

Revolutionary Communist Youth NEWSLETTER 10¢

Number 12

May-June 1972

VICTORY TO THE VIETNAMESE REVOLUTION!

The WAR and the CLASS STRUGGLE

Roused out of apathy by Nixon's escalation of the Vietnam war, students began a massive strike wave on Friday, April 21. On campuses across the country, the RCY is working to extend the student strikes to the working class by raising demands to turn students toward left-wing and anti-war groupings in the unions, and by raising among workers the crucial need for labor strikes against imperialist war. At Brandeis University in Boston for example, a work-stoppage committee was set up, under the direction of the RCY, to contact anti-war workers both on and off campus. At Boston University, already on strike against marine recruiters and the war, the RCY participated in the seizure of the Administration Building, then suggested, and was prominent in building, a defense squad and picket line. While sharply attacking the illusion that student actions by themselves can end the war, the RCY supports student strikes against the war and participates militantly in building such strikes, seeking to extend them to the organized working class. At Columbia University in New York City the RCY participated in militant picketing of buildings and, at mass strike meetings, presented demands aimed at defending and extending the strike, through a working-class orientation. The fact that Columbia workers met separately and voted for a work stoppage on Friday showed the practicality and immediate urgency of working with anti-war workers. At the University of California, Berkeley, all unionized campus workers are on strike for state recognition of their unions. The RCY has been fighting to build student support for the strike with militant picket lines and seeking to link student anti-war sentiment to the workers' struggles. At UCLA and Los Angeles City College, RCYers raised the need to expand the student strike to a workers' strike, despite SWP/YSA opposition and obstructionism.

The role of the various revisionist tendencies in the current strike wave demonstrates their refusal to formulate working-class strategy for social struggles. Simple campus militancy, supported by various Maoists and leftover New Leftists can lead at best to starting summer vacation a few weeks early. PL/SDS, while calling for "militant actions," has limited its demands to calling on the universities to divest themselves of "evil" stockholdings and ROTC. The mirror image of PL/SDS's adventurist student vanguardism is the reformist student vanguardism pushed by the SWP/YSA and its front group SMC, which also ignores the need for working-class struggle, calling for students to turn campuses into "anti-war universities." The SWP/YSA seeks to use the student strikes to build its peace rallies as a left cover for McGovern-Muskie-Lindsay's presidential campaign.

The Labor Committee took a sectarian and abstentionist position on the student strikes, calling on the Columbia student strikers to "abandon anarchist tactics," adopt the full (reformist) program of the Labor Committee, and call a city-wide meeting of the entire "non-ruling class population" on the basis of a "common-interest program." The Workers League covered its capitulation to the SWP/YSA's pop front by super-sectarianism, demanding repudiation of middle-class student strikes and "posing the question of April 22" and the building of a labor party in '72. At Boston University, the WL's Pat Connolly was the only person at a mass student meeting to vote against calling a student strike!

For Labor Strikes Against the War!

Contrary to SMC claims that "in 1968 the anti-war movement forced Johnson to stop the

bombing and invasion" (Columbia SMC leaflet), the re-escalation demonstrates that neither the anti-war movement nor student strikes by themselves can force U. S. imperialism out of Indochina. In fact, in 1968 Johnson did not stop the bombing; he merely moved it from the North to the South where the overall bombing was increased. Nixon only withdrew U. S. troops from Cambodia after he had opened the Cambodian border to successive waves of South Vietnamese Army invasions, U. S. aerial bombings, and last year the re-invasion of U. S. troops.

The present anti-war movement and student strikes have no real impact on the actual course of the war because they lack the social power to

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SDS NATIONAL CONVENTION:

SDS DESTROYED BY LIBERALISM

Less than three years ago, the Worker-Student Alliance caucus led by Progressive Labor confronted the New Left leadership of Students for a Democratic Society over the crucial question of the working class and, after a deep split in the ranks of SDS, emerged as the leading tendency. In the intervening period, against a background of growing working-class militancy and the sharpening of the international crisis of capitalism, the PL/SDS leadership has moved steadily rightward in rapid retreat from the subjectively revolutionary pro-working-class line which had won it hegemony over the radical student organization. The Spartacist League and Revolutionary Communist Youth (formerly Revolutionary Marxist Caucus) consistently fought to reverse SDS's rightward motion and make SDS a non-exclusionist socialist youth organization with a Marxist working-class program. At SDS's second National Convention since the 1969 split, held March 30-April 2 at Harvard University, RCY led the fight against the SDS leadership's new single-

issue "Anti-Racist Textbook" campaign which qualitatively deepened SDS's rightward plunge into an alliance with academic liberalism. When the convention approved SDS's turn to class collaboration and reformism, RCY led its supporters in a walkout.

