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DRAFT RESOLUTION
ON THE NEGRO STRUGGLE

by

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I. INTRODUCTION

The struggle of the Negro people for freedom and equality is the most dynamic struggle going on in America today. This struggle takes place in the context of, and is conditioned by, the general passivity of the organized labor movement. The consciousness of the Negro people and the tempo of their struggle has increased enormously over the past eight years, but the achievements have been minimal--limited entirely to token advancements of democratic rights. In fact, the fundamental conditions of life for the vast majority of black people, particularly in the key areas of employment, wages, housing, and education, have worsened. The Civil Rights movement, geared to the aspirations of the small Negro middle class, though professing to speak for all Negroes, has been stopped dead in its tracks in dealing with these fundamental needs, and in fact functions as a brake on the unorganized and leaderless pressures from below. In the absence of an alternative, revolutionary, leadership these pressures and frustrations explode from time to time in undirected, non-political outbursts that change nothing. Thus in the midst of rising consciousness, struggle, and aspirations among the black masses, the movement is at an impasse. A crisis of leadership is the essence of this impasse.

II. INTEGRATION OR SEPARATION?

From their arrival in this country, the Negro people have been an integral part of American class society while at the same time forceably segregated at the bottom of this society. As chattel slaves they were the labor force on which the Southern planter-aristocracy maintained its economic and political dominance until the Civil War, and were the only stable labor force in the

country as a whole. Various factors--the variety of African origins, the deliberate dispersal of slaves with common tribal backgrounds, the fact that most slaves brought from Africa were male--facilitated the total destruction of African languages, social institutions, and cultural memories among the slaves and allowed the imposition of a new language and new habits to fit the needs of the economic system into which they were being integrated. An eclectic Christianity, in particular, was early instilled to teach the slave to meekly accept his position.

Escape from slavery, not return to Africa, was the goal of Negro efforts toward freedom during this period. Despite the threat of extreme penalties and the new religion of submission, revolts were numerous--usually small and bloodily suppressed. Even more common were runaway slaves, a flow which increased to about 2,000 per year during the 30 years of the Underground Railroad (in part operated by free Negroes). And Negroes provided not only the backbone but also the ideology of the Abolitionist movement. Finally, in the Civil War itself, when the political needs of the vigorous and growing capitalist class in the North came into fundamental conflict with the continued political dominance of the Southern planters, freed slaves played an important part in the victory of the progressive forces and destruction of the slave system.

Capitalist and slave alike stood to gain from the suppression of the planter aristocracy but beyond that had no further common interests. In fact, it was the Negroes themselves who within the protective framework provided by the Reconstruction Acts carried through the social revolution and destruction of the planter class. However, the Compromise of 1877 and the formation of a powerful new bloc of Northern industrial capital and subordinate Southern Bourbons allowed the majority of ex-slaves to be forced back onto the land as tenant farmers or share-croppers.

Nevertheless, nearly a quarter of ex-slaves were able to acquire their own small farms. The small white farmers, who had also been "freed" by the destruction of the slave system, were driven to join hands with their black counterparts in the defense of their common interests against the new plantation masters. Yet this radical union--the Populist Movement--was doomed to failure. The small-farmer class itself could not be a real contender for political power in a capitalist society, while the dynamics of private farming inevitably brought about sharp economic competition among the farmers. This competition was exploited by the new political alliance of big planters, Southern capitalists and certain Northern financial interests. This bloc initiated a campaign of violent race hatred among their political opponents which succeeded in destroying the developing black-white unity. In the context of the new racism the black people were disenfranchised, stripped of all legal rights, and permanently denied access to adequate education. These setbacks were codified into a series of laws institutionalizing the rigid segregation which has been the dominant feature of the South ever since. It was the racism launched during this period which has since kept wages in the South at approximately half those of the rest of the country, which has prevented effective union organization, and which has perpetuated a crushing poverty on the land for black and white alike, though today the Southern economy has come entirely under the control of Northern capital.

