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- Marty Jan 2014

STATEMENT OF SUPPORT TO THE
INTERNATIONAL MAJORITY TENDENCY

Dear Comrades:

Since the inception of the 1973 preconvention discussion a number of members of the Socialist Workers Party have declared political support to the International Majority Tendency in the party's internal bulletin. We wish to add our names to that list and also to state the primary reasons for our adherence to the general line of the International Majority Tendency; additionally, we will indicate several areas where we are not at this time in total agreement.

1) We do not accept the SWP leadership's claim that the schism in the United Secretariat of the Fourth International concerns advocates of Guevarism as opposed to orthodox supporters of Leninist party building. Instead, the division rotates around the most fundamental issues for all Leninists and Trotskyists: the character of the Transitional Program and the necessity of raising the political consciousness of the masses; the importance of initiatives in action and reaching the vanguard elements with overtly revolutionary propaganda; the primacy of a proletarian orientation, especially in the advanced capitalist countries; elections as a revolutionary weapon; democratic centralism and the nature of the International; Permanent Revolution and national liberation struggles.

May 1968 was the decisive turning point in the development of the Fourth International since the 1963 reunification. Subsequent to that historic crossroads it became clear that the SWP leadership was moving in the direction of becoming the right wing of the world movement, and the European parties the left wing. While the SWP leadership interpreted the aborted French revolution as a reaffirmation of their intercontinental-wide student strategy, the European comrades absorbed the true lessons: the importance of being able to challenge the Stalinists and reformists inside the workers movement. Despite hesitations and disagreements on certain formulations and historical questions, we stand squarely behind the document "The Building of Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe," which represents an authentic affirmation of the proletarian tasks awaiting Trotskyism — as opposed to the SWP leadership's counterstrategy of minimalist demands and a petty-bourgeois orientation.

The so-called "Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency" represents an unprincipled combination out to challenge the leadership of the Fourth International for organizational control. One component of this combination includes the full political support of the SWP/LSA with their petty-bourgeois/minimalist perspective; and Moreno — one time guerrillaist and neo-Maoist. Also, unfortunately associated with this amalgam are Hugo Blanco, who penetrated mass organizations and developed armed struggle for defense of workers and peasants; and Comrade Peng, whose "Return to the Road of Trotskyism" argues the case for a thoroughgoing proletarianization of parties in advanced capitalist countries.

2) While we also support the general line of Ernest Germain's "In Defence of Leninism: In Defence of the

Fourth International," we wish to clarify before the SWP and International as a whole that we hold some differences, such as the following:

a) *Argentina*: It must unfortunately be acknowledged that Comrade Germain is all too correct when he observes that in Argentina there is a most favorable objective situation and a number of self-proclaimed Trotskyists, but no genuine Leninist-Trotskyist current. The ERP/PRT, no matter how admirable, is not Trotskyist in either theory or practice. The Moreno/Coral combination, on the other hand, lacks the willingness to advance the struggle beyond the legal channels and conforms to the classical definition of centrism — revolutionary in words, reformist in deeds. It should also be stated that under the concrete circumstances it was absolutely correct and necessary for revolutionaries to have entered into and participated in the 1973 Argentine elections — providing the elections were used to advance a *revolutionary transitional program*. This would include a call for the formation of workers councils, a workers militia and a workers government, while also a denunciation of the capitalist dictatorship and an exposition of its phony elections. In our opinion this was neither the spirit nor the letter of the PST campaign.

b) *Bolivia*: We agree with Comrade Germain's statement that — to say the least — there were incorrect formulations in the 9th World Congress Resolution on Latin America. However, despite certain errors of the POR-Gonzalez it manifested no deep-seated tendencies toward adventurism (like that of the ERP) nor toward opportunism (like that of the PST). The International Majority Tendency is 100 percent correct in their insistence that a revolutionary party undertake the task of educating the workers in action on the necessity of armed struggle. Although under the Barrientos regime the POR-Gonzalez turned mistakenly away from mass work, they did ultimately intervene fully in the urban mass struggles and they emerged from the battle unquestionably the only participant with a correct analysis and program — not only in words but in deeds. Nevertheless, we are in opposition to the sections of Livio Maitan's December 2 resolution, "Bolivia — Results and Perspectives," which explicitly give priority to the military side of the activities of the POR-Gonzalez in the next stage. Maitan clearly reaffirms those mistaken formulations in regard to a continental-wide strategy of guerrilla warfare.

c) We do not have full agreement with all of Comrade Germain's analysis of the political situation on the North American continent or with all his statements on SWP policy in the United States. This especially pertains to the party's orientation, and its confusion of the ideology of Black and Chicano nationalism with the national liberation struggles themselves.

d) There remain several additional issues in dispute within the world Trotskyist movement which are not presently incorporated into the Tendency Declaration of the International Majority as a basis of support. These include the nature of Stalinism, the struggle for women's liberation as opposed to feminist ideology, the correct slogans for the Middle East and the Indian subcontinent, etc. We

will state our attitude on these matters at the appropriate time.

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Representatives of the Tendency now formed around this "Statement of Support to the International Majority

Tendency" in SWP branches on the West Coast are:

Oakland/Berkeley: Ralph Levitt/Celia Stodola

Los Angeles: Judy Shane/Ron Warren

San Francisco: Jeff Beneke/Garth Chojnowski

June 10, 1973

THE REAL UNEVENNESS IN THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

by Tom Scharret, Oakland-Berkeley Branch

In section 22 of the document "In Defence of Leninism: In Defence of the Fourth International" Comrade Germain advances the theory that the political differences within the Fourth International reflect the objective unevenness of the development of the radicalization internationally. On page 46 the comrade states, "The fact that the two numerically strongest sectors of the world proletariat—the American and the Soviet working class—have not yet joined the rising tide of world revolution, still gravely impedes and limits the upsurge at the present stage. And, subjectively, this fact reflects itself also inside the world revolutionary movement, inside the Fourth International. The present discussion is a partial expression of this fact."

The comrade is correct in trying to find an objective basis for the differences within the International. He is also obviously correct in saying that the radicalization of the working class is generally far more developed in Europe and in Latin America than in the United States. Two examples of this are Spain and Argentina, which also have sections which are among the strongest supporters of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency. The unevenness which Comrade Germain does not mention and which is the primary cause for the differences is the unevenness in cadre development between the various sections and sympathizing groups.

In the task of constructing a revolutionary party, the question of cadre development is key. The cadre, or framework, carries the program and norms within the party. What was the difference between the successful revolution in Russia and the defeated revolutions throughout Europe in the early '20s? In many cases, the objective conditions were more promising than in Russia. But the key difference was that in Russia a firm cadre with years of training existed, and in the other cases that cadre did not exist. Trotsky mentions in *The Spanish Revolution* that a revolutionary party can grow very fast in a pre-revolutionary situation if it has a trained cadre which is firmly grounded in Marxist principles and knows what to do next.

In section 13, Comrade Germain quotes Comrade Can-

non out of context to try to prove that because the radicalization is deepening, therefore the contention of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency that ultraleftism is the main danger within the International is ruled out. However, the radicalization of European workers during the early 1920s, which had an even faster tempo of development, was accompanied by major manifestations of ultraleftism. Lenin and Trotsky designated this as the main danger in the International, Lenin published *"Left-Wing" Communism: An Infantile Disorder*, and Lenin and Trotsky demonstratively described themselves as "the right wing." They saw the central tasks of the International and its parties—which, although small in many cases, were much larger than the Trotskyist parties today—to be the winning of the masses through participation in mass struggles on a united front basis, and not to show "in practice" the necessity of violence in the class struggle. Was this "opportunist tailending"? There were no lack of Communists to make this charge. Today, anyone who knows the activities of the sections of the Comintern at that time knows that Lenin and Trotsky were correct in their analysis. The unevenness in that situation, as in this one, was the unevenness in the development of cadre. Thus, many Communists failed to see, as the Bolsheviks did, the necessity of a transitional approach to bridge the gap between the vanguard party and the broad masses of workers.

There are three important reasons why the leading cadres of the SWP recognize this as the central problem facing the International today, and why they realize that the gap in consciousness between the vanguard and the masses makes impatient ultraleftism a real danger. They are not the reasons Germain cites.

1. In Spain, the most central organizer of the Left Opposition was Andre Nin. In France, men like Rosmer and Molinier played key roles. In other places throughout Europe, the central responsibility for launching the Left Opposition fell on such accidental figures. In the United States, however, James P. Cannon undertook that task. No historical generalizations can be made to say that

Cannon "had" to be from the United States, rather than France, Britain, China, or anywhere else. But he happened to be in the United States.

2. Although important, the above factor is not decisive. Over a period, the accidental figures in Europe and the United States were sifted out. But the terrible decimation of leading cadres in Europe during the second world war (despite the growth of the International due to patient underground work) was an interruption in the process of consolidating cadres that cannot be underestimated. The American cadres, although they faced prison and persecution for their revolutionary views, were not subjected to similar decimation.

Is it possible to imagine that taking Dobbs, Cannon, Hansen, Kerry, Breitman, Lovell, Novack, Wright, Preis, etc., and removing them from the party's history after 1945 would have no effect on the party's course? Perhaps comrades such as Goldman, Morrow, Johnson, Clarke, or Bartell would have taken their place. Perhaps their politics, defeated due to the influence of those mentioned above, would have shaped the politics of the party. What kind of party would we have now? At the very least, a more impressionistic and unstable one.

3. Perhaps one thing which we might have done differently, if these leaders had taken the helm, is that we might have carried out an entry tactic into the Communist Party (or its peripheral organizations), the Socialist Party, or the UAW bureaucracy *sui generis*. We might have bent to the view that Stalinism is the wave of the future, or to the opposite view that imperialism represented a lesser evil.

The European sections carried out the policy of entryism *sui generis* into the mass Communist and Social-Democratic parties. Thus the European cadres went through an entirely different experience during approximately fifteen years than did the SWP cadres. One of the gravest consequences of entryism *sui generis* was that the European comrades were barred from learning by experience what was involved in building a revolutionary party in good times and in bad times.

