Movement, Jim Higgins noted:

"An understanding of the Minority Movement and its early comparative success is impossible without setting the movement within its own historical context. Both CP members involved and their non-CP co-workers were, in the main, people with an experience of rank and file movements going back to the pre-1914 period. Without these contacts even the limited success of the IMI would have been impossible. (Higgins, "The Minority Movement," IC 45, p. 13)

The same can be said of the TUEL, where Foster was the main, though not the only link with past movements in the unions. In effect, we in the US today are still in the period of the rank and file movements that preceded TUEL or IMI or for that matter the Comintern. It is now, in our labor work, that we are making contacts with those militants who will be the base, socialist and non-socialist, of the TUEL of the future. More generally, this is also the period during which those militants are gaining the experience required to be revolutionary leaders in the future.

For the US, the rank and file movements of today are the process in which militants can be forged into leaders and rank and file leaders into revolutionaries. It is in these transitional organizations and struggles that today's militants can digest and systematize, through an organized response to the crisis of the system. It is here, in this process, that the intervention of socialists, even in relatively small numbers, can have a serious impact, if we understand our tasks and whom we are speaking to.

Aside from historic figures such as Lenin or Trotsky, the most valuable members of a revolutionary party in the process of revolution are those workers who are actual leaders of the class at its base. That is, those rank and file leaders who over the years have won the respect and confidence of their fellow workers. It is these comrades who at crucial times can wield the tactics, slogans and ideas that mobilize masses of workers.

Hidden from the view of history, it is these leaders (organized as a vanguard) who give any program, manifesto, or declaration of action its power. Without this strata no party has ever been able to lead a revolutionary upsurge. When the social-democrats have controlled the majority of these leaders, the revolution has failed, as in Germany in 1918. When the revolutionaries have had sufficient members in this strata the revolution has won, as in Russia. While this is, of course, not the only factor in the success or failure of a revolution, it is a central one, and one virtually over-looked by most organizations that claim to be revolutionary. Militants, who have won the respect of their fellow workers become revolutionaries both because of their experience in the class struggle and their interaction with organized socialists. That interaction, however, must be more than a propaganda relationship.

The key to all our other tasks, as a small socialist propaganda organization working to build a mass socialist movement, is intervention in the rank and file movement. The first step is industrialization, the next step is implanting our cadres in that militant strata that today forms the actual rank and file leadership at the most basic level.

To a very large degree our implantation in that strata will involve the willingness and ability to provide tactical leadership for struggles over minimal and partial demands. For us, however, even the tactics we pose are a part of, and are a part of, and are subordinate to, the larger strategy that sees the rank and file movement as part of the process by which the revolutionary party can be built here.

We are for direct action, as opposed to those sectarians who insist that it only breeds illusions, because it builds the self-confidence and combativity of the class and the militants. (This is not to say that we are for every action, but that we are for direct action as a method of struggle.)

We are for opposition campaigns in union elections because they allow us to raise programmatic ideas in a situation that gives them focus and because such campaigns can give the militants experience in organizing and fighting for their ideas. We do not judge opposition campaigns solely by their written program, but by their direction and where they fit in in the over-all process and development of the rank and file struggle.

Above all, we are for organization. Direct action is more effective when organized. Campaigns are better and more instructive when wielded by permanently conceived rank and file caucuses. Programs cease to be simply ideas on paper when they are organized for.

Thus our central, agitational, immediate tactical proposal is the con-

struction of rank and file caucuses in the international unions. We will play a role in building such organizations. At the same time we will propose and fight for our programmatic, analytical and tactical ideas in these organizations, movements, struggles, etc. in line with the guidelines set down in the section on program for labor. For us, the question of organization and program are inseparable.

It is in this over-all context that we approach the question of bureaucratic oppositionists. The primary question is if a position of critical support to a figure such as Miller or Morrissey or Dempsey will open up the struggle or head it off. This is a concrete problem of analysis that can only be settled case by case. In general, however, if we feel that critical support to a particular oppositionist will open things up or better allow us to separate the militants and the ranks from this bureaucrat by a tactic of exposure, then we should give critical support. Depending on the issues, forces and individuals involved, of course, there are different degrees of critical support.

In the case of the MFD, for example, the leaders of this oppositionist organization were not, by-and-large bureaucrats. Furthermore, MFD represented, imperfectly, a number of actual rank and file movements. MFD as an organization represented a potential step forward which it did not fulfill because neither we nor anyone else attempted to carry through our agitational proposal for fulfilling that potential. That is, MFD represented an organized embodiment of several direct action movements directed at overthrowing the bureaucracy. Its program was limited and its leaders absorbed with the liberal anti-struggle politics of their "friends."

Even in this condition, however, the victory of MFD in the union elections was a step forward because it opened up the struggle by removing the Boyle bureaucracy. That the MFD leaders had their own policy of dampening struggle does not change the fact at all. Our criticisms were precisely those directed at the non-struggle policy and programmatic limitations of MFD. We wished to expose their failures and push the struggle past them.

In the case of Morrissey, there is scarcely even an organized base of any proportions. It is an exaggeration to say that he has no following, however, he was able to field a ticket with candidates, many black and Latin from all the relevant ports. His paper has a wide readership and there is little doubt that he has support -- although it is passable. His program is even more limited and less struggle-oriented than that of the MFD. Furthermore, Morrissey was a long-time bureaucrat himself -- which Miller, Trobovich and Patrick were not. Like MFD, he has gone to court many times, both out of weakness and simply bad politics. Clearly,

we would not support him because we thought he was hot-stuff. We would give him critical support both to open up the struggle by defeating Wall, and as a means of getting out our ideas on how to fight Wall, unemployment among seamen, etc.

The Herson campaign is a good example of how not to do this. I simply demonstrates that the socialists are unwilling to play a part in any broader movement that does not except all their ideas. It re-enforces all the worst notions people have about the left, many of which are firmly based in reality, and it leaves the socialists isolated. Instead of battling within the Morrikey campaign for his ideas, or even for the right program to build a rank and file movement, Herson and his supporters in the Spartacist League, have shown that their idea of a political fight isslogan mongering.