By the First World War 90% of all Negroes still lived in the South, though by this time nearly one million had made their way from the land into hundreds of Southern towns. Then, with the great expansion of demand for unskilled labor unleashed by the War a vast migration of black workers into the North took place, and for the first time a sizeable portion of black people became integrated into the mainstream of American capitalist society. This integration was not to last. With the recession of 1921 the new workers found themselves

forced out of their jobs. This, along with the cold and extremely harsh conditions of Northern ghetto life--instead of the "Promised Land" which many had expected--caused thousands in despair and frustration to turn to the "Garvey Movement" built on the thesis that the Negro would never receive justice in the white man's land and calling for a separatist solution. This first important mass movement with nationalist aims folded later in the 20's due to internal contradictions, the imprisonment of its leader, and the recovery in Negro employment. Far more significant during this decade in terms of American social reality was the successful organization of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters.

During the 30's once again black workers were forced out of the economy in large numbers--but this time not alone. Radical ideologies and the value of mass struggle made a deep impact among workers of both races. The organization of the CIO--the culmination of the upsurge in labor struggle--was a joint venture and bound large numbers of the less skilled and unprotected black workers to the most advanced section of the proletariat. Yet the betrayals of the Communist Party during the war years helped wipe out Negro gains and served to discredit all radical movements, even though a sizeable number of Negro workers came into the SWP at this time. The eventual subordination of the CIO to the bourgeois Democratic Party and Cold War ideology, its affiliation with the conservative AFofL, and its failure in the context of unexampled prosperity and passivity from below to come to the defense of the Negro's struggle for freedom caused black militants to lose confidence in the organized labor movement or in the perspective of common struggle in the future. At the same time the SWP failed to take a clear position on integration versus separation and thereby lost its hundred of black workers and the opportunity to forge a significant black Trotskyist cadre. This has opened the way for a new growth in nationalist sentiment in the present period.

But the objective basis for future common struggle of black and white workers not only exists but, unlike the Populist Movement of black and white farmers, holds the promise of success, while struggle along nationalist lines is a delusion and an impossibility. The vast majority of black people--both North and South--are today workers who, along with the rest of the American working class, must sell their labor in order to secure the necessities of life to those who buy labor in order to make profit. The buyers of labor, the capitalists, are a small minority whose rule is maintained only by keeping the majority who labor for them divided and misled. The fundamental division which was created deliberately along racial lines has kept the Negro workers who entered American capitalism at the bottom, still at the bottom. The Negro people can therefore be most accurately described as an oppressed color-caste of the American working class. Ultimately their road to freedom lies only through struggle with the rest of the working class to abolish capitalism and establish in its place an egalitarian, socialist, society.

Yet the struggle of the black people of this country for freedom, while part of the struggle of the working class as a whole, is more than that struggle. Because of the generations of exceptional oppression, degradation, and humiliation, black people as a group have special needs and problems necessitating additional and special forms of struggle. It is this part of the struggle which has begun today, and from which the most active and militant sections of black people will gain a deep education and experience in the lessons of struggle. Because of their position as both the most oppressed and also the most conscious and experienced section, revolutionary black workers are slated to play an exceptional role in the coming American revolution.

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Nationalism, on the other hand, accepts present American class society and working-class divisions as unchanging and unchangeable, and from this static vantage point separation is seen as the only solution. Yet this solution is unrealizable in terms of the realities of American class society. True nationalism is, in essence, the struggle to establish an independent area for the development of a separate political economy. Historically it has come at those times and in those places, usually within a common geographical area among those with a common language and cultural heritage, when an emerging capitalist class must free itself from the shackles of a decayed feudal economy or from external imperialism in order to develop freely, i.e., in order to exploit its "own" working class. But there is no black capitalist class in America. Instead, the so-called "Black Bourgeoisie" consists in reality of a small, weak, petty-bourgeoisie catering to service needs arising out of segregation, and of a "new middle class"--which latter is itself rapidly achieving a remarkable degree of integration into the white middle-class with whom it presently has an identity of interests and outlooks far removed from those of the majority of working-class Negroes.

