

# REVOLUTIONARY MARXIST CAUCUS Newsletter

Number 2

March 1970

## L.A. CONFERENCE — REPORT + ANALYSIS

The Western Regional Conference of Boston SDS meeting in Los Angeles over the weekend of Jan. 30 to Feb. 2nd differed considerably from the New Haven National Council (see the report in our February issue), if only in degree. It was clear that the National Office leadership would not allow any fundamental criticism or revision of the pre-determined method of operation or basic political thrust (i.e., the Campus Worker-Student Alliance - "CWSA"). Still, the conference was more open to political discussion and disagreement, and far less bureaucratically gagged than its New Haven predecessor, here reflecting a general mood of opposition to the leadership and an awareness that the much-touted CWSA program was defective. The three-day debate revealed important, to some extent fundamental, differences within the membership present.

While the proposed agenda submitted to the Conference (and actually ramrodded through the first session) was structured in a manner guaranteed to elevate the CWSA strategy into the focal point of the weekend and thereby to submerge political debate - what the national leadership wanted was a CWSA booster rally, with themselves the appointed prophets and cheerleaders - this strategy failed as the interest of the participants fixed on a faction fight breaking out over the "official" WSA proposal on Racism. Not only were five separate position papers distributed and debated over the weekend, reflecting an incredibly wide range on a subject presumably solved by the June 1969 Chicago split, but much tension and heat were generated by the fact that what was to become the major oppositional document - the "Merritt College proposal" - was the product of a breakaway from a "loyalist" WSA chapter, and one furthermore which was totally uncritical of the general CWSA line.

We of the Revolutionary Marxist Caucus found ourselves quite com-  
(continued on page 6)

### WHERE WE STAND

The Revolutionary Marxist Caucus is the left opposition in SDS fighting for an aggressive socialist policy in contrast to the narrow and conservative social work approach of the WSA caucus. Rejecting campus parochialism, we seek to involve SDS in all major social struggles, particularly those centered on the labor movement. We do not seek merely to provide passive material support for such struggles, but to bring to these struggles a radical socialist program. Important elements of such a program are a break with the two capitalist parties and formation of a labor party; a shorter work week with no decrease in pay to eliminate unemployment; opposition to racial oppression within the labor movement; and labor strikes against the Vietnam War and other manifestations of U.S. imperialism.

We call upon all members who feel the need for a militant socialist policy in SDS to join and support the Revolutionary Marxist Caucus!

Helen Cantrell, Newsletter Editor  
(SDS-at-large, Art Students League,  
Spartacist)

Mark Tishman, RMC Co-ordinator  
(New School SDS, Spartacist)

RACIAL OPPRESSION - IRVINE SDS AND RMC POSITIONS

At the LA national conference, members of the SDS chapter at the University of California, Irvine supported the general line of the RMC position paper on the race question, while disagreeing with one of its four resolutions. The following is the alternative Irvine position and a reply by one of the document's authors. The RMC document, Racial Oppression and Working Class Politics, remains available and should be ordered by all interested members of SDS.

\* \* \*

RACIAL OPPRESSION AND WORKING-CLASS POLITICS (ALTERNATIVE VERSION)

INTRODUCTION

The sponsors of this resolution agree with the basic thrust of the resolution entitled "Racial Oppression And Working Class Politics" submitted by Tishman-Salinger-Sebesta. (Hereafter, the three authors will be denoted by "Tishman".) However, we cannot accept Resolution No. III (p.6) of the document, which reads:

SDS must oppose all forms of racial inequality, including those that are specifically designed to limit the upward mobility of the Black population.

In rejecting that portion of the section entitled "resolutions", we necessarily also reject the two sections of the document (printed on pp.4-5) which motivate Resolution III; i.e., the sections entitled "Black Liberation and Upward Mobility" and "The Worse the Better". Accordingly, we propose as an alternative version of the Tishman document, this document which assumes the sense of the non-rejected sections, together with the following criticisms and alternative formulations.

