

PARTY BUILDER

SWP Organizational Discussion Bulletin

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PROBLEMS OF EDUCATION

by Gus Horowitz

Following are some thoughts about the problems of cadre education in the party at the present time.

From the point of view of party needs, education is not an abstract end in itself. For us, the goal of education is to adequately arm the party membership with an understanding of our goals and basic program; from this flows the ability to make decisions for the purpose of action.

Our educational program takes place today during a period of rapid recruitment and intense political activity. This situation does not in any way lessen the importance of education for us. To the contrary, we recognize that only well-educated, critical-minded cadres will be able to live up to the political opportunities and responsibilities that the party faces at the present time.

The problem of education boils down to the following: to develop an adequately educated cadre, without turning away from the intense political activity that needs to be carried out.

There are three major ways in which the party membership is educated in our program.

First is the political education that develops by participating in the mass movement, attending party meetings, undertaking internal party assignments, attending forums, reading *The Militant*, *International Socialist Review*, *Intercontinental Press*, etc. This education arising out of experience flows naturally from political activity. To be really educated, a party member must be politically active.

Second is the self-education that develops as a result of individual study and discussion with other comrades. This form of education cannot really be organized; however comrades can be inspired to further their self-education by the attitude set by the political leadership in organizing the work of the party. Continuing self-education by all comrades should be encouraged; in fact it should be considered a duty of party membership.

Third is the education that develops from the organized educational program of the party. Some comrades learn best from lectures, from discussions, or from guidance in choosing reading material and topics to study. In this way, comrades can make use of the collective experience of the entire revolutionary movement.

Each of these methods of education is important and should not be neglected. However, the major concern of the education department of the party, nationally and on a local level, is the third method: organized education.

The responsibility for organized education in the party rests with the political leadership, on both a branch and national level. Organized education is as much a component of party activity as are *Militant* sales, election campaigns, forums, finances, or participation in the mass movements. To be successful, the organization of education, like any other party activity, must be consciously and adequately led by the party leadership. Classes must be well-planned to insure that the party membership is educated on the most important political questions. They must be realistically scheduled so that conflicts with other activities are kept to a minimum. They must be politically motivated to insure maximum attendance and study.

There have generally been four major methods of or-

ganized education in the party: 1) socialist educational conferences; 2) branch educationals; 3) summer schools; 4) classes held during the non-summer months.

All four of these educational methods are useful. However these four methods have varying degrees of value.

The socialist educational conferences are usually held in each area once in the fall and once in the spring. These conferences are in reality more like a concentrated series of forums than a class for which much advance preparation is done. The primary value of these conferences is to help educate new members and recruit contacts. Their value in terms of intensive cadre education is limited.

The short educationals held after branch meetings are also useful, but by their nature they cannot substitute for intensive classes. Discussion time is very limited, and in-depth study of a book or topic is rarely possible. Because of the continual needs of current political activity, the educationals scheduled after branch meetings often must be postponed. One of the best ways to use the educational part of the branch meeting, in fact, is for an extended political report on some major area of party activity.

The summer schools have been the most effective means of intensive cadre education developed to date. The majority of SWP and YSA members attend the summer school classes consistently. YSAers in every region usually come in to one of the regional centers for the summer schools. A considerable amount of reading preparation is done for the classes.

The key to the success of the summer schools is that they are treated as a central area of party work. Political leadership is given to the planning of the summer schools and the preparation of the classes. Considerable thought is given to the program of study. The summer schools are made an integrated part of political activity so that classes are held regularly, rather than being subject to postponement or cancellation because of pressing political activity in other areas of work.

But the summer schools alone are insufficient to meet the educational needs of a rapidly expanding party. Some form of intensive cadre education should be going on throughout the year. Like the summer schools, this education should involve all party and YSA members.

The party has had a great deal of experience with classes that are held in non-summer months, and there are many problems to overcome. For example, classes are sometimes curtailed, postponed or cancelled during major campaigns such as antiwar and abortion actions, subscription drives, or election campaigns. Even if such classes are held, it is often difficult for many comrades to attend because of the requirements of other political activities. Sometimes the course of study suffers because the branch leadership is unable to devote adequate attention to the organization of the classes. Some classes are so arranged so that it is difficult to maintain a high attendance, for example, a class lasting for 8 or 10 sessions. As a result, one of the biggest problems during the non-summer months is to develop a realistic method of intensive cadre education that involves the majority of the membership and that

will entail study of the major political questions.

During this past year we have experimented with a new method of education during the non-summer months. It has had varying degrees of success, so far, but in my opinion it can be uniformly successful and should be continued.

The idea is to set aside for concentrated education a *short* period of time, no more than two or three weeks, when there are no other major political campaigns. During this short period, education should be made a central area of party activity. To be realistic, the classes should last for no more than three or four sessions. This is adequate time to study a particular topic or even a book. All members would be expected to prepare for the classes and attend them, just as in a summer school. These short periods of intensive education can be held in the fall and once in the spring. The key to the success of these classes will be the political leadership they receive. If they are motivated politically and organized effectively by the branch leadership, just as the summer schools are, then they have a good chance of involving the majority of members in an intensive class series. While such classes cannot do the same job as the summer schools, they offer, in my opinion, the most realistic method of intensive cadre education during the fall, winter and spring.

This idea does not cut across the other types of classes that are also held in different areas. Extended classes or classes on specialized topics can also be held at other times.

* * *

It is hoped that the branches make maximum use of the educational materials prepared by the National Education Department for classes and for self-education. These materials include Education for Socialists bulletins, study outlines, and tape recordings.

The Education for Socialists bulletins bring together material on a given topic that is difficult to obtain or of primarily internal party interest. Some of these bulletins have been published for use in specific classes suggested by the National Education Department. A list of the bulletins presently available is included in this *Builder*. More will be published as our needs require.