The present mood among black youth of the ghettos which is often labelled "nationalism" could more correctly be termed "pseudo-nationalism" since the conditions fostering genuine nationalist sentiment do not exist. It arises from growing racial consciousness and pride--a positive development and a precondition for real combativeness--coupled with bitterness at the failure of the struggle to gain significant results without support from the rest of the working class. It develops in the context of a generally correct criticism of the middle-class oriented Civil Rights leadership while an alternate, proletarian, leadership has not yet been created. The dominant feature of this pseudo-nationalism is its inability to generate a program of struggle--a further proof of its spurious nature. Such "nationalism" is divisive, for

it caters to and reinforces existing prejudices among the white section of the working class, and, insofar as it puts forward a false concept of society, it interferes with the development of class consciousness and a program to sharpen class struggle.

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The Negro struggle in America is more directly related to the class struggle than any essentially national question could be--for the Negro struggle for freedom is a fight by the working-class color caste which is the most exploited layer in this country. The falling rate of profit makes it difficult for the ruling class, even during a spurt of unequalled prosperity, to meet the demands of this super-exploited layer for improvements in the basic conditions of their lives, while the coming general crisis of American capitalism will make this area of struggle an even more critical one. Hence any steps forward in this struggle immediately pose the class question and the need for class struggle in its sharpest form.

III. THE BROAD TASKS

A Transitional Organization

The necessity for special mass organizations of strata of the working class with special needs and problems was recognized by the Comintern of Lenin and Trotsky, which worked out the tactics of the relationship of such organizations to the revolutionary party and to the class struggle as a whole. These organizations, whose programs consisted of that section of the transitional program related to the struggle of that particular section of the class, were considered a part of the revolutionary movement, and their struggles were considered to advance the overall class struggle. Such organizations are neither substitutes for nor opponents of the vanguard party of the entire class, but are linked to the vanguard party through their most conscious cadres. Examples of this type of transitional organization are militant women's

organizations, revolutionary youth leagues, and radical trade union caucuses. Such a transitional organization is necessary for Negro workers at a time when large sections of the working class are saturated with race hatred and prejudiced against the needs of black people.

With its program of transitional struggle around the present felt needs of a section of the class, the transitional organization maximizes effective struggle by the largest possible number at any particular time and level of consciousness. Such an organization, while not itself "socialist", leads those participating in its struggles to the realization that a fundamental overturn of the existing society is necessary.

In the Northern ghettos a great organizational vacuum exists. The objective basis of the traditional middle-class organizations such as CORE and the NAACP is growing ever narrower as more and more of the Negro middle-class is able to flee the ghetto. (For example, 40,000 employed Negroes moved from Harlem over the past decade into other, more desirable, parts of the city or suburbs, where their incomes were sufficient to break some of the barriers of segregation. The Harlem CORE chapter at present has only 2 or 3 active members who actually reside in Harlem!) As the objective basis of such organizations as CORE narrows, they are also growing subjectively ever less related to the needs and interests of the black majority. This is reflected in their move towards an increasingly consistent position that since the basic problems are economic, government intervention--secured by pressure on or within the Democratic Party--must be the primary aim of the Civil Rights movement. In 1964-65 this took the guise of "Liberal Coalition" politics as expounded most articulately by Bayard Rustin, and the delivery of the black vote to Johnson. This year's guise are the more militant-sounding slogans of "Black Power" and "independent political action" as interpreted by certain Northern Civil Rights leaders to mean black judges, black cops, and black Democrats

or, as regards "independent" political action, to mean a black voting bloc which will supposedly "swing" its vote to whichever capitalist party candidates promise the most to Negroes. The ultimate meaning of the latter is to build support for Bobby Kennedy's forthcoming presidential candidacy. As the old Civil Rights movement becomes more and more subordinated to the political arm of the very forces responsible for the oppression of the Negro people, it will serve increasingly to function solely as a brake on real struggle and a diversion from a revolutionary alternative.