CRITICISMS

Tishman cites as a "major error" of the WSA caucus of SDS: that WSA "...has refused to oppose those aspects of racial oppression expressly designed to keep Blacks out of the middle class." And in criticism of this "error", Tishman writes:

It is correct and necessary to denounce expanding the "Black bourgeoisie" as the solution to the problems of the Black masses. However, the WSA has taken the further step of refusing to fight discrimination against Blacks for middle-class positions. (Their position recalls a section of the French Marxists who thought they should be indifferent to the Dreyfus Case of anti-Semitism in the French officer corps. This sectarian disorientation actually facilitated their later collapse into opportunism.) The petty-bourgeois "hustlerist" aspect of the Black movement must be defeated politically, by being rejected by the Black masses. It will not and should not be defeated by erstwhile revolutionaries making a de facto alliance with the most reactionary sections of the ruling class to keep Blacks out of middle-class positions. (p.4)

The expression "middle-class" serves to obscure the analysis that underlies the positions taken by Tishman in the sections rejected by us. We gather from Tishman's usage that he designates as "middle-class" a number of occupations, including those of military officer, medical doctor, engineer, social worker, professor, manager, foreman, and university administrator. In doing so, Tishman obliterates a distinction that must be made: between wage-earners who function exclusively as political agents for the ruling class and wage-earners who combine the role of political agent with the performance of socially necessary labor. In the former category are military officers, cops, managers, foremen, and university administrators; in the latter category are school teachers, professors, and social workers.

It is our position that (1) it is correct for SDS to support struggles by Third-World people for equality of access to occupations such as those of professor, school teacher, and social worker (and to other "professional and technical" occupations like medical doctor and engineer as well); but (2) it is incorrect for SDS to support struggles  
(contued on next page)

aimed at opening up occupations like military officer, cop, foreman, manager, and university administrator to Third-World people.

Tishman correctly observes that we should "...denounce expanding the 'Black bourgeoisie' as the solution to the problems of the Black masses." Presumably, Tishman would agree with us that the regulation of the membership of the class of exploiters of the working class is not a matter about which SDS need offer advice. However, apparently, Tishman does not agree that the only task that SDS has concerning relations between the ruling class and its political agents is that of exposing them and explaining their functions.

Tishman's citation of the Dreyfus Case obscures another important distinction: between that of attacking, under certain conditions, racial discrimination against Third-World members of, or political agents for, the ruling class and that of programmatically promoting struggles over the "right" of such people to enjoy legal or social equality with their white counterparts. We deny that anyone has a right to be an exploiter or a political agent for the exploiters of the working class. As for the Dreyfus case, the anti-Semitic attack made upon Dreyfus within the French Officer Corps did not merely concern the regulation of the Corps by anti-Semitic members of that social caste. What was at issue was a systematic campaign aimed at breeding anti-Semitic attitudes and practices among the French people by means of the vilification of Jews as traitors and bloodsuckers - a campaign in which the persecution and court-martial of Dreyfus was merely the opening shot! In such a case, it is correct to denounce the racist persecution of such a person not on the grounds of any supposed right of the individual, but, rather, as a part of activities aimed at exposing the ruling-class purpose served by the particular case of racial oppression - that is, to show that the racist move is really against the entire racial group that the individual belongs to and to explain the anti-working-class implications of the racist attack; e.g., class divisiveness, weakening of the unions, etc.

We join Tishman in urging SDS to support struggles by Third-World people for open admissions to the colleges and universities; and we think he is correct in claiming that

...any improvement in the condition of the Black masses provides a basis for upward mobility. If the quality of ghetto primary school education is improved, for example, Black youth will be better able to compete for college admission. If Black workers have access to better-paying jobs, more of them will send their children to college.

It is our view that struggle by Third-World people for access to the colleges is a historical wave that is likely to acquire such social force that neither SDS nor any other radical organization will be able to oppose it without isolating itself from the Third-World masses. We do not, however, favor struggles for open admissions that are limited to the aspirations of racial minorities. Properly formulated as a struggle for open admissions on a class (rather than a racial) basis, a demand for opening the colleges to all working class people will speak to the aspirations of the Third-World masses and at the same time help overcome racial divisions within the working class. For example, if the demand is made for admission according to income distribution, more than 90% of the potential admittees will be from families with incomes below \$7500/yr. (mostly working-class); and since included within that 90% are 99+% of all Third-World families, the potential Third-World admittees will be approximately the same as it would be if the demand were only for open admissions for all Third-World people. This formulation of the demand for open admissions attacks the false consciousness of white workers, both industrial and white-collar, who believe that open admissions for Third-World people must be achieved at the expense of their sons and daughters.