The study outlines prepared by the National Education Department are designed to meet the major educational needs of the party at the present time. The topics selected, and the readings and questions suggested, have all been chosen with care. It is hoped that these study outlines will be used to the maximum by the branches in preparing summer schools and other intensive classes. Also included in this *Builder* is a compilation of some of the study outlines developed over the recent period.

As can be seen, the Education for Socialists bulletins

and the course outlines can be used for self-education, as well as for organized classes.

The National Education Department welcomes suggestions for additional Education for Socialists bulletins, as well as suggested additions or changes in the current study outlines or Education for Socialists bulletins. In this way, the party nationally can take advantage of the experience with education in each branch.

The third material available from the National Education Department is the tape library. The tapes fall into two categories. Some can be utilized as the "lecture" in a class on a certain topic. Others, however, are best used for individual study or as background material for the teachers of classes on the same or related topics. It is best if someone is assigned to listen to a given tape in advance before assessing whether or not it can be adequately used before an entire group. In some cases, there are technical defects with the recording, while in others, the tape may be dated or may not be suitable for lengthy group listening.

The National Education Department also coordinates trips to the local areas by party speakers. It is advisable, however, for each branch to rely primarily on local educators to teach the classes and organize the discussions which are based on preparatory study by the comrades. National speakers are best utilized for high points in the summer schools or other educational programs. Their inspiring talks can help round out well-organized programs of intensive study organized by the branches.

* * *

Finally, just a few comments on the nature of the topics and reading matter selected for intensive cadre education. To be specific, what is the relationship between study of the "classics" and study of current political questions? Should one or the other be the focus of study?

In reality, there need be no contradiction between the two. The "classics" are important for us, not so much as historical documents for academic study, but because they shed light on the major political issues we face today and enrich our understanding of them. In my opinion, the classics are best studied in connection with current political questions. Thus, the study of the united front vs. the popular front should include study of "classic" works of Lenin and Trotsky, and examples such as the Spanish revolution, in combination with study of the Allende regime or other current questions which are important for us to be crystal-clear on today.

As a matter of fact, the study of any major current question, pursued thoroughly, will necessitate study of "classic" works. This seems to me to be the most relevant, interesting, and educational way to study the "classics."

June 1, 1972

THE NATIONAL TAPE SERVICE

by Rich Lesnik

A useful supplement to the Education for Socialists bulletin series, course outlines, and other reading material used for education, is the use of tape recordings.

The National Tape Service includes the latest educationals and speeches of use for education. A list of the tapes available is appended.

While tapes should not be viewed as replacements for lectures or reading material, they often play an important and productive supplementary role in an educational series.

An example is Harry Ring's eight sessions on the history of the SWP. To date there is no written record of post-World War II party history, and this tape offers a comprehensive and concise body of material of use to teachers in the preparation of classes on party history.

Another example: except for *Defending the Revolutionary Party and Its Perspectives*, by James P. Cannon (Education for Socialists bulletin), the written material on the Cochran fight is not easily accessible. The recording, *The Cochran Fight on Tape*, provides an informative view of the Cochran fight by Al Hansen, who was involved first-hand in the fight, as well as speeches by James

P. Cannon during the fight. Together they provide useful supplementary material for both class preparation and for the class series itself.

The same is true for every other tape available through the tape service, as a short glance over the list will bear out.

In the future we intend to expand the number of tapes available to the branches, locals, and sympathizers. Most branches now own tape recorders, and it is a regular practice to record forums, classes, discussions, etc., in addition to playing tapes for comrades and contacts who express an interest.

Part of this projected expansion will be dependent on our receiving tapes on a regular basis from the branches and YSA locals. Up to now this has been done only sporadically. Our procedure is first to decide whether we can use a given tape, then, if we can, to copy it and send the copy back to the local. We then use the original to make further copies as the tape is ordered by others.

The expansion of the use of tapes for educational purposes should figure in future programs, and we will provide information on new tapes as they become available.

June 13, 1972

EDUCATION FOR SOCIALIST BULLETINS June, 1972

ASPECTS OF SOCIALIST ELECTION POLICY

Edited with an introduction by Doug Jenness; covers attitude of revolutionary party to election campaigns other than its own. 87 pp. \$1.35

THE CHINESE REVOLUTION, parts I, II, and III by Peng Shu-tse and Peng Pi-lan. Part I contains biographical material on the authors, and several articles discussing the events leading up to the seizure of power by the Chinese Communist Party in 1949. 54 pp. \$.85

Part II contains two articles, the first on the "People's Communes" period of the Mao regime, and the second

on the nature of the Mao regime and the political tasks for Trotskyists which flow from it. 54 pp. \$.85

Part III contains several articles on the so-called "Cultural Revolution." 54 pp. \$.85

THE CHINESE REVOLUTION AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

Articles and resolutions from the SWP discussion on the Chinese Revolution of 1949. 47 pp. \$.75