Furthermore, these reformist organizations have already become so exposed in their ineffectiveness, even in gaining token reforms, that the government has found it necessary to create its own reformist organizations in order that some alternative to proletarian organization and program will exist. The millions of dollars poured into HARYOU-ACT have actually succeeded in confusing or buying off a large number of potential youth leaders in Harlem through a combination of money and pseudo-radical, nationalistic rhetoric. The so-called "anti-poverty" projects have also served to foster a certain amount of illusions among the ghetto masses. The witch hunt in Mobilization for Youth when some idealistic young people tried to use it as a vehicle for support to rent strikes, school boycotts and community actions against police brutality shows clearly the reality of attempting to use government fronts as instruments of real struggle.

A certain number of militant youth, out of disgust with the older organizations, have turned to the nationalist movement seeking an alternative. Though a number of nationalist organizations exist, ranging from reactionary (e.g., the Muslims) to "militant" (e.g., RAM), in no case has the militancy extended beyond rhetoric. As we saw, since these organizations are based on a false assessment of American society they have not been able to generate programs for real struggle. Consequently, despite widespread pseudo-nationalist

sentiment among ghetto youth, this sentiment has not resulted in significant organizational affiliation.

The vast black ghettos of New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, and numerous others are wide open for the formation of a proletarian mass organization of struggle. Only the smallness of the black revolutionary cadre, the temporary aftermath of police terror during "riots," and in some cases sectarianism, have kept such organizations small. The Spartacist League will do all in its power to encourage and aid such organizations, and favors the unity of all working-class oriented organizations in the ghetto.

Organization and Defense of the Ghetto

The Northern ghettos will be organized only by revolutionary ghetto organizations. The beginning of such organization is possible now, while the form remains open. One form is the building of block and neighborhood councils based on tenants councils. Experience shows that from the beginning building tenant councils must be introduced to the whole transitional program and tied to as broad an organizational base as possible if they are to achieve stability. Block and neighborhood councils of this sort would be able to speak for a whole area, put forward their demands, and call out the people in militant actions to back up these demands.

One of the most important functions of such representative popular organs would be the organization and direction of effective self-defense against police and racist violence. This might take the form of block patrols of neighborhood men, preferably union members with past military training. The need for the immediate formation of such patrols is shown by the indiscriminate beatings and killings by police during the suppression of ghetto "riots". The function of wholesale terror by the police against the ghetto masses is shown most clearly by the 1964 events in Harlem and other Northern ghettos.

At that time the ghettos were overrun and occupied by thousands of specially trained elite cops who succeeded in stopping the mounting mass struggles of 1963-64 which had been taking place increasingly over the heads of the "official" Negro leadership. Such terror will be unleashed whenever the black people approach a breakthrough in changing the fundamental conditions of their lives, and the people must be organized and prepared to protect themselves and their gains. Block patrols would also help prevent the day-to-day acts of terror against individual ghetto residents by sadistic racist cops and would serve to control the crime victimizing ghetto residents which the capitalist cops ignore or participate in. Such neighborhood patrols will become a part of that workers militia which will defend the future American revolution.

Independent Political Action

The next step in the advancement of the struggle for black freedom must be the total break of the Negro people from the Democratic Party, the preferred political weapon of the forces which profit from the suppression and super-exploitation of the Negro people. The only alternative is a new party based on the needs of the poor and working people. The formation of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party in the South, with its initial mass base, indicated the potential and feeling which exist for independent political action. However, the MFDP, as its name indicated, was not independent but was simply a means whereby certain Southern and Northern civil rights leaders hoped to pursue their ambitions within the national Democratic Party at the expense of the interests of the Negro people. This has since been recognized by the most militant sections of the Southern movement, and the party has now lost its mass support. The formation this year of the Black Panther Party in Lowndes County, Alabama, is a step forward as it was consciously organized in opposition to the Democratic Party. Yet the Black Panther Party lacks a working-class program, and its attitude on racial exclusivism is not clear.

Only by the development of a working-class program and by explicitly opening the door to support by white workers can real political independence be maintained, real gains won, and the basis laid for eventual class political unity. This unity will come about when the exploited section of the white South is driven into opposition and in desperation is compelled to forego color prejudice in order to struggle along class lines against its real enemies--the owners of land and industry.