Again, we believe that Tishman may be correct in claiming that

It is precisely the overwhelming concentration of the Black population at the lowest social levels that tends to cause white workers to view Blacks with feelings of fear and contempt.

(p.5)

If the claim is correct, then the authors of the Merritt-Resolution are also correct in urging SDS to propagandize the fact that the absolute

(continued on next page)

number of impoverished whites is far greater than the number of impoverished blacks.

However, we do not share Tishman's apparent conviction that the possibility (even if a probability) that, in the long run, the experience of common struggle of white and Third-World workers against Third-World bosses will aid white workers in developing a more class-conscious attitude toward Third-World people should be a strategic consideration for SDS. Neither should the probability that the experience of Third-World bosses will, in time, teach Third-World workers that a boss is a boss and a worker is a worker be a strategic consideration for SDS.

We are convinced that the ruling class will install Third-World foremen, managers, etc. and promote black-capitalist enterprises - precisely to the extent that black-liberation struggles threaten to come under the leadership of black workers, and to the extent that workers' struggles threaten to become racially unified.

We must consider the purpose of the ruling class, since it is the bosses who have control over access to the ruling class and over the hiring of its agents. The aim of the bosses is certainly not to hasten the intensification of class contradictions. That is, the bosses also don't subscribe to the Worse-the-Better Argument.

#### ALTERNATIVE FORMULATION

SDS must oppose all forms of racial inequality that are designed to exclude Third-World people from access to and equal treatment in all parts of the productive process, but not access to political agent functions.

\* \* \*

#### RACIAL DISCRIMINATION WITHIN THE RULING CLASS AND SOCIALIST POLICY

In good part, the Irvine document appears to be based on a misunderstanding of the motivation and significance of resolution III of Racial Oppression and Working Class Politics. The Irvine document states, "Tishman's citation of the Dreyfus Case obscures another important distinction: between that of attacking under certain conditions, racial discrimination against Third-World members of, or political agents for, the ruling class and that of programmatically promoting struggles over the "right" of such people to enjoy legal or social equality with their white counterparts." However, the purpose of resolution III is precisely to defend blacks against racial discrimination and not to "programmatically promote struggles" or agitate for blacks being admitted into ruling class positions. The working of resolution III is deliberately passive and negative - "SDS must oppose all forms of racial inequality, including those that are specifically designed to limit the upward mobility of the black population." It does not state - "SDS should fight to get blacks into higher social positions". The purpose of resolution III is not to launch major SDS campaigns to get more black cadets into West Point and more black stockbrokers. Rather it is to affirm that opposition to racial discrimination within the ruling class is not unprincipled, the position taken by the WSA caucus.

As a rule, SDS will not initiate actions against racial discrimination within the ruling class, but should be prepared to support such actions as they arise. For example, a few years ago there was a well-publicized demonstration at a prestigious athletic meet sponsored by the New York Athletic Club. This meet included black athletes, yet the NYAC is a rich man's sporting club, which openly discriminates against blacks. SDS could well have participated in such a demonstration, not because we want prosperous blacks to be able to join the NYAC, but to expose the reactionary attitudes of the American ruling class in a particularly flagrant way. Resolution III would not eliminate sharp differences over whether SDS should involve itself in particular fights over racial discrimination within the ruling class, but, at least, there should be no question that such involvement is unprincipled.

(continued on next page)

### Political Agents and Upward Mobility

The distinction between "political agents" and economically necessary middle-class positions is certainly useful. A similar distinction was not made in the RMC document, in part because it was directed primarily against the WSA caucus, who also haven't made that kind of distinction. However, I do not believe such a distinction overturns the correctness of the original resolution. To begin with, many practices of racial discrimination simultaneously restrict black political agents and blacks in economically necessary middle-class positions. An obvious case is college admissions. Whether achieved through universal open admissions, working class open admissions or some more restrictive program, more black college graduates will mean both more black political agents and more blacks in economically necessary middle-class positions. Moreover, many economically necessary jobs lead logically to jobs as political agents. More black teachers mean more black principals and more black college degree civil servants mean more black government administrators. One of the problems with the Irvine resolution is that people can support it and yet come to opposed positions on its application, by leaning on the different clauses. Thus someone can support open admissions on the basis of non-discrimination and someone else can oppose it on the basis of not encouraging black political agents.