A telling indication of SDS's liberalism was the slippery pre-convention bloc with liberal university professors in the Boston area. When Harvard University balked at providing adequate facilities for the convention, SDS took its campaign for facilities to the bourgeois academic elite. More than a simple bloc for bourgeois democratic rights, the statement signed by numerous bourgeois intellectuals applauded SDS's new policy ("It is excellent that the student movement is beginning to concentrate on the issue of racism. . .") and was given a big splash in SDS's New Left Notes in order to give a respectable cover to the convention.

Workshops and More Workshops

The opening plenary session consisted of the usual fight over agenda proposals, RCY fighting for more open plenary time and PL pushing for extensive workshop time on specific limited topics. The technique of containing political discussion in numerous small workshops is generally used when the leadership wants to prevent a thorough airing of political differences. The convention as a whole is deprived of hearing the proposals of the spokesmen of oppositional political tendencies and, with the topics of the workshops restricted to particular (and generally trivial) subjects, debate on general political strategy can be ruled out of order.

The Labor Committee made the first proposal on agenda modification, calling for a plenary the next day to discuss immediate action to help welfare recipients. The LC thus indicated early in the convention that true to its social-democratic instincts, it had no intention of seeking to reverse SDS's decisive turn to liberalism, but merely to push for the adoption of its own reformist schemes.



Spartacist/RCY supporters at SDS convention.

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SDS NATIONAL CONVENTION:

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After the PL-proposed agenda passed, a series of speakers related stories of their involvement in "concrete anti-racism fights." Throughout the convention, story-telling, pep talks and skits were used to keep politics off the convention floor.

Friday and most of Saturday were given over largely to workshops and panels. The vast majority of workshops dealt with very limited subjects, often only tangentially related to major social aspects of racial oppression: lobotomies of prisoners, bad health care in state orphanages, genetic theories, and so on. Out of approximately fifty workshops perhaps three or four dealt with the working class, and these only insofar as students as students were supposed to relate to workers. Even so, these workshops were lightly attended, as PL concentrated its members in the reformist workshops dealing with racism in textbooks and courses and new SDSers recruited on the basis of the new liberal orientation indicated little interest in the working class.

PL Conciliates Black Nationalists

Once distinguished by its opposition to black nationalism (frequently undercut by opportunist vacillations) and a refusal to be race-baited by white-guilt New Leftists at the SDS split convention in 1969, PL displayed open conciliation to black nationalism at this convention. This was shown most strongly at the workshop on black nationalism, where PL members talked in a mild-mannered way about the reactionary nature of black nationalism in general, but did not sharply attack black nationalist spokesmen, and even stated that "revolutionary" cultural nationalism had "progressive" aspects useful in combatting racism. Such a perspective flows from the logic of the "Anti-Racist Textbook" campaign. PL's line for SDS presents racism as a set of ideas existing independent of any material base. The campaign around racist textbooks attacks racist ideas precisely in that area where racism is most derivative, most removed from its material base, and most irrelevant to the class struggle--that is, the racist theories of a handful of reactionary academics. This idealist concept leads directly to capitulation to petty-bourgeois cultural nationalism, which inevitably leads into reformist or utopian schemes which do not transcend capitalism and can only serve to intensify racial divisions in the working class by isolating militant blacks from struggles involving white workers. The logic of PL's "Anti-Racist Textbook" campaign points in the direction of the reformism of Jesse Jackson and the reactionary demagoguery of Leroi Jones.

