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LETTER FROM HUGO BLANCO TO JOSEPH HANSEN - JANUARY 1970

El Frontón
January 1970

Comrade Joseph Hansen:

The object of this letter is to convey our opinion on the international debate on Latin America.

We repeat once again that we stand on the Transition Program. That we are against the guerrillerista current.

The "Draft Resolution on Latin America" reached us at a time when our attention was concentrated on a struggle against a student syndicalist deviation that showed up among the leaders of a party filled with persons who were anything but active. It was on the eve of a Plenum that was to take a stand on this. Preparing for this, we did not have time to study the draft closely. We did not know that you had presented a document differing with it.

The contradictory aspects of the document prevented us from seeing that it was an expression of the guerrillerista current that we had fought for years.

Although I, preoccupied by a specific national question, came out in favor of the document, the Plenum did not discuss it because information that another document, yours, existed had not reached us.

Then a Peruvian comrade returned from Argentina, influenced by El Combatiente. After incorporating himself in the leadership and in all the party bodies without having been elected, he began to arbitrarily alter the line of the party. He openly declared that the line of the FIR was "obsolete," and, without a previous discussion, began to alter the line against the program of the FIR that was voted on and ratified by the Plenum. He utilized the majority of a leadership that had been elected to carry out our line in order to shift the party toward a verbal guerrilla-ism. To achieve this he undertook a convenient "purge" of the leadership, threatened more purges, and in practice excluded me from it, despite the fact that the Plenum had elected me as a member of the C.C.

They did not disagree with the documents that we sent in defense of the line. (They did that after the rupture.) It was easier to say nothing about the documents and act contrary to them, expelling and disciplining those who opposed this. All this could be done because in recent years the FIR has consisted of a numerous group of petty-bourgeois elements who in general do

nothing. The ratification of our line by the Plenum, the start made in applying it, signified a danger for these charlatans: either become active or get out of the party. With the arrival of the comrade holding the guerrillerista deviation, they were offered an ideal solution: neither become active nor get out -- talk about guerrillas.

In this way the process of rectifying the party, which was to have begun through engagement in activity, took another form: Those who did not want to work engaged in talking about guerrillas. They constituted a crushing majority (the factor that, as Comrade Livio told me, was decisive in recognizing El Combatiente as the official section in Argentina).

In face of such arbitrariness from people who were inactive, who did not even permit us to work, we few activists decided to reorganize the FIR in accordance with the line laid down in the program and ratified by the Plenum. We are carrying this out with excellent results despite the difficulties that every party nucleus faces at the beginning.

In reality the importation of the guerrillerista deviation was beneficial, since it accelerated purging the activists.

Your document, which we have just read, finished clarifying the scene for us; we see that our personal stand in favor of the "Draft" was a mistake and that the guerrilleristas were completely correct in taking it as their banner. We leave it in their hands; really it is theirs, not ours, we apologize for our initial confusion.

As for us we stand on the Transition Program, on the Program of the FIR, on the document of Comrade Joseph Hansen, who once more, as many other times in the history of our movement, has shown his Trotskyist consistency, the maturity of the Socialist Workers Party.

We advocate the methodology of Chaupimayo, criticizing ourselves for our deficiency in party building. We hold that it was one more demonstration of the continued validity of the method of the Transition Program. We think that the use of guerrilla war as a tactic was correct; we think that we will use this tactic again in Peru. Probably the guerrilla charlatans will not accompany us; they did not accompany us either in Chaupimayo.

Another factor must be taken into account; "guerrilla-ism," at least in

Peru, is another form of being "revolutionary" without doing anything.

The members of my guerrilla force (except an artificial element) were taken from the best in the union vanguard; it is sufficient to mention the organizational and economic secretaries of the Federación Provincial de Campesinos and general secretaries of four unions. People who had been looked down on for occupying themselves with demanding "crumbs" while the "genuine revolutionaries" argued over how to take power. This happened and will happen again; here and elsewhere. Today we are fighting for higher wages and against unemployment, with our old Transition Program in hand. The audacious guerrillistas call us cowards, they tell us that we don't want to make the revolution or that we are thinking of doing it in the year 2,000. We know that we will again take up arms in the city and the countryside; we did it before they did, with the forces that emerged from our people, not artificially "a suero." With this in mind we are working patiently today in organizing the peasantry and in advancing the workers' wage demands. We have confidence in Comrade Trotsky because Chaupimayo showed us that he was right.

Comrade, it would seem that we Trotskyists have been guilty of considerable complacency in face of guerrilla-ism in order not to appear sectarian. We criticized Comrade Moreno's "Two Methods" because of its "excessive hardness in form"; but we were in agreement with the content and still are. For this reason we republished it, because it drew the line of demarcation. It seems that international Trotskyism considered

this work to be "too hot" and now we are paying dearly for not having debated his thesis exhaustively. And the result is that now, when guerrilla-ism in Latin America is declining, defeated by the reality, it is reborn...within the Trotskyist movement!

Another item in which Moreno was right as against us: My defense and the defense of the happenings at Chaupimayo should not have been that of a "Trotskyist guerrilla" as was done in general, but as an example of the application of the Transition Program in opposition to guerrilla-ism. By way of contrast it stood out as an example of armed struggle that arose as a result of work among the masses.

It is understood that in identifying myself with Comrade Moreno it is in the general defense of our method; I know little about the current situation in Argentina.

There is much that must be said about guerrilla-ism, unfortunately I am pressed for time, hence the lack of order in this letter.

I am confident that you will defend our position with the necessary firmness. Up to now it appears to me that there has been too much complacency in face of the guerrilla current.

I authorize you to use any document of ours, either in whole or in part, in the discussion within the Trotskyist movement.

Affectionately,
s/Hugo Blanco G.

INTERNATIONAL REPORT

[9th National Convention of the YSA, December 28, 1969]

by Caroline Lund

I think we should be very proud and honored that we were able to bring such a great number of international comrades here to our convention this year. This is a great step forward for the world Trotskyist movement. We have to intensify this kind of international collaboration with our comrades abroad. YSAers who can take vacations to other countries should do so whenever possible. They should get to know the comrades there, get to know their problems, attend their conventions, their conferences and meetings, and try to bring them here to our conventions. It is especially important that we here in the center of world imperialism maintain the greatest possible international collaboration with socialists all over the world.

This report will center on the resolution, The Worldwide Youth Radicalization and the Tasks of the 4th International. I know comrades have many other questions, and are very interested in developments in the international revolutionary movement that are very important, such as the Arab revolution and many other things that I won't be able to go into here. Since we are voting on the resolution on the international youth radicalization, that's what this report will center on.

Later on tomorrow, in the international panel, we will have reports on the political situations and the concrete activities of our comrades in other countries, and comrades can ask questions then about the concrete situations there.

The resolution, The Worldwide Youth Radicalization and the Tasks of the 4th International, was put before the last world congress of the Fourth International by the United Secretariat.

At the congress itself some criticisms of the resolution were raised by some European youth comrades, especially some young French comrades. But these criticisms had not been written down at the time of the congress. The congress therefore decided to open a discussion on this resolution in the world Trotskyist movement. The congress did however unanimously decide to adopt the central practical conclusion of the document: that work among the youth was the central task and test facing the International at this time and all sections of the International should mobilize to intervene in it.

Since the world congress, the comrades in the leadership of the Communist League, the French section of the Fourth

International, have written down some of their ideas on the youth and student movement and their criticisms of the Secretariat resolution. I will take up some of these criticisms later.

The resolution was written for revolutionary socialist parties, not primarily for a youth organization. But it embodies the general line that the YSA has been following in our work in the student movement.

It should be clear that because we take a vote on the general line of the resolution this does not mean the discussion is closed for us. A discussion will continue in the Fourth International on the youth question, and we hope that contributions will be made to amplify or enrich the resolution.

Also, the fact that we are voting on this document does not mean that the YSA is affiliated to the Fourth International. Both the SWP and the YSA are prevented by reactionary laws from belonging to the International. But we can choose to agree with ideas from the Fourth International, such as are in this document and can maintain the warmest fraternal relations with our comrades who are fighting for socialism all over the world.

The purpose of the resolution is to analyze the phenomenon of the student and youth revolt which has arisen on a world scale; to draw the lessons from the real experiences of our comrades around the world in this movement; and most importantly, to turn the whole Trotskyist movement toward this new opportunity. It projects as the main task of all revolutionary socialist organizations to mobilize and lead the youth against the capitalist class, and to win the youth to revolutionary socialism and Leninism.

First I will summarize the content of the resolution, so everyone recalls clearly the general lines projected by it as to what revolutionaries should do vis à vis the student and youth movement

The first major section of the resolution analyzes the common worldwide objective basis for the youth revolt, especially its most dynamic component at this stage, the student revolt and also the common characteristics of this movement.

The resolution explains two main objective bases for the youth radicalization:

First, the ever increasing proletarianization of intellectual labor and the university explosion.

Second, the crisis of imperialism and the rise of the class struggle symbolized by the Cuban and Vietnamese revolutions, and the appearance of large revolutionary currents outside Stalinism and the Social Democracy.

The resolution documents how the student population of the world has tripled in the recent 15-year period. The reason for this university explosion was explained by Ernest Mandel in a speech he gave to a mass meeting of French youth on the eve of the night of the barricades in May, 1968. He said:

"What the student revolt represents on a much broader social and historic scale is the colossal transformation of the productive forces which Marx foresaw...: the reintegration of intellectual labor into productive labor, men's intellectual capacities becoming the prime productive force in society."

The university explosion, based on the increasing level of skill needed by the millions of workers employed by today's capitalism, has created a social layer with new importance. The social weight and role of students has changed, and this will be a permanent condition from now to the victory of the revolution.

Marxists should always be interested in such changes in social layers and their bearing on the class struggle.

Most students, especially in the U.S., now have the perspective of being higher paid wage earners, and the university is an institution of capitalism designed to prepare them to be good workers. The authoritarianism and hierarchy of the universities, mirroring the authoritarianism of capitalist society is one of the factors producing alienation and revolt among the students.

Since the university is an institution of this society, it reflects in its own way the contradictions of capitalist society. The problems of the university of course cannot be solved fully without a socialist revolution. The students feel alienation from their studies, they feel they have no control over their education, they feel they are being molded to fit into a machine which is alien to their needs and full human development.

The university explosion has occurred at the same time as a rise in world revolution, and is both a reflection of it and an integral part of it. Our generation of youth has seen imperialism

in a constant bloody battle around the world, and increasingly here in the U.S.A. to maintain its exploitation and oppression and to attempt to crush revolutionary movements which arise.

Connected with the rise in the class struggle is the crisis of Stalinism and the social democratic parties. These reformists fear the rise of independent revolutionary struggles.

A good example of how the Stalinists hate any independent struggle, even in another country, could be seen in the interview with the Polish student in the July-August Young Socialist. He explained the reaction of the Polish bureaucrats to the French events in May and June 1968 and especially to the French students. The bureaucrats pointed out in a newspaper that the French students made fun of some nationalistic symbols of France, like the tricolor flag, in a magazine they put out. The bureaucrats wrote:

"Under these symbols the best sons of France lost their lives in the last war." They continue, "The magazine is edited by the anarchist followers of Cohn-Bendit, the same people who think that patriotism is an obstacle blocking the route to mankind's happiness. They are the same people who, consequently, say such things as 'We are all German Jews,' teaching the youth to scorn their own country and forgetting to tell them that such scorn is first and foremost a form of self-hatred."