There will also be cases in which we will not support a bureaucratic oppositionist. For example, in a union where the victory of one bureaucrat over another will not open up things, by, for example, instituting minimal democratic norms, or where democracy per se is not at question, we may well be for running an independent slate or candidate. Similarly, where someone like Paul Schrade may be heading off an existing rank and file movement or organization, we would oppose him. But these tactics must be assessed concretely.

The running of independent candidates is ont a matter of principle for us, but of tactics. In the first place, we are not for running IS campaigns. Any independent, independent of other oppositionists, campaign we supported or advocated would not be explicitly socialist, so there is no question of socialist educational campaigns. (Even the SL, pretensions notwithstanding, do not run socialist educational campaigns.) For us the use of a campaign is guided by the task of building the organized rank and file movement. If we or the organized militants have the forces to run independently, we should do so. If our activity and our opposition to bureaucratic oppositionists can be more effectively pursued in the context of a broader campaign we do that. When we do critically support a bureaucratic oppositionist, we are guided by our task to expose the limitations and misleadership (real or potential) of that bureaucratic oppositionist.

Our relationship to rank and file militant oppositionists is different. Although they too accept capitalism or have illusions about many things, even when they regard themselves as radicals or revolutionaries, their position in the class struggle is fundamentally different. As de-facto leaders in a struggle that is directed against the labor bureaucracy as well as the employers and the government, these militants, as a strata, do not have the options open to the secondary leaders. Even

during a relative lull in the struggle these leaders were forced to maintain at least minimal resistance to speedup, productivity, etc. The secondary leaders can make their peace with the top levels of the bureaucracy simply by changing their ideas. The rank and file militant leaders must change their social position as well as their ideas. Of course, individuals can "sell-out" or become burned out; but it is virtually a law of the class struggle that new leaders will come to the fore eventually.

Thus, it is the dynamic of the class struggle and the relative social positioning of the different kinds of oppositionists that define the direction of the various strata today, more than their subjective ideas or verbal-written program. The secondary bureaucrats are quite likely to have "more advanced" programs than many rank and file militants for some time to come. We cannot judge an oppositionist by his or her program alone. It is above all to the rank and file militant leaders, the real "advanced workers" of today, that we direct our activity, agitation and propaganda.

It is among this strata of workers that we believe the first socialists can be recruited. It is this strata that can become the self-conscious layer of the class that makes a national rank and file movement, and later a TU&L or MM, possible. We, therefore, do not wish to "expose" their reformist consciousness to the rest of the class, which is even more backward in any case, but to change it by interaction and collaboration in the course of the real struggle.

The IS in Industry: The Last Two Years, and the Future

The IS policy of industrialization did not become a reality until about two years ago. It was only in the past two years that we have established a presence in or influence on any industrial or trade union situation. In assessing that experience two aspects must be discussed: industrialization itself, and our activity in industry.

The industrialization program itself has been a limited success with severe weaknesses. We have begun to establish a national presence in two or three of the priorities established last year, but with the exception of Detroit in one of those industries, our presence is still thin. We completely failed in two of the priority industries to industrialize any significant numbers. In view of the number of members in the IS and the need to concentrate and continue to industrialize in groups, as pointed out last year, we should scale down the number of priority industries. In particular, we recommend abandoning steel and public employment (AFSCME) as national priorities.

In the case of steel, we have simply failed to gain and maintain any significant industrialization. Furthermore, the difficulties offered by the USW as a union, by the strength of the CP there and by the relative lack of an organized opposition movement, make the USW a difficult union to take on. While our politics and approach would certainly allow us an advantage over the CP, it would require numbers of experienced cadre. It is a near certainty that we will not have sufficient cadre to industrialize there in the coming year or two. Thus, while we still feel steel to be an important industry, we must recognize that the IS will not be able to seriously industrialize there at this time.

AFSCME represents a somewhat different problem. In addition to the fact that we do not have significant numbers of cadre in that union, there is the question of the relative importance of that union, particularly the sections of it we might be able to enter, on a national scale. The most militant section of AFSCME, and those best organized to spearhead a rank and file opposition, are the blue collar locals -- particularly sanitation. We have no presence here and are not likely to for some time. The few locals where we do have cadre are peripheral or isolated by virtue of the manner in which AFSCME in some places is organized -- on craft, rather than industrial, lines. Also, AFSCME's impact on the labor movement and the consciousness of other workers is minimal. Nationally, AFSCME should be dropped as a priority.

The nature of the crisis, and of AFSCME as well, however, mean that in some cities or local areas AFSCME may have a greater importance than it does nationally. As there will always have to be local priorities for industrialization as well as national, we recommend that branches in large cities consider, concretely, the possibilities offered by certain AFSCME locals. Additionally, as we shall discuss, AFSCME may offer local possibilities for women who are unable to industrialize in the national priority industries.

The most consistent failure of our industrialization program has been the failure of the organization to find industries for women and to get women into those industries. This has had the twin political effects of excluding, to a large degree, women from the labor fractions and therefore decisions on many

labor questions; and of "excluding" consistent agitation and propaganda on women's questions in industry. The major partial exception to this has been in telephone, where women's issues have been raised with relative consistency nationally. In auto and AFT where there is a small number of IS women, there has been very little done on these important questions. Part of the solution to this problem is simply to find a way to industrialize women -- the other part is, of course, a matter of politics.

Taking into consideration the limitations and failures of our industrialization program, we propose the following priorities for the coming year or two:

1. United Auto Workers/auto
2. Teamsters/trucking and freight
3. Communications Workers/telephone
4. AFT/public schools

In each of these unions the current need is both to concentrate locally and to expand the national presence by industrializing groups in cities or areas where our presence is weak or absent. The specific localities should be in line with the geographic priorities now in effect. Particular effort should be made to industrialize women in UAW, CWA and AFT. Each of these unions employs significant numbers of women. In the case of CWA, telephone traffic should be the priority for women, except in those areas where traffic is not in CWA. It is doubtful if the Teamsters offers much potential for women at this time, though recent EEOC decisions may change this in the future for certain companies.