Marxists see racism as an ideology which has its material basis in racial oppression and the divisions in the working class and in society in general. Racist ideology seeks to explain and justify the material oppression and exploitation of blacks by seeing them as innately inferior. Until racial oppression is eliminated--through a socialist revolution made by a united working class--racism will continue to exist and be used by the ruling class to justify the exploitation of blacks and keep the working class divided along racial lines. Racist attitudes can only be overcome by a higher sense of class loyalty. They must be fought not by moralizing but by struggle around a class program which can unite the proletariat around demands which improve the condition of the entire class while combatting the special oppression of black workers. The transitional demands of a shorter work week with no loss

in pay to end unemployment, opposition to government wage-control, workers control of prices and rents, organizing the unorganized, the upgrading of minority workers into skilled job categories, and the struggle against racial discrimination in the unions are the basis for a program to combat racial oppression. Such a struggle fights the lumpenization of blacks and antagonism between sections of the class as workers fight for jobs in a period of rising unemployment, and seeks the thorough integration of blacks into the work force, thus unifying and strengthening the political power and consciousness of the class as a whole.

SDS Reformism

Throughout the convention the RCY was baited as "racist" for opposing SDS's political liquidation into the single-issue liberal campaign against academic racism. This baiting reached its peak at the Saturday plenary when one speaker read this sentence from the RCY resolution: "In a racist class society, blacks (like workers and women) cannot attain the same cultural level as more privileged groups," and charged that RCY was saying "the same racist shit as Herrnstein and Shockley." But as the position paper had earlier pointed out, "cultural level" is defined by class-biased standards (like the I. Q. test) of "certain acquired intellectual aptitudes" and "determined by social class, education, standard of living, neighborhood" and so forth. The RCY document went on to explain:

"A monopoly of knowledge through control of the educational system is one of the fundamental mechanisms of class rule. In the old South, it was against the law to teach black slaves to read. In the past, the bourgeoisie excluded most workers and almost all women from higher education in order to maintain and enforce the intellectual and cultural superiority of their own class and perpetuate the inferior status of the lower classes and of women. Today blacks are still excluded, by many mechanisms, from good schools and especially colleges . . . the liberal solution of equal educational opportunity cannot eliminate racial, sexual and class inequality. In a racist class society, blacks (like workers and women) cannot attain the same cultural level as more privileged groups. That is what class society is all about."

PL's opposition to the quoted section of the RCY document represents the essence of reformism. Material and social oppression has its cultural and psychological reflections. The precondition for genuine cultural freedom and development is the destruction of the oppressive and exploitative institutions of capitalist society through socialist revolution.

"Students Could Have Stopped Hitler"

Another SDS spokesman attacked RCY's belittling of the classroom fight against racism, stating that if students had fought anti-Semitic ideology in Germany in the early 1930's, fascist genocide could have been prevented! Aside from demonstrating ignorance of the fact that most German students at the time were enthusiastic fascists, this astonishing statement carries to the extreme PL/SDS's inability to distinguish between the crucial revolutionary role of the working class and the subordinate and unstable role of students and other sections of the petty bourgeoisie, and the elevation of ideology above and separated from its material roots. The driving force of German fascism, of course, was not German professors' theories of Jewish inferiority, but the failure of the German working class, under social-democratic and Stalinist mis-leadership, to struggle for power in a situation of deep social unrest and polarization.

SDS Chooses Liberalism

The first plenary on political resolutions was held late Saturday afternoon, and the RCY presented its proposal, "Racial Oppression and the Rightward Plunge of SDS--OUT OF THE CLASSROOM AND INTO THE CLASS STRUGGLE!" which concluded with the following demands:

"1. This conference condemn and reverse

WHY WE LEFT

The RCY and Spartacist League critically supported the PL-left wing of SDS at the 1969 split because of its subjectively revolutionary working-class line. Since then, SDS has betrayed its working-class position, retreating into campus narrowness, moralism and economism, and refusing to declare SDS a socialist group. SDS has joined NPAC-SMC and WONAAC, Popular Fronts dominated by the imperialist liberals. The RCY has constantly been gagged when we fought these betrayals. Now SDS is being turned into a single-issue reformist group which spreads the illusion that racism can be fought independent of the class struggle. The RCY resolutions would have reversed SDS's decisive rightward plunge. In refusing to adopt these resolutions, PL and the SDS leadership have decisively demonstrated their intention to uphold and deepen SDS's flight into anti-working class liberalism. We as communists can no longer consider ourselves supporters of SDS and are leaving this conference.