In the interview, the Polish student gave a good explanation of how international revolutionary events hurt the Stalinists:

"The reason for this lower level of internationalist consciousness in Poland," he explained, "lies in the way the people get news about developments in the world revolution. The news is very biased. It tries to conceal the importance of these struggles. The government's motive in this is explained perhaps by its realization that each revolution which is autonomous -- uncontrolled by the Kremlin -- serves as an important example for people under the domination of the bureaucratic regime, an example for breaking up bureaucratic monolithism in the Eastern European countries."

So the combination and interaction of changes in the universities, the increasing number of students, their destiny to become intellectual laborers for capitalism, plus the rise of world revolution, entailing the crisis of imperialism and its wars, the crisis of Stalinism and Social Democracy, all have interacted to produce the phenomenon of a student movement which has connecting links and many common features with the

young workers and soldiers and high schoolers of its generation.

The student movement is an international phenomenon and every country which is affected by the world market is pressed to one degree or another to expand its education system to keep up with and take advantage of the development of technology.

Along with the common objective causes, the resolution describes some of the characteristics common to the student movement in all countries.

The major weaknesses of this movement (pragmatism, not understanding the nature of Stalinism, a tendency to identify Leninism with Stalinism, and sometimes a tendency to utopianism and looking for solutions on an individual scale), these weaknesses derive from the conditions under which the student movement arose. The student movement has again and again bypassed the mass Social Democratic and Stalinist parties through independent action. But since the students had no mass revolutionary party to learn Marxist traditions from, it is understandable that the students would have these weaknesses.

On the other hand, the student movement has important strengths: first, it is a political movement. Students are concerned with broad political questions and not just their own narrow lives. Second, it is internationalist. The best example is the way the anti-Vietnam war movement was embraced by the students as an international struggle. Another strength is its anti-authoritarianism, or in other words, its independence. Youth don't accept the authority of their parents or the authority of the capitalist or bureaucratic state to control their lives. Most of them more and more hate all institutions of the family, private property and the state. And finally, the students are groping toward Marxism; they can be convinced to join the side of the working class.

In addition to ultralefts, spontaneists, like SDS, which are short-lived organizations, all the major tendencies in the working class movement tend to appear in the student movement, the Stalinists of the Kremlin or Maoist variety, the Social Democrats, and we, the revolutionary Marxists, also have to be there. We have to intervene and try to win over a movement with strengths like these.

To build our organization as an independent force, we have to intervene in two ways:

- 1) Ideological struggles against the reformist or ultraleft tendencies; and
- 2) fighting for united fronts and mass action, to demonstrate the effectiveness

and correctness of our political program in practice.

The second major section of the resolution projects our transitional strategy for the university which is summed up in the concept of the red university.

The red university concept is an attempt to apply the transitional approach, which is the basic approach of the world Marxist movement. This approach was explained in Trotsky's pamphlet, The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the 4th International which was adopted by the founding conference of the 4th International in 1938.

Our transitional approach is in contrast to both the reformist approach and the ultraleft sectarian approach. The reformists attempt to limit all struggles to the confines of the general status quo of capitalism. On the campus, reformists try to limit student struggles to narrow university issues, keeping them isolated from broader issues, especially extra-campus issues involving mass struggles. They always put forward only a minimum program, never leading from immediate struggles toward the struggle for socialism.

Some ultraleftists, on the other hand, put forward only a maximum program: socialist revolution, and dismiss struggles for immediate improvements as reformist. On the campus, the ultralefts either say that struggles on the universities are useless and students must go to the workers ("Serve the People"), or they try to substitute the action of a small group of "true revolutionaries" for mass action, with no regard for the mass of the students.

What reformism and ultraleftism have in common is that neither is oriented towards helping to change the consciousness of the masses and to mobilize masses in anticapitalist struggle. This is what we want to do, and we do it with a transitional approach. That is, we go to different sectors of the people engaged in struggle no matter what level they are on, we fight with them and lead struggles in their immediate interests, trying to link their struggles to the struggle for socialism both by using transitional demands, by linking democratic demands to transitional demands, and by using our whole transitional program in a propaganda sense to show the progression of our demands and where they lead to.

What is projected in the resolution is a program of democratic and transitional demands which all fit into the concept of a red university. Let's first be clear what are democratic and what are transitional demands.

Democratic demands are demands which were won or partially won, or at least raised as part of the process of the bourgeois revolutions. Democratic demands include such demands as national self determination, land reform, political democracy, civil liberties, the rights found in the Bill of Rights. These rights supposedly belong to everybody, to the exploiters and to the exploited.

Transitional demands usually contain within them a preview of socialist policies or a consciousness of the exploited masses as opposed to the exploiters. Take, for example, the transitional demand for a workers defense guard, to protect a strike. This demand is closely connected to the democratic right to self defense, but it contains the concept of the oppressed organizing as a power against the oppressors. Thus it leads to the concept of a red army, a workers army against the capitalist class. Or the transitional demand of a sliding scale of hours and wages, which has been taken up in a partial form in the demand for 30 hours of work for 40 hours of pay and the escalator clause. This demand gives a preview of the socialist policy of lowering the work time as productivity increases, or output increases, but still providing the means for a good life. On the other hand, it is a demand for the immediate well-being of the workers right now, under capitalism, their defense against inflation and the growing threat of unemployment.

The red university concept is transitional because it seeks through a set of partial demands, progressing in their implications, to bring the campus into the struggle of the workers and farmers for social change and revolution.

The red university does not mean the university should be a utopian island--where revolutionary ideas are discussed among students, patiently coexisting with capitalism. The main idea in this concept is that the university is not outside or above class society but an instrument of it. We say it should not be the instrument of the ruling minority but an instrument to better the lives of the majority.

This strategy enables us to deal with the problems of the university, the ways in which the capitalists try to use it to their purposes, but it also takes into account that the problems of the university cannot be solved outside of linking students with mass struggles off the campus and eventually, of abolishing capitalism.

Also, this strategy is the best possible way of linking the students to the rest of their generation as well as

to the masses of workers. For instance, the demand for the right of everybody to a free university education would appeal to young workers, high school students, and to workers who are parents and who want their children to have a good education. In Mexico, you remember, one of the demands the students raised and were fighting for was to be able to use university facilities to teach and assist peasants and workers who had come to ask the students for aid. In the United States we have seen this concept raised in the struggle for a black university.

So the Red University strategy fits into the ultimate aim of revolutionists which is to link student struggles with those of the workers and national minorities into a combined struggle for power.

I have been referring to the Red University as a strategy. That is what it primarily is. But it also can be used as a slogan if the struggle has reached a certain level. In a tremendous student explosion in June 1968 at Belgrade University, which I think first raised the slogan of a red university, the struggle was on a very high level. The Yugoslav students were calling for a 25% increase in the minimum wage for all workers, an end to bureaucratic privilege and to the extreme stratification of wages, and for greater socialist planning as opposed to dependency on the free market. They wanted their university to be a real communist university, a red university, fighting for policies to strengthen the socialist side of the economy rather than being subservient to the privileged bureaucracy.

Finally, the red university strategy takes into account the changed social weight of the universities. Educational institutions now have quite a bit of power, influence and facilities which can be of significant help to the revolutionary struggle.

The program of democratic and transitional demands given in the resolution have come from living struggles. In summary, they include the right of everybody to an education and to a decent standard of living while attending school; democratic student-teacher control of the university; self determination for national minorities in all spheres of education; the concept that educational institutions should not serve big business or the capitalist government; abolish capitalist conscription and rights for soldiers.

These demands and the strategy of the red university lay the basis for a revolutionary socialist youth organization to be in the leadership of a massive

student movement which has important links with other sectors of the youth. There are two sides, as I said before, to our fighting for this program and winning the leadership of the youth: first to mobilize the students in mass, non-exclusive democratically-run united front movements, and second, ideological struggle for our ideas and recruitment to the revolutionary youth organization.

Now, this new youth radicalization centering on the campus and the high schools as analyzed above, implies certain tasks for the Trotskyist movement.

First the youth radicalization means there exists the objective basis for independent revolutionary youth organizations which would be in political solidarity with the revolutionary Marxist party.

This revolutionary youth organization should not try to substitute for a revolutionary party. It should attract the growing layers of youth who are just coming to revolutionary ideas. These youth will want their own organization, organizationally independent and democratic in choosing its leaders and policies. The youth we want would not accept a front group like the CP often starts, or an organization which belongs to a party because it is financed by it, like the Young People's Socialist League is dependent on the Socialist Party.

Such an independent revolutionary youth organization can most effectively intervene in the youth radicalization, working in political solidarity with the revolutionary party, and providing a place where youth can learn about Bolshevik traditions and then decide if they want to join the party. This is the kind of youth organization the YSA is.

Of course, in some countries the Trotskyist forces are still too weak to launch a youth organization, or they may choose a tactic of working in some larger youth or student organization with the objective of building out of it a revolutionary socialist youth organization. But the resolution says that the strategy in all countries regardless of immediate tactics should be to build both a party and an independent youth organization because this is the most effective way we can intervene in this new radicalization.

The second main task cited by the resolution is for Trotskyist forces all over the world to jump into and take advantage of the opportunity afforded us by the youth radicalization. We must win over the vanguard of the class struggle, which appears now among the youth. We must win the students away from the dead-end policies of our opponents and we can only win them by intervening and leading the student and youth struggles, putting our politics into practice.

Now I will go on to describe and then consider the criticisms of this resolution raised by the leading members of the Communist League in France. I think it will be worthwhile to take up these criticisms because a resolution can always be more deeply understood for what it says when it is the object of criticism or controversy.

First I will try to summarize the main points of the criticisms from the leaders of the Communist League. You can find the two articles containing these criticisms in the latest discussion bulletin.

Their first major criticism seems to be that the resolution tries to project a strategy for the university, for the student movement, which the CL comrades think is impossible. They say that students have no common interests to defend, that they revolt as citizens, not as students, around general political issues, not university issues. The university-centered issues, they say, can be too easily taken over by the reformists. Then they say that the student movement can't be analyzed as an entity in itself, but can only be analyzed in relation to or as an adjunct of the workers movement and of the vanguard organization, or revolutionary party. They think that the students' struggle is dependent on the workers' struggle, to the extent that students should not be mobilized around transitional demands unless it is certain that the workers will join their struggle, otherwise the students will be smashed and victimized. Therefore, they allege, it is impossible to make a transitional program for the student movement.

Their second main criticism is regarding the nature of the period or stage the Trotskyist movement is in now. They think the resolution is wrong in characterizing this period as primarily a "preparatory and propagandistic" stage, and counterpose the idea that it is a period when we can be taking the initiative in mass struggles.

Thirdly, the CL leaders criticize that the resolution does not explain the "concrete conditions for application" of the transitional program. They think it is meaningless to say, as the resolution does, that revolutionary leadership must learn to be flexible in its tactics but firm in holding to its principles. They think this is just a vague generality.