The radicalization that developed in the early '60s opened all kinds of opportunities for all the sections and sympathizing groups, and for the SWP as well. A significant contributor to this development was the Cuban revolution. Many youth not only supported the Cuban revolution, but also impressionistically identified with the strategy of guerrilla warfare. When these youth joined the revolutionary movement, it was clear that either they would be won over time to a full understanding of the Trotskyist program or else the SWP cadres would bend to the prejudices of the new recruits and remold the party to suit their inclinations. The SWP cadres, including YSA leaders, did not bend. They chose instead the course of patiently educating the young revolutionaries and in this they were largely successful.

The SWP completely identified with the Cuban revolution and actively defended it. We had no hesitation in counterposing Guevara to Brezhnev and Castro to Escalante. We completely supported their empirical efforts to combat Stalinism, such as their opposition to the Stalinist concept of a peaceful transition to socialism. We did this while never giving up our own program, splitting the differences, or engaging in sectarian nagging.

Germain makes much of the fact that Comrade Moreno did not hold the SWP's position on guerrilla warfare at that time. But the SWP's refusal to bend toward the popular errors made by others, including Comrade Moreno, played a part in winning him to the correct position. Germain derides Moreno for making a 180-degree turn on this question. It is true that Moreno has made such a turn on this question, and openly acknowledges it. That is the purpose of this discussion, as far as the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency is concerned. We want Germain, Frank, Maitan and others to make the same 180-degree turn Comrade Moreno did, away from their present disastrous course.

Comrade Joseph Hansen, in "The Leninist Strategy of Party Building" describes the somewhat different attitude taken to party building by some key European sections. Bending to the ultraleft prejudices of youth, they proposed the Latin American resolution and attempted to bask in the light reflected by "Trotskyist guerrillas."

The Vietnamese revolution also made a big contribution to the development of the radicalization. Here, the European leaders made a mistake similar to their error in Latin America. In the education of our cadres, they sought to deny that the Vietnamese CP was Stalinist, even though no one in the Vietnamese CP shared their opinion on this. By thus papering over our very real differences with this party, they made themselves more attractive in the short run to some radicalizing youth. In the long run, however, they undermined education of our cadres in the question of Stalinism, and led many other comrades to believe that "people's war" was a profoundly correct strategy for the colonial revolution. It was certainly not important to make an issue of the Vietnamese CP's Stalinist politics in carrying out defense of the revolution. However, denying their very real commitment to Stalinist politics can have a destructive effect on our program.

Third example: I refer comrades to the collection of documents entitled "Discussion on China" for examples of the same policy applied to China. Even though the comrades recognized the existence of a bureaucracy in China and called for political revolution, they still attempt to minimize and split the differences with Maoism and to adopt positions which will make them more agreeable to Maoist youth. Such adaptations by leaders, however, lead to even greater concessions by young members with little experience in handling our programmatic concepts.

There is an important generalization we can make from this. Trotsky mentions, writing of the Spanish revolution, that one of the important qualities of a cadre is to know how to defy public opinion. This does not mean defying only right-wing and conservative public opinion (few parties have defied this type of public opinion as long as the SWP). It also means that cadres must be willing to accept the initial opposition and even hatred that may greet them if they counterpose our program and methods to those of petty-bourgeois "leftism."

I sense an unwillingness to face such hard political confrontations with opponent tendencies (such as Maoism, anarchism, spontaneism and pseudo-Trotskyism) in the European perspectives document. It generalizes from the past experiences of adaptation and theoretically justifies it. It refuses, for instance, to admit the ultraleftism of plainly ultraleft tendencies, and thus disarms effective op-

ponents work in dealing with them. It adopts a vague perspective of "regrouping" this vanguard, rather than breaking it up and winning its best elements to the Trotskyist program, as we did in our orientation to SDS. This is also the meaning of "organizing national political campaigns on carefully chosen issues that correspond to the concerns of the vanguard, do not run against the current of mass struggles, and offer a chance for demonstrating a capacity for effective initiative."

What hardened Trotskyist cadres in each country must do is show the activists *how* to win the masses (which is what the "vanguard" are concerned about) through united fronts around transitional, democratic, and minimum demands, and through patient propaganda work explaining the necessity of and the road to a socialist transformation.

A party must know what stage it is in. In parts of his document, Germain stresses the importance of the parties taking initiatives to transform themselves into mass parties. No one can argue with taking initiatives. For instance, the PST gave us a striking example of a daring and imaginative initiative in its recent election campaign. At this point, however, all the sections and sympathizing groups (including the largest ones like the Ligue Communiste and the PST) are propaganda organizations, even if they attempt to engage in "propaganda of the deed."

But they must be propaganda organizations that act as the mass parties they intend to become. The European perspectives document, on the other hand, narrowly focuses on the "new mass vanguard," gives it an importance out of proportion to the general strategy of building a mass revolutionary working-class party. Carrying out the orientation toward the unstable and fleeting concerns of radicals can lead parties into narrow propagandism which does not present a program for the masses but only for the designated "vanguard."

One clear example of this is the lack of involvement by France, Britain, and Belgium in efforts to initiate mass campaigns in defense of Vietnam. While it would be a mistake to mechanically apply some of our experiences in building an antiwar movement to other countries, it is clear that European governments are deeply complicit in the U. S. war effort. There is massive sentiment against that complicity, evidenced by many demonstrations, that goes far beyond the "far left." This potential merited a more consistent campaign on the part of some European sections to try to mobilize this sentiment into plausible actions aimed at the masses, not at a "tough" minority. However, Comrade Germain told the December 1969 meeting of the IEC: "For French revolutionists, Italian revolutionists, German revolutionists, there does not exist any possibility of making an immediate direct contribution to the victory of the South Vietnamese revolution, except by making an immediate victorious socialist revolution in their own country. For them, the key question is therefore the one of inserting themselves in the general trend of political radicalization, and contributing to the maturing and political clarification of the vanguard." This has resulted in demonstrations that focus on optimistic predictions like "the NLF will win" and worthy sentiments like "solidarity until final victory."

This logic leads to acting like a propaganda organization which does not intend to become a mass party. This orientation is also clear in Germain's defense of the activity in Bolivia that flowed from the Ninth World Con-

gress resolution on Latin America. If the text of section 6 of Germain's document "In Defence of the Fourth International" is placed beside that of the balance sheet submitted by the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency, Germain's narrowly propagandistic outlook becomes clear. He defends the policy of the Latin American resolution in Latin America on the basis of what was *said* in leaflets and what was *said* in the newspaper. At the same time, Germain glosses over the fact that the Bolivian section did not have the perspective of gaining hegemony over the working class through using the Popular Assembly as Lenin used the reformist-dominated Soviets, taking initiatives within this body, which had legitimacy in the eyes of the masses, to arm the masses. They counterposed a nonexistent revolutionary army to work among the soldiers, even though Germain admits that reunifying the army was the key task which the bourgeoisie set for itself under the Torres regime.

This propagandistic method stands in fundamental contradiction to the theses adopted at the Comintern's Second Congress in 1920:

"9. The fundamental method of the struggle of the proletariat against the rule of the bourgeoisie is first of all, the method of mass action. Such mass action is prepared and carried out by the organized masses of the proletariat, under the direction of a united, disciplined, centralized Communist Party. Civil War is war. In this war the proletariat must have its efficient political officers, its good political general staff, to conduct operations during all the stages of the fight.

"10. The mass struggle means a whole system of developing demonstrations, growing ever more acute in form, and logically leading to an uprising against the capitalist order of government. In this warfare of the masses developing into a civil war the guiding proletariat must, as a general rule, secure any and every legal position making them its auxiliaries in the revolutionary work, and subordinating such positions to the plans of the general campaign, that of the mass struggle."

The policy of the Ninth World Congress, which overruled and excluded the policy described in these theses, was all the more harmful since the Bolivian comrades had a very real influence in the trade unions. This influence was wasted because of the sterile sectarianism of the policy dictated by the Ninth World Congress. Only at the last minute did the comrades make maximum use of their trade-union base to organize the last desperate resistance to the rightist coup.

Comrade Maitan alludes to the position of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency on armed struggle in "Bolivia — Results and Perspectives," referring to it as "insurrectionalist-spontaneist" policy which "reduces armed struggle to the intervention of the masses at the final stage of the struggle for power, and holds that the masses will themselves resolve the problem of their armament at the decisive moment."

Of course, this thoroughly misstates the position of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency on armed struggle, which is based on the approach described by Trotsky in the Transitional Program.

Spontaneism is the concept that the leadership of the insurrection will be just "naturally" thrown up by the dynamic of the struggle itself. Lenin counterposed to this the necessity of patiently constructing a cadre around

a clear political program in struggle against all other political programs. This trained cadre, firm in its ideas, must root itself in the mass struggles, and win the leadership of the masses, and not simply their admiration or awe. It is this perspective of creating a hard political cadre rooted in the masses which should be reaffirmed. It is most important that this unevenness in cadre develop-

ment be evened out. A good beginning to this would be the full circulation of all contributions to the international discussion to the membership of all the sections and sympathizing groups. While a few would find this difficult, those with substantial resources like the Ligue Communiste will have no trouble in doing so provided that political clarification occupies a high place in its priorities.

June 12, 1973

COMRADE PENG SHU-TSE AND THE HISTORY OF THE INTERNATIONAL DISCUSSION

by David Keil, Lower Manhattan Branch, New York Local

It has been popular in recent years for comrades who wish to challenge the political line of our party to cite, as an authority in support of their position, Comrade Peng Shu-tse and his 1969 document "Return to the Road of Trotskyism." The Proletarian Orientation Tendency did this in the 1971 discussion, as did David Fender's Communist Tendency; and now Gerald Clark of Oakland-Berkeley does the same thing. He uses "Return to the Road of Trotskyism," which was mainly directed against the European leadership which drafted the political and Latin America resolutions, to bolster his own view that the SWP has left the road of Trotskyism, which was never Peng's opinion. Clark invites those "who wish to take up the struggle begun by Comrade Peng in 1969" to join him in fighting for Clark's third-camp position of rejecting both tendencies in the international discussion now taking place. (SWP Discussion Bulletin No. 1, April 1973, p. 12.)