RCY--1 April 1972

SDS's concentration on the anti-racist textbook campaign as a conscious adaptation to academic liberalism.

2. This conference condemn and reverse SDS's support for NPAC and SMC and its demonstrations as representing an alliance with the liberal wing of the ruling class.
3. The main form the oppression of blacks takes is their concentration at the bottom of American society. The struggle against racism must concentrate on fighting concrete acts and practices of racial oppression, rather than simply opposing racism as a pervasive social attitude. This struggle must necessarily be linked to that of the working class as a whole and to the fight for socialism.
4. This conference re-affirm SDS's anti-imperialist, pro-working-class orientation by openly declaring itself socialist.

The Labor Committee at the convention responded to our characterization of the LC as left social-democratic. The LC carefully avoided making the fundamental class criticism of SDS; reformism and class collaboration are nothing new for the LC. The LC's proposal for SDS was that SDS endorse the LC's "Emergency Welfare Defense Conference," a crackpot gimmick whose endorsers include the anti-communist New America Movement and Orrie Chambers of the Newark Teachers Union bureaucracy. In short, the LC put forward simply one more reformist proposal along with the dozens of others made at the convention.

After the presentation of a seemingly endless number of resolutions, all trivial and in keeping with the campaign over textbooks, the floor was opened for an hour or so for the first general political debate of the entire conference. After the close of debate, the RCY resolution came to the floor and was voted down. An

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RCY REGIONAL ADDRESSES

ATLANTA: RCY, c/o Spartacist, P. O. Box 7686, Atlanta, Ga. 30309.
 BERKELEY: See San Francisco.
 BOSTON: RCY, P. O. Box 137, Somerville, Mass. 02144, or call (617)547-6670.
 CHICAGO: RCY, c/o SL, Box 6471, Main P. O., Chicago, Ill. 60680, or call (312) 643-4394.
 LOS ANGELES: RCY, c/o SL, Box 38053, Wilcox Sta., Los Angeles, Calif. 90038, or call (213)467-6855.
 NEW YORK: RCY, Box 454, Cooper Sta., New York, N. Y. 10003, or call (212) 925-2426 or (212) 831-3004.
 PITTSBURGH: Contact New York.
 SAN DIEGO: RCY, P. O. Box 22052, University City Sta., San Diego, Calif. 92122.
 SAN FRANCISCO: RCY, c/o RMC, P. O. Box 40574, San Francisco, Calif. 94140.
 STONY BROOK: RCY, P. O. Box 654, Port Jefferson Sta., N. Y. 11777.
 WASHINGTON, D. C. -BALTIMORE: RCY, c/o P. Willig, 1100 22 St., NW, Washington, D. C. 20037, or call (202)223-1455.

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EDITOR: Helen Cantor

ASSISTANT EDITOR: Libby Schaefer

EDITORIAL BOARD: Richard Cramer, Reuben Samuels, Stephanie Kamkov

The RCY Newsletter is published by the Revolutionary Communist Youth, youth section of the Spartacist League. We seek to build a revolutionary socialist youth organization which can intervene in all social struggles armed with a working-class program, based on the politics of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky.

PL "Leads" SDS ROAD TO REFORMISM

The history of the decline of latter-day SDS is the history of Progressive Labor's criminal dissipation of revolutionary impulse and the loss of everything SDS had gained from its break from New Leftist populism in 1969.

In April 1966 PL dissolved its youth front group, the May 2nd Movement, in favor of entry into the growing Students for a Democratic Society. In "A Statement on the Dissolution of M2M" PL put forward the following political thrust for SDS: "Our radicalism is based on the belief that the student movement cannot survive or grow without a socialist perspective." (M2M's *Free Student* No. 7, April 1966)

Following its SDS entry, PL became the major force in SDS promoting a class analysis and a socialist goal, winning supporters on this basis. But since the SDS split in 1969 PL has systematically squandered this political capital and undercut the chance to build a strong organization of pro-working-class socialist students. While Revolutionary Communist Youth (formerly Revolutionary Marxist Caucus) led the struggle for a socialist class-struggle perspective for SDS, PL led SDS from a subjectively revolutionary working-class line to an economist working-class line, and finally, back to SDS's liberal reformist beginnings.