CLASS PARTY AND STATE AND THE EASTERN EUROPEAN REVOLUTION

Documents from the SWP and Fourth International

- discussion of Yugoslavia and the "Buffer Zone." \$1.00
- DEFENDING THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY AND ITS PERSPECTIVES**
by James P. Cannon; speeches and articles from the 1953 Cochran fight in the SWP. 31 pp. \$.50
- DEFENSE POLICIES AND PRINCIPLES OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY**
Article by George Novack; resolution of SWP National Committee, February 1950. 24 pp. \$.35
- THE DEVELOPMENT AND DISINTEGRATION OF WORLD STALINISM**
Documents of the Fourth International, 1954-1963. 77 pp. \$1.25
- THE NATURE OF THE CUBAN REVOLUTION: Record of a Controversy**
Articles and resolutions from the SWP discussion on the Cuban Revolution, from 1960-1963. \$.80
- THE ORGANIZATIONAL CHARACTER OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY**
Resolution of the 21st National Convention of the SWP. 24 pp. \$.35
- RECENT TRENDS IN THE LABOR MOVEMENT**
by Farrell Dobbs; articles selected from *The Militant*, 1966-1967. 31 pp. \$.50
- THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY**
by Milton Alvin; a review of four books by James P. Cannon. 15 pp. \$.25
- THE ROLE OF THE TRANSITIONAL PROGRAM IN THE REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS: Three Talks by George Novack**
Presented at the Socialist Activists and Educational Conference, Oberlin, Ohio 1971. 22 pp. \$.40
- SELECTED DOCUMENTS ON SWP TRADE UNION POLICY**
Contains "Class Struggle Policy in the Unions" (Trade Union Resolution adopted by 16th National Convention of the SWP, 1954); "Memorandum on Trade Union Policy" adopted by May, 1968 Plenum of SWP National Committee; "Black Caucuses in the Trade Unions," adopted by Political Committee, SWP, April 18, 1969; SWP Political Committee Statement on Nixon's Wage Freeze, August 30, 1971; Letter to SWP Organizers and NC Members, November 10, 1971, from Barry Sheppard and Frank Lovell. 21 pp. \$.40
- THE STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATIONAL PRINCIPLES OF THE PARTY**
by Farrell Dobbs; text of three talks given at the 1970 Socialist Activists and Educational Conference, Oberlin Ohio. \$.65
- STUDIES IN AFRO-AMERICAN HISTORY**
Articles by John Belisle, George Novack on Black Slavery and Capitalism; The Rise and Fall of the Cotton Kingdom. 55 pp. \$.80
- UNITED FRONT VS. PEOPLE'S FRONT: selected readings**
Contains: "Some Comments on Party Policy and Tactics in the Antiwar Movement," by Tom Kerry (excerpt); "The Tactics of the United Front," by Leon Trotsky; "For Committees of Action— Not the 'People's Front,'" by Leon Trotsky; "The People's Front: The New Betrayal," by James Burnham (excerpt). 24 pp. \$.40
- AVAILABLE IN JULY, 1972:
- THE ANATOMY OF STALINISM**
by Tom Kerry. This bulletin, for internal sale only, contains an article based on two lectures at the Socialist Activists and Educational Conference at Oberlin, Ohio in 1970, and has an appendix of an excerpt from an article by Joseph Hansen, originally printed in the *International Information Bulletin* entitled "The Difference Between the Two Documents on China." 16 pp. \$.25

AVAILABLE FROM THE NATIONAL TAPE SERVICE OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

BUILDING THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY, by Farrell Dobbs

Two lectures given in 1966 at the West Coast Vacation School of the SWP.
Time: 2 hours. 2- and 4-track, 1 reel.

\$ 4.50

THE MINNEAPOLIS STRIKES AND THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY, by Farrell Dobbs

One of the principle leaders of the 1934 truckdrivers strikes, Dobbs places the strikes in their social and political context, and draws lessons which are invaluable to socialists today. Four lectures, 6 hours.
2-track, 2 reels; 4-track, 1 reel.

4-track \$ 5.00
2-track \$ 9.00

RECENT TRENDS IN THE LABOR MOVEMENT, by Farrell Dobbs

Four lectures supplementing the Education for Socialists bulletin of the same title. Time: 4 hours. 2-track, 2 reels; 4-track, 1 reel.

4-track \$ 4.00
2-track \$ 7.00

THE LENINIST PARTY, by Les Evans and Frank Lovell

Four lectures given in New York, 1970, covering program, organization and party institutions. Time: 4 hours. 2-track, 2 reels; 4-track, 1 reel.

4-track \$ 4.25
2-track \$ 8.50

AN INFORMAL HISTORY OF THE ANTIWAR MOVEMENT, by Fred Halstead

Six lectures given in New York, 1970, beginning with early SANE and covering the entire period prior to the June 1970 Cleveland Emergency Conference. Laced throughout with humor and lively personal anecdotes.
2-track, 3 reels; 4-track, 2 reels. Time: 6 hours.

4-track \$ 7.50
2-track \$11.00

ORGANIZATIONAL PROCEDURES OF THE SWP, by Bea Hansen

An educational talk by Bea Hansen, and memorial meeting for her in New York, March 1969. Talks are by Betsey Barnes and Joseph Hansen. 2- and 4-track, 1 reel.

\$ 3.50

THE ROLE OF THE INTELLECTUAL IN THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY, by Joseph Hansen

Part of a series on Letters from Prison. Discusses strengths and weaknesses of intellectuals, giving historical examples. Tape includes the discussion period, with comment by George Novack.
2- and 4-track, 1 reel. Time: 1½ hours.

\$ 3.50

THE THEORY OF PERMANENT REVOLUTION, by Joseph Hansen

Two lectures, dealing with (1) the theory itself, and (2) the questions emanating from the Cuban Revolution with respect to the theory. Time: 2 hours
2- and 4-track, 1 reel.

\$ 3.50

HISTORY OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL TO 1945, by Tom Kerry

Three lectures discussing the reasons for the formation of the Fourth International, beginning with the Leninist Third International, and concluding with a discussion of the role of the CP in the American labor movement during World War II, and the SWP's counterposition to that role.
2-track, 2 reels; 4-track, 1 reel. Time: 4 hours.

4-track \$ 5.00
2-track \$ 8.00

TROTSKYISM AND LABOR IN AMERICA, by Tom Kerry

Four lectures given in 1963 discussing the development of the American class struggle. Kerry starts with the 6th World Congress of the Third International, discusses the flip-flops of Stalinism, their effect on American radical and labor movements, and ends with a critique of the labor bureaucracy, the Kennedy Administration, and presentation of the tasks of the revolutionary party. 2-track, 2 reels; 4-track, 1 reel.
Time: 5 hours.