For the IS industrialization is a tactical step in the process of winning militants to socialism. We do not believe that we are sending cadre from intellectual and petit-bourgeois backgrounds into industry to supply the working class with leaders -- though we do expect those cadre who do industrialize to be leaders. Our particular purpose in industrializing is to re-establish the link between socialist ideas and the actual rank and file leaders of the working class. We realize, however, that due to the course of US history socialist ideas simply presented from outside the class and its struggle will not take root fast enough to prepare the class for the future crisis of capitalism. We can play this only if we become part of the strata of militants who take responsibility for the daily conduct of the class struggle. To implant ourselves in this strata takes time and a willingness to learn the realities and details of struggle, as well as the broad conceptions we already know. The most successful aspect of our industrialization program has been our ability to do just this. While many comrades have learned that it takes time to win the respect of your fellow workers, and particularly of the other militants, that it can be done, indeed, has been done by many comrades.

Far more difficult has been the ability of the organization to act on a unified perspective within any one union. In no union where we have a national presence have we operated on a coherent perspective on a national scale. In unions such as the AFT, which do not bargain nationally, this is difficult except at convention time. Nevertheless, the IS had very little to say about the national wave of teachers strikes in a broadly political way. Our work in building an anti-Shanker movement at the NY State level has been programmatical-ly quite different from our work in the UFT, which seemed to have no clear perspective. These differences turned out to be deep political differences, none-

theless, it is an indication of a lack of national coherence. Similarly, in telephone. We seem to have operated on different perspectives, at least for a while, on the two coasts. At no time was our work coordinated. Thus, we failed to have a coherent, joint, approach to local bureaucrats who themselves shared a national perspective -- Dempsey, Kirkpatrick, etc. In auto, our local caucus work seems to have had little relationship to our UNC work, which occurs only at the Executive Board level. Clearly, this political disorganization must be ended. The labor perspective passed this year must be the one that the entire organization operates on. Specific national perspectives for each of the priority unions should be drawn up and must follow the guidelines and political thrust established by the convention -- not rediscuss the question under the guise of specifics as in the past.

A Program for Labor and the Rank and File Movement

The central concept, at this time, for today's rank and file movement is the building of national opposition caucuses in the unions. While this is not in contradiction to merely local caucuses, it is the context in which we place our call for and work in local caucuses. The importance of national opposition caucuses is both that they represent an organizational step toward a single, politically defined organization such as the TUUL in the entire labor movement; and that they are necessary to fight the bureaucracy which is itself organized on a national level. In organizing or participating in local caucuses formed around "local" issues, or to fight the bureaucracy of a specific local union, we will raise the importance of building national opposition caucuses if any victories are to be won. As in the past, our conception of a caucus, local or national, is one that is an extension of the actual fights and struggles in industry, not a substitute for them. At the same time, our conception is a political one.

While caucuses usually arise out of specific situations (an election, after a lost strike, around a specific concern) our role is to generalize the program and concerns of the caucus or rank and file organization. To do this we draw on our program, including our general analysis and strategy for the period. In fighting for our program, however, we recognize a distinction between immediate, inter-mediate and long range tasks and ideas, as well as the distinction between agitation and propaganda. Our long range tasks; e.g., the building of a revolutionary party and international, the mobilizing of the masses for state power, etc., determine what our more immediate tasks are. Nevertheless these different tasks are different. Rank and file caucuses are for us a way of raising the level of organization and political consciousness of the class. They are an immediate task to be agitated and propagandized for. The revolutionary party is what determines our attitude toward today's caucuses, but it is not the same thing. The revolutionary party cannot be agitated for today and cannot be seen as an immediate task -- regardless of how urgent the need for such a party is, and it is urgent. Thus we do not raise or fight for, in the labor movement, every principle, tactic, strategy, demand or idea in our overall program today or in the coming years. We will, of course, raise many of the more advanced ideas and tasks in IS publications in an educational and propagandistic way. Similarly, certain tasks which are immediate, but cannot be fully carried out in practice (e.g., a national opposition caucus) in each and every case or at our bidding in almost any case, will be raised educationally by us in the labor movement, local groups, rank and file publications, etc.. That is, our immediate task includes an educational and propagandistic aspect.

Immediate Tasks in the Labor Movement

Our overall immediate task is our own intervention in today's rank and file movement. The political task we pose for ourselves and for the militants is the building of organized national rank and file caucuses in the unions. Initially, in most unions, this concept must be posed educationally at this moment. Nevertheless, we pose it as a task that can be carried out today. The basic motivation for such national caucuses is, of course, the obvious need to combat the international union bureaucracy in order to win even the most minimal or partial demands, even to hold the line against inflation and speedup. In

addition to the specific demands for each industry we propose that the national rank and file caucuses be built on the following crucial demands:

1. End Wage Controls in all forms -- control prices and profits
2. 30 hours work for 40 hours pay -- Jobs for All
3. Automatic C.O.L. for all workers and people on fixed incomes
4. No freeze on the Fight for Equality -- Jobs for blacks, latins, and women. Preferential hiring where necessary. Equal work for all, equal pay for equal work.
5. Full Democratic Rights for all in the Labor movement -- establish democratic procedures in all unions. The right of oppressed groups to organize independently within the unions. End the special privileges of the bureaucracy.
6. No restrictions on the Right to Strike or the Right to Ratify Contracts.
7. Organize the Unorganized -- priority to black, latin and women workers.
8. International cooperation among unions -- fight protectionism. No trade or tariff wars. US wages to workers in US firms overseas.
9. Tax the Corporations and Banks to pay for needed public and social services.
10. Build a Labor Party to Fight for the Needs of all Working Class People -- for a Congress of Labor and its allies, the oppressed people, to launch a labor party.

This set of demands is both a political program in embryo and a program that the unions and the rank and file movement can fight for by direct action. It is, of course, not our full program in any sense. It is neither purely agitational nor purely educational in content. It is not meant to be a minimum basis for our support to or participation in the life of or building of any specific rank and file group.