SDS: Social-Democratic Roots

SDS has its roots in labor reformism and social democracy, originating as the youth group of the League for Industrial Democracy, an organization of liberal union bureaucrats and their kept intellectuals, politically associated with the pro-imperialist Socialist Party. Renamed SDS in 1950, the organization involved itself in the civil rights movement; in June 1962 it came out with the Port Huron statement advocating "participatory democracy" and reaffirming its anti-communism. In June 1965 SDS dropped from its constitution the ban on communist participation and on 1 January 1966 officially severed its connection with the LID, to which SDS had become something of an embarrassment. SDS had passed from establishment left-liberalism to petty-bourgeois radicalism.

Worker-Student Alliance

Following its massive entry into SDS, PL emerged as the pole of attraction in opposition to groupings which wrote off the working class as the vanguard of revolution. But when the hard New Leftists split in 1969 and PL took over leadership of SDS, the rotten and contradictory Stalinist roots of PL's brand of "Marxism" gradually began to erode the left thrust around which PL had built its Worker-Student Alliance caucus. This was apparent as early as the 1969 split convention itself.

Spartacist League members of SDS critically supported the WSA wing, introducing to the WSA's main motion proposing a working-class orientation an amendment calling upon SDS to declare itself a non-exclusionist socialist youth group. Despite its stated intentions for dissolving M2M, PL opposed this amendment, insisting on defining SDS's program only negatively--i. e., anti-imperialist, anti-racist, anti-male-chauvinist, etc. Still riding on the sharp polarization of the factional struggle, however, PL included the following slogan at the end of the WSA statement: "ALL POWER TO THE INTERNATIONAL WORKING CLASS!" When a Spartacist spokesman pointed out that the slogan had a certain communist flavor, PL did not reply, but when a final edition of the WSA statement was presented to the body for approval, the slogan had disappeared. This was a foretaste of things to come.

The degeneration of PL's line in SDS from a crude but real working-class orientation to an alliance with academic liberalism stems from an opportunist "two-stage theory" of revolutionary organization and the rejection of the transitional program. PL puts forward a min-

imum program for "mass organizations" (SDS), reserving for "cadre organizations" (PL) a "maximum program" of socialism. By this logic, PL must fight for reformism in organizations like SDS in order not to deprive itself of its very reason for existence.

At the root of the reformist content PL gives to the slogan of a worker-student alliance is an inability to grasp the Leninist insistence on the leading role of the industrial working class in the socialist revolution. The working class--by virtue of its role in production, the collective and cohesive social organization of its work, its existence as wage slaves rather than proprietors (small or large) of land or capital--is the only inherently revolutionary class in capitalist society. The petty bourgeoisie stands tangential to capitalist production, and its social position is highly unstable. In times of crisis, the petty bourgeoisie in its main motion supports whichever major class--bourgeoisie or proletariat--offers the greater social stability. The critical



Panthers at '69 SDS convention call PL "racist" for stressing class line, opposing black nationalism. PL now abandons class line for SDS, capitulates to reformism.

factor in gaining the support of sections of the petty bourgeoisie for socialist revolution is therefore the strength of the working class and its leadership, the Leninist party. In the absence of a politically conscious and organizationally cohesive working class contending for power, no section of the petty bourgeoisie as a group will transcend the varieties of capitalist ideology: liberalism or, in periods of crisis, fascism. But many individual students can and must be won to the side of the proletariat on the basis of a communist world view, as declassed revolutionary intelligentsia who will constitute an important part of the future Leninist vanguard party.