The criticisms raised by the CL comrades are the attempt of a section of the Trotskyist movement to grapple with real problems that we face in our work in the youth movement. But these criticisms have similarities to attitudes which we often come across in the student and radical movements in the United States. The tendency, first to depreciate the significance and power of the student

movement, and secondly to warn against "co-option" and the danger of reformism. These two attitudes are characteristic of some ultraleft currents in our student movement, especially the wings of SDS.

Many students, after they first see the correctness of Marxism, downgrade the importance of the student movement because they now correctly see the decisive importance of the working class. But we can't let this subjective reaction get in the way of us seeing the objective importance of the student movement.

Now let's go back and consider some of the most important questions involved in these criticisms. There will not be enough time to go into all the questions raised in the criticisms; I will have to try to pick out the most important.

First, the question of whether it is reformist to struggle for university-centered demands. The CL leaders, in an article submitted to the international discussion on the youth radicalization which was printed in the YSA discussion bulletin No. 2, write the following:

"Revolutionary trade-unionism in the student milieu leads into reformism. You cannot restrict yourself to applying in limited areas an all-encompassing design which you have the means to carry through only in the universities. This way you end up with the slogans of student control, even student management, in the universities and high schools, which, in isolation from the overall situation in the class struggle, are thoroughly reformist."

In another article they wrote, directly criticizing the youth resolution, they say, "Indeed, as a catalog of demands, the program proposed by the resolution only juxtaposes bourgeois democratic demands and university demands of which the formulations are obscure when they are not openly reformist."

We agree completely that university issues should not be isolated from broader connected issues -- and that is the whole meaning of the youth resolution and the Red University strategy.

On page 16 of the youth resolution in pamphlet form, there is a discussion of the reformist danger. The resolution says: "The reformist tendency maintains that students should concern themselves primarily with narrowly-defined university issues -- grades, courses, the quality of education, living conditions, narrow campus politics. They see struggles around such issues in isolation from the crisis of capitalist society as a whole. They counterpose such limited struggles to the inclinations of the politicized students themselves to take up issues of key concern to the world, such as the war

in Vietnam."

Later, on the same page, the resolution continues: "The revolutionary youth vanguard, to be effective, must put forward a program that transcends the campus in its goal, but at the same time includes it; that connects student demands with the broader demands of the class struggle on a national and international scale, that shows students how their own demands relate to these bigger struggles, are an integral part of them, and can help advance them." That is what the program of democratic and transitional demands contained in the resolution is designed to help accomplish.

We combine struggles around campus issues with the issues of the broader class struggle, and we try to mobilize students around both kinds of issues. We do not leave certain kinds of struggles for the reformists -- we don't say that simply because reformists join a particular struggle with their methods and their objectives that we will not join it also with our methods and our objectives.

We don't put preconditions on the level of a struggle, even one that starts out fighting for the simplest of reforms, before we can join it. The incidents which gave rise to the student explosion in Czechoslovakia, which then led to the tremendous upheaval in 1968, concerned a student fight for adequate lighting in the dormitories -- the demand to replace crummy light bulbs. Hardly a high level demand! This movement was brutally attacked by the police, and a process was set in motion which resulted in the downfall of Novotny and the beginning of the political revolution. It's that process that we are interested in, that transitional process we want to help further and guide along.

It is possible for reformists to try to use narrow university demands in an effort to derail or destroy a movement which is already fighting for general political demands. A good example in the United States was the efforts of the Communist Party and others to derail the antiwar movement, specifically the SMC, by counterposing to antiwar work, struggles for issues they said were closer to the students, like dress restrictions in the high schools. This was the approach of the High School Union in New York City, which was led by CP types and which counterposed itself to the student antiwar movement.

We have to be able to recognize when such issues are being used by the reformists to take a struggle backwards, but we don't say that the struggles for such demands are necessarily

reformist and cannot mobilize students.

In New York we opposed the attempt of the CP to destroy the SMC by counterposing school-centered issues, but we didn't oppose fighting around these demands in the high schools in addition to and connected to building the high school organizations to fight against the Vietnam war.

In struggles over university-centered questions we must be there, fighting with the masses of students and counterposing our revolutionary methods to the methods of the reformists.

The second question we should look at is whether or not students have common interests to defend; does the university itself generate anticapitalist revolt, or do students radicalize only around national and international political questions separate from the campus.

Here is what the comrades of the CL write about this:

"Even if the time spent in school has been extended, even if the concentration of university complexes has reached immense proportions, even if the diversification of university recruitment and the professional careers open to students create stronger ties than ever between them and the rest of their generation in the high schools and factories, for all that the contradiction in the university system does not constitute an objective foundation for bringing the students as such over to the side of the proletariat and does not make the students natural allies of the workers. There are no homogeneous student interests to defend."

In their second article, they say:

"It [the juxtaposition of democratic themes and university demands] is based, on the one hand, on a debatable presupposition: the presupposition that the politization of the student movement follows a pedagogical progression, proceeding from immediate interests to apprehension of historic interests, whereas actually the student politization is determined from the outset by extra-university factors, by the political context as a whole."

There is little disagreement on this last point. I think the resolution is crystal clear on the dominant importance of national and international issues as the source of the worldwide youth radicalization. In fact, the resolution says, and it's underlined, "The efforts of the imperialists to maintain their exploitation and oppression and crush revolutionary movements have been the prime factor in radicalizing the youth in both the advanced capitalist countries and

the colonial countries."

But it is also clear that the student movement very often begins around university-centered issues. The reason that students radicalize as students is that the contradictions of capitalism which generate the general class struggle are reflected also in the universities, because they are institutions of society and instruments of the ruling class or bureaucracy.

A basic result of the contradictions of capitalism, which is generated in the universities as well as in the working class, is alienation. Students are alienated from the capitalist structure and policies of the university. They feel that the university is designed to fit them into the capitalist system, to its advantage, no matter what they want; they feel they have no control over their lives. Also, they see that the university is directly used by the capitalist class, for instance, to carry out war research and to teach ROTC. Before November 15 in Denmark, students found that the university was housing a NATO military installation, and this led to an important mobilization of students that also gave a push to the antiwar movement.

To say that the university does not produce anticapitalist struggles is to fall into the same error as the theory that the university is an ivory tower, above class society. It is an instrument of class society, and the students will become more and more aware that this is true.

So what interests do students have in common, as students? First they have an interest in learning the truth. This means they should oppose the compartmentalization and mystification of knowledge; they should have the right to consider all theories, including revolutionary theories and Marxism; they should have the right to hear all views; students have a special interest in freedom of speech and expression; they have an interest in eliminating mechanistic examinations, competition for grades, memorization and all substitutes for encouraging students to really search for the truth.

Students have an interest in the right of everyone to an education and a decent standard of living while they are going to school.

They also have an interest in the freedom to act politically while they are students, the right to hold meetings, demonstrations and build political, social and cultural movements in the universities and high schools.

They have an interest in making the university serve the interests of the majority rather than the ruling minority. And finally, like all non-capitalist sectors of the population, they have the interest to link themselves to the revolutionary struggle to abolish capitalism.

The course of the student movement itself refutes any idea that students move around general political issues only and not around university-centered issues. There are dozens of examples which could be given of the connection between the two. At the London School of Economics a major demand of the students in last winter's protests was to end the ties of the university with South African companies.

In Belgium and in Quebec, massive struggles have taken place for the right to have educational institutions which use the language of the oppressed nationalities. In Santo Domingo last spring students had mass demonstrations demanding greater appropriations from the government for education. In Kenya also last spring 1,800 students were expelled from the university for demanding their right to invite opposition leader Oginga Odinga to speak at the university.

Certainly all of these demands are connected with greater social and political issues, but they also directly concern the universities or high schools, and can mobilize masses of students.

The third question posed in the CL criticisms is whether the student movement is capable of having a strategy. In their article printed in discussion bulletin No. 2, they write: "Any attempt at a student strategy is thus liable to a double trap. On the one hand, there is the danger of reformism, of patching up the system under the pretext of a partial transitional strategy applied to the university. On the other hand, there is confrontationism which is only a policy in bits and pieces."

I think the actual struggles of students have shown that even though the mass of students may not fully understand Marxism, they can in practice see that Marxists have the solutions to the problems they see; they can follow a Marxist leadership. We project the concept of the Red University as the strategy for the student movement, even though we don't always use the words "red university" but can explain the concept in many different ways connected to each particular situation.

Consider the struggle of the Mexican students in the fall of 1968, for instance. The Mexican comrades have written that the Mexican students in 1968 did not have

to fight for demands such as student-professor control, democratic liberties on the campuses, and university autonomy. These demands had already been won, and in this sense the universities were little islands of more or less political freedom in the midst of a police state. What the students saw from the beginning was that the rights they enjoyed must be spread to the rest of the people. The movement began, however, over the question of police invading the university and beating up and arresting student leaders, that is, over the right of university autonomy that had supposedly been won. We shouldn't forget that the capitalist state cracks down on all democratic rights when it comes into a crisis. The students immediately drew up demands which included the following: free all political prisoners; against a law which enabled the police to arrest anyone contributing to "social dissolution;" for dismissal of heads of the police departments; and for dismissal of government officials who were responsible for the repression and killing of students.

As the struggle continued, however, the students saw that they needed to gain popular support if they were going to stand up to the government. First they constituted brigades of students who would go out into the workers neighborhoods and the peasant villages to explain to the people what it was that the students were fighting for. Then they attempted to draw up another program which could appeal to the masses of the people and win their support. This program, adopted by the National Student Strike Council, demanded: maintenance and improvement of the standard of living through immediate wage increases and through further increases commensurate with price increases; halting unemployment by cutting the workday; workers control to assure an equitable division of the profits; winning trade union independence and democracy through the formation of struggle committees elected directly by the workers; a union federation based on these struggle committees; and organization of peasant struggle committees to fight for cheap credit.

Could you say that the Mexican students were incapable of arriving at a strategy for their struggle? The Mexican students saw that to stop themselves from being arrested and killed by government repression it was necessary to attempt to mobilize the masses of the country around the issues most immediate to them as well as the issue of broad democratic rights; with the universities acting as an organizing center for this social change. They succeeded in mobilizing 700,000 people in one demonstration. I think that the comprehension that the Mexican students achieved was going toward a strategy, and one with

which revolutionary socialists would agree, as far as it went. It was heading toward a mini-program around which to begin to constitute a revolutionary party.

Or consider the students at Harpur College, where 1,300 students voted for our comrade Gary Wurtzel for student president. Even if they didn't agree with the YSA's whole program, these students voted for an openly socialist candidate whose platform was to end military and industrial recruitment on campus; to increase admission of black, Latin, and working class youth; an amnesty for anti-war demonstrators; the elimination of course requirements, final exams, and mandatory grading; and to make the student government a vehicle for mobilizing student support for social change.

During uprisings in Pakistan last year, the 5,000 students from Dacca University became the major leading force in East Pakistan. Their demands were for regional autonomy in East Pakistan, nationalization of all basic industry and banks, for political democracy, and for Pakistan leaving the SEATO and CENTO alliances.

I think these examples are sufficient to show that the student movement can develop a strategy which is neither reformist nor ultraleft.

The fourth important question raised by the CL criticisms is whether the student movement is so dependent on the working class movement that students shouldn't be mobilized for far-reaching demands unless it is certain that the workers will support them. They write, "It is not true that the student movement should be mobilized for transitional goals if you don't have the capacity to make this mobilization unite with a mobilization of the workers."