Such misleading references to Peng may have had some effect, as in the case of a leading French comrade who was under the totally mistaken impression that Peng agreed with David Fender. This French comrade had this impression even after Fender had left the Trotskyist movement.

The politics of the tiny sect Fender ended up joining, the Vanguard Newsletter, approximate the positions advanced by Clark in our own discussion bulletin. Clark may indeed attract to his position some comrades from the Internationalist Tendency who are disillusioned by this tendency's capitulation to the guerrilla warfare line of the Ninth World Congress. Fender's sectarian position, which has been echoed by the Gregorich "Leninist Faction" and is now adopted by Gerald Clark, has never been fully answered. Perhaps it is appropriate now, therefore, to begin by considering what Peng has really been saying, and whether it supports Clark's arguments.

Comrade Peng did not enter the Marxist movement in 1969 with his document "Return to the Road of Trotskyism" under his arm. He was a founder of the Communist Party of China and participated in the formation

of the Trotskyist movement there. He has been an international leader of our movement for many years, and a leader with Chen Pi-lan of the Fourth International's Chinese section in exile. He was around for the split in the world Trotskyist movement in 1954 and for the reunification in 1963.

Thus, comrades who wish to cite Peng at the same time that they call the reunification an "unprincipled bloc," as Gerald Clark does, should first of all investigate what Peng thought of the reunification.

If we look at the record, we find that Peng had more than one or two words to say on the subject of reunifying the world movement. For example, in 1963 Peng wrote a document entitled "Where Is Healy Taking the Socialist Labour League? — A Dangerous Sectarian Tendency" (International Information Bulletin, May 1963, I). This article was a polemic against the Healyite positions on Cuba and Algeria and, in particular, Healy's attempt to prevent the reunification. In this article, Peng wrote that beginning around 1957, the Pabloite International Secretariat "discarded Pabloism completely." Peng had written a document as early as 1955, in fact, suggesting a political discussion aimed at providing a clear ideological basis for reunification. Peng even favored the establishment of a Parity Committee between the two factions *before* the International Secretariat had abandoned Pabloism, and tried to convince the International Committee faction to participate in such a Parity Committee. Thus we can see very clearly that Peng never considered the reunification "unprincipled," but was on the contrary among the first to see its possibility and desirability. The SWP leadership's opinion on this subject coincided with Peng's by 1957.

The International Committee (I. C.), which was launched in 1953 with the political support of the SWP, Peng, the SLL of England, the Canadian section, and others, as a faction of the world Trotskyist movement, was expelled by Pablo in 1954. This open split was thus the work of Pablo, not those who were fighting him such as Peng

and the SWP. In fact, Peng wrote that he believed it might have been possible to avoid this "unfortunate" split.*

The I. C. was thus never set up as a separate Fourth International. Healy was the one to do that (in 1963), and he had to falsify and usurp in order to do it. So as soon as the Pabloite International Secretariat (I. S.) turned away from its original disastrous liquidationist course, it was logically possible for the two groups to reunify. The I. S. actually did turn away from Pabloism between 1954 and 1956, as Peng pointed out. Peng noted that the I. S.'s response to the 1956 Hungarian uprising, for example, was to support it and its tendency toward a political revolution carried out against the bureaucracy by workers' councils. He contrasted this with the I. S.'s position on the East Berlin insurrection of 1953, when the Pabloites refused to demand the withdrawal of Soviet troops. Peng therefore wrote "Suggestions and Proposals on Unifying the World Trotskyist Movement" in 1956. Based on the same considerations, the SWP leadership concluded that reunification was necessary since the political positions of the I. S. and I. C. were close to each other on the critical Hungarian question and on the question of the Stalinist parties. (In fact, the account on page 17 of Les Evans's article on the history of the Fourth International, Education for Socialists Bulletin, June 1973, coincides very closely with the arguments on page 25 of Peng's 1963 polemic against Healy.)

It is for this reason that it would be incorrect to call the present European leadership of the Fourth International "Pabloite," as Gerald Clark would no doubt do; not because they are not mistaken about many major questions today, and even show certain hangovers from Pablo's methods, but because even Pablo retreated from his essential revisionist positions such as "self-reform" of the Stalinist bureaucracy. These comrades did likewise, all the more, and forced Pablo to participate in the reunification. These comrades, such as Germain, Frank and Maitan, deserve credit for this, as does the SWP. There is no more principled basis today for a split in the world movement on the basis of "anti-Pabloism" than there was for continuation of the split after 1956. (Nor is it even necessary to force the European leaders to agree that they were wrong in 1953, or that there was ever such a thing as Pabloism, any more than it is necessary for the SWP to be forced to admit that it made mistakes then. There are more important questions to vote on than that!)

But Gerald Clark does not take any of this into consideration. Instead, he veers toward the extremely sectarian position of Pablo's former close collaborator, Gerry Healy. Far from being "unprincipled," however, as Healy and a

* On this particular question, Peng and Pierre Frank are in agreement. (See Frank's history of the Fourth International, *Intercontinental Press*, April 24, 1972.) But on the political questions, Peng and the SWP were in agreement as against the Pabloites. (For a discussion on some of the issues in this split, see "Internationalism and the SWP," by James P. Cannon, in Education for Socialists Bulletin, *Defending the Revolutionary Party and its Perspectives*, as well as "Problems of Methodology in the 1953-54 Split in the Fourth International," by Tom Kerry, in Education for Socialists Bulletin, June 1973, *Towards a History of the Fourth International*, Part 1.)

number of others claim, the reunification was based on political agreement on sixteen points, proposed by the SWP on March 1, 1963. (See *Intercontinental Press*, May 11, 1970, for this document and some pertinent comments on it by Joseph Hansen.) If Gerald Clark wishes to continue to call the reunification "unprincipled," then he would be advised to criticize these sixteen points. He would thus earn the added distinction of being the first, out of a long list of sectarians, to even attempt to do so.

Clark (somewhat belatedly perhaps), declares his support for the position of the SWP's "Revolutionary Tendency" of the early 1960s, led by Wohlforth and Robertson, stating that Cuba was a deformed workers state starting in 1960-61. A political revolution was necessary there, he writes, right from the beginning, to overthrow the Cuban leadership. Peng, however, would not have agreed with this position of the "Revolutionary Tendency" on the crucial question of Cuba. He wrote, "As for Castro, while he has many shortcomings and has committed many errors, he has acted as a revolutionary leader from the beginning right up to this moment." ("Healy," p. 7.) At the same time, Peng had no illusions about the weaknesses of the Cuban leadership and the workers state there. He pointed out that "the workers' and farmers' government in Cuba was not created in a democratic way by the workers and peasants." For that reason, he wrote, "we urge establishment of workers', farmers' and soldiers' councils to reorganize the government and establish a democratic socialist regime—the dictatorship of the proletariat." This is the same position taken by the SWP, as when Joseph Hansen said on May 25, 1961, that the Cuban workers state must be qualified as "one lacking as yet the forms of democratic proletarian rule," i.e., "democratic control of the workers and peasants." (Education for Socialists Bulletin, *The Nature of the Cuban Revolution*, part 4, p. 26.)

For Trotskyists to deem a workers state "deformed" or "degenerated," they would have to be able to point to a crystallized bureaucratic and privileged caste there which had taken power and developed interests distinct from and in contradiction to the working class. But Gerald Clark calls Cuba "deformed" simply on the basis of the petty-bourgeois *origins* of the revolutionary leadership and on the basis of his criticisms of Castro's *political* policy. No one could ever make a political revolution with such weak theoretical armaments!

* * *

It is especially unfortunate that comrades should be confused about what Peng's major positions have been over the years since these opinions have stood the test of time and turned out to be correct. For example, Peng opposed the strategy of guerrilla warfare at an International Executive Committee plenum in February 1968, and was alone in doing so. In "Return to the Road of Trotskyism," he pointed out that the alternatives were "Castroism or Trotskyism." The SWP later adopted this position strongly rejecting Castroism and its guerrilla warfare strategy and is supporting a tendency in the world movement which counterposes to it the Leninist method of the Transitional Program.

Another minority position which Peng Shu-tse and Chen Pi-lan took was on the Cultural Revolution in China. As

Joseph Hansen has pointed out, the majority of the delegates at the 1969 World Congress voted for a position implying support for the Mao faction in this struggle. The SWP's position was to maintain neutrality, opposing both major factions equally because neither was revolutionary Marxist. The Chinese comrades, however, argued that the only way to intervene in the Cultural Revolution in such a way as to attract revolutionary militants in China towards Trotskyism was to give critical support to the faction of Liu Shao-chi, which represented a bureaucratic but nevertheless reform-minded tendency toward de-Stalinization. They predicted that a victory for Mao would result in a consolidation of power by the counterrevolutionary bureaucracy and a disastrous policy of opening wider the Sino-Soviet split, which would endanger the Chinese revolution itself; while a victory for Liu might make possible a united front with the Soviet Union to aid the Vietnamese revolution. We cannot say for sure, of course, what Liu would have done had he been the victor, but we can now see very clearly the results of Mao's success. Chinese foreign policy has veered to the right and Peking has even openly participated in the attempted sell-out of the Vietnamese revolution. The Cultural Revolution was clearly a step backward for the Chinese revolution, a step forward for the Maoist-Stalinist bureaucracy in China in consolidating its power. Peng's view of the Cultural Revolution has thus been confirmed by the events.

The Cultural Revolution is still an important question today in any Marxist analysis of the Chinese situation. It is also a major issue in any discussion with students from various countries which have had dealings with China, such as Iran and Pakistan. If we cannot present to such students a correct position on the Cultural Revolution, it will be difficult to convince them of the ideas of Trotskyism.

Another question on which Peng has taken a minority position is the class orientation of the practical work which the Trotskyist parties of the world carry out. He recognized the importance of the student movement, but

pointed out that this movement "does not constitute (and cannot even be considered as) a basis for building a revolutionary (mass) party." ("Return to the Road of Trotskyism," International Information Bulletin, No. 5, March 1969.) For this reason, and because the world movement has been "working in and recruiting from primarily petty-bourgeois strata, especially the student movement," Peng urged that "the reorientation toward and integration into the working class is the most urgent task facing our movement today."

