

A YEAR OF PRACTICE

"Seize the Time" has been publishing for one year now. The Staff of STT feels that the paper has reached a point where summing up our practice and development is necessary for us to move ahead.

Too often, revolutionaries don't attempt to look critically at their practice. They do not ask themselves: What did we do right; what did we do wrong; what were the effects; how do we correct our practice and what should we achieve in the future? STT thinks that our readers can benefit from this kind of analysis of STT's practice.

STT has been aimed at reaching organizers and activists and helping them build cadre organizations, both among white workers and in the national liberation movements. Our paper has 8 central points of unity. These have provided a framework (but not a definition) for the practice of STT. These points have withstood a year of our work as well as years of practice by others very well. They are:

1) To unite and provide information and communication for the non-revisionist left.

By non-revisionist we mean those organizers that understand that American society is presently based on a corrupt, dehumanizing, wasteful, killer socio-economic system that will not and cannot benefit the vast majority of people. Further, an egalitarian, collective, producer (worker) controlled society will benefit the vast majority of the people. Transition to this society will not come about peacefully because of the violent resistance of the few who now benefit from the misery of many. Lastly, those who suffer the most now and their struggles will in general be the leadership of the social revolution.

Information provided in our paper has been reprinted in Black community newsletters and in pamphlets for study groups. Prisoners' support committees have been using it for political education. Various Chicano, Asian, and white study groups have included articles on their reading and discussion lists.

In its distribution STT is a tool to establish political connections. Organizers and activists have responded well to the paper, even though we have not been very disciplined and clear on distribution. The effect of distribution in many areas has been to establish links between activists who were isolated from one another before. This is critical considering the chaotic state of the non-revisionist left today.

STT's successes in this area rests on two key features of STT. One is its country-wide viewpoint. The second is STT's focus on using and developing theory to solve the strategic problems of revolution--how do we organize revolution, how do we make correct analysis of a given situation, what political principles should we adopt to really serve the people? We do not focus on reporting or stop at analyzing an event. We want to help people to predict and control events--to win the war.

2) To raise and clarify the level of ideological struggle within the revolutionary movement.

There are currently many different views on what is the best way to win the revolution. The effectiveness of the practice based in the different views is the key to resolving this struggle. Our job is to find out, analyze and report such practice, summation, and theories.

Many of the major articles written by STT have provoked ideological discussion and consolidated ideological positions of previously unorganized groups. The centerfold in issue #2 on Fascism, "Organization of the Revolutionary Movement (#2)", "Ideological Clarity in the Black Liberation Movement (#3)", the series on the role of the white working class and white revolutionaries (#4&5) and the article, "Internationalism in the U.S." (#5) have all provoked much response. For example, the anti-imperialist caucus in VVAW-WSO in the San Francisco Bay Area voted to endorse the position of the article, "Struggle in VVAW-WSO" (#5), a perspective on the issues involved in the RU effort to take over VVAW-WSO.

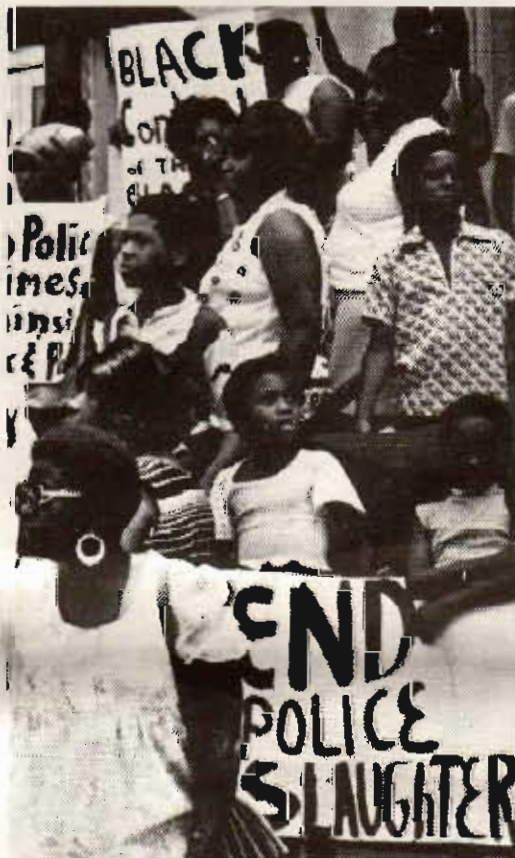
3) To provide support and information for national struggles within the U.S.

We believe that national forms of struggle against U.S. imperialism within the U.S., i.e. Black, Chicano, Native American, etc. are the leading form of struggle here for the present period.