In most unions today, our initial agitational work will be in building local groups or caucuses, as a means of organizing the day to day struggle. Both the idea of a national caucus and the programmatic demands linked to it should be discussed, written about, and become a part of the actual program of the local group. Wherever there is an existing national caucus that we are able to support, no matter how critically, we concretize our national orientation by an orientation to and, where possible, affiliation with the existing national caucus. This should be our orientation toward the UNC in the UAW. In the IBT, we can point to the previous existence of TURF and to the fact that many of the local groups that gave TURF its reality still exist. We are for the reconstruction of TURF. Where no national grouping exists, such as CWA, we seek to concretize the idea of such a caucus as best as possible. In the CWA the notion of the "Big City Alliance," given our rank and file content, has a realistic character because of the political history and current situation in that union. In short, even where we are limited, agitationally, to local caucus work we push the idea of a national rank and file opposition.

The demands, organizational proposals and political ideas in the ten point program above are meant to deal with the particular nature of the effects of de-stabilization. The use of these demands is determined by the tasks facing the rank and file of labor; the fight against inflation, productivity drives (speed-up and layoffs), unemployment, and government intervention in the union and bargaining. While our program, particularly as presented in IS publications, is

class-wide; the building of an organized rank and file movement in the different unions means that different aspects of the program will receive different emphasis and timing in each case. We put our programmatic ideas in a manner that is meant to convince, not just inform, militants of our ideas.

For us, these demands are but the slogan form of strategic ideas with both immediate possibilities and long-range implications. We have the immediate task of educating advanced militants to a long-range, class struggle view of the rank and file movement. These demands and slogans are short hand for explaining in concrete terms why we believe the rank and file movement must be a political movement and not just a reform movement or one directed at throwing our specific union leaders out. We have both a different concept of what unions should be and how they should fight (our concept of rank and file democracy and militancy embodies this) and a different conception of what being political means than either today's labor leaders or even most militants. Our specific demands should be used in such a way as to help us illustrate these more complex conceptions.

Our tactical judgement is guided by the general notion of expanding each and every struggle to the broadest layers of the class. Thus, in calling for the defeat of wage controls, we not only call on each union at bargaining time to break the guidelines, but we call for direct action by the entire labor movement, including a General Strike, to defeat Phase IV and all anti-labor legislation and policy. In fighting productivity drives or deals, we not only call on the ranks to reject any contract embodying such a deal and for direct shop floor action to control production or work speed or load, but we call for company-wide or union-wide action. Thus, we counterpose to Leonard Woodcock's "Apache Strikes" the idea of a GMAD-wide strike. Similarly, in steel, we call for a union-wide rejection of Abel's no-strike plan both in the June local elections and by direct action at the time of the contract expiration.

We recognize as a part of the immediate tasks of socialists in industry an aggressive and positive attitude toward the strengthening of shop floor militancy and organization. We continue to raise those demands that would strengthen stewards' organization such as a steward for every foreman, election of all stewards, for democratic stewards councils with control over shop floor bargaining, bring the union leadership back to the shops, etc. It is also likely that the first forms of organization will be in response to local or shop floor (or office, or gang, or crew) issues. We do not counterpose our broader program to this level of struggle. We do, however, point out that the shop floor struggle must be reinforced by a broader struggle. Our local caucuses should not be conceived of as shop caucuses, but as caucuses within the local union -- even if directed initially at getting the local to back up the shop floor struggle -- with a view to building a national caucus.

Our expectation is that there will probably not be any significant national opposition caucuses formed in the next year. Certainly, there will be no genuinely rank and file opposition organizations on a national scale. At the same time, however, this is likely to be the year in which the potential rank and file leadership for such caucuses in the future gain or regain their self-confidence through local struggle and less organized struggle in the international unions. In the unions where we have a presence we can play a limited but significant role in training some of these militants in the political, organizational, and tactical ideas, presented above and elsewhere in this docu-

ment, needed to build and sustain national oppositions and deal with the secondary bureaucrats who may play a crucial role in initiating many of these. In this respect, the small caucuses we are now active in and the various rank and file publications we have access to are important. We must, in the coming year, make the fullest use of these organizations and publications to educate and agitate for the broader developments and the programmatic ideas presented above. In this way, our current day to day work, often disconnected even from other comrades in the same industry, receives a context and direction.

Along with the political conception of national rank and file oppositions in the unions, the most important political conception for this period is the Labor Party. This slogan or concept gives a political focus to many demands that are otherwise thought of as simply bargaining demands or things to be won by pressure. Our basic motivation for the labor party is in terms of the pressing issues of the crisis: inflation, unemployment, speedup, and above all wage controls and government anti-labor intervention. For us, the fundamental notion embodied by the labor party slogan is that of political class independence. The face of political class independence would be an historic step forward. Even the consciousness of this need on the part of militants, however, would be a great step forward. From our point of view, the political content of the labor party is a class struggle one. In such a party, we, the socialists, would fight for a socialist program. We are not calling for some bureaucratic reformist hulk like the British labor party, but for a party of action that can smash the employer-state offensive. At the same time, the call for a labor party is not some secret code for a revolutionary party, or an unknown quantity in the lower path of sectarianism. Our outline program for labor, meant as an answer to the issues of today, is the basis we propose for fighting for a labor party in the labor movement today. This does not mean that every time we raise the labor party slogan we are bound to append all our demands, etc. It simply means that over time, through many forms of propaganda, we make our program clear. As in the unions themselves, so in the labor party or steps leading to it, we are the irreconcilable opponents of all wings of the labor bureaucracy.