The Spartacist League calls for the creation of a South-wide Freedom Labor Party which would serve as a tremendous impetus for similar action by Northern workers. The struggle for such a party would necessitate a rank-and-file revolt within the organized labor movement to overthrow the present labor bureaucracy. In the absence of a labor party, the Spartacist League supports all independent candidates whose programs are based on the needs of ghetto.

Negroes as Workers

In this period when primary attention has been focused on the ghetto, the importance of Negro militants within the organized labor movement must not be overlooked, especially in view of the fact that they form an immediate, existing, organizational link with the white section of the working class. Union bureaucracies will be hard put to suppress "Civil Rights" caucuses within their unions when these bureaucrats give public lip service to the Civil Rights movement, yet it can be statistically proven that these same unions discriminate against the admission and upgrading of black workers.

In addition to anti-discrimination demands, the "CR" caucuses should raise the following demands:

(1) Organize the unorganized. At the same time this demand is raised, the black worker militants should themselves begin this organization.

(2) Organization by the unions of the unemployed. Again the raising of this demand should be accompanied by the actual organization of unemployed

workers by the black worker militants. The aim is to create links between the ghetto and the labor movement and to counteract the lumpenization process proceeding apace in the ghettos among the unemployed. Welfare recipients should be organized around a program calling for full employment and their organizations affiliated with welfare worker unions.

(3) For a Sliding Scale of Wages Controlled by Labor. All workers are being hurt hard by inflation caused by the war in Vietnam. The bourgeoisie's attempts to freeze wages to save profits must be countered by the demand that wages be scaled according to the purchasing power of the dollar, with the power of the sliding scale in the hands of workers' committees, not bourgeois agencies.

(4) Fight for the Shorter Work Week. The rate of Negro unemployment is twice that of white workers, and the gap is increasing. Yet white workers also face the threat of unemployment due to automation. The struggle for more jobs for all, rather than competition between black and white workers for a few jobs here or there, can unite workers. At the same time, the "shorter work week" demand offers the opportunity of demanding racial equality in union hiring without making the white worker fear for his job. At all times we oppose using the Government to "integrate" unions, and rely solely on the working class for this task. Such ruling class tactics as decertification of discriminating unions will not aid black workers but are intended to destroy union independence, foster division among union members, and worsen the position of all workers.

But for Negroes the fight for full employment at decent wages is not just the key to better housing, schools, etc., but a fundamental and necessary defense. For if black people are forced out of any economic role, if black people as a group become lumpenized, they will be in a position to be used as a

scapegoat and totally wiped out during a future social crisis--just as the Jews in Germany were--without affecting the economy. The fight must be fought now to maintain Negroes as part of the working class.

The struggle for this program within the labor unions will entail a simultaneous fight for full union democracy and ultimately a struggle for leadership against the present labor lieutenants of capital. The most essential feature of this struggle will be the break of the labor movement from all its present ties to the capitalist state.

IV. THE SOUTH

The Southern economy is today controlled entirely by Northern capital and is an integral and essential part of American capitalism. This is succinctly expressed by Richard Kirk in his resolution "Revolutionary Integration" submitted to the 1963 SWP Convention as a minority position:

"...Wall Street and the Democratic and Republican parties created the South, need the Southern system, support and bolster it economically, politically and ideologically, and would collapse if anything happened to it. The nerve center of Southern racism is not tropical neurosis, not the backward needs of a plantation economy, not social tradition. The source and patron and chief beneficiary is U.S. Capital."

The contradictions of capitalism culminating in the tendency of the rate of profit to fall necessitate the maintenance of this vast area of low wage, non-unionized labor as a source of super-profits, and prohibit either any fundamental improvement in living standards for Southern workers whatever their color or any real change in the Southern political system of terror against Negroes. The problem of the South is more than merely one problem among many in the capitalist system. U.S. capitalism can oftentimes remove some problems through reforms in the system, always of course at the expense of exacerbating problems elsewhere. But the Southern system lies at the very heart of American capitalism; it cannot be removed without destroying capitalism

itself. Yet capitalism in the course of its own development has now created in the South a Negro proletariat larger than the rural Negro population and brought together black and white workers in the social process of production. Thereby the objective basis is laid by capitalism itself for a future revolutionary struggle against the inhuman Southern system.