During our year of practice, the Staff of

STT has come to believe that, in order to best organize these struggles, the formation of united fronts and parties based on nations within the U.S. is necessary at this time. We do not think that parties or organizations based on the "whole multi-national working class" will effectively organize either TW or white working people. This concept is at best idealistic and ignores the empire's history and at worst racist. Ending national oppression can not be dismissed until after socialism because it can't be fully achieved under capitalism. Rather, in order to achieve socialism, we must destroy imperialism which depends on national oppression.

When organizations like the RU put that kind of theory into practice, issues such as busing in Boston get reduced to a question of "equal rights", not anti-imperialism and national liberation. This leads to errors like calling for community self-defense in both white and Black neighborhoods when it is Black children who are being stoned. Do both U.S. soldiers and Vietnamese peasants have an equal right to self-defense in Vietnam? And they are both part of the international working class.



Police murders of youth are a major issue in Third World communities. (Protest in Atlanta)

On the other hand, STT has seen organizations based on national struggles build campaigns involving large numbers of their people, workers and other classes. They also have won the support of many other TW and white people. For example, the African Liberation Support Committee has organized hundreds of thousands of Black people to support liberation struggles of African Blacks and Black people here. CASA, Hermanidad de Trabajadores, has been working to protect the right of Latino workers in the US. This spring CASA began a nation-wide campaign against economic deportations.

The Wounded Knee occupation sparked dozens of similar struggles by Native American people. These include struggles to recognize treaty rights and national sovereignty, to stop the super-exploitation of reservation factories, to fight the European concepts of private property (preventing white businessmen from building warehouses on traditional burial grounds and occupying unused lands and buildings to demand schools, medical centers and cultural centers. The Puerto Rican Socialist Party has organized both in Puerto Rico and the US huge demonstrations supporting Puerto Rican independence. In particular, its slogan "No colonies for the Bicentennial" has reached millions of working people who were unaware of US imperialism.

Filipino, Japanese and Chinese people generally see themselves as national minorities in the US. Yet even here the necessity of building a base in national forms of struggle is made clear as Filipino, Japanese and Chinese organizations have done the bulk of organizing within that nationality. It is clear that socialist revolution for even a national minority does not mean liquidation of national culture and organization, but exactly the opposite.

"Correct" white (and sometimes TW) revolutionaries often attack or dismiss all this work because it involves alliances between the working class and middle classes of each nationality. They maintain that such alliances will inevitably be dominated by petty bourgeois nationalism. (Unfortunately, they confuse the issue by calling the rejection of their leadership petty bourgeois nationalism.) Certainly that is a real possibility. Certainly there are struggle within every national movement and organization over which road to take. In ALSC it took the form of "do we only support liberation in Africa, or do we also support liberation here?" There is a struggle between CASA and UFW over "do we denounce and turn over 'illegal immigrants' for taking 'US' jobs or do we unite Chicano and Mexicano workers to fight job exploitation and deportations?"

This is precisely why STT thinks that building national parties is the most pressing need of our national liberation movements. By party we mean a disciplined cadre organization with both scientific socialist principles and, in this case, revolutionary nationalism. Party organization would provide consistent, working-class leadership to the mass movement and its united front organizations. It also makes possible principled and realistic alliances with the greatest number of white workers through joint work with white working class cadre organizations.

4) To provide support and information on the working class movement within the US.

We believe that the working class movement is the basis for uniting the struggles of the vast majority of people, including national liberation struggles within the US and with the world revolution. We believe working class leadership is necessary for the over-all movement towards a better society and within each national struggle. Working people produce not only the material basis of any society but also its history, culture and technology. For white revolutionaries the main task is to build the workers' movement in an anti-imperialist, anti-racist, anti-capitalist and anti-sexist way. For TW revolutionaries the main task is bring working class leadership to the national movement.

STT has been weak on discussing the practice of the working class movement. STT must correct this fault in the future.

We recognize that the working class is the largest class within the oppressed nationalities of the US. We also recognize the tremendous power of the proletariat due to its strategic placement in relation to production. Potentially the proletariat during a general strike could force the US to its knees. On the other hand, we recognize that 1) no revolution has yet been won by a single class. Alliances between the proletariat and other oppressed classes have been necessary for seizure of state power. 2) The specific development of US capitalism has led to large numbers of oppressed under and unemployed people of color. These people have nothing to lose by revolution and some aspects of their consciousness is more advanced than that of TW workers. Furthermore, as the US capitalist crisis deepens, more and more TW workers will be thrown out of work (in some cities Black unemployed outnumber Black workers). There must be a functional alliance within the national struggles of workers with and without jobs! These workers when allied with progressive lumpen and petty bourgeoisie will provide the main strategic force for national liberation. It has been shown that the best leadership of the recent liberation movement has come from workers, former workers and former lumpens, (Malcolm X).