While the fight against NEP and the defensive struggles of the class even today require an openly political approach, many of these ideas will still find their sharpest expression in the context of the fight for better contracts. While we do not limit our program to the context of collective bargaining, we take contract fights seriously and, in fact, make use of militant movements for a better contract to advance our political ideas. To do this most effectively, our concept of a "good" contract should lead to our broader ideas; both those about the nature of unions and our political ideas. Thus we fight for contract demands that both improve the living and working standards of the workers and place the greatest control in the hands of the workers and open the greatest possibilities for rank and file struggle. The current employers offensive requires first of all a defensive fight against speedup and related attempts to undermine whatever shop floor organization does exist. The USW and the URW, to name only two, have recently given away important aspects of stewards organization at the shop floor level. In every union we oppose limits on or the erosion of the power of the stewards at the shop floor level. We oppose arbitration schemes meant to undermine shop level grievance bargaining or union control of grievances generally. We oppose all productivity deals or other forms of eroding working conditions. We fight for an offense against the employers attack. As in the past we fight for the following demands and tactical ideas in the un-

ion contract or constitution:

1. Elected shop stewards. A steward for every foreman or supervisor. Right of the job steward to participate at all levels of the grievance procedure. Stewards Councils.
2. Union control over work speed, assignment, load, manning, etc. Right to bargain and reach binding agreement on these issues before the company can change working conditions or rules.
3. Union control over and the right to strike over health and safety conditions. No unsafe work shall be performed.
4. Unlimited right to strike during the life of the contract.
5. No compulsory overtime.
6. Innocent until proven guilty in all disciplinary cases.
7. One year contracts.
8. 30-and-Out at full pay.
9. 30 for 40.

As the crisis of the system grows, workers will increasingly be faced with plant closures and unemployment due to international competition and the urge of US capitalists to invest in high-profit, cheap-labor areas of the world. While the old problem of "runaway shops" that moved to the South could have been, and to a degree was, solved by organizing drives in the South, the flight of capital to Taiwan or Japan cannot. The labor bureaucracy's answer is a form of protectionism. Similarly, their answer to the competition of foreign goods on the US market is protectionism. "Buy America" and support to the Burke-Hartke Bill have been their program. In fact, protectionism will not even save jobs. More importantly even than that, it is a more or less conscious attempt to tie the workers to the employers in this country. Politically, the national chauvanism that the labor bureaucracy is attempting to whip up around protectionism differs from any other support to imperialism, say of the Vietnam War, only in the means employed. Additionally, this chauvanism and its obverse side -- fear of unemployment -- are being used to gain acceptance of productivity drives. We must ~~oppose completely and~~ aggressively all such protectionist schemes. Not only should we point out that they are a sham; but that they deflect the movement that is needed if jobs are really to be protected. We propose the following demands as the basis for a real fight for full employment:

1. 30 for 40.
2. Defeat all productivity deals.
3. Tax overseas investment to pay for job producing public works.
4. US wages for all workers in US owned firms, here or abroad.
5. International cooperation and bargaining by the unions. Raise the wages of low paid Asian, Latin American and African workers by international solidarity.
6. Opposition to the anti-labor governments of states such as South Korea, Taiwan, etc.
7. Nationalize runaway shops under workers control.

In our immediate trade union work, we do not raise the slogan of nationalization under workers control in a general way -- the way we do the labor party slogan, for example. We do raise this notion in IS propaganda, fully explaining the meaning of workers control and our opposition to bureaucratic nationalization. In the case of sick industries, those which cannot afford to meet the workers demands, or those closing plants because of competition, we advance the transitional demands of "open the books" and nationalization under workers control. We do so in our agitational union work as well as in IS literature, even though this may have an educational rather than immediately agitational character today. For us, the demand of nationalization under workers control is important because it demonstrates that the workers need not accept the limits of capitalism. At the same time, this slogan or idea cannot have this educational value today in industries that can, in fact, afford to meet the current demands of the workers and those they will actually fight for. This is a question of the application of program and not of our program itself. Nationalization under workers control is part of our program. But it is our assessment that it is not a demand that today has general agitational value, or even, in most cases, immediate educational value in our direct trade union and rank and file caucus work.

Although the level of independent black organization is low, the fact of racism in industry and in the unions, as in the entire society, makes the fight against racism a crucial immediate task. We continue to call for the formation of independent black caucuses in the unions as an effective way for black workers to fight racism. We do not base our call for black caucuses on considerations of this or that shop or local union. Like the other problems faced by workers, racism occurs and must be fought on a national scale. While blacks are now a majority in some shops or local unions in certain industries, they still have little power or even influence in the labor movement as a whole. Confusion on this matter, political changes on the part of the former Revolutionary Tendency, and tactical narrowness by others has led to a poor record on the question of black self-organization by the IS, even at the level of propaganda. Furthermore, the existence of bureaucratic black pressure groups (often called "caucuses") in many of the larger international unions has caused many to hesitate on this question. This reluctance and confusion must be ended.

The IS does not advocate or, generally, support in any manner bureaucratic pressure groups of any sort -- including black pressure groups. Most of these formations, e.g., the CWA and AFSCME "black caucuses," exist in reality only at conventions. While it is permissible to support specific resolutions with which we agree, we do not, in most cases, give any organizational or consistent political support to these groups. Most of them are concerned with advancing the careers of a limited number of black bureaucrats. Clearly, we have no interest in that pursuit. Instead, we advocate national black caucuses in the unions to fight, year round, for the needs of black workers. Our conception of these black caucuses is that they are membership organizations open to and controlled by the ranks.

In our view these caucuses, as well as local black caucuses, will contribute to the development of the total rank and file movement. We are for a unified rank and file movement, but not one that subordinates the needs of blacks to the prejudice of whites. In advocating black caucuses, we urge that they organize as caucuses within existing national rank and file caucuses where they exist. Where none exist, we urge that black caucuses take the lead in

initiating such broad caucuses. In no case do we ask black workers to disband their own organization as a prerequisite for participating in integrated caucuses -- quite the opposite. There will be situations where blacks are a majority in the local situation and will constitute the leadership and bulk of the membership of the local rank and file caucuses. In such local situations we do not demand that blacks organize separately, or raise the black caucus tactic for the local situation. We do, however, point to the need for independent black organization at the level of the international union. This situation is likely to be relevant in auto, telephone traffic, steel, and public employment.