It is certainly true that students are a minority, and we must take into account the fact that not only can they not make the revolution by themselves, but that they will not be the central force.

But this is also true in a sense of other segments of the population. For example, the black struggle in the U.S., the struggles of farmers or peasants when they are not in a majority, or the struggles by a particular trade union or by workers in a particular city. The Minneapolis strikers in 1934 had to keep in mind that they couldn't strike out to take power and create socialism in Minneapolis.

But we don't tell any sector of the population which is struggling in the vanguard, ahead of the rest of the people, that they must hold up their struggle because they can't win alone. We don't tell the black people, for instance, that

they should wait to mobilize in struggle until the white working class moves.

At the center of this problem is the law of uneven development. The fact that the mass of exploited people never move all at the same rate; there are always some sectors out ahead of the others. But this fact just means that we must be politicians; we must learn to gauge what are the correct demands to bring forth, and how best to mobilize masses; how to win as much support as possible from the rest of the people and to minimize the possibility for victimization so that we can build upon victories. And there aren't any abstract formulas to tell you what to do in a specific case.

Now I want to deal with what I think is the most important criticism made by the CL leaders. That is, they say that the program of democratic and transitional demands found in the resolution has nothing transitional about it. Here is what they wrote:

"Indeed, as a catalog of demands, the program proposed by the resolution only juxtaposes bourgeois democratic demands and university demands of which the formulations are obscure when they are not openly reformist. What does this mean: 'an annual salary for all students in relation to their needs'? The term 'salary' can well be a demagogic concession to the idea of 'student work'; as for 'needs' -- of what nature? And who determines them? 'A guaranteed job for students after receiving their diploma,' well and good; it would still be necessary to specify 'at the level of qualification achieved' and to then discuss who is going to guarantee this employment, who is going to determine the needs for materials and man-power. 'Nomination of faculty members under the joint control of the faculty and the students': this much too imprecise formulation (what is 'the faculty') opens the door to forms of co-management in disguise, etc.

"Indeed, this juxtaposition of democratic themes and university demands doesn't have much transitional about it."

Now let's consider further the question of whether demands dealing with the universities and high schools can be transitional demands. I think everyone would agree that after the socialist revolution, the socialist government would have a program for the universities. Many changes would be made, to eliminate all those structures and practices in the universities which served capitalism, and introduce new structures and new content to education in line with making the universities serve the masses of the people and the workers state.

Demands concerning the university can be transitional in two ways: they can give a partial view of what educational institutions under socialism will be like, what these changes would be. And secondly, they are transitional because they can -- and have -- mobilized students against the capitalist state. They can mobilize them in a way that can link the students' struggles to the working class, in whose interests these demands are, and set an example for working class struggles.

Take the demands dealing with ending the ties of the university with the military and big business. These demands are based on the democratic concept that the university should be controlled democratically, by the majority of the people, rather than by a minority. On this foundation they project a view of what education would be like under socialism; they raise the idea of a society not immersed in wars, with a military machine perverting all spheres of life including education; they raise the possibility of a society without capitalists trying to turn everything to their own profit. And these demands can mobilize students against the capitalist class, against capitalist wars, against imperialism.

Now let's look at the demand for an annual salary for all students. The CL leaders criticize this, saying "what needs" do students have, and "what work" do students do.

The point of this demand is that not only students who have well heeled parents should be able to get a good education, as is still the case, for example, in France. Even in the case where a university is supported by the state so that tuition is eliminated, simply the cost of living and supporting himself or his family will prevent a poor youth from getting an education. What needs do students have? They need food, housing, books, child care facilities if they have children. And these needs can be determined most accurately by the students themselves.

In Cuba students receive an annual wage to cover their needs.

Of course, many students have certain privileges, and don't have to work as hard or under as bad conditions as most of the working class. But education as properly understood should not be a privileged, exclusive soft occupation, but an exacting, challenging and universally inclusive one, a preparation for being able to contribute most fully to the betterment and progress of mankind. Part of the root of the international youth radicalization is that more and more students are beginning to see education in this light.

There have been numerous struggles carried out by students for a decent standard of living. In Nigeria three weeks ago, students demonstrated for better loans from the universities. Six Congolese students were killed last spring demonstrating for higher grants for students from the university. In Argentina earlier this year, we should remember that the incident which touched off the student demonstrations which led to the massive struggle of the whole working class against the dictatorship was an increase in prices in the university cafeterias.

Then the CL leaders ask "but how are demands for a decent standard of living and for guaranteed jobs after graduation going to be provided? Who is going to guarantee jobs to the students?" They mean, I assume, that it is very unlikely that the capitalist class will give in to demands such as these. That is always a characteristic of transitional demands, that they are very difficult for the capitalist class to grant. That's because they go against the special rights the capitalist rulers reserve to themselves and toward socialist policies. But this doesn't mean that transitional demands cannot be won for a time, or partially won. The whole concept behind the transitional approach is not to separate immediate, winnable demands from the full, maximum program for socialism, but rather to link immediate demands with socialist demands. This transitional approach is more successful for two reasons: one, it makes it possible to mobilize masses in an anticapitalist direction, beginning from the most immediate needs of the masses, and second, the transitional approach is best able to change the consciousness of masses of people of the need for socialism, in the course of the struggle.

I would like to describe one more example of a struggle which has been going on in the last few weeks in Belgium, to illustrate how the types of demands given in the resolution have revolutionary potential. In Belgium they have a type of educational institution which is in between the level of a high school and a university. These are called non-university higher education, and they train various kinds of technicians, interpreters, social workers, and other occupations. They are something like the Junior Colleges in California. These schools have been set up quite recently, as part of the education reforms going on all over Europe to streamline the educational process, to strip down studies as much as possible to an understanding of the practical work, and to fit the needs of capitalists for various kinds of skilled workers. Also, the capitalist class prefers this kind of stratification of the educational system because it makes the

students ready to fit into the hierarchy of the companies they are to enter, and helps to fragment the student movement.

A massive movement has begun among the schools for social workers. It started in a few social work schools, and swiftly spread to all of them in the country, uniting the two major national groupings in Belgium, the Flemish-speaking and the French-speaking schools. Now this movement has also been joined by other types of schools in the non-university higher education system, and has made contacts and gained support in the universities.

Here is a summary of the demands of these social work students:

First they demand democratization of the university, student control over policies and content of the education. They demand that students have a veto over any education reform laws proposed by the government. They demand freedom of expression, and the right to hold meetings on the campuses.

After a mass demonstration, the social work students occupied the main hall of the nearby university -- which they are excluded from -- writing on the black boards "University Open To All."

Secondly, they demanded a longer course of studies for social workers. At the present time they have a three-year program, and the government wants to cut it down to two years, while the students want four years. They want their diplomas to be worth more, like a university diploma. And they want jobs guaranteed after graduation.

After a process of discussion which the students say really began after the May-June 1968 events in France, these students have developed a critique of the whole social policies of the government. They say the government does not want a real social work policy and it doesn't want good social workers who really understand capitalist society. They point out how the social service field is completely understaffed and incapable of dealing with social problems. In addition to permitting this understaffing, the government wants to cut their study time so they cannot have a rounded education.

These students have also come to the conclusion that the whole end, or purpose, of social work, as taught to them, is wrong. They say they are taught always that the end is to reintegrate people who have problems into the society as it is. But the students realize that there are good reasons for what they are taught is social disintegration and asocial behavior, like workers' strikes and protests. They don't think the

solution is to "reintegrate" these people into the society as it is, but to search for the real reasons for social discontent and struggles. They say they don't want to be used as an instrument of the ruling minority to be cops over their fellow workers.

To show that they want to support the working class struggles rather than be divided from them, the students have joined demonstrations of striking workers. The student leaders explain that they think education should be toward the end of serving the interests of the majority of the people rather than the ruling minority.

And these students have been fighting in a very militant manner, mobilizing thousands in mass demonstrations, stopping the education minister's car and forcing him to answer their questions, and uniting as much of the students in other schools as possible, cutting across the national lines which until recently have divided the Belgian student movement.

I think this struggle of the social work students in Belgium illustrates how the very demands contained in this resolution, democratic and transitional university-centered demands, combined with our whole transitional program, can link together to form the basis for a profoundly revolutionary struggle.

The struggle of Quebec students last October (1968) was similar to the Belgian struggle. The students involved were from technical schools, and they were demanding the right to enter the universities, and guaranteed jobs.

Democratic demands, as we saw in considering the Mexican student struggle, are not less important than transitional demands, and become combined with transitional demands.

Marxists are the best defenders of bourgeois democratic demands because they are steps forward for humanity. They have been won by the people through mass struggles, and are important aids to the continuing workers' struggle. Because of the decay of capitalism and the erosion of democracy which was won in the past, and because of the inability of capitalism any longer to carry forward and complete democratic tasks in the colonial world and elsewhere, this means that struggles for democratic rights often lead to most revolutionary developments.

A good example of this process was the struggle in Pakistan last spring. This struggle was initiated in West Pakistan, where the students were fighting to abolish what were called the University

Ordinances, which said it was a crime for students or professors to interfere in politics. It forbade student political demonstrations or meetings, and even contained regulations like one making it a crime for male and female students to talk with each other on the campus. The students' demands were for the overthrow of the dictator Ayub, for democratic rights on the campus and in society as a whole, freedom for imprisoned student leaders, police off the campus, and the reduction of university fees. These mainly democratic struggles of the students touched off a deep-going uprising of the masses, especially in East Pakistan.

These examples of student struggles illustrate how the linkage of democratic and transitional demands actually exists; it is inherent in the situation and tends to come out in the process of a struggle. This is because the university is part of society, and university problems relate to general social problems.

It is our job to be present in these struggles, which will be spontaneously generated, to explain clearly the linkage and bring up demands which will lead to higher levels of struggle.

Just one more example to show how democratic demands lead naturally into transitional demands and how we must fight for them both together. In the black struggle in the U.S. we put forth the democratic demand for the right of black people to self-determination. Following from this, comes the democratic demand for the right of black people to control their own schools and universities. And following from this, we come to the demand for the right of black people to use educational institutions to further their liberation, to discuss and teach revolutionary theories and Marxism. This is a transitional type of demand, which raises the concept of fighting against capitalism. We could see how this progression of demands worked out in P.S. 271 in Brooklyn, where the teachers were using The Militant and Young Socialist in their courses.

Now let's go on to another important question raised by the CL comrades: what is the nature of the stage or period we are now in? Here is what the resolution says about this question: "Work among the youth is not an end in itself. It reaches fruition in the impetus given to the construction or reinforcement of the revolutionary parties that will be capable of leading the working class to victory. The sections of the Fourth International are as yet too small to lead the masses in their own name and under their own banner in a decisive struggle for power. Thus, their work has a preparatory and predominantly propagandistic character involving limited actions."

Here is what the CL leaders think about this: they write, "We think that precisely this preparatory and 'mainly propagandistic' work becomes insufficient in relation to the abundance of the tasks in the coming period; that it is necessary and possible, even with limited forces, to take the initiative in action and in revolutionary mass agitation, at least in areas concerning the youth. This is not a meaningless difference of 'points of view,' or 'nuances,' etc. The conception which assigns to the sections 'mainly propaganda' activities implies a whole strategic course for leading the youth.