The Southern Struggle

Because only a direct anti-capitalist struggle can eradicate the Southern system, any struggle short of that must soon either turn against capitalism or else fall into a swamp of hopeless reformism and idealism.

Perhaps the most critical problem of the Southern Negro struggle has been its lack of such theory. Much energy and much blood have been sacrificed, but the gains have been few. The struggle has gone slowly as the movement has painstakingly groped its way along, testing this tactic and that, this demand and that--hammering out by trial-and-error a program and method of struggle which is still in flux.

Without any theoretical weapons, the movement first struck out blindly but boldly at the most immediate signs of oppression--segregation in public transportation, eating places, educational institutions; etc. The basic demand was equality within the system, and so was entirely reformist, while the method of struggle was dominated by non-violence. This struggle reached its height in the early 1960's with the sit-ins, Freedom rides, Old Miss confrontation, etc. A good deal of publicity was achieved, but the system was basically untouched. As if to indicate the still basically reformist nature of the demands, the bourgeoisie adopted the entire Civil Rights program and called it the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

But the civil rights movement was beginning to learn several important lessons. It was learning that one cannot merely make demands--one must have

political power. What kind of political power was still to be learned. The emphasis was on registration of Negroes for the vote and the breakdown of racist barriers to the vote. Once again, though, the bourgeoisie adopted a basically reformist though useful demand, this time calling it the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

But the bourgeoisie in the era of imperialism is so decadent, so dependent upon reactionaries, that it can no longer really grant even simple bourgeois justice. At this point, then, the civil rights movement was pushed outside the realms of reformism by the bourgeoisie itself. At the 1964 Democratic Party Convention where the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party tried to enter the regular Democratic Party, the bourgeoisie rejected this chance to absorb the Southern leadership and so pushed the leadership into its present more militant phase. Stokely Carmichael describes this new turn in an interview in the June 4th issue of the National Guardian:

- Q. Are there lessons you have learned from the MFDP?
- A. We certainly have. We learned number one, that the national Democratic Party doesn't care about justice or equality, they just care about power. We went to them, the Freedom Democratic Party, and said: "Now here we are. We've organized in the state. We haven't shot anybody. We haven't lynched anybody who's tried to vote. We support your platform. We're willing to sign the loyalty oath. And we support your candidates, Johnson and Humphrey." The white Democratic Party [of Mississippi] came to them and said "We don't support your candidates; if Negroes try to vote, we're going to shoot and kill them, we don't support your platform and we ain't going to sign your loyalty oath." And we said: "Now which one will you seat?" And they said: "We have to seat those white guys, but we'll let two of you go with them so you can become like them." And we said we didn't want any part of that.

The Failure of Reformism and the Black Power Movement in the South.

In its recent history, then, the Negro movement in the South was inevitably confronted with two roads: reform vs. revolution, liberalism vs. communism. Gradually, through trial-and-error, the movement saw the need for a genuine social overturn. But the well-hated "white liberal" who dominated the

earlier movement wanted merely to reform the system without upsetting it, for a real social overturn would threaten his class position. This attitude was held not only by the white liberals, but also by the petty-bourgeois Negro leaders like Roy Wilkins and Martin Luther King.

The vanguard of the civil rights movement sensed the inadequacy of reformism, and its suspicions were empirically confirmed by the experience of the MFDP. Hence it has rejected the liberal or reformist solution and is now groping towards revolution. This healthy though empirical rejection of reformism has its center in SNCC and the "black power" movement. In the present context then, the Southern "black power" movement is a militant left splinter of the civil rights movement which has developed as a reaction against reformism and liberalism.