Our view of the rank and file movement is that it must take the fight against racism as seriously as any other part of its program. But the entire history of the US and the American working class teaches us that this cannot be taken for granted. Certainly, it is not the "spontaneous" direction of white workers. We will fight for programmatic ideas that attack racism and lead toward class unity within the general rank and file movement. Similarly, we fight for the black workers' movement to adopt a broad program, and to take the lead in the struggles of the entire class. Virtually all of the demands, tactics and policies proposed above for the general movement are also crucial for black workers and their organizations. The programmatic demands we urge blacks to fight for are the same ones we fight for. Within the labor movement we urge black caucuses to fight for:

1. Open all Skilled jobs to black workers. Company paid training. Abolish discriminatory exams. Open the Building Trades.
2. Jobs for Black People. Preferential hiring, seniority and upgrading to achieve and protect full equality.
3. End separate or discriminatory seniority lists.
4. Abolish the 90 day waiting period in unions like UAW, USW, etc.
5. Fire racist foremen.
6. Right to strike over racist acts, slurs, or harassment by management.
7. Equal protection under the grievance procedure. Elect militant black stewards. Recall and decertify all stewards who refuse to protect all workers.
8. Organize the Unorganized. Bring millions of unorganized black workers into the labor movement.
9. Black workers take the lead in fighting for a labor party.

The particular history of blacks in America leads us to believe that they will play a leading role in the development of the class struggle here. While other oppressed peoples or national groups, such as Puerto Ricans, face similar discrimination and racism, their weight in the population and the labor force is considerably less than that of blacks. Thus on an overall national scale these oppressed groups may not play the same or as great a catalytic role as black workers. Nevertheless, their oppression is similar and the means of fighting it must be similar as well. We advocate latin workers also form caucuses and we follow the same program and guidelines set above.

No less than blacks and latin women remain oppressed. While this oppression does not originate on the job, it is reflected in discrimination at work, in the labor market and in the unions. Unlike black people, women -- organized as women -- do not have a more or less continuous history of independent self-organization in society as a whole or in the labor movement. Yet, as noted, a

generalized women's rights consciousness exists among working class women, even though the vast majority continue to believe in the inviolability of the family. This fact, itself, comes into contradiction with even minimal participation in union activity. That is, that sort of activity is thought to be "man's work." Wives and husbands alike accept the notion that if any choices on time are to be made, the woman will stay home. Both the fight against oppression and minimal rights of women to participate in the class struggle point toward the need for independent organization. As we pointed out years ago, one of the most basic reasons for supporting black self-organization was the need of black people, at that time, to overcome the internalized sense of inferiority that racism had forced on them. The same is even truer with women generally. It is not that women's caucuses should make a programmatic demand on husbands; but rather that the minimum of self-confidence and re-enforcement often lack to an individual can be gained through collective self-organization. Thus, women's caucuses in the unions may be a prerequisite to full participation in the rank and file movement as well as a means of fighting oppression per se.

As we have already noted, most of the current organized activity around women's issues in the unions is coming from women bureaucrats. Many of these women labor bureaucrats are associated with NOW or the Women's Political Caucus -- in any case they share the same political perspective. Our attitude toward women or black bureaucrats is the same as our attitude toward all labor bureaucrats. We are their enemy and we seek to build a movement to defeat them and abolish their social and material basis. To do this we will employ various tactics of exposure, such as demanding that these bureaucrats fight for certain goals, while pointing out that we do not believe they will or can because of their social position and political perspective. At times we will also advocate critical support in the manner already discussed vis a vis the bureaucracy as a whole. Similarly, when conferences or specific actions are called that we can support critically, we will participate and propose our program for women's organization in the unions -- including the need for a unified rank and file movement. The cutting edge of our propaganda, and where possible agitation, today, however, is the need for independent women's rank and file caucuses that can fight discrimination and sexism in the labor movement and provide leadership for rebuilding the women's movement in society as a whole. As with any workers organization today, these caucuses may be discussed or initiated around a specific demand or small number of demands. We will fight in this process for our program which includes those central political ideas discussed for general rank and file movement, e.g., labor party, and the following special demands and slogans for women:

1. Open all jobs to women -- end sexual discrimination in employment.
2. Jobs for women -- Preferential hiring, seniority and upgrading to achieve and protect full equality.
3. Equal Pay for Equal Work.
4. Federally Paid Neighborhood Childcare; employer paid, worker controlled day care; union paid childcare during union meetings.
5. Paid Maternity Leave, with no loss of seniority.
6. Complete maternity and abortion costs covered by medical plan.
7. Fire Sexist Foremen and Supervisors. Recall and decertify stewards who refuse to fight on women's issues. Elect women stewards to represent women workers.
8. Organize the Unorganized.
9. Abolish high school and vocational training. On the job training for women.

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As with the rank and file movement generally, we fight for the conception that women's black or latin caucuses in the unions have a political responsibility for the general movements of the oppressed, and for general social conditions. In the case of the broad movement of workers, this notion is best concretized by the labor party conception and the program we propose to fight for in the movement to build such a party. In the case of specific movements of the oppressed, this idea is additionally concretized by calling on these caucuses to take the lead in building the movements of the oppressed. This notion is a part of our general propaganda on caucuses of the oppressed in the labor movement.

We repeat the assertion in the 1972 Labor Perspectives that the unity of the class and the building of the rank and file movement as the more immediate task in fighting for a revolutionary party is not an organizational, but a political conception. We do not fetishize any organizational form (rank and file caucus, black caucus, etc.). These tactical ideas are but concrete embodiments of a complex of political conceptions; e.g., the need to fight the bureaucracy as a privileged social strata, thus rank and file caucuses in the international unions; the need of oppressed people to struggle against their oppression, thus black, women's and latin caucuses. We raise these "organizational" slogans so that we can better argue, propagandize, and explain the social and political realities underlying them at the same time that we propose actionable, programmatic means of fighting against those realities, i.e., oppression, bureaucracy, inflation, unemployment, etc. We reiterate what has always been essential to the political approach of the IS, that the unity of the class can arise only on the basis of mutual respect, common struggle and political ideas.