"This course, which is expressed in the program of the resolution itself, could be summarized in the following way: the vanguard, full of wisdom, perched upon the heights of its piously accumulated theoretical acquisitions, contemplates the revolutionary field; suddenly on this field there appears the unforeseen mass of youth, which the vanguard tries to describe in its habits and political behavior; after which the problem will be: 'how to bring leadership to this movement and how to win over the best of them?' Answer: a) it is necessary to give the youth a good slice of the transitional program, which answers to their immediate aspirations and makes a bridge to revolutionary objectives; b) it is necessary to draw from the youth new cadres for the vanguard.

"On this level of generality, it is neither false nor true, it is simply formal and abstract. One finds here all the themes belonging to the Fourth International when it was isolated in the period of the cold war and of the ebb of the world revolution, driven into a defensive position where it was difficult to preserve its acquisitions."

To me this section was a little unclear, but I think the main objection to the characterization in the resolution of this period as primarily "preparatory and propagandistic" and to the transitional approach of the resolution is that they think this somehow means abstentionism or isolation of the revolutionary organization from the mass of students and youth. But this is the opposite of what the resolution says and means.

There may be some confusion here about what could be meant by "preparatory and propaganda" period. What the resolution clearly says is that the period is a preparatory and propaganda one because we are faced with the major task of building mass revolutionary parties and youth organizations. This is the one condition lacking for world revolution, as was clear, for example, in France during the May-June, 1968 events. As our

comrades there have pointed out, the revolutionary situation was present, but a mass revolutionary party was missing. Even though we are on the way to building a revolutionary party in France, the revolutionary forces were still too weak to even come close to defeating the Communist Party and leading the workers to victory.

But in no way does the resolution imply one iota of abstentionism or of a suggestion that we should isolate ourselves from the masses. Just the opposite! The resolution repeats time and again that it is only through intervening in the real struggles of the youth and putting our program to the test of practice that we can hope to win youth to the revolutionary movement. The whole program of democratic and transitional demands are presented as a guide for active participation in the youth movement.

It is never correct to abstain from the political life of the country; even if there is just one revolutionary socialist alone in a fascist country, he doesn't abstain from struggle. The CL comrades imply that the Fourth International was just sitting on its perch of Trotskyist theory and observing the political field during the cold war period of the 1950's. I do not know about other sections of the International but the American Trotskyist movement was not abstaining from struggle. Even during the height of the witch-hunt, the Socialist Workers Party was carrying on a campaign against McCarthyism. SWP members were collecting signatures in the streets in order to put the SWP on the ballot to run election campaigns; and the SWP was carrying on the case of the legless veteran, the defense campaign to prevent Jimmy Kutcher from being fired from his job just because of his membership in the SWP. And it was fighting in the unions against the witch-hunt.

We agree completely with the CL comrades that this period is one of a rise in the world revolution, and the student movement is the first stage and harbinger of what is to come. We must enter and strive to lead these struggles because that is the only way to building the mass revolutionary socialist parties which are the main condition lacking to make a socialist revolution.

If it was true that in some sections of the International during the 1950's the revolutionary movement was isolated from struggles going on, then we agree with the CL leaders that this must be changed and all sections of the world Trotskyist movement must have a policy of intervention -- of unity between theory and practice.

The next criticism of the CL comrades is that the resolution is insufficient because it does not spell out how

to apply the program of transitional and democratic demands. Here is how they put it: "Because the draft produces no real analysis of the student movement, it contents itself with verifying its bad instincts (opportunistic adaptation, ultraleft sectarianism); because the draft does not make clear the real roots [of these bad instincts] it gives no means to fight them, except with athletic-psychological qualities of the vanguard, which must be "alert" and flexible (!) It's that simple."

The concrete conditions for application of the program contained in the resolution are not spelled out because they can't be. In each different situation we have to think out which demands to raise, where to make concessions or to make a retreat, and when to stand firm. A resolution can only set forth a political line, but it can't substitute for thinking and political experience and judgment.

Also, in each country revolutionaries must analyze the particular conditions and movements they have, and write resolutions for their own work, but they can do this based on the general line of this resolution. For instance, the YSA program for the campus, which was printed in the Young Socialist.

But this resolution is for the whole world. It tries to analyze the common objective characteristics and roots of the youth radicalization, taking into consideration the struggles that have arisen in all three sectors of the world revolution, the advanced capitalist countries, the colonial or former colonial countries, and the workers' states.

I want to deal with just one more of the criticisms raised by the CL comrades. They say that the student movement has reached a new stage; that after going through experiences such as the May-June events in France, the Pakistan, or Argentine events, the students will come to a realization that the student movement as a movement is at an impasse because they see they must either wait for the workers to move, or attempt to substitute for the workers, which is impossible. Therefore, say the CL comrades, the student movement will begin to polarize into the various political currents and the student movement will recede into the background while the vanguard groups come to the fore. They cite as an example the break-up of the Japanese Zengakuren into many different tendencies.

I think they are right that this process does occur for one layer of students who go through an experience of a massive workers mobilization which is stopped. But we don't speak to only one layer of students; we look to the student

population as a whole, which is continually being reviewed by new layers. It is a big mistake to identify one layer of students with particular experiences with the student movement as a whole, which is being generated continuously by objective conditions.

The development of the Japanese student movement and the break-up of the Zengakuren will illustrate what I mean. The Japanese student movement was one of the first mass movements which ushered in the worldwide student movement, with its mass protests against the Japanese-U.S. Security Treaty in 1960. Up until 1958 the Zengakuren had been a federation of all Japanese student governments, and was controlled mainly by the Communist Party. In 1958 it broke from the CP, and went on to lead the mass demonstrations in 1960. But then the Zengakuren began fragmenting into many different organizations. These organizations were called Trotskyist by the CP, but most of them were of a "state capitalist" character -- that is, they considered the Soviet Union and China as having a kind of capitalism.

Then in about 1967 the new wave of student struggles began in Japan, but since the fragmentation of the Zengakuren there was no longer any mass student organization which could unite the students in struggle. What arose to lead these struggles were various kinds of united fronts or strike committees, commonly called "the non-sect radicals."

An example of this second wave of struggles in Japan was the university occupation movement which began at Tokyo University among the medical students and then spread to over 50 schools in Japan in the summer of 1968. This struggle began over university issues: the medical students wanted better pay and better working conditions for interns, who were until then treated almost like slaves. The other faculties joined in on the strike, demanding an end to the dictatorial powers held by the full professors and more voice by the students in running the university.

When Fred Halstead interviewed these students in the summer of 1968 on his trip to Japan, the student leaders of the strike explained to him essentially the concept of the red university, which they had arrived at on their own. They said "the university should be a training ground for revolution," "an engine for revolution." These students, the "non-sect radicals," would get 3,000 students to their strike planning meetings, and they were leading the struggle. The various Zengakuren groups generally supported the strikes, but on one of them had hegemony in the student movement.

So now we must not only look to the formal members of the Zengakuren groups as the student movement, but must look to the new layers of student revolutionaries who are ready to carry on struggles. We must try to build united fronts of the Zengakuren groups and the non-affiliated political students to carry out the struggles.

To sum up, then, the resolution is both an analysis of the worldwide radicalization of youth and a guide for the intervention of revolutionary socialists into the student and youth movement. It is based upon real experience, and is not sucked out of somebody's revolutionary thumb. Behind it is the experience of the student and youth movements of the last decade on an international scale -- from Tokyo to Paris, from Ceylon to Nigeria, from Prague to Belgrade, from Argentina to Canada, in all three sectors of the world revolution. This resolution will help members and future members of the Young Socialist Alliance to understand better the student and youth revolt in this country -- and at the same time enlarge our awareness of this phenomenon as a truly international one, and help us to intervene in this field on an international as well as national scale.

I want to end by discussing two concrete tasks which face us in the next period. First, a campaign to defend our comrades who have been arrested in Bolivia and in Peru. And second, our role in building the international antiwar movement.

Most comrades have, I'm sure, read in Intercontinental Press about the arrests of our comrades of the POR in Bolivia. Many leading comrades of the POR were arrested and tortured; now they are being held in prison with no trial. Because these comrades have not even been brought to a trial, there has not been much news about them, and the regime apparently wants to just keep them in prison and let them be forgotten there.

Unfortunately the public international legal defense campaign for our Bolivian comrades has not been really launched yet by the world movement, due to various reasons. But to start off the campaign the Bertrand Russell Foundation has agreed to provide lawyers, who will be able to go to Bolivia and get information about the situation of our comrades in prison and their families.

In Peru, comrades Hugo Blanco, Eduardo Creus, and Candela have been in prison now for six years. The international campaign carried out by our movement succeeded in preventing Hugo Blanco from being executed. Now, in both Peru and Bolivia there have been military coups

which have installed regimes that have put on a liberal anti-imperialist face, carrying out some land reform measures and nationalization of some U.S. companies. In Bolivia, the general Ovando was directly involved in the murder of Che Guevara, but now, as part of his left face, he even praises Che Guevara.

The new liberal regimes in Peru and Bolivia mean a good opportunity for us to put pressure on these regimes to release our comrades and all political prisoners, who were only trying to fight imperialism just like the generals claim to be doing.

As the international campaign gets started, we must mobilize to join in on this double campaign for the release of our Bolivian comrades, linked with the launching of a new campaign for freedom for Hugo Blanco and the other Peruvian comrades. This work is especially important for the American revolutionary socialist movement because Latin America is our government's colony. It's our responsibility to demonstrate that the American government is not representing us when it supports dictatorial regimes that murder, torture, and imprison people for their political beliefs.

Key to this effort will be our collaboration with the U.S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners, which has already been carrying out the defense of Hugo Blanco and of imprisoned political prisoners in Mexico.

Now I want to turn to a related but separate point, and that is the international antiwar movement and our obligations to it.

As the resolution points out, the new rise of the world revolution, in which the struggle of the Vietnamese has been a key element, has been an important factor in the international youth radicalization. In country after country -- from all the way down in New Zealand up to Denmark -- revolutionary youth have been inspired by the Vietnamese resistance to U.S. imperialism and have embraced the Vietnamese struggle as their own. Even the movement I referred to earlier in Yugoslavia, which raised the demand for a red university during the occupation of Belgrade University in 1968, that movement began as an anti-Vietnam war movement. We all know the tremendous potential of the antiwar movement in this country.

As a matter of fact, it has been the existence of the antiwar movement right in the United States, right in the heart of the imperialist monster itself, which has been a big factor in the rise of the antiwar movement on a world scale.

For the past period, however, for about the last year or so, there has been

a decline in the international antiwar movement, just as there was during the election period and the first period of Nixon's term in this country. But it lasted longer in the rest of the world. The Paris talks, Nixon's promises, the shift of bombing missions from North Vietnam to South Vietnam and Laos -- combined to give the illusion that the war was over or would be over soon. The bourgeois press all over the world, anxious to help defuse the antiwar movements in their own countries, presented the war as just about over. This was especially true in Britain, which has a very adroit capitalist press with a great deal of experience in reporting imperialist wars.