4-track \$ 5.00
2-track \$ 8.00

LABOR'S GIANT STEP, by Tom Kerry

Four lectures discussing the pre-history and history of the CIO. Also includes a talk on "The Progressive Labor Party: Origins and Direction." Five lectures in all. Time: 4½ hours. 2-track, 2 reels; 4-track, 1 reel.

4-track \$ 5.00
2-track \$ 8.00

THE NEW LEFT: Organizational Methods and Concepts, and
LENINIST ORGANIZATIONAL CONCEPTS, both by Tom Kerry

Two talks, the first dealing with the "New Left," the second with modern application of Leninist organizational concepts. 2- and 4-track, 1 reel.

\$ 3.50

MALCOLM X ON TAPE: Speeches by Malcolm X

Everything by Malcolm X available for release by the National Tape Service, including discussion periods, two interviews, and four short memorial speeches given in 1965 and 1966. Included are: "The Black Revolution," "Interview by The Young Socialist," "What's Behind the Harlem 'Hate Gang' Scare?" "Prospects for Freedom in 1965," "Malcolm X on WBAI," and others. 4-track, 1 reel; 2-track, 2 reels.

2-track \$14.00
4-track \$ 6.50

SOCIALISM, UTOPIAN AND SCIENTIFIC, by George Novack

Four lectures discussing not only the work of the same title by Engels, but also the evolution and key concepts of Marxist philosophy. Time: 4 hours. 2-track, 2 reels; 4-track, 1 reel.

2-track \$ 7.00
4-track \$ 4.00

A HISTORY OF THE SWP, by Harry Ring

Ten lectures covering the history of the SWP from 1933-1939 and 1945-1965. Time: 10 hours. 2-track, 4 reels; 4-track, 2 reels.

2-track \$16.00
4-track \$ 9.00

COMMENTS ON THE EVOLUTION OF THE SWP POSITION ON BLACK NATIONALISM,
by Robert Vernon

Three lectures by Vernon, with discussion periods, and a 30-minute commentary by George Breitman. Time: 3½ hours. 2-track, 2 reels; 4-track, 1 reel.

2-track \$ 7.00
4-track \$ 4.00

SEMINARS ON WOMEN'S LIBERATION: Nine Talks

Covers origins of women's oppression, the family, history of the struggle for women's rights in the United States, Black and Third World women, women in the post-capitalist countries, roots of the current stage of the women's liberation struggle. 2-track, 3 reels; 4-track, 2 reels.

2-track \$13.50
4-track \$ 9.50

THE CHINESE REVOLUTION AND MAOISM, by Theodore Edwards

Lectures on the development of the Third Chinese Revolution, the rise of Maoism and post-revolutionary China. 2-track, 2 reels; 4-track, 1 reel.

2-track \$ 9.00
4-track \$ 4.50

PROBLEMS IN THE ANTIWAR MOVEMENT and

EDUCATIONAL AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, both by Peter Camejo

Given in June 1970 and December 1969 respectively, these two lectures deal with key questions before the antiwar and radical movements at those times. 2-track, 2 reels; 4-track, 1 reel.

2-track \$ 9.00
4-track \$ 4.00

THE COCHRAN FIGHT ON TAPE: Speeches by Al Hansen and James P. Cannon

An indispensable aid to the study of this important political fight. Should be listened to in conjunction with Defending the Revolutionary Party and Its Perspectives (available from SWP National Education Department for \$.50). The series begins with three lectures by Al Hansen which set the political and social context for the speeches by Cannon, who is known as one of the finest orators of American labor. 4-track, 3 reels; 2-track, 5 reels.

2-track \$20.00
4-track \$12.00

THE TRANSITIONAL PROGRAM

(A Six-Class Series)

Summer 1972

Class 1. FOUNDATIONS

Reading: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, The Communist Manifesto

Leon Trotsky, The Communist Manifesto Today

(both are published together in a Pathfinder Press edition, from which the page numbers below are taken)

QUESTIONS:

1. In the beginning of Part II, the Communist Manifesto says: "The Theoretical conclusions of the Communists are in no way based on ideas or principles that have been invented, or discovered, by this or that would-be reformer. They merely express, in general terms, actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes." (page 27-28) How is this reflected in the way the Manifesto is written, in its analysis, and in its political conclusions?

2. In the beginning of Part IV, the Communist Manifesto says: "The Communists fight for the attainment of the immediate aims, for the enforcement of the momentary interests of the working class; but in the movement of the present, they also represent and take care of the future of the movement." (page 43) Explain what this means. How is this concept incorporated into the Manifesto?

3. What is the role of the working class in the socialist revolution? Why?

4. Is the Communist Manifesto an international program? Why?

5. What does the Manifesto say about women and the family?

6. What does the Manifesto say about national oppression?

7. What does the Manifesto say about democracy?

8. What are the main ideas in the Manifesto that remain valid today, and what are the main changes that have to be made?

Class 2. THE PURPOSE OF THE TRANSITIONAL PROGRAM

Reading: Leon Trotsky, The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International [The Transitional Program] Pathfinder Press. pages 4-9; 40-46.

"Discussion" and "More Discussion" with Trotsky on the Transitional Program. Writings of Leon Trotsky 1938-39. Pathfinder Press. pages 43-45; 48-52.

George Novack, first talk from The Role of the Transitional Program in the Revolutionary Process (Education for Socialists bulletin, pages 4-10)

Pierre Frank, "The Transitional Program" in Key Problems of the Transition from Capitalism to Socialism, Pathfinder Press, pages 5-16.

Supplementary: Rosa Luxemburg, "Speech to the Founding Convention of the German Communist Party" available in Rosa Luxemburg Speaks, Pathfinder Press, pages 400-427.

V.I. Lenin, "The Threatening Catastrophe and How to Fight It," available in various forms, including Collected Works volume 25, pages 319-365.

George Novack, "The Problem of Transitional Formations," in Key Problems of the Transition from Capitalism to Socialism, Pathfinder Press, pages 17-34.