Among our immediate tasks is that of recruitment to the IS. In reality the justification for and success of our industrialization program rest entirely on our ability to recruit among the advanced militants. The current level of struggle, the size of the IS, and the tenacity of reformist ideas among even the most advanced militants makes this task difficult. Our expectation is that it should be possible to recruit worker militants in very small numbers in the coming year. The recruitment of workers will not be fast enough or large enough to achieve a sufficient growth rate for the IS. Nevertheless, it is only this sort of recruitment that can change the IS from a largely petit-bourgeois organization with working class politicians, into a genuine revolutionary workers organization. For this reason recruitment is a priority. The primary steps needed to facilitate such recruitment are of two kinds: the revamping of our propaganda and internal educational program (this includes the paper, our pamphlets, internal educational materials, etc.) so as to attract, educate and hold advanced workers on the basis of our ideas; the continuation and growth of industrialization and, more importantly, the thorough organizing and cohering of our trade union work on a national scale. We believe that the key to proletarianizing the IS does not lie in any organizational scheme. It lies in our ability to win and hold people to our ideas. Workers will not change their lives because of this or that form of branch organization or even because they feel comfortable here and not there, etc. They will make the change (for example from being a popular militant to a revolutionary who can no longer depend on popularity) because they believe that we are right and that the IS offers the hope of carrying out those ideas in spite of its small numbers. While the initial impression made by a branch is important, it will not amount to much if this or that militant does not believe our work in the unions is national in

scale and effectively organized. Thus, a priority for this coming year, along with establishing literature that we can actually use to recruit and educate workers, is the establishment of effective national fractions in the priority unions that work on a common national perspective.

Long Range and Intermediate Tasks

Our major long range task is, of course, the construction of a revolutionary workers party that can lead the working class to state power. All of our more immediate tasks are determined by that strategic goal. As we have said, the building of an organized rank and file movement is an immediate, actionable and important step in the process of building that party. The labor party concept has been crucial for us in the US both because it is short hand for the notion of political class independence and because such a party or the movement for it may well be the arena in which the fusion of the revolutionaries and the advanced militants takes place on a mass scale. But such a fusion must be prepared for; and that is the primary significance of the rank and file movement. Thus, our conception of a rank and file movement in the unions is a political one. Whatever the specific origins of this or that caucus, our conception of and program for rank and file caucuses is not that of a "reform" caucus, but of a political caucus with a political conception of itself and the labor movement. Such caucuses are not built in a day, but that is our program and that is the direction we openly fight for. Yet, our immediate agitational and propagandistic work in the unions will continue to emphasize the call for opposition caucuses in specific unions, i.e., a caucus for the UAW, one for CWA, etc. Our intermediate goal, however, is a broader conception of an opposition in the labor movement.

As an intermediate task, we look toward the building of an organized left-wing in the labor movement as a whole. That is, a political caucus within the unions that cuts across union lines and proposes a program for the entire labor movement. As an example of what we mean we give the historical examples of the TUEL in the US and the Minority Movement in Britain. In the case of TUEL we are referring to the brief period in its existence, 1921-22, when it conducted itself in a non-sectarian, non-Stalinist fashion. We certainly do not claim that the TUEL or Minority Movement made no mistakes, even in their healthy periods. Nor do we propose that the organized left-wing we advocate have the same program as the TUWL -- that would be an absurd anachronism. We do, however, point out that the early Communists were able to construct an opposition organization that dealt both with the immediate and real needs of the workers and the unions as well as with the political needs of the working class as a whole.

There can be little doubt that the notion of a political opposition that is not limited to sectarian propagandizing or phrasemongering is unheard of by most militants -- indeed, by most socialists in the US. The opposition rank and file caucus is fairly traditional in the American labor movement, and for that reason we advance our notion of a political opposition in that form today. Nevertheless, the implementation of our intermediate task requires, today, an educational effort of a long range nature. That is, we must prepare material, in the IS press and publications, directed to militant worker leaders that explains politically and by historical example what such an opposition would look like and how to build it, i.e., how today's rank and file opposition caucuses

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relate to that goal. In our immediate work, this is done largely by the example of the type of program we propose for national rank and file oppositions in the unions. Thus, the program we propagandize for today, let us say, for UNC or a revived TURF, would be substantially the same as that of the future TUEL -- except that today's caucuses are limited to specific unions.

The role of educating about the need for a new TUEL and the revolutionary party is primarily the job of the IS. Most of our work in rank and file caucuses will be of a more immediate character -- even if often propagandistic in form. The IS, however, has as a major responsibility in the labor movement to educate the most advanced in these intermediate and long range ideas. It must be central to our labor perspectives that the IS itself have a presence in the labor movement even beyond the work of its fractions in the rank and file movement. For the coming year this independent IS role will be primarily literary and propagandistic. While putting forth the full range of socialist concerns and ideas, our educational material on the labor movement should be regular and should deal thoroughly with the intermediate tasks in an educational manner. To put it another way, the strategy that we have agreed on and internalized, must be imparted in our press and publications in a thorough way. Though some of these more long range ideas will appear in rank and file publications supported and influenced by us, it is only in our own press that a systematic presentation of these ideas can occur.

OUR NORMAN

WANT ANYTHING FROM THE SHOPS, NORMAN?

YES, TERRY, SOME SMOKEY BACON CRISPS...



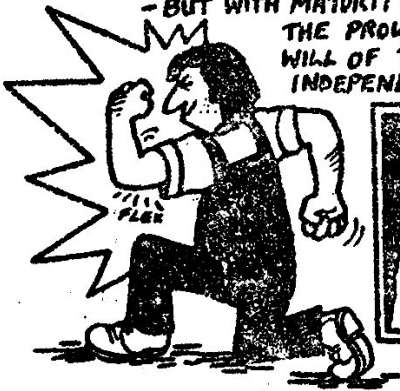
IT'S NOT SO LONG SINCE THEY USED TO SEND ME TO THE SHOPS...

UNBELIEVABLE

AT BUY LETTERS LESS YOU CAN A



- BUT WITH MATURITY COMES THE PROUD FREE WILL OF THE INDEPENDENT MAN!