The impact of the October 15 and November 15 demonstrations, and the disclosure of the Song My massacre, have jarred people outside the U.S. into the realization that the war is not over. On or around November 15 there were new actions in many countries signaling a rebirth of the antiwar movement. In Copenhagen, Denmark, for example, there was a demonstration of at least 20,000 on November 15. The day before, partly as a direct response to the Moratorium, there was a very successful student strike against the war held in Copenhagen and another city. To get an idea of the scope of this action, we should remember that Denmark is a very small country, with only 4½ million inhabitants. Our comrades were in the leadership of this action, along with other forces. There were also the actions taken in France in spite of the ban on antiwar demonstrations issued by Pompidou, which you read about in The Militant. On October 25, a smaller but significant action of about 1,000 youth was held in Brussels, which brought a number of new young people around the revolutionary socialist youth organization in Belgium, the Young Socialist Guard. There have been a series of actions in Germany, and on November 23 there was one in Britain of 3,500, where our comrade Allen Myers spoke. Allen is presently on a tour of the far east for the SMC, and spoke at a December 15 action in Sydney, Australia where again our comrades were in the lead. You know better than I do the actions which took place in Canada.

Outside the U.S., the biggest action took place in Japan, against the Japanese-U.S. Security Treaty and Prime Minister Sato's negotiations to return Okinawa to Japan but with U.S. bases on Okinawa intact. Hundreds of thousands of students and workers took part in those actions in mainland Japan and Okinawa. Both of these issues, of course, are deeply connected with the war in Vietnam. It is the Japanese-U.S. Security Treaty which enables Japan to be used by the U.S. military for all its operations in the

Far East and especially Japan, and Okinawa is the major U.S. base in the Far East, for troops, supplies, B-52 bombers and flights of spy planes over North Vietnam, Korea and China.

In many of these actions, antiwar youth have combined slogans and demands against their own governments with the opposition to the war in Vietnam. In Australia and New Zealand this takes the direct form of calling for the withdrawal of Australian and New Zealand troops from Vietnam. In Denmark and Belgium, activists were demanding their governments cut ties with the NATO imperialist alliance. In Britain, our comrades have put forward the demand to end the complicity of the British government in the war, through the solid political support that Wilson has given to both LBJ and to Nixon, and in the name of the Labour Party, in the name of the British working class.

The new upsurge of the American antiwar movement will provide a powerful stimulus to the international antiwar movement. Our role as leaders of the left wing of this movement in the United States places upon us the obligation to help get the American antiwar movement conscious of the international role it in fact already plays, and to intervene more effectively in the international struggle. The SMC issued an international call for this fall's antiwar offensive. The SMC has sent Allen Myers on a world tour. These kinds of things we should encourage and systematize. There are more things we could be doing in this regard to give a lead to the movement internationally, like

providing information, materials, etc.

In so doing we will be acting in accordance with our internationalist convictions and program. Our internationalism is expressed in many ways. One way has been our defense of the Vietnamese right from the start -- we saw their struggle as ours, and our struggle for them as primarily a struggle against our own imperialist government which was carrying out that war. Another is our participation in working out a program of the revolutionary socialist international, for example in regard to the resolution we talked about earlier. We are internationalists both in thinking and in action, both in word and in deed. I am suggesting that we aid the SMC to step up efforts on the side of helping to coordinate international antiwar action. The tremendous growth of the SMC puts them in a position to be able to do it.

For we should make no mistake about it -- the Vietnamese revolution and the counterrevolutionary war against them spearheaded by U.S. imperialism remains the key focus of the class struggle on a world scale and here in the U.S. How that struggle goes will have a profound impact on the relation of class forces throughout the globe, and including right here in the United States. If we, together with antiwar forces throughout the world, and with the heroic self-sacrificing revolutionists of Vietnam, can stay the hand of imperialism in Vietnam, we will have given the whole world revolution a mighty impetus forward.

Balance Sheet of the Student Movement

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[In our July 14 issue (page 723), we published a resolution entitled "Worldwide Youth Radicalization and the Tasks of the Fourth International." This document opened a discussion on the subject in the Fourth International, the World Party of Socialist Revolution, founded by Leon Trotsky in 1938. The document below is a second contribution to the discussion. It is a condensation of *Cahiers Rouges*, No. 12, "Problèmes du mouvement étudiant," written by Daniel Bensaïd and C. Scalabrino. The condensation appeared in *Quatrième Internationale*, No. 38 (September 1969). The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

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1. The student movement in the 1960s was everywhere in the vanguard of the reviving revolutionary struggles. The particular political mobility of the student milieu arises from the accumulating superstructural contradictions of which it is the focus: the crisis of bourgeois ideology which affects the youth as a whole; the problems of employment, training, and professional careers which concern the intellectual workers; and the institutional crisis of the university.

2. A component part of the youth in general, the students were the first to be affected by the crisis of bourgeois ideology, which they are called upon to glorify and perpetuate. The bourgeoisie of the period of imperialist decadence is not the creative bourgeoisie that rose to power to accomplish its historical tasks. The values, morals, and history of this bourgeoisie can inspire no enthusiasm. The cause of the crisis seems clear—the youth cannot identify its hopes with those of the bourgeoisie, or tie its fate to this moribund class. This is all the more true because the values so much preached by the schools, the academies, and the authorities are denied daily by the crimes imperialism commits in its death throes. Los-

ing its morality and ideals, the bourgeoisie has replaced them with advertising slogans. It no longer seeks to inspire defense of the ideals of the rising bourgeoisie ("liberty" and "equality") but conformity to the robot image of the average consumer, the mediocre bourgeois of the period of decadence. No young generation can identify with this ideology. And more than any other young people—since they are the heir apparent and the appointed continuers of this tradition—the students experience the crisis of bourgeois ideology very intensely.

3. As future "professionals," the students are haunted by the problems of employment. In those branches where the professional perspectives are precisely defined, to be a future specialist is frequently synonymous with future unemployment as a consequence of the imperatives of continual economic reorganization. In the liberal professions, long years of study often culminate in beginning a slow climb in the restricted hierarchies.

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4. More specifically, the students find themselves in the center of a contradiction which they may strive to surmount but which they can never resolve because it involves the fundamental contradiction in the capitalist mode of production—the contradiction between developing the productive forces and maintaining the relations of production. This same contradiction bears on the universities which are compelled to respond simultaneously to two contradictory demands—(1) advancing the productive forces through a general increase in the level of skills at the price of an increase in the social costs of training; and (2) retaining the productive relationships through fragmentation of knowledge, discriminatory recruitment, and respecting the private profits of the capitalists as individuals. The bourgeoisie everywhere tries to deal with this contradiction by measures and reforms which themselves

are hybrid and contradictory and which perpetuate the institutional crisis and instability of the university.

5. The increasing needs for skilled manpower are bringing about a diversification of university recruitment and its extension to the middle strata. These strata, attracted by the prospects of assimilation into the upper classes, do not bring rebellion into the universities with them. But everywhere they are an element of instability. Caught between an insecure family background and an uncertain professional future, the children of the petty bourgeoisie on occasion are ready to make the authorities pay for the insecurity and anguish which is their lot.

6. The student population, rooted in the contradiction of the university, lacks both social and political homogeneity. Even if the time spent in school has been extended, even if the concentration of university complexes has reached immense proportions, even if the diversification of university recruitment and the professional careers open to students create stronger ties than ever between them and the rest of their generation in the high schools and factories, for all that the contradiction in the university system does not constitute an objective foundation for bringing the students as such over to the side of the proletariat and does not make the students natural allies of the workers. There are no homogeneous student interests to defend.

7. The student milieu has given birth to movements and political currents whose poles are outside the university, in the class confrontation between the bourgeoisie and the working class on the national and international scale. A part of the students have aligned themselves with the established order, whose benefits they are destined to share; another part have gone over to the proletariat. But there is nothing natural and spontaneous about this lineup, especially when the workers—deprived of revolutionary leadership—fumble and mark time.

8. This is why in the advanced capitalist countries the politicalization of the students has generally taken the path of anti-imperialist struggle. The students have not found the least perspective in the Social Democratic or Stalinist workers organizations in their own country, which have submitted to the status quo. As a result, the Vietnamese revolution provided a symbol and an example of the international struggle of the proletariat in which a part of the student population recognized what it was waiting for and which restored its hope.

9. Moreover, mobile, unstable, and continually renewed, the student milieu provides few openings for the working-class bureaucracies, above all at a time when the crisis of Stalinism and its ideology echoes that of the bourgeoisie. Thus the student movement represents the weakest link in the chain of political integration forged and maintained by the bourgeoisie and the Social Democratic and Stalinist leaders to preserve the international status quo.

III

10. Shaken by the interplay of contradictions all of which come to a focus on the campus, the university population produced a powerful student movement. Impelled by the crisis of bourgeois ideology and of the educational structures, and inspired by the example of the colonial revolution, this student movement escaped the control of the working-class bureaucracies. The extreme contradiction in the universities has given the student movement an energy which has enabled it, alone and in spite of its isolation, to wage vanguard struggles distinguished by a revival of violent forms of combat, of direct action, in defiance of the political rules of the game accepted by the working-class leaderships.

11. However, the student movement by itself cannot deal with the contradiction of the university, which rests on the very foundations of capitalism. It is incapable of political and programmatic independence from the working class.

12. As a result, the student movement is torn between its revolutionary vocation and the objective limits of the university community, between

its mass character and its role as a substitute vanguard, at a time when, as the weakest link in the political system, it finds itself thrown into the vanguard of the struggles.

13. This is why the student movement cannot be analyzed as a distinct entity; one could only describe its fluctuations, often irrational and unpredictable. In order to understand it and give it political direction, it must be analyzed in connection with the variations of the coordinates that condition its existence and its development, for in itself the student movement has no history or memory. These coordinates are on the one hand the workers movement (the extent of its mobilization, the political forces which compose it) and on the other the development of the revolutionary vanguard, which is still in too embryonic form to really play a leadership role.

IV

14. The evolution of the French student movement illustrates the relationship between the student movement and the workers movement in a very complete way. After the Algerian war, in a period of relative quiescence in working-class struggles, the student movement became the guilty conscience of the workers movement. Against the spurious rationality of the bourgeoisie, it counterposed its own programmatic rationality — it relied on the power of reason and the word to unmask the contradictions of capitalism and demonstrate the validity of the socialist view without having to take into account a relationship of social forces caused by lack of mobilization of class.

15. In the period of reviving workers struggles, the student movement, inspired by revolutionary groups that had broken from the Social Democracy or the Stalinist movement, rediscovered the reality of the workers movement and the possibility of linking up with it. In this period, the student movement constituted itself either as pressure groups acting on the workers movement or as supporters of the workers movement. As a pressure group, the student movement acted through liaisons with the unions on common problems (training, employment); as a supporting force through populist movements inspired by Maoist groups. During this period, the

developing student movement slipped into the preexisting structures of academic vocational associations where it found an ideological forum and a vaguely unionist rubric that legitimized its attempt at hybrid unionism.