In a book called *SDS--A Profile* (New York, Scribner's, 1972), endorsed by PL with only the slightest qualifications (*PL Magazine*, March, 1972), Alan Adelson writes:

"A revolution is very much a possibility in this country, PL reasons, if the tremendous industrial work force can be united in struggle with the legions of students. That powerful worker-student alliance would be enough to run out the entrenched 'rulers' here just as the fusion of workers and peasants established 'a dictatorship of the proletariat' in China." (page 9)

Later, in discussing the failure of the Campus Worker-Student Alliance strategy at Berkeley, Adelson writes: "No one wanted to scrap the idea of trying to ally Berkeley's 'two oppressed groups'--the workers and the students. . . ." (page 91) PL's conception refuses to recognize the class difference between the petty bourgeoisie (to which both peasants and students belong) and the working class, and thus projects an equal

revolutionary role for each group. The "theoretical" codification of this obscuring of class lines is found in *PL Magazine*, November 1971 (see *RCY Newsletter* No. 10, January-February 1972, "PL's Right Turn").

The Short but Dull Life of the CWSA

Rejection of the 1969 Spartacist proposal that SDS declare itself socialist was only the beginning of its retreat from the sharp leftist posture taken by PL in preparing for the SDS split. In the fall of 1969, just months after the split, PL proposed the Campus Worker-Student Alliance strategy for SDS--a reformist working-class orientation economist in thrust and parochially confined to the campus. At the December 1969 SDS conference in New Haven, Spartacist members and supporters in SDS formed the Revolutionary Marxist Caucus. RMC pointed out that campus workers, having little social power, were being used by PL/SDS as a substitute for the decisive struggles in industry and within the union movement, and that the question of program was being shunted aside in favor of "show the workers SDS wants to help them." PL vehemently opposed RMC demands to broaden working-class struggles beyond pure and narrow economist and to inject revolutionary political issues into SDS's mere atrocity-mongering propaganda. The oft-repeated "Students can't tell workers what to do" conflicted with the line that students and workers are natural allies with shared class interests, but it also represented a patronizing view of workers, a negation of the role of revolutionary theory and a dishonest cover for the desire to keep SDS a low-level front group so that revolutionary-minded students could be drawn into an organization that could, presumably, "tell workers what to do": PL.

Anti-War Upsurge Bypasses SDS

RMC argued that SDS must address itself to the critically important issue of the Vietnam war, with a revolutionary class program demanding labor strikes against the war. But SDS continued to push the CWSA line, and the national student strike in the wake of the Cambodia invasion and the murders of students at Kent and Jackson State caught SDS totally unprepared. When the student strike wave erupted over its head, SDS chased frantically around campuses trying to seize buildings and get campus workers to join the demonstrations. Only the RMC, pointing out that student strikes are impotent unless they are extended to the working class, which has the power to stop capitalist production, distributed propaganda at union meetings and worked with workers who were agitating in their unions for labor strikes against the war.

PL let the CWSA die quietly, admitting to each other that it had been a failure (as Adelson openly states in his book) and switching SDS's attention to assorted on-campus issues like day care, ROTC, right-wing professors, and resisting any serious orientation to major labor struggles--all this against the background of an increasingly militant wave of strikes all across the country.

During the summer of 1971, PL held numerous "Fight Unemployment" marches in its own name (around essentially economist demands) but in SDS confined itself to demanding an end to campus unemployment! In August, when Nixon declared the wage freeze, PL responded with the call for a general strike and "30 for 40" (demands lifted directly from the Spartacist program) but opposed RMC's attempt to get SDS to join in agitation for labor strikes against the war and the wage freeze.

We Both Get Thrown Out of NPAC

Belatedly, PL/SDS turned its attention to the anti-war movement and began attending the meetings of the National Peace Action Coalition, the Socialist Workers Party's single-issue popular-front alliance with the liberal wing of the bourgeoisie. At the Cleveland December 1970 NPAC meeting, PL/SDS blocked with Spartacist/RMC

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challenge U. S. capitalism. Only the working class has both the social interest and the social power to fight imperialist war. The Cambodia-Kent-Jackson State student strike, while demonstrating the unquestionable opposition to the war of the overwhelming majority of students, ultimately had no real effect on U. S. government policy. On the other hand, the recent West Coast dock strike, if it had been extended to war goods, would have made it logistically impossible for the U. S. to maintain a military presence in Vietnam. Because ten thousand striking dock workers offer a far greater potential threat to capitalism than a million striking students, capitalist politicians like McGovern will support student strikes at the same time they call on Nixon to bust the dock strike.