The new active adherents of "black power" are usually the most militant elements who have adopted the term partly because of its militant sound, and partly because of its repugnance to white liberals. Thus the "black power" movement contains a number of radical points and methods which have caused the bourgeois press to shower vicious abuse on it. The "black power" advocates profess to reject middle class values and desire human values; they generally favor independent political action such as SNCC's work in Lowndes County; they see the connection between the Negro struggle at home and anti-imperialist struggles abroad, as in SNCC's recent statement on Vietnam; and they discuss the use of armed self-defense against racist terror. In short, the "black power" movement is a groping for solutions outside the framework set up by the capitalist class.

This is not to say that the movement has become consciously anti-capitalist. It is caught at the moment in that twilight zone between reformism and revolution, having tested and rejected the former but unsure of how to go about the latter. Still lacking Marxist theory and a conscious orientation towards

the working class, and constantly surrounded by bourgeois propaganda, the movement may yet fall prey to bourgeois politicians with radical phrases or else become hopelessly isolated and demoralized.

Another facet of the "black power" movement is the proposition that black militants should organize black people and forget about whites for now, since most whites are racist, and that it's a white man's job to organize whites. But since the achievement of Negro liberation depends on the radicalization of white workers, the Negro vanguard must do everything possible to transmit to the white working class the class consciousness which it has gained in bitter struggle. Every class conscious white worker means a new ally for the Negro struggle. The Negro vanguard must not make the task of radicalizing white workers more difficult than it need be; at all times, the vanguard must make crystal clear that it is anxious to build an integrated anti-capitalist movement, North and South. The slogan "black power" must be clearly defined in class, not racial, terms, for otherwise the "black power" movement may become the black wing of the Democratic Party in the South. The possibility of this is indicated by Stokely Carmichael's endorsement of the so-called "National Conference for New Politics," a Social-Democratic front group which is leaning towards Robert Kennedy for "peace" candidate for President in 1968.

Advancing the Southern Struggle

At this stage of the Southern struggle where the most militant elements are groping for new solutions to the problems reformism is demonstrably not able to overcome, the Spartacist League, as the only professed revolutionary organization with any sort of base in the South, is in a unique position to intervene in the movement to advance the development of consciously anti-capitalist struggle.

In addition to the programmatic points discussed earlier under "Broad Tasks", additional demands are pertinent to the Southern struggle.

(1) For A Southern Organizing Drive backed by Organized Labor. Organized labor is being hurt as many companies move South, or threaten to move South, to tap the vast source of cheap, unorganized Southern labor. Black workers meanwhile suffer from low wages and high insecurity due to lack of unions. A labor-backed Southern organizing drive would thus help both black and white workers. Such a drive would necessitate the removal of the present right-wing labor bureaucracy which is tied hand and foot to the capitalist class. The demand for a Southern drive is complementary to the demand for a Freedom Labor Party, and, if achieved, would lay the material basis for such a party by creating an organized Southern base.

(2) Armed Self-Defense. While this slogan is also applicable in the North, the demand has a more immediate urgency in the South and is already being acted upon. The Deacons for Defense and Justice is a tremendous step forward for the Negro struggle, not only because it saves lives, but because it raises the level of consciousness of the civil rights movement by encouraging independent action and discouraging reliance upon the institutions of the bourgeois state. However, the Deacons exhibit a curious duality: on the one hand, highly militant, paramilitary tactics are used to protect their struggle; however, their political perspectives are characterized by comparatively mild, anti-discrimination politics. This contradictory character will eventually result in a crisis which will reveal the urgent need for revolutionary theory and program along with self-defense if the social liberation of the black people is to be achieved. The Spartacist League counterposes the formation of self-defense organizations to the demand for Federal intervention which would not only preserve Southern racist "law and order" but also the status quo.

(3) For a Workers United Front Against Federal Intervention. As the bourgeoisie loses political control of the working class, it relies more and more on direct Government controls, sometimes thinly disguised as "arbitration panels," "wage guideposts," etc. In the recent Machinists' strike a naked anti-strike bill was almost passed. In 1963 Federal troops were used to put down a virtual insurrection of black workers in Birmingham. All workers have a vital interest in opposing Federal intervention.