16. The student movement could not remain forever on this tight leash, drawn behind a workers movement under Stalinist or Social Democratic domination. It had to either submit and return to the bosom of the "democratic" forces or rely on the resources of the student population and alone, or at the risk of isolating itself, take the initiative and try to upset the status quo in the class struggle. The student movement was driven to this choice. Economic struggles that were halted or diverted as they ran up against a state speaking in the name of the "national interest" seemed increasingly futile. Thus, the mobilizing structures taken over from the vocational interest-group associations seem too constrictive. The example of the March 22 Movement at its birth was typical. Along with this movement, the vanguard groups took the initiative of combining the fragmented political activities of the student movement into an anti-imperialist, anticapitalist, and antibureaucratic movement. After this turn, the student movement ceased to follow its natural channels; it was organized by the vanguard groups which defined its role and its objectives, no longer in accordance with campus criteria but in accordance with the general relation of forces, an overall evaluation of the class struggle. In this altered form, the student movement acquired the means to play the role of a temporary substitute vanguard, of accelerator or detonator of the class struggle, more by its exemplary forms of struggle than by its programmatic content.

17. Once the workers movement began to struggle, the student movement could not continue to play its role of substitute vanguard by giving an example of determination and courage. The workers cannot limit themselves to moving through the tactical breaches opened up by the students. They need strategic perspectives and slogans which the student movement, incapable by itself of going beyond a certain level of political comprehension — that of petty-bourgeois radicalism — cannot provide. In the face of

this problem, the student movement yields to the revolutionary vanguard.

V

18. The temporary vanguard role played by the student movement is not a novelty requiring any revision of Marxism. Already Engels, Trotsky, Mao Tse-tung hailed the vanguard role played by the students in Austria in 1850, in China in 1919. This role merely testified to the fact that the bourgeoisie was no longer vigorous enough to make its revolution and the proletariat was not yet mature enough to lead its own. Today, the vanguard role of the student movement is no longer a sign of the insufficient objective maturity of the proletariat but of the bankruptcy of its Social Democratic or Stalinist leaderships.

19. It is no less true that the student movement can only play this role with the perspective of a linkup very shortly with the workers movement. Without this perspective, the student movement is condemned to maintain an impossible balance between its revolutionary function and its mass character, continually pulled by reformism on the one side and ultraleftism on the other. This contradiction can be resolved only by constructing and developing a revolutionary organization capable of transcending the student "point of view" and offering a strategic design, an organization capable of playing a vanguard role in the workers movement as well as in the student movement.

20. Building such an organization demands qualities of doggedness, of perseverance, of firmness, which are far from inherent in the fickle, unstable, and unremembering student population.

This is why we see the flowering in the student movement of a gamut of ideologies that are just so many escape routes from the fundamental task of building the revolutionary organization.

21. An early variant of these ideological evasions consisted in the dynamics of a group, a phase of introspection in which the student movement searched for the reasons for its political impotence in its own lack of consciousness. A subvariant was populism by which the movement endeavored to efface itself by doing penance in the service of the masses—

all under the theoretical aegis of Mao's thought. Introspection and populism are the infantile deliriums of the student movement.

22. Anarchism and spontanéism are its adolescent deliriums. Incapable of surmounting the contradiction in the student movement (between its revolutionary role and its mass character), the anarchists prefer to deny this movement outright. For them the student population is sociologically petty bourgeois; consequently there can be no revolutionary student movement, only anarchist militants intervening in the student milieu by direct action and propaganda of the deed. The objective is, by means of the question of violence, to radicalize this student petty bourgeoisie still tainted with a squeamish humanism. The objective is to draw the student masses into the wake of an activist minority. But since the "solidarity" of the mass of students is associated more with sentiment than political consciousness, it would be futile to try to give it an organizational form.

23. As incapable of resolving the contradiction as their anarchist cousins, the spontanéists dissolve the student movement in the cultural revolution. For them the students are a natural ally of the proletariat. The only obstacle in the way of revolution is the lingering fascination of decaying bourgeois ideology, the cop everyone carries in his head. Through a spiritual conversion, termed cultural revolution for the occasion, everyone must drive the cop out of his head. In this way he comes directly to the revolutionary movement (without class distinctions) and not to the student movement. In a word, between the student under the spell of bourgeois ideology and learning and the revolutionary militant there is no longer any place for an overly encumbering student movement. The problem is thus removed but not solved.

24. The common denominator of these student ideologies is an antiauthoritarianism which combines the student movement's awareness of the hoax of the strong state and its resentment of a hated father figure. The student movement blames the bourgeois society which has nourished it and educated it for betraying its own teachings and its own precepts and covering up this betrayal by an omnipresent and arbitrary state authority.

To this betrayal the student movement reacts by seeking a new antiauthoritarian humanism into which it dissolves the class struggle. And since it does not have the means of carrying out a proletarian revolution by itself, it contents itself with a "cultural revolution." It attacks culture by preference because it began by sustaining itself from it. Mao-spontanéism is the most all-inclusive cocktail of student ideologies in which populism, spontanéism, and antiauthoritarianism blend. All these ideologies converge on one point and that is to reject the revolutionary organization which threatens them as their own negation.

VI

25. In the period when new vanguards are emerging from the youth radicalization, these vanguards find a favorable environment for growth in the student milieu. Since they are too weak to confront the bourgeois regime directly or to compete with the recognized working-class leaderships, the student movement offers these organizations shelter and protection. By its mass mobilization, the student movement compensates for the vanguard groups' weakness. During this period these new vanguards are primarily student groups regarding themselves as parricidal offspring of Stalinism or the Social Democracy. It is only through transforming themselves that they can link up with the Fourth International which is the bearer of the strategical acquisitions that constitute the alternative to Stalinism.

26. This transformation enables the incipient revolutionary organization to raise itself to the level of an overall strategic understanding, and to finish off the student group outlook that perpetuates the social and political characteristics of the student movement. The revolutionary organization must be virtually torn out of the student movement.

27. The student movement as such has neither memory nor history, it is absorbed in ephemeral actions, in acts of bearing witness, in spectacular demonstrations. In contrast, the intervention of the vanguard is not spectacular. By organizing and training militants it weaves the fabric of the political memory of the student movement. It is the mast that bears the sails of the student mobilization. It is vertical with respect to the hori-

zontal dispersion of student agitation (anarcho-Maoist agitational focuses). Through the improvisations of the student movement it traces the coherence of its own revolutionary design. The balancing of the student movement between reformism and ultraleftism cannot be broken except by the hammering intervention of the revolutionary organization.

VII

28. The development and reinforcement of the revolutionary organization does not mean the end of the student movement but a change in its function. In the early period, the student movement, because of specific conditions in the universities, was in the lead of the youth radicalization. The development of a revolutionary organization makes it possible to reconstitute the student movement, which is foundering in repetitious actions dictated by its contradiction, into a movement of the youth in general. This broadening is a precondition for increasing the mass movement's capacity for struggle. It has been made possible by modifications in the relationship of forces between the vanguard and the state, between the vanguard and the bureaucratic working-class leaderships.

29. The basis for such a youth movement lies in the struggle against the regimentation of youth. This regimentation begins with vocational training in all its forms (high schools, universities, apprenticeship, technical education). It includes the housing, transportation, and working conditions imposed on youth; the organization of amusements, culture, competitive sports, all the repressive recreational structures offered to the youth (scouting, camps, athletic clubs); and sexual oppression. Finally this regimentation culminates in the army, the last stage of integration into bourgeois society.

30. The youth, not having gone through the great defeats of the working class, does not bear the burden of this dead past. It is a profoundly powerful element of political renewal and is shaking the bureaucratic yokes.

31. The mass youth movement we have to strive to develop must be distinguished, however, from the youth affiliate of a revolutionary organization. Such a youth affiliate assumes the existence of an already

strong revolutionary organization.

VIII

32. The attempts to define a strategy for the student movement as such have generally ended in failure. The strategists of the Critical and the Negative Universities, as these terms indicate, reduce the student struggle to an essentially ideological struggle against the bourgeois university. As soon as the student movement moves on "from the criticism of the university to the criticism of society," it is faced with problems of revolutionary strategy that only a vanguard can resolve.

33. In a parallel way, revolutionary trade unionism in the student milieu leads into reformism. You cannot restrict yourself to applying in limited areas an all-encompassing design which you have the means to carry through only in the universities. This way you end up with the slogans of student control, even student management, in the universities and high schools, which, in isolation from the overall situation in the class struggle, are thoroughly reformist.

34. Any attempt at a student strategy is thus liable to a double trap. On the one hand, there is the danger of reformism, of patching up the system under the pretext of a partial transitional strategy applied to the university. On the other hand, there is confrontationism which is only a policy in bits and pieces.

35. The Red University is not a slogan. Like workers control, it is a general theme of struggle which should be filled out by concrete slogans in specific situations. The Red University is not an institution that can be counterposed to the bourgeois university; it is a movement of struggle by which the vanguard seeks to direct the student movement as a permanent striking force against the system. The Red University is not a line for the universities but the tactic of the vanguard in the universities, a subordinate part of its overall strategy.

36. The university slogans of the organization may attack the problems of professional training by demanding flexible training and a guarantee of employment at the level of skill acquired. But the implementation of these slogans requires the mobilization

of the workers movement, in which the embryonic vanguard does not hold the initiative. That is why the slogans centering around the theme of workers control of education retain a propagandistic character.

37. Incapable of an overall strategic program, the student movement can meet the bourgeoisie's university policy only by organizational resistance (maintaining the independence of the movement and opposing participation in collaborationist structures) and tactical political initiatives laid out by the vanguard in accordance with its evaluation of the political conjuncture as a whole.

These initiatives revolve around three major axes—support of workers struggles, support of anti-imperialist struggles, and the struggle against regimentation. It is under this last heading that struggles for freedom of expression, political organization, and against the bourgeois educational policy fall.

IX

38. A student trade union as a means of struggle is a scheme that could have reality only in a consciously defined framework of student self-management. The reformist workers organizations, anxious to humor their allies, have maintained this myth of the autonomy of student demands. The student trade-union structures fly into bits as soon as political struggles revive. Moreover, united mass political organizations of the student movement, such as the FUA and the March 22 Movement were in France, can have only a temporary existence. Based on specific tactical agreements, they must disappear or fossilize once strategic problems come to the fore. Caught between the slow attrition of the student-interest organizations and a nostalgia for united political organizations, the student movement runs the risk of fragmentation into fiefs (Italy) or atomization.

39. The most favorable organizational outlet for the student movement presupposes already quite powerful revolutionary organizations. In this case, a process of cartelization develops. The breakup of Zengakuren provided an example of this which will not prove an exception. The revolutionary organizations, which alone are capable of resolving certain strategic

and practical problems (like demonstrations which at a certain threshold of confrontation require a degree of discipline and organization that does not come naturally to the student movement), will reorganize the mass movement around their own political initiatives.

X

40. The student movement and the youth radicalization cannot be considered simply as a windfall for the vanguard, which can win the youth involved over to its program and recruit new elements among them. This youth radicalization, in which the student movement occupies a prime position, enables the vanguard to alter the relationship of forces between it and the bourgeois state and the working-class bureaucracies. The specific role of the student movement offers the still weak vanguard a margin for maneuver, an opening to get a foothold in the political arena, to carry

out its initial experiments without being under the double fire of the bourgeois and bureaucratic repression. In this sense, the student movement is playing a precise and specific historical role.