5) To provide support and information on the World Revolution.

US imperialism is a worldwide system. Revolution against it has also developed worldwide solidarity. The struggles of people abroad affect our struggle and vice versa. Many struggles hold valuable lessons for our own developing struggle. So, STT has also tried to provide documents from the World Revolution that have significance for our struggle.

The primary focus of our paper has always been struggle here - JUCHE. However, we have found presenting the series of articles on organizing the party, united fronts and international coordination helpful in suggesting solutions to problems we have here in the belly of the beast.

Cont. to Pg. 9 (after centerfold)

Cont. from Pg. 8

6) To provide support and information on P.O.W./prisoner struggles.

US society has made many people "criminals" under its laws. Many are guilty of being poor, jobless, non-white and/or unwilling to starve and beg. We say the imprisonment of people for these reasons is a vicious crime itself. The exposure and prosecution of those who benefit from this crime against the people is necessary for the formation of a better society. The struggle of the victims of this crime is an integral part of that process.

Other POW's are political prisoners - those whose spirit, thought, leadership and actions among the people were so great a threat to things as they are that the rulers of this country felt it necessary to forcibly separate them from the people. We must support these comrades.

STT understands that in the prisons as everywhere else, contradictions among the oppressed exist. The prisons try to enforce a more vicious atmosphere of dog-eat-dog individualism and gang mentality than elsewhere in this society. We hope our principled support and consistent information of POW struggles will help overcome those conditions. STT has tried to develop working ties with prisoners and support committees.

Lastly we have tried to emphasize that the struggle in the prison should be linked to community struggles and the over-all movement towards revolution. Important individual struggles can be won only by involving the people and connecting that struggle to other struggles. Indeed, the entire prison system can only be abolished by the establishment of a new society.

7) To provide dialectical criticism, support and information on the clandestine movement within the US.

We believe what Dharuba Moore says, "Either it (revolutionary armed struggle) is supported everywhere, or it is not supported at all". It is hypocritical to support armed struggle only in Africa or Indochina or Uruguay. We cannot ignore the attacks of US imperialism on the lives and welfare of people here. We cannot ignore its attempts to destroy revolutionary mass movements.

STT has set aside a section called "Messages to the People". This has included communiques on the political reasons for clandestine actions, denials and denouncements of certain actions and political statements from clandestine organizations. In the past we have been careless in stating why we included some articles and in investigating the effect actions had on mass organizing. Our readers have pointed this deficiency to us. We will be trying to preface articles with explanations and explain more fully our view of different clandestine organizations and actions. However, we are also reluctant to make statements if we think we do not know enough. We cannot and will not reject or condemn violent clandestine action out of hand.

8) To provide support and information for the liberation of women.

Women are half of humanity. They cannot be held back while the struggle against other forms of oppression moves forward. US imperialism often directs its attacks on TW and poor people against the women - sterilization, welfare, birth control, prostitution, drugs and US military-sanctioned rape and prostitution. As a result, women are also prominent among our freedom-fighters. Everyone can learn from their determination, leadership and love for the people.

When STT first started publishing, there was no separate section on the liberation of women. A letter from a reader criticized this "oversight". It was actually a political error. The staff unanimously agreed to start the section "From the Sisters". We are very happy we did so. Many anti-imperialist women organizers have been able to contribute, make useful criticisms and mutually develop a better understanding of the relationship of women's organizations and struggles to the overall movement and to national liberation struggles.

STT has also tried to increase recognition of the differences between the conditions of struggle for white women and TW women. We have been consciously trying to resolve the problems created when people mistakenly make those differences into contradictions by trying to ignore them. For example, white feminists in general battle for birth control and abortion as the right of women to control their own lives rather than men or institutional religion. But TW women often oppose sterilization, birth

control and abortion programs as a conscious government attack on their people's existence.

Both positions are correct in the specific situation. Applying one solution to both situations is what produces antagonisms.

These are the principles "Seize the Time" has developed and applied over the past year. They are the basis for understanding our relationship to other forms of propaganda and other forms of organization, and our future direction.

SEIZE THE TIME'S RELATION TO OTHER PAPERS

1) Community Newsletters

STT as a newspaper does not exist in a vacuum. In fact, we depend on the existence of other kinds of revolutionary news media. Organizers should try to develop local community newsletters to distribute to all the people they work with. Our paper is not meant to be a mass paper in its focus, distribution or language. STT would like to receive community papers because we use them to provide examples of struggle and organization to other organizers. A number of these papers from different regions also gives us an over-all perspective of the movement.