Student strikes must be extended to labor strikes; the anti-war movement must be turned into an anti-capitalist movement. Radical students must turn their efforts toward support to the only real way of fighting imperialism: class struggle.

All Indochina Must Go Communist!

The liberal defenders of imperialism are quick to seek to turn the revulsion against Nixon's re-escalation to their own advantage. Bella Abzug, for example, rushed up to Columbia in an attempt to rally the striking students around her electoral ambitions. The elementary duty to exclude the



RCYers, other strike militants bar President McGill from Hamilton Hall, Columbia.

class enemy from the student strikes must be linked with ceaseless political exposure of the liberals and fake-lefts who bring the bourgeoisie's program into the strikes. The liberals' call to "set the date" only means that "date" when the Vietnamese revolution is crushed and a pro-American government stabilized. The SMC's emphasis on the single issue of troop withdrawal plays straight into Nixon's "Vietnamization" strategy of replacing U. S. soldiers with soldiers of the Saigon puppet government. To draw a hard line between those who oppose imperialism and those who seek a more popular, less costly way to buttress it, the student strikes must take sides with the embattled working people of Vietnam. They must oppose to the class collaborationism of the U. S. anti-war movement and of the Vietnamese Stalinists the demands:

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ALL INDOCHINA MUST GO COMMUNIST!**

writings disappeared from the face of the earth, black youth would still be fired from dead-end jobs, get beaten in police stations, be forced to die for imperialism in Vietnam. SDS's new campaign to "Fight Racism" is no fight at all.

Fight for Socialism—Join RCY!

Continual right-wing split-offs in SDS (when they could no longer be conciliated by the SDS leadership), along with continuous attrition as SDS supporters looked in vain for the pro-working-class program they had been promised, have effectively destroyed the SDS which emerged as the left wing of the 1969 split. PL, incapable of leading SDS onto a socialist road, has turned to an attempt to "rebuild" SDS along liberal pop front lines. The old left wing of the student movement is dead, destroyed by the political incapacity of its PL leadership.

JDL and CCNY Administration Unite Against Divided Left

NEW YORK CITY--Recent events at the City College of New York (CCNY) pose the urgency of the Leninist united front of the left against bourgeois repression and right-wing terror. At a Jewish Defense League (JDL) rally (see *RCY Newsletter* No. 11, March-April 1972, for an analysis of this group), JDL goons attacked members of SDS, National Caucus of Labor Committees (NCLC), Young Workers Liberation League (YWLL), and Workers League/Young Socialists (WL/YS). The CCNY administration responded by suspending SDS, YWLL, and WL/YS from campus for seven days, on grounds of "disruption" of the JDL rally!

What was required was a united front of left groups around the demand "Defend the left against ruling-class repression and right-wing terror--End all suspensions" with each group reserving the right to propagandize its own full program and its criticisms of the other groups publicly and within the defense bloc. The SL/RCY proposed such a united front, quoting Lenin's formulation, "march separately, strike together." But sectarianism and reformism prevailed. The WL/YS declared that "The defense of all the left is through building the YS" and, what is even more grotesque, made its defense of SDS conditional upon the latter's repudiation of "provocative" and "adventurous" tac-

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to militantly oppose the participation of bourgeois representatives in the anti-war movement.

At the July 1971 NPAC conference in New York, PL/SDS and Spartacist/RMC were violently ejected for shouting down Senator Vance Hartke. Like it or not (and they didn't) PL/SDS found itself in an anti-class-collaboration bloc with Trotskyists. It managed to differentiate itself by organizing a token kamikaze attack on the conference the following day and by its position that trade union bureaucrats are the same as capitalist politicians and should equally be excluded from the anti-war movement.

By the time the November NPAC peace marches came around, PL/SDS declared its support for them. At the December NPAC conference in Cleveland, PL/SDS humbled itself many times over to the leadership of this alliance with the liberal bourgeoisie, pledging its support to the next march and generally adopting the posture of NPAC loyalists. The SL/RCY alone at the conference stood in militant and unconditional opposition to class collaboration. What PL learned from the NPAC experience was apparently that capitulation works, and began developing its own reformist single-issue campaign, SDS's "Fight Racist Textbooks" line, complete with endorser lists signed by liberal professors.