41. But this opportunity for the vanguard is also a test. It cannot be satisfied to profit from the student movement. In order to play its role, the vanguard must grapple with the student movement, organize it en masse, engage in a continual polemic against its spontaneously generated ideologies. Ceaselessly threatened by opportunism of the left and right, the vanguard must have enough theoretical firmness to resist the ideological pressure of the movement and enough political understanding of the conditions of struggle left by the breakup of Stalinism to get in step with the movement without dissolving itself in it. The road is difficult; no verbal schematism can make it any easier. But it is by this route that the resurrection of the revolutionary vanguard will come.

42. If this phenomenon holds true

primarily for the advanced capitalist countries, it is often true also for the colonial countries and for the forces destined to carry out the political revolution in the bureaucratically degenerated or deformed workers states. In the colonial countries, the student movement often combines the characteristics of the Western student movement and the classic features of a liberal intelligentsia struggling against imperialism. In the degenerated workers states, the rise of the student movement is often based on the defense of freedoms rather than anti-imperialism, but the political characteristics of this movement also offer striking similarities, both in its role and its limitations, to the student movement in the advanced capitalist countries.

Understanding the role and the limitations of the youth radicalization is one of the keys to advancing the sections of the Fourth International and developing the world movement itself from a propagandistic International to an International rooted in the masses and capable of responding to the new tasks of the period.

A CONTRIBUTION TO THE DISCUSSION
ON THE WORLDWIDE RADICALIZATION OF THE YOUTH

[Resolution passed by the Political Bureau
of the French Communist League]

Preamble

Before drawing a balance sheet of the French experience concerning the radicalization of the youth, we should recall the three fundamental points of disagreement between the draft resolution presented by the United Secretariat at the World Congress and the article published in No. 39 of the review (Quatrieme Internationale).

* * *

1. Characterization of the Period

At the Ninth World Congress, it became clear that there was general agreement that a turn had occurred in the international situation. The victorious resistance of the Vietnamese people, the upsurge of struggles in Palestine, in Southeast Asia, in Pakistan, the resumption of revolutionary activities in Latin American (Mexico, Argentina), the appearance of vanguard militants in Poland and in Czechoslovakia, and finally, the great struggles of the French and Italian proletariat, these have been the principle manifestations of this turn.

However, it is not sufficient to declare that there has been a turn and that this turn has resulted in better "objective" conditions for us. Besides this, it is necessary to draw the strategic and organizational consequences for the Fourth International; not simply content ourselves with "profiting" from the turn, but to deepen it, to accentuate it while we transform ourselves.

On the strategical plane, the resolution on Latin America in favor of armed struggle and the break from entrism in Western Europe testify to this change. On the other hand, the resolution on the youth appears to us to strike a false note in its strategic conceptions as well as its organizational consequences.

"The work of the sections," reads the last part of the resolution, "has a preparatory and mainly propagandistic character." (p. 16 of text) We think that precisely this preparatory and "mainly propagandistic" work becomes insufficient in relation to the size of the tasks in the coming period; that it is necessary and possible, even with limited forces, to take the initiative in action and in revolutionary mass agitation, at least in areas concerning the youth. This is not a meaningless difference of "points of view," or "nuances," etc. The conception which assigns to the sections

"mainly propaganda" activities implies a whole strategic course for leading the youth.

This course, which is expressed in the program of the resolution itself, could be summarized in the following way: the vanguard, full of wisdom, perched upon the heights of piously accumulated theoretical acquisitions, contemplates the revolutionary field: suddenly on this field there appears the unforeseen mass of youth, which the vanguard tries to describe in its habits and political behavior; after which the problem will be: "how to bring leadership to this movement and how to win over the best of them?" (p.1) Answer: (a) it is necessary to give the youth a good slice of the transitional program, that corresponds to their immediate aspirations and forms a bridge to revolutionary objectives; (b) it is necessary to gain from the youth new cadres for the vanguard.

On this level of generalities, it is neither false nor true, it is simply formal and abstract. One finds here all the themes belonging to the Fourth International when it was isolated in the period of the cold war and of the ebb of the world revolution, driven into a defensive position where it was difficult to preserve its acquisitions. It is a question of, on the one hand, popularizing the program and winning influence ("tens of thousands of youth have already accepted large parts of the Trotskyist program", p. 15), and on the other hand, to increase the primitive accumulation of cadres ("a substantial number of the youth can be recruited....", "it is necessary to draw new cadres from the youth," p. 15).

The main objection that can be made to this course in the coming period is that it perpetuates the relationship of the vanguard to the mass movement as an exterior force. The interchange between the two is limited to ideological influence in the sense of vanguard-mass (the vanguard groups have "made their mark on the theoreticians" of the movement, p. 8) and to individual recruitment in the sense of mass-vanguard (the vanguard groups have all "won adherents," p. 8). What has disappeared is the whole dialectic of the organizational relationships between the vanguard and the movement of the radicalized youth. This lack was not fatal in the preceding period; it could even have been necessary for the protection of the vanguard. Today, in the period of offensive that is opening

up, this lack could put the vanguard out of the game.

2. A Transitional Program for the Youth?

Besides the criticisms made in the preceding section, the idea of elaborating "a program of transitional and democratic demands" is in itself faulty.

The authors of the draft resolution have recorded the slogans and themes of student mobilizations in order to classify them by categories. The result of this is an ambiguous catalog of slogans more than a program for struggle. If it is true that the slogan for freedom of expression can be shared by the student movement of the advanced capitalist countries, the people's democracies especially, and the colonial countries, still the slogan "university autonomy should be achieved or maintained inviolate" seems, on the other hand, to be more than questionable. If it has a real meaning in the colonial countries, still it is hard to see what the content of this demand could be in the advanced capitalist countries: either a reformist content (that which the Faure reform gives to this slogan in France: autonomy permitting the adaptation to regional conditions, to local industries, etc.); or a conservative content: that of defense of the liberal bourgeois university (to maintain the autonomy "inviolate"). For us, it is not a question of repeating again and again the theme of autonomy but of posing every time the question: autonomy in relationship to whom?

In fact, as a catalog of demands, the program proposed by the document only juxtaposes bourgeois-democratic demands (on civil liberties) with university demands whose formulation is obscure when it is not openly reformist. What is the meaning of an "annual salary for all students adequate to their needs"? The term "salary" might very well be a demagogic concession to the thesis of "student labor"; as to their "needs" ... of what nature? And who determines them? "Guaranteed jobs for students upon graduation" -- good; still it is necessary to specify "the level of skill reached" and then discuss who is to guarantee this employment, who is to determine needs with regard to hiring workers. "Joint control by students and faculty over the hiring and firing of faculty members and administration officials" -- this formulation, much too imprecise (what is the "faculty"?), opens the door to camouflaged comanagement, etc.

Indeed, this juxtaposition of democratic themes and university demands doesn't have much that is transitional about it. It is based, on the one hand, on a debatable presupposition: the presupposition that the politization of the student movement follows a pedagogical pro-

gression, proceeding from immediate interests to apprehension of historic interests, whereas actually the student politization is determined from the outset by extra-university factors, by the political context as a whole. On the other hand, this program for the youth follows a curious conception of the "propaganda" utilization of the transitional program.

In the draft resolution, the program of "democratic and transitional" demands is the worm to catch the fish, the carrot to lead on the donkey. "If you bite at the worm, if you follow the carrot, I will show you the real transitional program in its entirety." There is the essence of the matter. Through this mini-program, the students will be "led to understand the validity of the transitional program in its totality" (sic!) (p. 12). This course is one of gradually unveiling the program as an instrument of recruitment more than as an instrument of struggle. That is the essence of the propagandistic utilization! Operating in this way is not without dangers, however.

For if we in France have practiced the tactic of construction of the organization from the periphery toward the center, it is not true that a strategy was elaborated from the periphery to the center. It is not true that the student movement should be mobilized for transitional goals if you don't have the capacity to make this mobilization unite with a mobilization of the workers. We have, in the course of three years of struggle, adopted the firm conviction that at the present stage there is no strategy for the student movement, there are only initiatives and tactical political slogans for the student movement, subordinate to the overall strategy of the revolutionary organizations. We will return to expand on this point.

3. For an Analysis and not a Description of the Radicalization of the Youth

But to limit the student movement to tactical initiatives, isn't that yielding to the most empty empiricism, since these initiatives must each time be concretized as a function of the country and of the precise conjuncture?

Such misgivings would be legitimate if one contented himself with the ideas furnished by the draft resolution. Indeed the draft collects and synthesizes information on the student movement; it describes certain characteristics of the youth. Never does it present the framework or the coordinates which make possible a political analysis of the youth movement. By failing to provide the elements for such an analysis, the draft repeats empty, wordy generalities, inspired by correct principles but for which the concrete conditions for application are not made precise: "a Marxist leadership is

needed, politically alert, supple in tactics, capable of avoiding both opportunistic adaptation in the student environment and adaptation to ultraleft sectarianism." Because the draft produces no real analysis of the student movement, it contents itself with noting its bad instincts (opportunistic adaptation, ultra-left sectarianism); because the draft does not make clear the real roots, it gives no means to fight them, except with the athletic-psychological qualities of the vanguard, which must be "alert" and "supple" (!) It's that simple.

For us, the student and youth movements cannot really be analyzed except in their relationship to two points of reference: the workers movement (political composition, degree of activity and of mobilization) on the one hand, and the vanguard organization on the other hand (implantation, development; in this case the relationship between the movement and the vanguard can also be a relationship of forces). It is only by always specifying the variations in the relations between the youth movement, the workers movement and the vanguard that one can give a concrete analysis of the student movement and define tactical political initiatives for it.

Because these two coordinates are lacking in the draft resolution, it evades all the most difficult problems of the youth movement.

- it loses sight of the radicalization of the youth by only taking up the student movement.

- it doesn't make any distinction between the student milieu and the student movement which greatly simplifies the task: since there is no movement between the vanguard and the milieu, the vanguard has a monopoly of thought and of political expression. Things happen differently in reality.

- although one cannot really speak of a mass movement or of a process of radicalization if one stops short of the forms of organization adopted by the movement, the draft is more than reserved on this question. The masses do not exist politically short of the organized forms of their struggle. This difficult problem of the organizational forms of the youth movement is barely touched on.

In conclusion, we think that the draft resolution says either too much or not enough. To encompass the international radicalization of the youth, it has to give up going into details. Consequently it remains pragmatic and descriptive in the area of analysis. On the other hand it is too precise in the area of strategy, proceeding to premature and improper conclusions before having defined the possibility and the framework of a strategy for the youth and the student movement.

As far as we are concerned, we propose to write a balance sheet mainly of the European student movement and to analyze more precisely the situation in France. This document is to be considered a contribution to the discussion. Finally, we will summarize our conclusions in the form of theses on the radicalization of the youth, for it seems dangerous and false to us to be more precise if one intends to encompass the problem on an international scale and to avoid extrapolating from a particular experience.

Along the lines of the preceding critique, we will distinguish four main parts in our analysis of the student movement and the radicalization of the youth.

First we will try to place the specific characteristics of the student movement onto the foundation of the radicalization of the youth.

Second, we will show by means of the historic path of the French student movement the variations in the relation between the student movement and the workers movement, the political consequences and the strategical problems that result from it.

In a third section, we will define the political contradictions of the student movement and the manner in which they can be resolved in the transformation of the relationship between the student movement and the vanguard organization.

Finally in the last section we will draw a balance sheet of the French and European experience concerning the specific role of the student movement, the themes for mobilization, and the organizational forms.