2) National Liberation Newspapers

STT also thinks that specific national liberation struggles should develop nationwide newspapers for their people. An example of sorts would be "Muhammad Speaks" for Black people, except with revolutionary politics. These papers would be most likely published by the national united front, just as South Vietnam in Struggle is published by the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam (NLFSVN). Such papers would help tie together the national movement in various cities and regions. They would be able to give much more emphasis to specific conditions, analysis and strategy of that nation than a paper like STT. They would also reach more people of that nation than would a paper like STT, including advanced and middle people as well as cadre and organizers.

3) The White Revolutionary Movement

A similar relationship would exist between a paper like STT and white revolutionary papers published by essentially all white cadre organizations. The newly announced "Osawatomie" of the Weather Underground is such a paper.

A paper like STT would also be necessary to provide white organizers with a grasp of what TW movements are doing, written by TW people, and vice versa.

RELATION OF PAPER TO POLITICAL ORGANIZING

1) Cadre Organizations and Parties

STT is not officially affiliated with any established cadre organization. We encourage the formation of national liberation parties and white cadre organizations. We want our staff members to join such organizations or be sent by the organizations, and represent those organizations' political views in the paper. In the future we would like to see such a paper become affiliated with a joint council of various organizations.

Our staff at this point includes people who have been in early forms of cadre organizations and people who are now engaged in collectives of serious revolutionaries in various kinds of mass work. All of our staff do various kinds of mass organizing including national liberation movements, trade union, workplace, prison, women's movement and coalitions on specific issues. Although it has been difficult, and we have not always succeeded, we have tried to be democratic and flexible with the basic political principles of the paper. We have and will continue to print articles that include different strategic approaches to the revolution.

STT has really felt the need to work with cadre organizations, particularly those representative of national liberation movements. We have made political mistakes, mostly of omission, because we are lacking consistent input. This has been particularly evident with the Chicano/Mexicano movement. For example, in our articles on organization we did not take into account the history of organizing of Chicanos and Mexicanos. We did not recognize the relative independence of that movement from events such as the split in the Black Panther Party which did heavily affect both Black and white revolutionary movements.

2) National Liberation United Fronts and Mass Organizing

We encourage the formation of national liberation fronts within the US. STT's rela-

tionship to United Fronts would be indirect as we are a theoretical journal aimed at cadre level organizers. We encourage the formation of national liberation papers written by the political organization of the UF.

We also recognize that there are forms of organizing on specific issues that cross national lines based on working class leadership, ie. economic issues, labor and union work, prisoner struggles, military organizing. (These issues include organizing on national lines as well.) In these struggles we hope to:

1. Sum up conditions and practice.
2. From that develop practical theory
3. In order to propose over-all strategy
4. Encourage practical unity/alliances through this work.

3) Organization within Seize the Time

The principle feature of organization within STT is the formation of a TW staff and a white staff. Each has developed workteams to help with production, distribution, contributions and criticism of the paper. The separate teams have allowed us to really pay close attention to developing specific aspects of national liberation struggles and the white working class movement. We feel that this has enabled STT to avoid the vagueness and idealistic generality of newspapers put out by multinational cadre organizations based on the "unity of the whole multinational working class".

STT is faced with other kinds of problems. Mostly, it has been difficult at times to coordinate the practical activities of the staffs and find time for both work in specific movements and the paper. It has required dedication when enthusiasm falls to a low point. However, these problems can be worked out by practice.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

1) Political content

In working with organizers STT finds that the more general theoretic articles have been helpful, but we now must go further. Specifically, we have been asked to focus more on mass organizing in line with the rising tide of popular struggles. We intend to make our content more issue/problem oriented to help organizers and activists. This includes planning the central theme of the paper 2 and 3 issues in advance. It includes announcing those themes in preceding issues to give people a chance to make well-thought out contributions.

Besides the central theme of each issue, specific sections of the paper need strengthening - "From the Sisters" and "Class Struggle". We need to develop more ties with organizers in those areas and really be more conscious of political content.

2) Organizational Objectives

Two major weaknesses now are our inconsistent and unsystematic publishing and distribution. Both really hold back what we feel to be essentially good political content. What good is content if it doesn't reach people? This whole area of distribution will be STT's major focus in the coming period of practice:

"A newspaper is not only a collective propagandist and collective agitator, but also a collective organizer. In this respect it can be compared to the scaffolding erected around a building in construction; it marks the contours of the structure and facilitates communication between the builders, permitting them to distribute the work and to view the common results achieved by their organized labour."

LENIN

FROM THE EDITORS OF SEIZE THE TIME

SEIZE THE TIME is available on a subscription basis. Please send requests and letters to:

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