(4) The Struggle for Democratic Rights and the Formation of Representative Bodies. Even within the framework of bourgeois political democracy the existing governmental bodies in the South are unrepresentative, and could be termed "illegal", as in no Southern state do even half of the otherwise eligible Negroes have the right to vote. This provides a legal front for bodies selected through "mock elections" and other similar devices to begin claiming authority and exercising certain state functions. Such bodies would need the protection of organized defense groups such as the Deacons.

(5) For the Right of Inspection of Jails by Anyone at Anytime. Especially in the South the jails serve as local torture chambers, where Negroes are completely at the mercy of sadistic cops. The right of inspection would considerably alleviate this suffering and weaken the terrorist power of the police.

BLACK WORKERS AND THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

There is one state power in this country, and its destruction will only be accomplished by a united working class under the leadership of a single revolutionary vanguard party. The SWP's concept of the continued division of the working class along color lines with two separate vanguards which would coordinate their activities in a revolutionary period would be like having two command centers during a war, issuing separate orders and disorganization and confusion in the face of the strongest and most united

ruling class in history. The struggle against this concept of a federated vanguard is similar to the struggle carried on by Lenin and Trotsky at the second congress of the Russian Social Democratic Party against the Jewish Bund's demand for autonomy within the party and for their sole right to work among Jewish workers. Trotsky argued that to grant such autonomy to one group would in effect be recognizing the right of autonomy of any particular section of the working class, would be the institution of a federated party and the destruction of a centralized organization, in addition to an explicit challenge to an internationalist outlook. As it is the goal of Socialism to sweep away national and racial barriers, a socialist organization could have no part in erecting such barriers. Furthermore, the perpetuation of a "dual vanguard" concept within the United States would actually prevent the struggle from reaching a revolutionary level. Only common struggle for common aims can unite the working class and overcome the lifelong racial prejudices of American workers.

Our immediate goal is to blacken the Spartacist League. We aim not only to recruit Negroes--itself a short-cut to the working class in this period--but to develop these black workers into Trotskyist cadres capable of carrying a leadership role in organizing the black masses and within the League itself. As Trotsky said:

"We must say to the conscious elements of the Negroes that they are convoked by the historic development to become a vanguard of the working class...If it happens that we...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 be only a lie."

In recruiting and holding a Negro cadre there are several problems:

(1) Color hostility. Only the demonstrated determination of the Spartacist League to carry through its revolutionary tasks will convince black militants to join and remain in what is at present a predominantly white organization. To avoid disappointment and demoralization, we must make clear to our

black recruits that only the patient construction and theoretical preparation of a revolutionary vanguard party will produce significant results.

(2) Class and educational differences. At present most white members of Spartacist are from a middle-class background or from a more privileged section of the working class than the black workers we will be recruiting. In addition whites in America as a whole have access to more and better formal education than Negroes. These factors may create a certain social gulf which will only be overcome through conscious, common struggle, and the education of all our members in Marxist theory and practice.

(3) Daily oppression and the problems of life. The struggle for livelihood and the immediate problems of daily life create additional pressures on our black members which draw them away from full participation in the revolutionary movement. Our black comrades should be aided in gaining job skills that will make the immediate day-to-day problems of living less pressing and free them for revolutionary activity and concentration.

(4) Over-Activism. Because the Negro struggle is the most active struggle in the country today, our Negro members will at this period be the most active party members. The demands of the mass organizations in which they will be participating may tend to occupy so much time that little is left for the study of Marxist theory and the lessons of past class struggle. If there is not a balance between these two forms of activity our goal of creating a black Trotskyist cadre to intervene in the mass struggle and lift it to a higher consciousness of its anti-capitalist goals will not be realized. The Spartacist League is confident that it will be able to overcome these problems and create an integrated revolutionary vanguard capable of reaching and eventually uniting in struggle the entire class.

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The victory of the socialist revolution in this country will be achieved through the united struggle of black and white workers under the leadership of the revolutionary vanguard party. In the course of this struggle unbreakable bonds will be forged between the two sections of the working class. The success of the struggle will place the Negro people in a position to insure at last the end of slavery, racism, and super-exploitation. Side by side with their white brothers they will administer the building of the new society.

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