QUESTIONS:

1. What is the "crisis of leadership"?
2. What is the ultimate aim of the transitional program?
3. What does Trotsky mean when he says that the program flows from objective conditions rather than subjective ones? Why is this so? What was the objective situation in the United States at the time the Transitional Program was written? What was the subjective situation? What is the objective situation today? The subjective situation?
4. What is the main function of the Transitional Program? What does the term, "transitional" mean? Why don't the reformists or sectarians have any use for a transitional program?
5. What are the three categories of demands in the Transitional Program? Give examples of each.
6. What is wrong with the classical social democratic division of the program into a "minimum program" and a "maximum program"?
7. Are the demands in the Transitional Program realizable under capitalism?
8. What are the historical origins of the Transitional Program?
9. The Transitional Program is only part of the entire program of the revolutionary socialist movement. What does the entire program consist of? Can additions or alterations be made in the Transitional Program?

Class 3: SOME KEY CONCEPTS OF THE TRANSITIONAL PROGRAM

Reading: Leon Trotsky, The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International [The Transitional Program] Pathfinder Press, pages 8-30.

Leon Trotsky, Leon Trotsky on the Labor Party in the United States, Pathfinder Press, pages 21-31.

Les Evans and Linda Jenness, The Wage Price Freeze Swindle, Pathfinder Press.

Supplementary: Leon Trotsky, Leon Trotsky on the Labor Party in the United States, Pathfinder Press, pages 10-21.

Leon Trotsky, "Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay," in Leon Trotsky on the Trade Unions, Pathfinder Press, pages 68-75.

Leon Trotsky, "Discussion with a CIO Organizer" in Leon Trotsky on the Trade Unions, Pathfinder Press, pages 62-68.

QUESTIONS:

1. The Transitional Program singles out unemployment and inflation as two key issues around which transitional demands should be raised. Why? Discuss why the demands for a sliding scale of wages and a sliding scale of hours are transitional demands. Why are these demands linked?

2. How are the various demands in the Transitional Program interlinked? What do they progressively lead towards?

3. On page 26 of Leon Trotsky on the Labor Party in the United States, Trotsky says, "The labor party proposal is not a part of the program of transitional demands but is a special motion." Is the labor party demand applicable internationally? Is it a part of the transitional program in the United States?

4. Which components of the Transitional Program deal with the trade unions and which have a more general character? Why is the Transitional Program more than just a program for the trade unions?

5. The Transitional Program says that the demands corresponding to the interests of the agricultural workers are basically identical to the demands corresponding to the interests of the industrial workers. Why? Why is this not the case for the demands corresponding to the interests of the peasants? What is the approach of the Transitional Program toward the urban and rural petty bourgeoisie? Does the Transitional Program classify the youth, women's, national liberation, and antiwar struggles with those of the urban and rural petty bourgeoisie?

6. What are Soviets? Why does the slogan of soviets crown the program of transitional demands? "Ever newer layers of the oppressed will raise their heads and come forward with their demands.... How are the different demands and forms of struggle to be harmonized, even if only within the limits of one city?" (pages 29-30)

7. What is dual power? Give some historical examples.

8. What are some of the key demands of the Transitional Program that are widely popularized by the SWP today?

Class 4: THE ROLE OF DEMOCRATIC DEMANDS

Reading: George Novack, "The Role of Democratic Demands," second talk in The Role of the Transitional Program in the Revolutionary Process, Education for Socialists bulletin, pages 11-17.

Leon Trotsky, The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International [The Transitional Program] Pathfinder Press, pages 30-40.

Supplementary: E. Germain, "On the Opportunist Utilization of Democratic Slogans," Fourth International, November 1946, pages 346-349.

George Novack, "Some Questions About the Program," third talk from The Role of the Transitional Program in the Revolutionary Process, Education for Socialists bulletin, pages 18-22.

QUESTIONS:

1. What is a democratic demand?
2. Do democratic slogans necessarily have a reformist character?
3. In the imperialist epoch, what is the relationship between the bourgeois-democratic and proletarian revolutions? What is the connection between democratic demands and the program for the socialist revolution?
4. In colonial countries are democratic demands central or peripheral to the program for the socialist revolution? Do bourgeois-democratic demands necessarily play into the hands of the national bourgeoisie?
5. Is the struggle for democracy unimportant in the imperialist countries? In the degenerated and deformed workers' states? What are the different contexts in which democratic demands are raised in the three sectors of the world revolution.
6. How do proletarian methods of fighting for democratic demands differ from those of the reformists?
7. What is the difference between workers' democracy and bourgeois democracy?

Class 5: SPECIAL APPLICATIONS OF THE TRANSITIONAL APPROACH:

The Youth and Feminist Movements

Reading: A Strategy for Revolutionary Youth [The Worldwide Youth Radicalization and the Tasks of the Fourth International] Pathfinder Press.

"Toward a Mass Feminist Movement" [SWP 1971 resolution] in International Socialist Review, November 1971 and in Feminism and Socialism, Pathfinder Press.

Leon Trotsky, The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International [The Transitional Program] Pathfinder Press, pages 44-45.

Supplementary: May 1970: Birth of the Antiwar University, Pathfinder Press.

Ernest Mandel, "The Changing Role of the Bourgeois University," in The Revolutionary Student Movement, Theory and Practice, expanded edition, Pathfinder Press.

Betsey Stone, Sisterhood is Powerful, Pathfinder Press.

Mary-Alice Waters, "Two Components of the Radicalization: The Student Movement and the Rebellion of Women," in Towards an American Socialist Revolution, Pathfinder Press, pages 62-82.