Only the membership of the SWP, not Peng, can make the concrete decision on whether we should increase our orientation toward the working class. But we can see in some other parts of the world movement the results of a policy of recruiting mainly from peripheral sectors, such as students: acquiescence to, and even extension of, an ultraleft policy. Here, too, Peng's predictions turned out to be correct.

Peng's ideas have carried more authority recently than they did in 1969, as we can see by the numerous quotations from "Return to the Road of Trotskyism" which appear in the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency's "Balance Sheet" resolution, and by the acceptance by Joseph Hansen (International Information Bulletin, No. 3, April 1971, p. 61) of Livio Maitan's (and Peng's!) contention that the main political resolution of the 1969 World Congress and the resolution on Latin America were not in sharp contradiction to each other, but had essentially the same line. While Maitan quite consistently supported both these resolutions, Peng, once again alone, rejected the line of "The New Rise in the World Revolution" as being the same as that of the Latin America resolution, i.e., a strategy of guerrilla warfare for the backward countries. Perhaps many comrades are giving consideration also, now, to Peng's positions on China and on the need to reorient to the working class. This would have an extremely beneficial effect. Therefore, for comrades to make misleading references to Peng's opinions, as Gerald Clark does, is very harmful.

June 12, 1973

THE SWP'S POSITION IN THE DEBATE ON ARMED STRUGGLE

by Fred Feldman, Brooklyn Branch, New York Local

On March 11, Comrade Hedda Garza presented the position of the "Internationalist Tendency" on Latin America to the Brooklyn branch. She defended their view that the resolution of the 1969 World Congress on Latin America should be reaffirmed as the guiding document for the work of the Latin American sections of the Fourth International.

In her presentation, Comrade Garza made much of the fact that during the middle and late sixties we appeared before the public as supporters of the line of revolutionary struggle in Latin America, including Che Guevara and the numerous guerrilla groups that existed at that time. She implied that we have now repudiated that stand and that we are now inclined towards a "pacifist" and "reformist" position. In other words, Comrade Garza holds that the party has politically degenerated. This explains, in her view, our failure to politically support the Latin American resolution passed by the Ninth World Congress.

Comrade Garza is correct in stating that we gave political support to Castro, Guevara, and the guerrilla groups during the '60s. Of course, we are always in solidarity with such struggles against imperialism even if they are doomed by a bad strategy. However, in this case, we also supported the *political direction* that we believed the guerrillista tendency was moving in.

What was going on in Latin America at that time? Fidel Castro and Che Guevara were in conflict with the Stalinists over the question of the Stalinist position of peaceful transition to socialism. The Stalinists held that it wasn't necessary to abolish the capitalist police, army, and state bureaucracy in order to achieve socialism. They held that by getting elected to office in the capitalist state, and by participating in coalitions with "progressive" bourgeois figures, it would be possible to carry out a gradual and peaceful transition to socialism. No violent confrontation with the capitalist class would be necessary.

Castro bitterly disagreed with the Stalinists at that time. He held that the bourgeoisie would fight to preserve their property and power. He said that they would make full use of the state power to prevent the majority that wanted socialism from achieving it. He presented countless examples of how the ruling class trampled on democratic rights and forms to preserve the system.

We had disagreements with Castro and we made no secret of them. Comrade Hansen pointed to some inadequacies in Castro's position (in a very friendly tone, of course) in the article he wrote in the November-December 1968 *ISR* on the OLAS conference. But basically we supported Castro's position as opposed to that of the Stalinists and saw it as an opportunity to reach the healthy forces who were supporting Castro and to win them to our program.

Three main principled questions were involved. One was whether peaceful transition to socialism was possible. We agreed with Castro that it wasn't possible. Another important question was whether to ally with "progressive" bourgeois forces. The SWP and Castro both said no. A third question was whether armed struggle was a neces-

sary aspect of carrying out a socialist revolution. We agreed with Castro that it was necessary even though we didn't agree with Castro's belief that revolutionary violence was more important than building a mass revolutionary party with a clearly defined program and a mass base in the working class. We utilized these points of agreement with Castro to get out our line in opposition to the class-collaborationist policies of the Stalinists and the Social Democrats.

That is something we often do in a debate. We will give critical support to a grouping that is moving to the left and combatting the enemies of revolution, while putting forward our own program. I think that was a correct tactic. The party has not repudiated it.

However, some changes have occurred in the world situation. After the defeat of Che, the political advance of the guerrillista tendency halted, with a few exceptions. The Cuban government, while still publicizing guerrillista tendencies in its press, retreated from some of the positive positions it had taken earlier. For instance, it now supports the regimes in Chile and Peru.

The guerrilla groups also stagnated politically, failing to come to grips with the central importance of party building and the urban working class in making the revolution. Their leftward motion stopped and many of them became little more than armed rural or urban political sects. Since nothing in this world stands still, their failure to advance in the directions we had pointed out to them led to political backsliding in most cases. As a result of the Castroist default, the advocates of peaceful transition, multiclass coalition governments, and pacifism again gained adherents.

Another unfortunate development at this time was the "turn" at the Ninth World Congress. Instead of trying to draw the guerrillista current closer to Trotskyism, leading Trotskyists attempted to create a melange of Trotskyism and Guevarism. This frequently amounted to little more than Guevarism minus the tactic of foquismo. Instead of dealing with a tendency in the radical movement that was breaking with reformism and Stalinism, we were confronted with a tendency in the revolutionary vanguard that was shifting away from the Trotskyist strategy of party building. Naturally, this required us to change our emphasis.

We never supported the perspective now upheld by Germain, Maitan, and Frank: that autonomous armed bands carrying out "propaganda of the deed" can spark the masses into following their leadership. In order to defend this untenable position, Comrade Garza had to equate her debate with the supporters of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency to the debate between Castro and the Stalinists. She was obliged to imply that the SWP leadership has moved toward the Stalinist position on armed struggle, that the SWP is a pacifistic group that doesn't believe it is necessary to confront and defeat the capitalist state. She is compelled to hint that we, like the Stalinists and Social Democrats, believe that elections represent the real road to power.

Framing the debate in this false way has advantages

for Comrade Garza. Since she holds to a position that doesn't have a leg to stand on in its own right, she hopes, by spreading vague suspicions about "reformism" and "pacifism" in the party, to win support from comrades who recognize the untenability of her positions.

Comrade Garza is not alone in utilizing this method. It appears to be universal among supporters of the Mandel-Maitan-Frank line. Comrade Massey, who holds the prestigious title of "coordinator" of the "Internationalist Tendency" stated the following in his second declaration of tendency (not to be confused with his first declaration of tendency which had a different political line):

"[The SWP] presents party building as separate and apart from the needs of the living class struggle including the methods of armed struggle under specific circumstances. This is a repudiation of the Leninist strategy for the seizure of state power and the smashing of the bourgeois state, which requires the party leading the masses in the military as well as the political arena." (SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 31, No. 9.) In Massey's view, the Latin American resolution and Livio Maitan's reports to the IEC on Bolivia and Argentina represent the only alternative to "repudiation of the Leninist strategy for the seizure of state power."

What is the real position of the SWP on armed struggle? What explains our opposition to the strategy which Massey and Garza would like to see reimposed on our Latin American cothinkers at the next world congress?

The SWP holds to the essential method and approach laid out by Leon Trotsky in the Transitional Program. Here is what he says on the question of "the arming of the proletariat":

"Only armed workers detachments, who feel the support of tens of millions of toilers behind them, can successfully prevail against the fascist bands. The struggle against fascism does not being in the liberal editorial office but in the factory—and ends in the street. Scabs and private gunmen in factory plants are the basic nuclei of the fascist army. *Strike pickets* are the basic nuclei of the proletarian army. This is our point of departure. In connection with every strike and street demonstration, it is imperative to propagate the necessity of creating *workers' groups for self-defense*. It is necessary to write this slogan into the program of the revolutionary wing of the trade unions. It is imperative wherever possible, beginning with the youth groups, to organize groups for self-defense, to drill and acquaint them with the use of arms.

"A new upsurge of the mass movement should serve not only to increase the number of these units but also to unite them according to neighborhoods, cities, regions. It is necessary to give organized expression to the valid hatred of the workers toward scabs and bands of gangsters and fascists. It is necessary to advance the slogan of a workers' militia as the one serious guarantee for the inviolability of workers organizations, meetings, and press.

"Only on the basis of such systematic, persistent, indefatigable, courageous agitational and organizational work, always on the basis of the experience of the masses themselves, is it possible to . . . train detachments of heroic fighters capable of setting an example to all toilers; to inflict a series of tactical defeats upon the armed thugs of the counterrevolution; . . . to pave the road for the conquest of power by the proletariat. . . .

"The *arming of the proletariat* is an imperative con-

comitant element in its struggle for liberation.

"When the proletariat wills it, it will find the road and the means to arming. In this field, also, the leadership falls naturally to the sections of the Fourth International." (*The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution*, Pathfinder Press, pp. 85-86.)

Note that there is nothing here—nothing whatever—about armed groups autonomous from the mass movement. Every one of these methods of arming the proletariat is based on and is part of the development of a mass movement. This does not mean that Trotskyists advocate "spontaneous" arming of the workers. Revolutionists take the initiative in convincing the masses of the need for such defense units, in bringing them together, and in giving them direction. We don't wait for the arming of the proletariat to fall out of the sky, anymore than we waited for the mass antiwar demonstrations to fall out of the sky. We take advantage of the mass mood and activity to take the masses themselves another step forward.

Nor does Trotsky confuse workers' defense detachments and their activities with the armed insurrection itself. The initial function of these detachments is not to smash the state but to defend the organizations, lives, and social gains of the masses against the antidemocratic attacks of the ruling class.

Note that Trotsky "neglects" to put forward the concept advanced by Maitan and Mandel that the small Trotskyist parties themselves should be transformed into armed units carrying out exemplary armed actions against the capitalist state. No, Trotsky advocates that the party "on the basis of the experience of the masses themselves" should take the initiative in creating defense formations based on the mass movement. Not "in close association with" or "linked to" the mass movement, as Germain likes to say. These workers' defense units are to be *part and parcel* of the mass movement, of strikes and mass actions.