### A Wait and See Policy?

Since the Irvine comrades do not rule out fighting against racial discrimination of "political agents", they must provide criteria for determining when such fights are correct. In brief, they appear to believe it is correct for SDS to attack specific acts or aspects of racial discrimination within the ruling class when these become sufficiently important among the black population or become major political issues. Thus, they write, "It is our view that struggle by Third-World people for access to the colleges is a historical wave that is likely to acquire such social force that neither SDS nor any other radical organization will be able to oppose it without isolating itself from the black community." To base our policies on the current mood of the black masses is both passive and, at least potentially, opportunistic. The Philadelphia Plan and other state attempts to get more blacks into the unions are probably supported by a majority of the black community and certainly by a majority of young black militants. However the Irvine comrades rightly oppose such policies as a deceptive form of union busting, as do we.

To adopt a wait and see approach to these questions is not a viable political posture. Consider the following not impossible situation. A reactionary Southern Congressman refuses to sponsor a black youth for West Point and this becomes a cause celebre for the black movement. When this issue first arises, the Irvine comrades would presumably favor a neutral policy. Sometime, as the campaign develops, they would reverse themselves and support the youth's admission. These kind of policies can hardly serve as principles for SDS to follow. If a group of black militants asked SDS about how it felt about black youths not being admitted to the military academies, we could hardly say, "The military academies are imperialist institutions and we don't care whether blacks can get in or not, unless, of course, you organize a mass movement around the question, in which case we'll support you." Rather, we should say, "We oppose all forms of racial discrimination, including that of keeping black youths out of the military academies. However, we devote our energies to fighting those aspects of racial oppression that are most harmful to the black masses. Moreover, we believe the U.S. is an imperialist country and are opposed to anyone wanting to be a direct servant of U.S. imperialism."

Not every instance of racial discrimination within the ruling class is going to become a cause celebre. But, every instance is part and parcel of the overall system of racial oppression and we can't be neutral.

### The Lessons of the Dreyfus Affair

The Irvine resolution states that it was correct to support Dreyfus because his conviction was the start of a general assault on French Jewry. This description telescopes the Dreyfus Affair and obscures  
(continued on next page)

the important lessons the world socialist movement drew from it.

The Dreyfus Affair began as an isolated act of injustice and developed into a major right-wing attack on French Jewry and bourgeois democratic institutions in response to pro-Dreyfus agitation. Dreyfus was court-martialled in 1894 without much to-do. While some pro-Dreyfus agitation was conducted by his family and some liberals, the case did not become a major political issue until 1898, when Zola published J'Accuse. Thereafter, it was a major political issue until 1906, peaking about 1901. The French majority Marxists, led by Jules Guesde, abstained on the key parliamentary vote in 1899 and didn't come out for Dreyfus until 1900, two years after Zola's trial. This long delay by the French majority Marxists had two serious consequences. The socialist abstention strengthened the forces of reaction and condemned the pro-Dreyfus movement to liberal leadership, such as Clemenceau and the reformist socialist Jaures. Moreover, the 1900 turnabout still discredited the Marxists in the eyes of the pro-Dreyfus forces who saw them as opportunistically jumping on the bandwagon. The primary reason for the long delay was that the French Marxists believed it was unprincipled to concern themselves with the fate of a French general staff officer under any circumstances.

The policy advocated by the Irvine comrades is similar to that practiced by the French Marxists - maintaining a neutral position unless and until a particular act of racial discrimination within the ruling class becomes a major political issue. The weakness of this position has been indicated. The correct position is that we oppose, in principle, all acts and practices of racial discrimination. In practice, we devote our energies to fighting those aspects of racial oppression that are most harmful to the black population and to the unity of the working masses.

Mark Tishman  
New School SDS-RMC, Spartacist

\* \* \*

...L.A. Conference (continued from page 1)

pletely at odds with both the official WSA proposal and the Merritt repudiation and refused support to either side. We took this course because we could not support what was a mere tactical nuance within a fundamentally defective strategy (see our founding conference document, "Away From Campus Parochialism and Toward the Labor Movement") and because we felt the thrust behind the Merritt proposal was so crude in its analysis as to be completely disorienting, thereby laying the groundwork for a probable shift to a right wing openly anti-Marxist direction. And indeed, something of this sort appears to have happened in the period since the Los Angeles Conference.

Both the official WSA position on racism and the Merritt counter-proposal are rooted in an extraordinarily crude 'economic' approach to revolutionary working-class politics in which nothing of the Marxist or Leninist methodology survives except for a certain terminology, typically (and appropriately) misapplied. This approach, explicitly held by Progressive Labor until two years ago and implicitly since, is the "Third-Worldy", Fanon-derived view that the poorest, the most "super-exploited", the "wretched of the earth" are the most militant in rebelling against their fate, and therefore the most revolutionary. This view, more common to the American Left a few years ago than today, held that the focus of world revolution had shifted away from the industrial west to the colonial countries, since the workers and peasants of those countries obviously were so much worse off than their European and American counterparts. This view was common to such otherwise disparate elements as Monthly Review, RYM, the Guardian and the Socialist Workers Party, yet the present tactics of the Weathermen, so bemoaned by all these people and also by Boston SDS, are simply a consistent carrying out of this argument to its implied conclusion.

What the WSA has done, then, is simply to have taken this scenario and placed it within the American scene, with the Blacks given the role of the super-exploited. This general theme, with countless variations played upon it, became the stormcenter of the racism debate; those who, like ourselves or an oppositional grouping from Irvine

(continued on next page)

college, tried to place the Black question on a firm Marxist grounding found themselves either shouldered aside or ignored.

Obviously, arguments centering upon such a grossly anti-Marxist axis, no matter how much some of the participants wish to rebel against the conclusions drawn from these premises by others, cannot be supported by a Marxist tendency within SDS for the very good reason that there is no principled, programmatic analysis in common with our mutual views. Other oppositionalists, including the Irvine College majority, felt the same way. While we were unable to secure principled agreement with these comrades on our Racism document, we suggested to them that they write and present to the Conference a counter position discussing those sections of our proposal with which they differed. That counter position, "Racial Oppression and Working-Class Politics (Alternative Version)" and a rebuttal by the original maker of the RMC position are included in this issue of the Newsletter.

Anyone wishing to defend either the WSA or Merritt view of racism would do well to explain how it was that Marx himself, writing in 19th century Europe with its impoverished peasantry and with a large share of the urban population reduced to the level of lumpenproletariat, never the less argued that it was the urban, industrial proletariat - a relatively privileged class - whose dictatorship would lay the foundation-stones of socialism. It was upon this analysis of the industrial proletariat that Lenin derived his views of the possibility of, and necessity for, a revolutionary vanguard party. It is a basic error, made by both the WSA and the Merritt oppositionalists, to confuse poverty and social oppression with the social power necessary to rip up the capitalist state by its roots and substitute the rule of another - the working - class; poverty is not equal to exploitation, nor a guide to the proper agency for revolution. Further, in the Marxist view, exploitation is defined quite precisely as the degree to which surplus labor is produced. In most parts of the U.S., Blacks and white workers are exploited at the same general rate, and "super exploitation" does not come into play; indeed, as we have many times pointed out, one can make a far better case for the super exploitation of women than for Black workers. Anyone interested in further pursuing this argument should study our position paper, "Racial Oppression and Working-Class Politics."

So far as the rest of the Conference proceedings are concerned, little more of a great substantive nature occurred. The RMC position on the CWSA was voted down by the Plenum session, as were all the oppositional documents on the Black question, the Merritt resolution included. The Plenum did vote, however, for a proposal from the floor that all position papers not debated or voted on during the Plenum Session, including the RMC's "The Fight for Women's Liberation", should be published in upcoming issues of New Left Notes; a similar proposal made by a RMC supporter at the earlier New Haven meeting was voted down overwhelmingly. Thus the decision systematically to suppress oppositional documents, made at New Haven at the request of the Boston leadership, was decisively repudiated in Los Angeles. We shall press the national leadership to make sure this decision is carried out.

In summary: We feel that Boston SDS, as presently constituted, is functioning more as a political holding action than the dynamic socialist youth group it ought to be, decisively intervening in the working class, while the Los Angeles conference provided further evidence that Boston SDS is still by far the largest and most serious of the three separate organizations that emerged from the June 1969 Chicago split, although it also provided some evidence that this is due to its managing to secure the mantle of SDS "legitimacy". What separates it from the frenzied, street fighting adventurism of the Weathermen or the gross, super-Stalinist opportunism and factional disintegration exhibited by RYM is not so much political superiority (although that in part is present) as it is a stance of studied indifference and abstention on the part of the leadership from the major struggles now raging within the radical and working-class movements. This abstentionism, in large part born of the womb-like campus-parochial strategy of the "Campus Worker-Student Alliance" has meant in practice not only a (justified) repudiation of mindless activism and "new left" idiocy, but has also meant an insulation of the membership from struggle. The situation in SDS today can be characterized by the adjective "soggy"; so long as the present leadership and their CWSA strategy remain in control this

(continued on next page)

situation will remain. We expect that an opposition will crystallize around a program to repudiate the present leadership and its line; we intend to play our part to see that program realized. D.C.

\* \* \*

KEEP TALLAHASSEE SDS ALIVE!

(The following leaflet and letter were put out by Tallahassee SDS RMC)

MEETING TO REORGANIZE SDS

Sunday, February 8, 1970 Tallahassee SDS voted to dissolve, abandon the name SDS and cease holding meetings. This deplorable action represents a major set-back for working-class politics in the South. What was at one time one of the most militant SDS chapters in the country has voted itself out of existence!

This liquidationist tendency first became apparent in October, when Tallahassee SDS found itself unable to align with the national SDS office in Boston. This short-sighted decision, combined with a blatant anti-communism, ultimately caused the SDS Southern Regional Conference held here in October to end in chaos with a major defeat for SDS, the passage of a resolution that in effect equated Boston SDS and RYM, the group whose unprincipled walk-out in Chicago caused the present split. This resolution advising non-alignment with either group was railroaded through by Tallahassee SDS. While another regional conference held a month later unanimously reversed the resolution, the damage to SDS in the South had already been done.

Tallahassee SDS, in rejecting the most vigorous left student organization in America, Boston SDS (even the ever-hostile National Guardian was recently forced to describe it as the "most successful of the splinters" coming out of the recent split) gave notice at this time of its intention of turning its back on class struggle, and the results can now be seen in a retreat into mindless anti-Marxist pragmatism. Serious revolutionaries can only condemn this action in the strongest terms.

Having taken leave of working-class politics, this group is now wandering aimlessly in the direction of the Student Mobilization Committee, a group that has a long history of single-issue organizing around anti-war work and whose most notable accomplishment so far has been to attract support for bourgeois liberal candidates of the left wing of the Democratic party (Senator McGovern, for example, addressed the huge MOBE rally in Washington this fall). While the (national) Revolutionary Marxist Caucus of SDS is totally opposed to single-issue organizing across class lines of the MOBE type, we do not turn our backs on the anti-war movement. Rather, we attempt to connect the war to American imperialism abroad and to the class struggle at home while also raising the political consciousness of students and workers through educational use of the slogan "Victory to the Vietcong." Thus it is especially disheartening that one once-promising member of the former Tallahassee SDS has joined the Young Socialist Alliance, an organization that has consistently opposed support for the Vietcong within the SMC on grounds of supposed "expediency."

All of this has dealt Tallahassee SDS a serious blow, and it would be folly to close our eyes to the fact. But some of us refuse to turn our backs on working-class politics and wish to continue the struggle. Tallahassee SDS is not dead. We call on all those who desire meaningful change in our society to attend a meeting, Thursday at 8 P.M. on the porch of Moore Auditorium with the aim of reorganizing Tallahassee SDS as a non-exclusionist chapter in alignment with the national office in Boston.

Revolutionary Marxist Caucus, SDS

\*\*\*

To the Editor of the Flambeau:

Feb. 12, 1970

I would like to take exception to statements made by Bill Boyd and Debbie Russell in a Flambeau interview and appearing in your issue for February 12th.

1. While of course SDS as a national organization has not disbanded, the local chapter has. A resolution to disband made by Jack Lieberman at the regular Sunday meeting was passed, with only the present writer voting "nay."

2. This state of affairs could have been avoided, as it was common knowledge among all SDS members and sympathizers that Liebermann intended to offer such a resolution. I myself spoke with Debbie Russell sev-

(continued on next page)



SUBSCRIBE TO FOCUS  
 Monthly Newsletter of Memphis Movement for a Democratic Society  
 P.O. Box 11463, Memphis, Tenn. 38111

(continued from page 8)...Tallahassee SDS

eral days before the meeting and again on the phone the night before, strongly urging her and the CWSA Caucus (Campus Worker-Student Alliance) centering around her and Bill Boyd to attend, for the very purpose of preventing the demise. Despite assurances to the contrary, neither she nor her adherents put in an appearance; thus whatever Bill Boyd may assert, the "Old" SDS chapter has dissolved: his absence from the crucial meeting does not invalidate the results. This action or rather inaction of Bill Boyd and Debbie Russell in the face of a major threat to the continued existence of Tallahassee SDS is the more deplorable in that Debbie Russell is National Interorganizational Secretary of SDS, elected at the New Haven conference in December upon the nomination of Bill Boyd.

The question arises whether one can arrive at an explanation for deliberate inaction and subsequent misstatements to the press. In point of fact Boyd's and Russell's activities in Tallahassee since the New Haven conference do display a regular patterning:

1. A sudden disinterest in the SDS chapter as constituted. Failure of their CWSA caucus to attend last Sunday's meeting was no isolated event.

2. SDS is traditionally non-exclusionist, an umbrella organization for all left students that welcomes the diversity of opinion represented by various caucuses within the group. Thus there is nothing inherently wrong with the formation of a CWSA caucus. What is wrong is what can only be regarded as the deliberate exclusion of fellow SDS members from participation in the activities of this group while coupling this with a claim that this exclusionist group constitutes SDS (the overall intent of Boyd's remarks to the Flambeau). An example: although constituted as a committee of Tallahassee SDS, the CWSA has persistently refused to inform other members of SDS when and where meetings were held.

3. That this is a deliberate policy is evidenced by an identical tendency on the national level for WSA caucuses to abandon SDS in favor of organizing as a separate, exclusionist organization, with an all too transparently desired isolation of young and inexperienced members from those who might object to the campus provincialism represented by this disregard of the industrial proletariat as the primary agent of revolution. Thus a group that can equate cafeteria workers with the vanguard of the working class finds it a simple matter to substitute an ineffective though demonstrative concern for individual firings for support of struggle for the basic right to unionize. (The local CWSA has refused to include this demand for union rights in its current petition.)

4. On the local scene this attempt to foster the illusion that Tallahassee SDS is an ongoing "viable" organization can only testify to a desire to perpetuate a status quo which the CWSA has, by its inaction, itself brought about, namely maintenance of the presently existing CWSA caucus as a pseudo-SDS for the unwary on a separatist, isolationist basis, while simultaneously impeding the formation of a real SDS chapter whose non-exclusionism would attract students of a variety of political persuasions.

I do not desire two SDS chapters in Tallahassee; at present there is none; what I would desire is the formation of an open, democratic, non-exclusionist SDS chapter in alignment with the national office in Boston. I regret the necessity of these public political polemics, which I was careful to exclude from my original letter and which have been thrust on me solely by the misstatements of fact published by the Flambeau without adequate investigation. We must all work together to build SDS. I invite Bill Boyd, Debbie Russell, the CWSA caucus and most particularly all interested students to join with me in organizing a chapter of SDS in which open discussion of political differences will build rather than undermine a truly revolutionary worker-student alliance.

Tweet Carter, Revolutionary Marxist Caucus, SDS

Please send all criticisms, comments and/or suggestions to:

Revolutionary Marxist Caucus Newsletter  
 c/o Mark Tishman  
 P.O. Box 454, Cooper Station  
 New York, N.Y. 10003

## SDS AND THE ANTI-WAR MOVEMENT!

Recent regional meetings of the Student Mobilization Committee (SMC) in New York and Boston have been attended by large contingents from SDS. The SDS contingents proposed generally good motions aimed at exposing SMC's class collaborationist, Popular Front policies and demanded that SMC break its single-issue bloc with the anti-war liberal bourgeoisie. Other indications as well from around the country indicate that the SDS leadership has made a decision to focus its attention on the existing anti-war movement, particularly SMC, and therefore SDS chapters will be deciding to make some sort of entry into SMC.

Supporters of the Revolutionary Marxist Caucus (RMC) of SDS agree that the anti-war movement presents an opportunity and a challenge to SDS. The Spartacist League, which helped found RMC, has always pressed for SDS to orient itself toward polarizing the anti-war movement and splitting militant anti-war youth away from the sell-out leadership of SMC, and has always fought for a pro-working-class, anti-imperialist perspective.