QUESTIONS:

1. What are the underlying causes of the youth radicalization?
2. What is the function of the university in capitalist society? How have the universities changed in recent years?
3. What is the red university concept and how has the strategy of the red university been applied in practice? How does the antiwar university fit in? The Black or Chicano university?
4. What are the key categories of demands for mobilizing women against their oppression?
5. What is the difference between the demand for legalized abortion and the demand for free abortion?
6. What kinds of feminists oppose mass action? Why?
7. Why are special demands required to meet the needs of women of oppressed nationalities?
8. Are the student and women's movements petty-bourgeois movements? How can these movements be characterized?
9. What is the role of the revolutionary party in the feminist movement? Among the youth?

10. Why do we favor the formation of revolutionary socialist youth organizations? What is the relationship between the revolutionary socialist youth organization and the revolutionary socialist party?

Class 6. TWO PROGRAMS FOR THE NATIONAL STRUGGLE:

Black and Chicano Liberation

Reading: A Transitional Program for Black Liberation, Pathfinder Press

The Struggle for Chicano Liberation, Pathfinder Press (also available in November 1971 International Socialist Review)

Supplementary: The Case for an Independent Black Political Party, Pathfinder Press

Documents of the Chicano Struggle, Pathfinder Press

QUESTIONS:

1. What are the two principal points in a program for the Black struggle?
2. What has been wrong with the politics of the Black Panther Party in the light of the Transitional Program?
3. What is the function of the Black or Chicano university strategy? How does this relate to the red university concept?
4. What demands are required to meet the needs of Black workers? How are these related to other demands in the Transitional Program for Black Liberation?
5. What are the historical roots of Chicano nationalism?
6. How have La Raza Unida parties developed? What is their significance?
7. Why are special demands required to meet the needs of Chicanas.
8. How were the proposals in these two programs developed?

STALINISM

(a five-class series)

Summer 1972

(Note: if it is possible to devote more time to the study of this topic it is advisable to divide classes 1 and 5 into two sessions each.)

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Class 1. WHY STALINISM TRIUMPHED

Reading: Leon Trotsky, The Revolution Betrayed, Chapter 5, "The Soviet Thermidor," pages 86-114 Pathfinder Press.

SUPPLEMENTARY: Leon Trotsky, The Revolution Betrayed, Chapters 1-4, 6, pages 5-85, 115-143, Pathfinder Press.

Leon Trotsky, "The Workers State, Thermidor and Bonapartism," in Writings of Leon Trotsky 1934-35, pages 166-184, Pathfinder Press.

QUESTIONS:

1. What were the main international and domestic causes for the rise of the Stalinist bureaucracy? What is the material basis for the continued existence of the bureaucracy in the Soviet Union? Did Stalinism disappear with the death of Stalin? Is the problem of Stalinism mainly that of a "cult of personality"?
2. Was the rise of Stalinism inevitable? Could the Left Opposition have carried out a different course of action to prevent its rise?
3. Do dangers exist for a similar Stalinist degeneration after the American socialist revolution takes place? What measures can be taken against any such dangers?
4. Stalin proclaimed that socialism had been achieved and classes eliminated in the Soviet Union. Is this true? What classes or remnants of classes bear down on the Soviet state?
5. Lenin's position was that the state would begin withering away with the first act of the workers state in expropriating the capitalist productive forces. Why is a state needed as a repressive force after the revolution? Why did Lenin say that it would begin to wither away? Has this process developed in the Soviet Union? What is the nature of state compulsion in the Soviet Union? What does this say for the claim that socialism has been established?
6. What does Trotsky mean by the "Soviet Thermidor"? What happened in the Soviet Union to cause Trotsky to use this historical analogy?

Class 2. INTERNATIONALISM AND "SOCIALISM IN ONE COUNTRY"

Reading: Leon Trotsky, The Revolution Betrayed, "Appendix," pages 291-301, Pathfinder Press.

Leon Trotsky, The Third International After Lenin, pages 3-6, 43-61, Pathfinder Press.

SUPPLEMENTARY: Leon Trotsky, The Third International After Lenin, pages 3-73, Pathfinder Press.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why is a national program inadequate for the present epoch of world history? What must be the starting point for an international program? What is its relationship to the programs of the national sections?

2. What is the theory of "socialism in one country"?

3. How does the development of world economy affect the Soviet Union? Can the Soviet Union build socialism in isolation "even if at the speed of a tortoise"? How do international factors affect the tempo of Soviet development?

4. Why is it impossible to build socialism in a single country? Can socialism be built in a single industrially advanced country?

5. How does the theory of "socialism in one country" reflect the interests of the bureaucracy? Have the outlook and policies of the Soviet bureaucracy changed fundamentally since Trotsky's writing?

6. Discuss Bukharin's arguments that (a) the Soviet Union possesses the necessary and sufficient material resources for the complete construction of socialism, and (b) since the relationship of forces between the proletariat and peasantry is roughly the same both in the Soviet Union and on a world scale if it is possible to build socialism on a world scale it is also possible in the Soviet Union.

Class 3. THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE STALINIST BUREAUCRACY

Reading: Leon Trotsky, The Revolution Betrayed, Chapter 8, pages 186-203, 225, 233. Pathfinder Press

Leon Trotsky, The Third International After Lenin, pages 61-65, Pathfinder Press.

SUPPLEMENTARY: Leon Trotsky, The Third International After Lenin, pages 3-60, 66-166.

QUESTIONS:

1. What would be an internationalist foreign policy for the Soviet Union? What would be the program, policies and role of the International and the national sections?

2. Taking as the starting point the goal of complete construction of socialism in a single workers state, what role does foreign policy play? What role does the International play? What role do the national sections play?

3. Discuss several examples of Stalinist international policy from among the following:

- a. the rise of fascism in Germany;
- b. the Spanish civil war;
- c. the French Popular Front period in the late 1930s;
- d. the Stalin-Hitler pact;
- e. World War II;
- f. the post-war revolutionary upsurge.