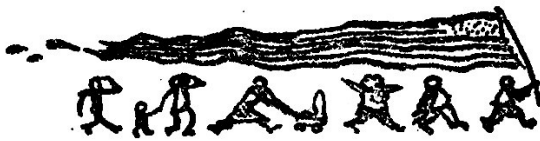
NORMAN - GET ON WITH YOUR WORK!

RIGHT CHIEF!



SOME SECTORS OF THE PUBLIC SEEM TO HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THE AUTO COMPANIES ARE NOT THOROUGHLY SAFETY CONSCIOUS. THIS IS NOT CORRECT.

WORKERS OF THE WORLD,



DIVIDE UP INTO LITTLE GROUPS ACCORDING TO RACE, RELIGION, SEX, MINOR ECONOMIC DISTINCTIONS, AND THEN DISPERSE.



"The machinists ain't happy about this fan you bought for the shop!"



A CASE IN POINT, RECENTLY IT WAS REPORTED TO OUR ATTENTION THAT THE FRONT WHEELS ON TWO OF OUR LUTHER MACHINES TENDED TO WORK LOOSE AND FALL OFF, SOMETIMES AT HIGH SPEEDS.



THE MACHINISTS SEEM TO HATE SPENDING LITERALLY HUNDREDS OF DOLLARS TO REPAIR THE FRONT WHEELS.



THEY NOW FALL OFF AT MUCH LOWER SAFER SPEEDS.

PROPOSAL ON THE THEORETICAL JOURNAL

A motion to the national convention by D. Crees and J. Higgins

1. The production of a theoretical journal is of great importance to the I.S. It will supplement the newspaper and thus help to resolve the problems of the paper. It is a major vehicle for putting forward our perspective to the working-class oriented left, including the numerous collectives across the country. It is the means through which the I.S. can develop its theoretical perspectives in a number of areas. For all these reasons, it is important that the journal appear in early 1974. All further delay must be avoided. The editorial board must begin functioning immediately after the convention.

2. All of the benefits described above will be increased if the journal is bi-monthly. Subscribers forget that a quarterly exists. The political effect of the journal, both internally and externally, will be increased by a more frequent publishing schedule.

3. The undertaking of a bi-monthly journal poses the question of material. A good journal requires good material. Specific consideration of the problem suggests that the journal be subdivided into three parts: a scanner, a substantive section and a book review section.

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4. The Scanner (or Survey, or Notes) section should be a summary of the most important national, international and labor developments in the preceding two months. The comparable section in International Socialism provides an excellent model. The National Secretary should have responsibility for coordinating (but not necessarily writing) the national and international sections. The Industrial Secretary should have the responsibility for coordinating (but not necessarily writing) the labor section. Both should be members of the editorial board.

5. A second major section of the journal is the book review section. A book review editor (who would be responsible to the editorial board but need not be in Detroit) should solicit and coordinate this section while the E.B. decides which will be printed and when. The goal should be that each issue contain a number of brief crisp reviews that draw the political conclusions which apply to the specific book. Our members and contacts should be able to use the reviews as a means of determining which books suit their purposes and are worth their time. For particularly significant publications, a review essay may be appropriate.

6. The heart of the journal is the substantive section and the editor should be freed from responsibilities for other sections in order to devote complete attention to this section. A bi-monthly should carry two to four articles per issue, depending on their length. These articles should develop our theory and communicate it to our readers. The major problem faced by any journal is the number and quality of its articles. Our success or failure in this area will inevitably reflect the state of the larger organization. On the other hand, the state of the organization is partially revealed in our efforts to ensure a systematic and high-quality flow of articles. Let us list the potential sources of quality material.

- a. We have a significant amount of material available from The New International and the journals of fraternal organizations. We should not be afraid to reprint. It might be especially useful to accompany a reprint with a current article which builds upon the reprint and places it in contemporary perspective. We should not, however, allow reprinting to become a major characteristic of the journal. No more than one article should be reprinted per issue. If there are only two articles in a given issue, neither should be a reprint.
- b. There is a considerable backlog of material in past Bulletin's which is of high quality and compares favorably with articles published by other groups or journals (for example, the debates on black liberation, women's liberation, program and state cap vs. bureaucratic collectivism all have ~~be~~ given rise to documents which deserve far more public exposure). Much of it will need slight reworking or updating but it still constitutes a tremendous organizational resource. We should begin immediately to bring this body of writing into publishable form.
- c. The organization as a whole must take responsibility for writing original articles. The best approach will be to systematize the relationship between writers and the journal. All members should be encouraged to contribute to the journal on a ~~regular~~ regular basis (once every six months, nine months or year). Members who agree to do so will ~~understand~~ enter into an understanding which they should see as an obligation. In this way, a regular flow of material can be ensured and a reserve will soon be created. Members who choose not to enter into such a regularized understanding will still be encouraged to contribute as frequently as possible. The women's commission and the black/brown commission should attempt to stimulate and solicit articles in those areas. Such regularization should allow the editorial board to develop special topic issues from time to time.
7. The journal should be closely coordinated with a pamphlet program so that the same plates may be used to turn relevant articles into pamphlets. The pamphlet program should not be coordinated by the editor, but by another member of the editorial board who works closely with the editor.
8. The journal should maintain a letter-to-the-editor section. The quality of such a section will vary but it will provide some additional life to the journal.
9. The editor should utilize comrades who are not in Detroit in the evaluation and polishing process. To the extent that such a policy is followed, the work load at the center is reduced and more of the organization is brought into the editorial process.
10. Upon its appearance, the journal must be taken seriously by the organization. Branches and MAL's should solicit library subscriptions and encourage bookstores to sell it. All comrades going to academic conventions should set up a table, if possible. Cooperative ads should be taken out with other left journals.

11. The prospective name of the journal should be changed. International Revolution blurs with Socialist Revolution, Intercontinental Press, etc. Our journal is the vehicle of the IS and should say so. International Socialism, ~~and~~ the International Socialist Review and the International Socialist Journal are taken but we can still call our journal the Journal of International Socialism which is exactly what it is. The purpose of the journal is to build the IS internally and externally. A clear name such as the Journal of International Socialism will contribute to that purpose.