### What is SMC?

SMC is a class-collaborationist, social-patriotic organization, openly welcoming Republicans and Democrats into its ranks. SMC is the organized front group of the SWP-YSA (in uneasy bloc with the CP) and represents the right wing of the radical anti-war movement. SMC fights to restrict the program of the movement to the single issue of Viet Nam--an issue which cannot be separated from all the other manifestations of exploitation and oppression under world capitalism--in order to preserve the "broad" Popular Front it has organized. The SMC seeks to unite under the slogan "Bring All the G.I.s Home Now" (a social-patriotic formulation of the correct demand for immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. troops) both sincere youth who want to fight imperialism and pro-imperialist liberals who think the interests of the capitalist class might best be served by ending military involvement in Viet Nam. Politically, this is a chasm which should not be bridged; it is the irreconcilable class antagonism between the working class and its allies and those who serve its enemies. To seek to weld these forces into one movement, SMC must obscure politics and isolate the militancy that has grown up over the war issue from the vital development of revolutionary consciousness in the working class, the only force which has the potential to destroy capitalist imperialism.

### How to Fight SMC

SMC has grown widely, partly because of SDS's laxity in linking the Viet Nam issue to its newly-acquired pro-working-class perspective, seeing the Campus Worker-Student Alliance as the principal expression of its orientation. Partially due to the failure of the sterile, non-political CWSA perspective, the SDS leadership is now making a turn toward the anti-war movement. We must not let SDS turn from campus isolationism to a symmetrical mistake of liquidation. Our entry into the field of the antiwar movement will certainly put a strain on SDS's resources. More importantly, unless we embark on this course with a clear understanding of what we are about and with a determination to build SDS, not SMC, we will disorient our own members and blunt our anti-imperialist thrust.

SMC must be viewed as a competing organization. We must make it clear that we do not regard SMC as the legitimate vehicle for anti-war actions. SDS--as a broad, non-exclusionist radical youth group which, for all the mistakes of its successive leaderships, has never been tainted by the kind of class-collaborationist betrayal which is SMC's *raison d'etre*--must contest SMC's legitimacy by continuing to issue anti-war propaganda and by holding non-exclusionist anti-war demonstrations and rallies. Struggle around the Viet Nam issue is a natural and indispensable component of SDS's program and activity and must never be sacrificed to any entry tactic.

### For a Working-class Anti-war Program!

In addition to and in implementation of the general minimum slogan, "U.S. Out of Viet Nam Now, No Negotiations!", SDS should include the following slogans:

1. Victory to the Vietnamese Revolution!

2. No 'Loosening' of Rent Control--No Anti-Union Legislation!
3. Free the Panther 21, Chicago "Conspiracy" and all Other Left-Wing Political Prisoners!
4. Break with the Capitalist Political Parties--For a Political Party of the Working Class!
5. Labor Militants Must Oppose the War--For Political Strikes Against Imperialism!
6. Oppose the Futile Tactic of Individual Draft Resistance--For Anti-War Consciousness among G.I.s!

Fight SMC--Build SDS!

It is essential that SDSers attend SMC meetings, especially regional and national ones, to expose the SMC leadership by demanding that SMC abandon its collaboration with the class enemy and adopt an anti-imperialist, class struggle perspective. But there is little to be gained from attempting to launch organizational battles with the YSA-controlled SMC. SMC should be smashed politically, not taken over. That is, SDS should seek to win to itself anti-war youth presently organized in SMC by putting forward an anti-imperialist, pro-working-class political program and by its own independent actions. To implement this, RMC puts forward the following motions:

1. SDS should be the principal organization of the anti-war student movement.
2. SDS should enter SMC not to build it but to split SMC and recruit the radical elements to SDS.
3. SDS should not build SMC at the campus chapter level.
4. SDS should intensify its own anti-war actions, such as demonstrations and rallies, and should intervene aggressively as an organization in the April 15th protests.

March 21, 1970

Revolutionary Marxist Caucus of SDS

\* \* \*

Enclosed is a dollar, I want to join the RMC \_\_\_\_\_.

I want more information \_\_\_\_\_.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ School/Chapter \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

(return to RMC Newsletter, c/o Mark Tishman, P.O. Box 454,  
Cooper Station, New York, N.Y. 10003)