4. Discuss these questions in relation to the recent escalation of the war in Vietnam, the Moscow and Peking trips by Nixon, and the role of the American Communist Party in the antiwar movement. What program would a revolutionary leadership in a workers state follow? Is there any fundamental difference from Moscow in the approach of the Chinese bureaucracy and the Maoist parties around the world?

5. What is the basic approach of Stalinist foreign policy in the Mideast and Chile? What is the meaning of the Soviet military and economic aid? What is the role of the Communist parties of these countries?

6. Is it accurate to characterize Stalinist international policy as counter-revolutionary?

7. How does the theory of "peaceful coexistence" relate to the theory of "socialism in one country"?

8. What is the relationship between the "two-stage" theory for the colonial revolution and the theory of "socialism in one country"? Between "anti-monopoly coalitions" and the theory of "socialism in one country"?

Class 4. THE SOVIET UNION, WOMEN AND THE FAMILY, THE NATIONAL QUESTION, YOUTH, AND CULTURE

Reading: Leon Trotsky, The Revolution Betrayed, Chapter 7, pages 144-186, Pathfinder Press.

SUPPLEMENTARY: Leon Trotsky, Women and the Family, Pathfinder Press.

Caroline Lund, The Family: Revolutionary or Oppressive Force? Pathfinder Press.

Wilhelm Reich, The Sexual Revolution, pages 153-269, Noonday Press.

Tony Thomas, In Defense of Black Nationalism, Pathfinder Press.

QUESTIONS:

1. What was the program of the Bolshevik Party of Lenin in relation to the family? What measures did the revolutionary leadership in Lenin's time take to replace the family and end the oppression of women?

2. How successful was the Soviet Union in achieving the goal of ending the oppression of women? What were the main objective factors determining both the successes and failures in their policy? What do these failures mean to the claim to have established socialism?

3. What role did the bureaucracy play in the retreat on the family, divorce, abortion and prostitution? How was this in the interests of the bureaucracy? Is it likely that the struggle against this oppression will play an important role in the political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy?

4. How does the bureaucracy's maintenance of the family and the oppression of women reflect itself in the position of the American Communist Party on the women's liberation movement and the family?

5. What was the Bolsheviks' attitude on the national question at the time of the revolution? What role did this play in the victory and defense of the revolution? How did the revolution affect the nationalities in the Soviet Union?

6. As the bureaucracy rose, what changes took place in the Soviet leadership's attitudes on the national question and on the position of the nationalities in the Soviet Union?

7. What importance does the national question have for the East European workers states? Give examples. What role will the national question play in the political revolution?

How does the position of the nationalities within the Soviet Union reflect itself in the positions of the American Communist Party?

8. What did the rise of Stalinism mean for Soviet youth? In the area of culture? What will the political revolution do in relation to youth and culture?

Class 5. THE CLASS NATURE OF THE SOVIET UNION

Reading: Jean van Heijenoort, "How the Fourth International Was Conceived," in Leon Trotsky: The Man and His Work, pages 61-64, Pathfinder Press.

Leon Trotsky, The Revolution Betrayed, Chapters 9, 11. pages 234-256, 273-290, Pathfinder Press.

SUPPLEMENTARY: Leon Trotsky, "The Tragedy of the German Proletariat: The German Workers Will Rise Again -- Stalinism Never!" in The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany, pages 375-384, Pathfinder Press.

Leon Trotsky, "It is Necessary to Build Communist Parties and an International Anew," in The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany, pages 419-426, Pathfinder Press.

Leon Trotsky, "It is Impossible to Remain in the Same 'International' with Stalin, Manuilsky, Lozovsky and Company" in Writings of Leon Trotsky 1933-34, pages 17-24, Pathfinder Press.

Leon Trotsky, "The Class Nature of the Soviet State" in Writings of Leon Trotsky 1933-34, pages 101-102, Pathfinder Press.

Leon Trotsky, "The Workers State, Thermidor and Bonapartism," in Writings of Leon Trotsky 1934-35, pages 166-184, Pathfinder Press.

Leon Trotsky, In Defense of Marxism, Pathfinder Press.

QUESTIONS:

1. What is the bureaucracy? What is its social base for existence? What is a class? Is the bureaucracy a class? What classes do exist in the Soviet Union?

2. Why do we still call the Soviet Union a workers state? What would be necessary to overthrow the workers state?

3. What do we mean when we say a political revolution is necessary in the Soviet Union? What is a political revolution? Why is a social revolution not necessary? Why do we say a political revolution is inevitable? What about China? What about Cuba?

4. What are some of the main issues that will be raised in the course of the political revolution?

5. Discuss the evolution of Trotsky's attitude from being a faction in the Communist International toward the need for new parties and a new International.

QUESTIONS BASED ON SUPPLEMENTARY READING:

1. What did Trotsky mean by bureaucratic centrism? What was the relationship between the earlier characterization of the Stalinist leadership as centrist and being a faction of the Communist International?

2. Why did Trotsky change his position on the characterization of the Stalinist leadership as bureaucratic centrist?

3. What was the development of Trotsky's position that new parties were necessary in Germany, in the rest of the world, in the Soviet Union? How did this relate to his characterization of Stalinism in the Soviet Union and the necessity of a political revolution?

THE ORIGINS AND CHARACTER OF CHINESE STALINISM

(Three Classes)

Summer 1972

Class 1. WHAT MAOISM IS AND HOW IT CAME TO POWER

Reading: "The Third Chinese Revolution and Its Aftermath," Resolution adopted by the 1955 Socialist Workers Party Convention, in The Chinese Revolution and Its Development, Education for Socialists bulletin, pages 3-10.

"A Mao-Stalin Rift: Myth or Fact?" by Tom Kerry, September-October 1969 International Socialist Review, pages 1-22.

SUPPLEMENTARY: "The SWP Position on China," Resolution adopted by the 1963 SWP Convention, in The Chinese Revolution and Its Development, Education for Socialists bulletin, pages 32-35.