PL opposed the welding of a political alliance between radical students and class-conscious workers (the formation of a fighting youth auxiliary to communist opposition in the unions), preferring to establish such an alliance on an appeal to moral do-goodism and the obscuring of a class line. PL's own inability as a would-be revolutionary party to develop a program to bridge the gap between trade union and socialist consciousness, its adherence to the sterile minimum/maximum program, fed its tendency to progressively lower the political level of SDS.

Throughout our existence as the left opposition to PL in SDS, Revolutionary Communist Youth has raised the need for a socialist orientation based on transitional demands--demands which raise the issue of class power, connecting the felt needs of workers to their larger political interests--e. g., strikes against the war and wage freeze, "30 for 40", construction of a labor party, etc. Marked by a rejection of a communist approach, the history of PL's "leadership" of SDS is a sad story of the squandering of precious political capital. Now the sellout-to-liberalism "Fight Racist Textbooks" campaign marks a qualitative shift in the political character of SDS. It is a betrayal and has transformed SDS into an organization whose thrust is dangerous to the working class. The RCY must struggle politically to defeat SDS, counterposing itself as the genuine communist youth organization.

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RCY spokesman attempted to read a brief statement (see "Why We Left," page 2) but was prevented from using the microphone. The RCY contingent left the convention chanting, "FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM! DOWN WITH LIBERALISM!"

The main focus of the RCY's political attack was that SDS was being turned into a popular front through the establishment of a political program acceptable to the liberal bourgeoisie. That there are no liberal bourgeois representatives in SDS now only points to SDS's social irrelevance. There were no leading capitalist politicians in the early anti-war movement either; it took the SWP nearly five years of continuous sellout to bring its first senator into its anti-war front group. SDS's sharp about-face on the presence of the class enemy in the anti-war and women's liberation movements signalled its intentions for SDS.

PL/SDS presents racism not as a symptom and bulwark of capitalism, but as "the main way people are oppressed today." (*New Left Notes* flyer, 6 November 1971) Simply ignoring the class question, PL/SDS spreads the dangerous illusion that it is possible to overcome racial oppression within the confines of capitalism. The more farsighted wing of the ruling class, the McGoverns and Lindsays and their ideological henchmen, will find that mouthing off against racist textbooks is a cheap price to pay for helping to keep the struggles against oppression within reformist limits.

Down with Liberalism!

PL's strategy for SDS ever since the original split has been to isolate certain of the more repugnant features of the capitalist university--the treatment of campus workers, ROTC, and now racist textbooks--and inflate them into the main enemy for students to fight. But whereas other projects retained at least some connection to the class struggle or opposition to capitalist imperialism, the "Anti-Racist Textbook" campaign is entirely restricted to the classroom, deliberately divorced from the material basis of racism in capitalism and confined to liberal goals. The civil rights movement of the early 1960's succeeded in many of its reformist demands but the actual economic condition of blacks has actually worsened. If the reactionary professors and their

tics toward the JDL, a group which the WL/YS characterizes as fascist! The NCLC attempted to smuggle into the defense their own reformist program of \$150/week minimum wage and the taxing of banks, real estate, and corporate interests. Not to be outdone in sectarianism, SDS called on CCNY to "ban racist textbooks, not SDS" and failed to even mention other banned groups!

The YWLL (youth group of the reformist Communist Party) correctly called for reinstatement of all suspended groups, but saw in the attacks little more than "a serious violation of academic freedom and campus democracy" and appealed to the administration to "protect the rights of its [!] students and faculty." Needless to say, such boot-licking will win nothing from the administration. Only a strong united front of the left around slogans of defense and class solidarity can repel the vicious attacks of JDL-type thugs and the no less sinister attacks of the bourgeoisie's legal agents on campus and in society as a whole.

"Out of the Classroom and Into the Class Struggle!"--RCY position paper from SDS convention, 10¢. Write: RCY, Box 454, Cooper Station, New York, N. Y. 10003.