Another thing Trotsky "forgot" to propose in this section was the assassination of hated bourgeois figures, in which a small vanguard becomes the carrier of the ideal of justice independent of the mass movement. Trotsky "neglected," unlike the Ninth World Congress resolution, to call upon Trotskyist nuclei to carry out armed actions "striking at the nerve centers (key points in the economy and transport)." Trotsky "forgot" to suggest, unlike Livio Maitan, that the distribution of expropriated products is a good way to win mass support for a vanguard party. He also "forgot" to propose that small groups of revolutionary intellectuals kidnap factory managers as a way of raising the political consciousness of workers on the job.

Trotsky also "neglected" to call for the formation of the "Revolutionary Army of the People," or the "Revolutionary Workers' and Popular Army" as did the PRT(C) and the Bolivian section. Instead every aspect of his strategy was defensively formulated, aimed at sounding sensible and reasonable to masses in struggle. Trotsky remembered that the October revolution itself was not carried out with calls for "revolutionary violence" and "smashing the state" but under defensive slogans.

Trotsky didn't say that these methods of struggle based on the mass movements were not applicable where there were no repressive regimes. He omitted this even though there were one or two repressive regimes in the world

in 1938, when the Transitional Program was written.

It is Trotsky's policy, and not that of Germain-Maitan, which the SWP has carried out. This policy has been carried out in action, where we had mass influence and our proposals would be comprehensible to radicalizing masses, and in propaganda where the slogans have been appropriate to the mass movement. This was the basis of our physical defense activities against the police and company thugs in the Minneapolis strikes of 1934, which culminated in the Battle of Deputies Run. Farrell Dobbs played a leading role in that strike. Why hasn't he noticed our supposed conversion to "pacifism" and "reformism"?

This was the basis on which we built mass demonstrations against fascism in the thirties and forties. Those demonstrations defended themselves quite energetically when they had to, although we make no mystique of "revolutionary violence" for its own sake.

True, we never substituted ourselves for the masses, never struck at the nerve centers of the economy and transport. But we always opposed pacifist concepts of change, and attempted to make our opposition comprehensible to masses who have an understandable desire to avoid violent situations if possible.

We did this even when our leaders were on trial for their beliefs in 1940. Comrades who believe they have stumbled unawares into a pacifist party should take a good look at James P. Cannon's testimony in *Socialism on Trial*.

A graphic example of our stand on arming the proletariat was given by our intervention in the struggle of Black people in a small town: Monroe, North Carolina. The Union County NAACP, a mass organization, was led by Robert Williams. In 1959, Williams came out for the right of Black People to arm to defend themselves, to "meet violence with violence." Under his leadership, the Black community armed itself to repel racist attacks and we backed him to the hilt. When the NAACP threatened to expel him for his stand, we went to the NAACP convention to support him and *The Militant* headlined the case. We supported the right of Black people to arm themselves in self-defense and opposed the pacifist prejudices that were predominant in the Black struggle at that time. We felt that, even though Monroe was a small and isolated town, Williams was giving a good example of the Transitional Program's approach to arming the proletariat. His activities were rooted in the mass movement of Black people for democratic rights in Monroe, North Carolina. There was nothing autonomous or spontaneous about the defense detachments that were built in Monroe.

In 1961, the racists took the offensive and Williams' movement was beaten back. He was framed up for hav-

ing allegedly kidnapped a white couple. The incident occurred during a day when masses of Blacks had gathered in the streets to fend off an expected racist attack by the State Police. We went on a campaign to defend Williams and the other victims of this frame-up and a major part of this defense work consisted of explaining the democratic right of Black people to arm themselves in self-defense. Of course, we did not restrict the defense to those who agreed with us on this. We carried Williams' book, *Negroes With Guns*, in all our branch and local bookstores.

We took the same attitude toward the formation of the Deacons for Defense and Justice (armed Black defense organizations), in various southern cities in the late sixties. We supported that as a good example. We saw it as an alternative to both ultraleft and pacifist approaches.

What evidence do Massey and Garza have that the party has changed its mind on this question? I can guarantee that our approach will be the same to similar developments.

However, when the Black Panther Party began to talk about "picking up the gun," "offing the pig," forming isolated detachments to smash the state and break the power of the repression that was coming down on them, we took a different stand. We defended the Panthers 100 percent against the capitalist state. But we opposed their line of small individual terrorist actions, even though they insisted they were trying to build a revolutionary party. We opposed their approach of giving out food and clothing in the ghettos as a way of "linking" their activities to the Black masses.

We counterposed our line of building a mass movement based on demonstrations, slogans, and activities that could be understood and supported by the masses of Black people to the Panthers' ultraleft orientation. We believe that only the working masses, and not any small group, can overturn the capitalist state and end repression.

Contrary to the implications made by Massey, Garza, Germain, and Maitan, this concept held by the SWP has nothing in common with "peaceful transition to socialism," with pacifism, or with spontaneism. We who live in the United States, one of the most violent countries in the world, are under no illusions that the working class will have to fight only on the last day of the revolution. The ruling class uses violence, of one type or another, at every stage in the class struggle, and in every country. Our aim is to build a mass working-class revolutionary party to lead the working class and its allies to power. Attempts by "nuclei," individuals, or other small groups to launch armed insurrection—and that is still Livio Maitan's approach in both reports to the IEC which form part of the basis of the "Internationalist Tendency"—are alien to Marxism, Leninism, and Trotskyism.

June 12, 1973

BUILDING REVOLUTIONARY PARTIES IN CAPITALIST EUROPE: STRATEGY FOR MASS PARTIES OR MASS DISORIENTATION?

by Alan Einhorn, Boston Branch

The current discussion in the Fourth International is revolving around a number of important issues. The questions of strategy for Latin America and Europe, the nature of the Chinese bureaucracy, the nature and role of Vietnamese Stalinism, our analysis of the international youth radicalization, and many other questions have all been raised. The discussion on Latin America remains at the center of the international discussion. And for good reason. It is there that the line of both the Mandel-Maitan-Frank tendency and the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency have been put into practice and a balance sheet has been drawn. It is becoming clear that the MMF tendency, because of their indefensible position, wants to shift the discussion away from Latin American to other questions. This trend was strikingly confirmed at the recent YSA plenum where the reporter for the MMF tendency spent an hour and a half discussing the international discussion *without ever once* mentioning Latin America.

Nonetheless, the discussion on strategy and party building in Europe is a welcome and important addition to the international discussion. The document "The Building of Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe" is advanced by the MMF and their American supporters, the Internationalist Tendency, as a concrete and correct way to deal with the problems of party building faced by the sections in Europe. They claim it projects the real road to building mass revolutionary parties in Europe. I think, upon carefully reading the United Secretariat draft, comrades will see that this is not the case at all. The European document offers a schematic obfuscating analysis which if adopted can only be a disorienting guide to the European sections.

All of the document's projections flow from a dogmatic timetable which is advanced. The document states, "But the fact that we are only at the beginning of the deepening social crisis, that neither the extent of unemployment nor the political level of the workers struggles yet confronts the bourgeoisie with an immediate question of life and death, allows us to envisage a period spread out in most cases over 4 to 5 years before the decisive battles are fought." (Section 3, page 11.) And what will happen if by 1978 we aren't ready for these "decisive battles"? We are told that "If a new revolutionary leadership is not built in the time remaining to us, after successive waves of class struggles, the European proletariat will experience new and terrible defeats of historic scope." (Section 6, p. 14.) This doomsday theory of politics is not new to our movement. Similar abstract and dogmatic projections have been made before and proved false and disorienting. The war-revolution thesis adopted by the world movement in the early 1950s held that World War III was imminent and from that deduced the 17-year-old policy of deep entryism. The Latin American draft resolution adopted at the last world congress ruled out the possibility of anything but extreme repression and thus deduced the "strategy" of rural guerrilla war for a protracted period of time. History turned out differently both

times. And it's the "most likely variant" that history will prove the "1978-or-bust" prognosis as equally false.

It is from this prophecy that all party-building tasks are drawn. In the section entitled "Three Tactics" a schematic explanation of the "tactics" for party-building is expounded. While guerrilla war is a "strategy" for Mandel et al., party building is only a tactic.

The first tactic is "entryism sui generis." While correct from 1952-1969, except for what the document delicately calls "overspecialization," it is no longer applicable, according to the document. "Massive organic growth," that is striving to recruit as many of the best militants to our parties, is also rejected. Despite the fact that the "decisive battles" will be fought before 1980 Germain says there is no possibility for massive recruitment. The experiences of the Argentinian PST point out what kind of "massive organic growth" can occur in a prerevolutionary situation when the revolutionary party has a correct program and strategy.

The tactic which is opted for is "winning hegemony in the new mass vanguard." This abstraction which is classified in Section 6 as "The Central Task," is extremely confusing. The document never states what this vanguard is. Its various components are never analyzed and the European resolution projects adapting to the backwardness of the "vanguard" as the way to winning over these elements.

What exactly, in plain English (or if the documents were translated, in plain German, French, Spanish, etc.), does "winning hegemony within the new mass vanguard" mean? Does it simply mean recruiting the best and most conscious militants to sections of the Fourth International? If so, fine. Or does it mean, as the reporter for the MMF said at the YSA plenum, "regroup the new vanguard into qualitatively stronger organizations"? Will this stronger organization be a section of the Fourth International, or will it be an "adequate instrument," yet not a Bolshevik party, but still adequate enough? The United Secretariat document is totally unclear on this and this obfuscation must be cleared up.

Finally the MMF document does not spell out at all the key party-building tasks, the concrete ways the European sections should intervene in the *real* class struggles *today*. It sees the central slogan of workers control as the central axis of our trade-union work. It is true that it is not necessary for the document to spell out the specifics of building left-wing caucuses in the unions for every particular situation in Europe. But it should at least spell out some of the central issues and demands which our comrades can raise. Instead of simply proclaiming, a document should be a guide to our work.

All the document says about the youth and student movement is that we should liquidate our Trotskyist youth organizations. And in fact in every European section that line has been systematically carried out since the last world congress. It also states that the student movement has taken an "irreversible turn," a permanent down-

turn. History has already proved this postulate incorrect. The massive student mobilizations in France against the Debray laws and Fontaine decrees, in Belgium against the Claes-Hurez measures, in England against educational cutbacks and in Greece and Spain for basic democratic rights don't seem to indicate an irreversible turn. If anything they indicate the continuous deepening of the youth radicalization in Europe.

Work in defense of the Vietnamese revolution, past, present and future, is hardly mentioned at all. Perhaps that is because the MMF tendency supports the ceasefire accords signed in January and think the Vietnamese have won a tremendous victory, and thus need no defense. The struggle in Ireland and the need to defend the Irish movement is totally skirted over. Perhaps that is because Comrade Germain in his document *In Defense of Leninism: In Defense of the Fourth International* explains to us that the nationalism of oppressed nationalities is reactionary, except for oddly enough Black and

Chicano nationalism. We can only assume that Comrade Germain views Irish nationalism as a counterrevolutionary backward force.

Work in the women's liberation movement is mentioned once—in the same breath as work among radical artists. But then again, Comrade Germain sees the women's movement as a "minor matter." The document does not mention at all work within the armed forces or in the struggle against the denial of basic democratic rights. These are just some of the real, concrete party-building tasks which our European sections must relate to if they are to move qualitatively forward.

The United Secretariat majority document attempts to create the objective situation and then make it conform to our orientation—rather than the other way around. The European document does not relate to the real situation in Europe. As such, it will only prove to be an abstract, disorienting guide to our movement.

June 13, 1973

THE RAZA UNIDA PARTY IN CHICAGO

by Antonio DeLeon, Chicago Branch

This contribution to the discussion before the convention is to acquaint the comrades with the Raza Unida Party in Chicago.

Throughout the Southwest the RUP has captured the imagination of the Chicano voter: the continuing success of the RUP in Crystal City as well as throughout Texas with the Muniz campaign; in Colorado with the impressive results in a large city; and most recently the campaigns of Ruiz in California.

These campaigns show that the RUP, although it is still a small party that must meet many obstacles, can, if correctly led, play a significant role in the struggles of the movement in these states and gain national influence.

It is precisely because the majority of Chicanos live in the Southwest that the RUP has developed there, but at the same time there are cities across the nation that have large percentages of Chicano and Latino populations. Among them are Chicago, Seattle and Gary.

The Raza Unida parties that were represented at the national convention in El Paso, Texas, last year all had different origins. The ones in Texas and Colorado began after the Chicanos that started them were involved in actions that involved large sectors of the Chicano communities in their areas. On the other hand some of the parties started out as a finished product of meetings, conferences and as a response to the developing parties in the Southwest, as was the case in respect to the RUP in Chicago.

Latinos in Chicago

In the greater Chicago area there are over 6,978,000 people. This includes over 1,230,000 Blacks and more than 350,000 Mexican-Americans. In addition there are, according to the 1970 census, more than 40,000 Borincuas in Chicago.

Before the Bracero Act of 1942 there were only a little more than 40,000 Chicanos. But after the act was passed and Chicanos were able to migrate with the crops, they came to Chicago by the thousands. World War II brought the Chicano into the heart of the Midwest and into the shops, factories and into basic industry.

As a result we find large percentages of teamsters, steelworkers, railroad workers and metal workers. But the majority of the Chicanos are, just as everywhere else, relegated to menial, backbreaking, lowpaying jobs.

In Chicago there is no university that has more than a five-percent Chicano enrollment. For example, the Chicago extension for the University of Illinois, the Chicago Circle campus, was built after the city tore down a Latino and Black ghetto. They did this under the pretext of building a campus that would provide education for Latinos and Blacks. Yet in the ten years that it has existed it has only 400 Chicanos out of an enrollment of 20,000. Precisely because the Chicano family earns very little throughout the year, it cannot afford to send its sons and daughters to the more expensive colleges and universities. So for the most part the Chicano and the Latino students are forced

to attend the junior colleges that prepare them to go directly into the army and into the same low-paying jobs that their fathers had before them.

Compared to 305 teachers with Spanish surnames in the entire Chicago educational system, there is only one Spanish principal. More than 70 percent of the Chicanos live in the seventh district, and there is a Chicano enrollment of 65,000 students in 20 elementary schools. Yet there is no school with bilingual education even though 37,266 of these students speak only Spanish.

Out of the 110,000 students that are Spanish surnamed in the Chicago educational system, only 13,640 receive bilingual education, and in the entire educational system there is no public school that teaches anything that could be called Latino studies.

In Chicago's districts 3, 6, and 7, the Latino students amount to more than 47 percent of the student enrollment yet the dropout rate of the Latino is 71 percent.

Looking at this, it figures that the Latino students have carried out at least five blowouts in the last two years.

Background of the RUP

Early in 1972 the Raza Unida Party of Crystal City called the national conference of the RUP, to be held in September in El Paso, Texas. After the call Jose Angel Gutierrez made an organizational tour of the country where RUPs were set up. We can, with reasonable accuracy, point out that his tour was of a factional nature and motivated by some political ideas. At that time, he was of the idea that the Chicano vote made up the difference between the two presidential candidates in 1968 in the Southwest, and therefore the RUP could organize this vote and give it to the 1972 national candidate that promised them the most concessions. So in his tour Gutierrez, to a large extent, lined up many of the parties on his side. He even granted official status to RUPs that had members of the Democratic Party in leading positions. This was the case with the RUP in Chicago and Michigan.

In August of last year he came to Chicago and met with some people that wanted to set up an RUP in Chicago. He told them that if they could organize a delegation by September they would be seated at the convention.

Most of these people were members of Chicago Latino organizations. They were members of OLAS (Latin American Organization of Students), which has a base at Chicago Circle Campus and at Loop Junior College. This is a reformist culture-oriented student group.

Many were members of Latino organizations that are based in the south side of Chicago. Among them are Casa Central and Centro de La Causa; both are community-oriented cultural organizations that have been around for a long time. In addition some of these people had come from the numerous Latino organizations that had grown up during the first response to the UFWOC actions in the Southwest. Chicago has at least fifteen organizations that have at one time or another organized around the cause of the bracero.

With the exception of OLAS, none of these organizations has ever tried to develop a base in the high schools or colleges. As a result very few of them have taken part in the mobilizations against the war or for women's liberation.

Some of these people have also worked with elements in the Democratic Party and were members of that party. In Casa Central the city has set up special programs for the community such as bilingual classes and Latino studies. In addition they have put some of the Chicanos that are members of Casa Central on full-time pay to handle and organize the programs. These people play a role in that they are looked up to by the community and people trust their reformist politics.

So when Gutierrez came to Chicago he met with about 20 to 30 of these people. Thereafter they called themselves the Committee to Build the Raza Unida Party. They then held four meetings in which they adopted a platform and elected delegates to the national conference.

At that time I went to one of the meetings and was told by a person who used to be in the YSA that I could not attend because I was already a member of a political party. At that time she was working with the Democratic Party. In addition at least six of the people that were chosen as delegates were paid members of the Democratic Party, one of them had run on the Democratic Party ticket for representative in the 22nd district. During the course of the 1972 elections I was running for Lt. Governor on the SWP slate in Chicago. During this campaign I debated this person twice on the need for an independent Chicano party.

So this group went down to El Paso as the RUP in Chicago. What took place is very interesting. There was some fighting inside the RUP due to the fact that the Democratic Party hacks wanted to take over the party and throw out some of the militants such as Moreno and Felipe Aguierra (who is the campaign manager of the RUP).

What happened was that these elements took it to a vote and expelled the members of the Democratic Party. This certainly took Gutierrez by surprise because up to that time he thought that he had the votes of the Chicago RUP on his side.

This is due to the fact that he came to Chicago once after August and endorsed Rea Hammer and other Chicano Democrats. Gutierrez knew that the Chicago RUP had Democratic Party members in it, but he saw that they would support him for control of the RUP nationally against the forces led by Corky Gonzales.

At the conference in El Paso the Chicago RUP went on to support all of the demands that we as communists support. Among the demands are:

- Independence from the two capitalist parties.
- Support to the UFWOC.
- The right to strike.
- End to illegal deportation, etc.

Probably the most important thing that they did was to vote as a bloc for Gonzales to be head of the national RUP. This was important because it was Gonzales and his group that fought to chart an independent road for the RUP. Throughout the conference and before he had made his position clear.

While Gutierrez spoke of "making the difference" and forcing concessions, Gonzales was pointing out the lessons of the Black movement, the Chicano antiwar actions throughout the Southwest, and the need to build an independent machine of the oppressed Chicanos, a party that would be involved in the daily struggles of the Chicanos and that would not sell them out.

As a result, the RUP came back to Chicago without any Democrats in its ranks and with a clear idea of what program they supported even though they do not have the experience to carry it out.

The leaders of the RUP know that they have a young organization and that they have to learn a lot about building a party. The leaders of the party have pointed out that they projected a period of planning and building the base of the party. Angel Moreno, the chairman of the RUP in Chicago, points out that they were trying to build a base for the party so that they could get involved in the elections in 1975. They felt that by that time they would have built a base in the high schools in Chicago as well as set up committees in the Latino communities.

The RUP never got the chance. In December of 1972, Otis Collins died. Collins was the Congressman from the 7th District in Chicago. This district has two of the largest Latino ghettos in the city. The total Latino population is well over 300,000. The district in addition has more than 800,000 Blacks; thus the district is more than 60 percent third world. The RUP saw that if they wanted to build a base they would not get, nor could they hope for, a better opportunity than this one. They felt they had to get involved and put up an alternative to the candidates that the Democratic and Republican parties would put up in the special election that was called for June 5, 1973.

The 7th District has three major Latino ghettos, as well as the major Black ghetto. The Latino ghetto is separated into the Chicanos and the Borincuas (there are over 30,000 Borincuas in the district). This district is also the base of operation of the RUP. The famous Chicago Gold Coast is also part of the district as is the downtown area. This is also a major Democratic Party stronghold, as is seen from the fact that the Republican Party did not run anybody for that office.

The RUP decided to run Angel Moreno for Congressman. Moreno was a delegate to the conference in El Paso and helped to expel the Democrats. From the beginning, the RUP campaign met many problems, mostly because this was their first attempt at elections. They lacked the experience and knowledge of what a party needs to launch an election. To begin with they had not had enough time to build a base or set up committees in the schools. They had not been able to explain their program to the Latinos, or to get involved in any actions so that the young Latinos could look to them for leadership.

Throughout the campaign the RUP participated in many community actions and demonstrations. They actively built and participated in the January 20 antiwar action in Chicago. In several high school boycotts and blowouts they played an active supporting role. In the course of the campaign they influenced and convinced people that the Latinos need their own party and that the RUP was that party.

But at the same time the RUP has shown several lackings. The major one is that they do not see that they must counterpose their program to all of the other Latino organizations. They do not see that it is right and correct for them to support the UFWOC and build their actions and at the same time criticize them severely for supporting the Democratic Party.

So in essence the main problem of the RUP was a lack of experience in carrying out campaigns and a lack of

clarity and ability to put out their program.

Results of the Campaign

The RUP lost the election, but at the same time was able to build a modest base in the Chicano and Latino community.

In the course of the campaign they built the January 20 antiwar action, help build the boycott efforts of the UFWOC and participated in the Farah boycott and demonstrations.

In addition they played a role in three high school strike actions. In a conference of over three hundred Latinos in Chicago in March, they were able, with our help, to get the conference to adopt a motion not to support the Democratic or Republican parties in the upcoming elections. Many of the people who attended the conference from Chicago later helped build the Moreno RUP election campaign.

The RUP was the main force that got Latinos to participate in the April 4 spring offensive against the Nixon cutbacks. In June they helped build the UFWOC boycott rally on June 3 at which Moreno spoke to over 2,000 people.

These, among other actions, helped to bring the name of the RUP to the Latino population in Chicago.

The Need for a 'Latino' RUP in Chicago

The problems of building an RUP in Chicago are many and diverse. First of all, in the Chicano community there are six or seven organizations that are organizing around as many issues. In many cases Chicanos are members of several at a time. There are even cases where members of the same family belong to different organizations doing the same thing but do not think of joining forces or learning from each other's mistakes. In order for the RUP to grow it must make its program clear to them and lead them in the different issues of the struggle.

It must not see itself as just another organization, but one that will put up its candidates against the two major parties, organize for the farmworkers and build a high school and college base to lead in the struggle for Latino studies and better education. In short it must be the instrument for liberation.

Another problem in Chicago is that the Latino population is not just Chicano. In Chicago there are over 30,000 Puerto Ricans and at least 15,000 people of South American descent. The leaders of the RUP have already pointed out that they intend to organize all of the Latinos. In the case of Chicago this is correct; they must in essence form a Latino Raza Unida Party. Only in this way can they become a force in the politics of Chicago.

Role of the SWP

The party voted to give support to the RUP campaign. This support was critical. The main reason for this was that they were not running in the name of the RUP but in the name of the People For Moreno Committee. They ran in this name because the majority of the Latinos were not familiar with the RUP and they had not built a base yet. They thought that they could form a coalition behind Moreno of all the Latino organizations, build a base, recruit and be in a better position to run candidates under the name of the RUP in 1974 and 1975. We thought that they would not talk about the RUP, but this

fear was dispelled later on, especially after they got on the ballot in April.

Another reservation that the Chicago branch had was that they had not put out a clear program, even though we know their stand on such issues as the farmworkers and immigration, the war (immediate withdrawal), housing and community control. To date they have still left parts of their program vague and unclear. Despite these things they have not done anything that we see as a major error.

For the most part we have tried to work with them as closely as possible. We helped them by petitioning, getting out their campaign material and trying to set up meetings for Moreno.

So far we have good relations with them even though they are still a little wary of socialists (they turned down the endorsement of the CP). At the start of the campaign they baited us, but we kept on trying to work with them and they now see us as different than the CP.

In summing up, I think that the Chicago branch has never been as involved in the Latino community as it has been in the last six months. Since we started working with the RUP we have gotten involved with the UFWOC and have close relations with them.

We should continue working with them as closely as possible in the hope of building a following in the Latino community and recruit some of the best activists. The future should be exciting.

June 15, 1973

WHY WHITE RADICALS CANNOT UNDERSTAND BLACK NATIONALISM

by Ninure Saunders, Chicago Branch

I am forced to admit that the idea for this contribution is not entirely original. In 1963 Comrade Robert Vernon wrote a contribution entitled "Why White Radicals Are Incapable of Understanding Black Nationalism" (SWP Discussion Bulletin Vol. 24, No. 11, April 1963). It attempted to outline, as the title would suggest, the difficulties all "57 varieties" of white radicals (including Trotskyists) would have in comprehending the struggles of American Blacks as Blacks, i.e., Black nationalism. (Comrades should make a point of getting a hold of that contribution and reading it.) This present contribution is meant to be a supplement to that contribution.

One problem which Comrade Vernon did not go into was the *almost complete ignorance that most white radicals have of the historical roots of Black nationalism, as well as Black history in general.* (Added to that problem was, and still is, the white radicals' ignorance of the day-to-day occurrences in the Black community.) Many white radicals, including a good number of the members of the party and the Young Socialist Alliance, operate under the mistaken assumption that Black nationalism is a development of the twentieth century, i.e., that it did not exist previous to the twentieth century. They fail to realize that if Black nationalism is not a heterogeneous ideology, and is composed of many tendencies, it is due to its long his-

tory.

(There has been a serious lack of any consistent study on the part of the Marxist movement on the Black liberation struggles in America, the West Indies and Africa. Small wonder then, if many Black nationalists looking at Marxism label it "made in Europe," they have some justification. Reading the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky one wonders how the vast continent of Africa merited being seldom if ever mentioned, much less West Indian and American Blacks. And the Fourth International has yet to change that situation.)

Black nationalism can be seen as a variety of the nationalism of non-Western peoples in general and of Black peoples in Africa and the West Indies in particular. That the majority of white radicals do not understand this or realize this is due to that ignorance mentioned above. What struggles are taking place in Africa, the West Indies, the West Side of Chicago? You won't learn of these struggles by reading the white radical press, and white radicals seldom if ever read the Black press.

That white radicals in general, and comrades such as Don Smith, Bill Massey, and Tom Cagle, see Black nationalism as being an ideology which primarily serves the interest of the Black petty bourgeoisie is due to their total ignorance of the history of Black nationalism. To

study Black history, to really study the *Black nationalist movements is beneath them*. They would rather take a much easier way of approaching the question, and that is to attack what *they think Black nationalism is*.

White radicals are not aware, or do not understand, that the Black community exhibits Black nationalism in varying degrees. The intensity or strength of Black nationalist sentiment and organizations can generally be related to the colonial status of Black Americans, i.e., the social and economic status, of Blacks in America. Black nationalism has consistently shown a greater strength among the working-class Blacks than it has among the Black petty bourgeoisie. American Blacks as a whole, unlike the various immigrant groups that came to this country voluntarily, have not had an overwhelming desire to assimilate into the white American mainstream, contrary to what many white radicals would like to think.

When white radicals point at Black nationalism as being in the interests of the petty bourgeoisie, they are only pointing to one of the aspects of Black nationalism. In its mildest form, Black nationalism can take the form of petty-bourgeois reformism, which represents the view that the United States is still capable of reforming and meeting the needs of Black people, without any other major changes needed, i.e., change in structure. It sees working in this system as a viable means for achieving Black liberation, for example working in the Democratic Party, or building Black capitalism. (The Black petty bourgeoisie have turned more and more to the use of nationalist rhetoric to scare the system into its senses and grant their demands which amount to assimilation to integration.) But this is not the nationalism of the masses, which are overwhelmingly working class.

In contrast to the above-mentioned "type of nationalism," there is what could properly be called "revolutionary nationalism" which is of itself composed of several varieties, such as separatism, Pan-Africanism, and cultural nationalism to name a few. But white radicals refuse to see the distinctions. They say that these distinctions between the various tendencies don't exist with the same logic that ultralefts and liberals are fond of using to prove that there is no difference between Stalinism, Maoism, and Trotskyism.

Coupled with this is the refusal of most white radicals, and this includes Comrades Massey, Smith and Cagle, et al., is of confusing the nationalism of the masses with that of many so-called Black leaders. An example of this can be found in a contribution entitled "On Trade Union Work" by Tom Cagle (SWP Discussion Bulletin Vol. 29, No. 8, June 1971). "Black nationalism is petty-bourgeois not only because its ideology turns the Negro masses away from class confrontations and internationalism, from a fight against capitalism itself, but because the petty-bourgeois strata of the Negroes are the only ones to benefit in the slightest from nationalist demands. Who is this petty-bourgeois leadership? You have only to flip through some back issues of *The Militant* to find our press completely adapting to them, the Muslims' John Lewis, Dick Gregory, William Worthy, Conrad Lynn, Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth, Rev. Milton Galmison, Rev. Albert Cleage, Le Roi Jones, H. Rap Brown, Stokely Carmichael, Floyd McKissick, Aaron Henry, John O. Killens, Noel Day, Stanley Branche, Roy Wilkins, Rev. Martin Luther King, etc." (Ibid., pp. 15-16.) It would be very

correct to say that these leaders are petty-bourgeois, and the majority of these leaders were out for their own personal gain. But it would be an act of complete and total ignorance to contend that these so-called "leaders" spoke for the masses, or that these "leaders" have any real base in the Black community. Once again it is a failure to make the distinctions.

White radicals have little if any understanding of why American Blacks feel the need for racial solidarity, to come together as Black people. They even go so far as to turn the victim into the criminal. Just like any white liberal, or conservative for that matter, they label Black solidarity as being "racism in reverse," as "Black racism." They would have us believe that it is the struggles of Blacks to achieve their needs that causes the white workers' chauvinism.

For example, "The absolute paralysis that resulted in the shutdown of business and industry for one week was attributed to this outrage and fury of the ghetto explosions that produced racial tensions, racial polarization, hostility and fear. . . . The racial polarization was self-defeating. . . . Despite all of its revolutionary rhetoric they remained exclusively racial, separatist, and nationalist in their outlook, causing considerable white suspicion, hostility, and opposition. . . ." (Ibid., p. 18.)