"On the Nature of the Chinese Communist Party and Its Regime -- Political Revolution or Democratic Reform?" by Peng Shu-tse (March 1961), in Education for Socialists bulletin on Peng's writings (forthcoming).

QUESTIONS:

1. How did the Stalinist theory of the "revolution by stages" endanger the chances of success for the Chinese revolution after World War II?

2. Why was a coalition between Chiang Kai-shek and Mao not realized?

3. What role did the Chinese working class play in the civil war and the seizure of power?

4. What social changes took place after the 1949 victory of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) that led us to characterize China as a workers' state?

5. What bureaucratic deformations marked the new CCP regime?

6. What was Mao's theory of "New Democracy" in the years immediately following the 1949 revolution?

7. How was the theory of permanent revolution realized in China and how did it correspond to Mao's prognosis?

Class 2. MAOIST INSTITUTIONS AND POLICIES

Reading: "A Criticism of the Various Views Supporting the Chinese Rural People's Communes -- What Our Attitude Should Be" by Peng Shu-tse, Education for Socialists bulletin on Peng's writings (forthcoming).

"Draft Resolution on Chinese Communes" adopted by the SWP Secretariat in 1959, in The Chinese Revolution and Its Development, Education for Socialists bulletin, pages 11-15.

✓ "The Sino-Soviet Dispute," resolution adopted by the 1963 SWP Convention, in The Chinese Revolution and Its Development, Education for Socialists bulletin, pages 23-31.

✓ "Mao Labels the Soviet Government 'Fascist'" by Joseph Hansen, World Outlook, February 17, 1967, pages 169-173.

✓ SUPPLEMENTARY: "Maoism and the Neo-Stalin Cult," by Tom Kerry, The Chinese Revolution and Its Development, Education for Socialists bulletin, pages 43-47.

QUESTIONS:

1. How did the collectivization drive of 1955 and the Great Leap Forward of 1958 compare with Stalin's forced collectivization of 1929?

2. What evidence is there that the Maoist leadership represents a privileged social strata in China?

3. If collective -- and eventually state -- property in land is the goal of a socialist society, why is it wrong to compel the peasantry in an underdeveloped country to give up their land to join collective farms and communes?

4. Was the Great Leap Forward decided by democratic means?

5. What is the difference between democratic centralism and bureaucratic centralism?

6. How does public discussion of the technical implementation of party decisions in China differ from workers' political democracy?

7. Should the same discipline demanded of party members in a democratic-centralist organization be demanded of the population as a whole in a workers' state in peacetime, for example in regard to job choices and work assignments?

8. Why did the theory of "socialism in one country" lead inevitably to the Sino-Soviet split?

Class 3. THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION AND MAOIST FOREIGN POLICY

Reading: "The Upheaval in China, an Analysis of the Contending Forces," by George Novack and Joseph Hansen, in Behind China's "Great Cultural Revolution," Pathfinder Press, pages 42-63.

"Why Mao Defends the Bloodbath in Bengal," by Les Evans, June 1971 International Socialist Review

"Nixon's China Policy -- New Tactics for Counterrevolution in Asia," by Dick Roberts, March 1972 International Socialist Review

SUPPLEMENTARY: "Peng Shu-tse on Background of Chinese Events," in Behind China's 'Great Cultural Revolution,' Pathfinder Press, pages 7-35.

"Meaning of the Shanghai Events" by Pierre Frank, in Behind China's "Great Cultural Revolution," Pathfinder Press, pages 36-41

QUESTIONS:

1. Was the Cultural Revolution an attempt by Mao to prevent the growth of bureaucracy and institute "pure communism"?
2. Is the institution of organized "self-criticism" of people's personal faults a valid method of democratic decision-making in a workers' state? What other function could it serve in a party and state dominated by an "infallible" leader?
3. What did the Maoists' refusal to publish the documents of dissenting groups show about Mao's claim to be instituting proletarian democracy?
4. Were the accusations made by Mao against Liu Shao-chi truthful as far as we can tell? How did they compare to the charges made by Lenin against his innerparty antagonists? How did they compare to the false charges made by Stalin during the Moscow trials?
5. What forces did Mao rely on in his struggle with Liu Shao-chi and also with the intellectuals? What role did the working class play in this conflict?
6. Why were the university students sent to the countryside in large numbers?
7. Is Mao's theory of peaceful coexistence essentially different from that of Stalin, and is Peking's foreign policy more revolutionary than that of the Kremlin? Give examples.

UNITED FRONT vs. POPULAR FRONT

(a four-six class series)

Summer 1972

Class 1. THE LENINIST CONCEPTION OF THE UNITED FRONT

Reading: Leon Trotsky, "On the United Front," in United Front vs. People's Front: selected readings, Education for Socialists bulletin, pages 7-9; also in The First Five Years of the Communist International, volume 2, pages 91-96.

Les Evans, Alliances and the Revolutionary Party, Education for Socialists bulletin, pages 3-7.

Tom Kerry, "Some Comments on Party Policy and Tactics in the Antiwar Movement," United Front vs. People's Front: selected readings, Education for Socialists bulletin, pages 3-6.

Supplementary: Leon Trotsky, "On the United Front," The First Five Years of the Communist International, volume 2, pages 97-109.

Leon Trotsky, The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany, Pathfinder Press, pages 179-199.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why was the tactic of the united front first raised by the Communist International? Are conditions in the workers movement essentially the same in most countries today? What does the SWP's approach to the antiwar movement have in common with the united front tactic of the early Communist International?
2. In a united front, what is it that the different political tendencies can be united around?
3. Was the united front as initially proposed intended to include the opportunist leaders of the social democratic parties as well as the masses who supported these parties? Why?
4. Trotsky says that "the growth of the mass aspects of the movement tends to radicalize it," creating more favorable conditions for the revolutionary party. