

APPENDIX: ACTION GROUPS AND SIDE-LINE PAMPHLETEERS

(Excerpt from a speech on organizational questions.)

The types of basic organization of the opportunists essentially come down to action groups and side-line pamphleteers. While they do not have anything new on this front they have a few new slogans on the question. But they have nothing new from the 1960's. And in fact this point is fairly relevant in the sense that the opportunists are now busily engaged in floating a multitude of new SDS's, only some of the new ones are in the working class. So the basic organization of the opportunists consists of the action groups and the sideline pamphleteers. These sideline pamphleteers, basically they have an easy life, in the sense all they have to do is be isolated in the sidelines, give analysis in the abstract and don't engage in struggle. The action groups under the guise of a frenzy of activity are just as irrelevant to the masses in any place in the world as are the sideline pamphleteers. What they take up is the practical action without analysis, that is what the practice is, action without analysis. This is not a criticism of practical activity, we are in favor of practical activity, but practical activity should be guided by something, by Marxism-Leninism. We say practical activity should not be detached from the needs of the masses, that is to say, from the political line. You have to actually take up the political line and deal with the actual situation in order to advance from one stage of revolution to the next. And the action groups do not do this. They take up various activities detached from what is the situation, detached from what is the stage of revolution, detached from anything you can think of. As to the basic life of an action group, comrades who have been in SDS, who have been in other New Left or student groups, subsequent to SDS have experience with this. What the life is like, is you come up with an action. In the student movement in the 60s, it was usually of the caliber of you were going to throw blood on the Dow recruiter. That

was going to be the action. Or it could be something much more glorious looking than that but by and large it was pretty much stuff like that. So for a week you would have a week of frenzied activity of preparation, of excitement in the air. And on Friday the Dow recruiter would come to the campus, twenty of you would burst into the recruiting office, douse him with a gallon of beef blood, run around the campus and proclaim what you have done and then settle into three weeks of utter depression. You were so depressed you could hardly even hold meetings. Somebody would always quit the next Monday and then come back about three weeks later. In our group it was the guy in charge of the literature table. So for the next three weeks after an action we never had a literature table. After about three weeks you would slowly bit by bit recover, the comrade in charge of the literature table would come back, you would have a literature table again and you would start holding meetings again and start planning what would be the next action. And this was the life of the action group. The basic point here is that no matter how frenzied it is whether the action is once a month or once a week, whether in appearance it takes place in total isolation or with the support of an entire section of the masses, it is utterly rotten and will never lead to anything. If the opportunists could recruit a million backward workers into this type of organization, which they cannot and will not, it would collapse because this is its basis and it is utterly rotten and nothing will ever come of it.