Thus it goes, Black nationalism and the racial solidarity of American Blacks, their struggle for democratic rights, for a share of the many privileges that white workers enjoy, this is the cause of white chauvinism. "Don't organize your own independent organizations to win and defend your democratic rights; that divides the working class; that's class collaboration!" And after screaming this out to the Black community, the few times that they are willing to acknowledge its existence, they wonder why American Blacks aren't flocking to them with open arms!

Did Trotsky share the views of these radicals? Did he oppose *Blacks organizing as Blacks*? Not hardly. In the period 1933-1939 Trotsky had the following to say about the "Negro question": "Today the white workers in relation to the Negroes are the oppressor, scoundrels, who persecute the Black and the yellow, hold them in contempt, and lynch them. . . .

". . . 99.9 percent of the American workers are chauvinist; in relation to the Negro they are hangmen, and they are also to the Chinese. It is necessary to teach the American beasts.

". . . *They [American Blacks] were liberated by the whites (so-called liberation). They were led and misled by the whites and they did not have their own political independence. They were in need of prepolitical activity as Negroes. . . .*

"We must say to the conscious elements of the Negroes that they are convoked by the historic developments to become a vanguard of the working class. What serves as a brake on the higher strata? It is the privileges, the comforts that hinder them from becoming revolutionaries. It does not exist for the Negroes. *If it happens that we in the SWP are not able to find the road to this stratum, then we are not worthy at all. The permanent revolution and all the rest would only be a lie.*" (*Leon Trotsky on Black Nationalism and Self-Determination*, Pathfinder Press, 1970, pp. 14-17, p. 36, p. 43. Emphasis added.)

How strange that Comrade Trotsky, who only spent a total of two weeks here in the U. S., should understand

the potential dynamic, and the need for, Black nationalism better than the white radicals who have spent their entire lives within spitting distance of the American Blacks' community. (Of course most white radicals, including some "Trotskyists," would contend that Trotsky was completely wrong on this question, that he did not know what he was talking about, that he had not fully studied the "Negro question." However these white radicals *have yet to concretely prove that Trotsky was wrong*, that he had not attempted to fully study the Negro question. And if Trotsky was wrong because he had not fully studied the "Negro question," it would seem that they too are guilty of the same crime, and following their own logic, their positions would have to be dismissed for the same reason.)

I think that there is a clear solution to the problem of the ignorance of the white radicals on the question of Black nationalism. I think that all comrades would agree

that what is needed is a serious Marxist study of the Black American nationalist movements, the struggles of Blacks in the West Indies, and of African liberation struggles. Such a study is not only necessary for ourselves, or for white radicals in general, but also for the white, as well as the Black working class.

Of course it is not quite enough to point out a solution to a particular problem. As the continuators of revolutionary Marxism, it falls upon the Trotskyist movement to carry out the task of making such a study. Not only that, but to make a more conscious effort to present in the pages of *The Militant*, the *IP*, and other Trotskyist publications, the struggles of Blacks in the U. S., Africa and the West Indies.

As Trotsky said, "It is necessary to teach the American beasts," whether they are radical or unpolitical members of the working class. This is one of our central tasks.

June 16, 1973

WHY A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE GAY LIBERATION MOVEMENT?

by Jo Della-Giustina, San Diego Branch

The National Committee memorandum on the gay liberation movement puts forth an inadequate position for our party to take on the developing social movement of gay people.

There are a number of points in the memorandum which I agree with. An important one is that "the party does not and should not take a stand on the nature or value of homosexuality." It is true that the nature of homosexuality, at this point, is not scientifically established. Whether gay is good or even better than heterosexuality is a personal viewpoint which should not be decided by the Socialist Workers Party, just as we do not decide whether or not abortion is murder. The Socialist Workers Party is a political organization that will lead the proletariat to a socialist revolution. Therefore, the positions it takes must be political ones.

What the party must take a position on is whether or not we will participate in and build the gay liberation movement.

The memorandum states that the "development of the gay liberation movement is progressive. It confronts and helps break down the reactionary morality that helps preserve class society. The struggle of gay people for

their rights is directed against the capitalist government, and is in the interests of socialism, which can only be built by the mobilization of the working class and its allies in the historic task of rebuilding society, eliminating every vestige of discrimination and oppression spawned by class society, including the oppression of gay people." This clearly establishes the gay liberation movement as a progressive movement for social change.

Let's take a look at the gay liberation movement. Can we ignore the mass mobilizations of gay people that have occurred every year since Christopher St. across the nation? Can we ignore the hundreds of student gay groups that have sprung up on campuses from New England to California? Can we ignore the press of the gay movement or the fact that in many major cities there are gay centers and organized gay activities? Or can we ignore that recently there was a West Coast Lesbian Conference which 1,500 women attended? What other movement has had a conference as large in the past year? In my estimation, the gay liberation movement is a growing viable movement in which masses of gay people are involved.

The 1971 Political Resolution passed at the last convention clarifies how we relate to any and all social move-

ments when it says, "In all stages of building the mass revolutionary socialist party its cadres must be alert to, recognize and embrace the new forms of struggle and the demands of oppressed groupings that appear as the radicalization develops. The Leninist party champions the fighting movements of all oppressed social layers and advances and develops their key democratic and transitional demands as part of its own. The revolutionary vanguard consciously uses *its participation in these movements* to draw the lessons necessary to bring revolutionary socialist consciousness to as broad a layer of militants as possible." (Emphasis added.)

Taking the two statements by the party cited above to their logical conclusion would mean that we should participate in and put forward a revolutionary socialist perspective in *any* and *all* progressive social movements, including the gay liberation movement.

Also, the gay movement is a movement that is raising questions against the capitalist system and against the way homosexuals are treated by bourgeois society. These include the "insistence on equality before the law like other citizens, with full rights in all respects, that their private lives be their own, free from legal or police restraint; against police entrapment practices; for their acceptance as equals in all spheres of life." This quote, taken from the 1971 Political Resolution recognizes the scope of the gay movement beyond merely civil rights. Yet, the recent memorandum does not give support to the gay liberation movement in all its aspects. It gives "unconditional support to the struggles of homosexuals for full democratic rights, including full civil and human rights, and against all the forms of discrimination and oppression they suffer under capitalism." But, this does not give support to the gay movement in all its aspects, as we do the women's and Black movements. In these other movements, we support them as progressive not only in their political demands, but also their attempt to regain their own culture, to express pride in themselves, whether it be Black pride, woman pride, or gay pride.

Many of the reasons given in the memorandum for not having a national perspective for the gay movement are totally inadequate and ask a number of questions. Let's look at those reasons.

1. "the gay liberation movement directly relates to a relatively narrow sector of the population." What is meant by this? Does it mean that the number of people it affects is too small for us to bother putting our forces into? In numbers, is it smaller than the Native American movement or even the Black movement? How are we to determine the number of gay people there are? Even if the number were to be small, so what? Lenin puts forward the thesis that revolutionary socialists must link up with *all* progressive struggles. In *What Is To Be Done?*, he says that the revolutionary party must be the "*tribune of the people*, able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it takes place, no matter what stratum or class of people it affects." (Emphasis in original.) He goes on to say that the revolutionary socialists' "obligation (is) to be *in advance of everybody* in bringing up, sharpening and solving *every* general democratic problem. . . ." (Emphasis in original.) Then, to further emphasize his thesis, Lenin lends support to the following statement by *Rabocheye Dyelo*: "All events

of social and political life that affect the proletariat either directly as a special class or *as the vanguard of all revolutionary forces in the struggle for freedom* should serve as subjects for political propaganda and agitation." (Emphasis in original.)

2. "the issue it raises is essentially limited to the struggle for democratic rights of this sector." Even though this is generally true, the gay liberation movement also brings up deeper questions, such as the role of the family in society and how a class society based on a nuclear family system psychologically distorts sexuality, stifles sexual norms, etc. (questions that the women's liberation movement also raises).

3. "the gay liberation movement does not have the potential mass of either the women's movement or the movements of the major oppressed nationalities." I question this statement very strongly. Who is to say that the *potential* mass of the gay liberation movement isn't 100% of the population?

4. "the gay liberation movement is at present very diffuse, not organized into any single grouping or action front on a national scale. . . . A sector of the movement developed in an ultraleft and inward-turned direction. This sector became part of the broader ultraleft and commune-oriented youth current. In some areas, this process resulted in the virtual disappearance of any viable organized expression of the gay liberation movement. . . . On the campus, many groups have become essentially social groupings to provide social outlets and help for gay. . . . There is no national gay liberation organization which could be a focus of our intervention. There is no national action coalition around specific issues of gay oppression which we could support and help build. . . . On a local level there has been somewhat of a dropping off of struggles for the rights of gay people in the past period." I agree with the above statements. But, in essence, these statements also characterize the women's movement and the Black movement. If we carry this logic to these other movements, it would mean that we should not have intervened in the movements of women, Blacks, and other oppressed nationalities because there was no national organization or national action coalition in which we could work. Or because many women turned inward and became ultraleft within the movement, we should abandon our work in the women's movement. Or that large numbers of campus Black groups are merely social groupings means that we should abstain from participating in the Black movement. The gay liberation movement is not isolated from the radicalization as a whole. When there is a downturn in the student and radical movements, the gay movement will undoubtedly be affected by it. And, because that is the case in nearly every movement today, does that mean that we pack up our bags and go home or that we wait with our thumbs in our pockets for "something to happen in the mass movements"? No, comrades, that is not what we do. We should participate in those movements to whatever extent is possible at this time and put forward our perspective. And when specific struggles arise, we will be there ready to throw our forces into the struggle.

The gay liberation movement is a movement of an oppressed sector of society that is moving to end their oppression. We should participate in, be active in, and

be the best of that movement. And, I again quote the 1971 Political Resolution passed at the last convention: "Our capacity to recruit and educate a Marxist cadre that is active and influential in the movements as they

arise, that fights for leadership against the claims of all our opponents, is decisive in building a mass Leninist workers party capable of leading the coming struggle for power to a victorious conclusion."

June 15, 1973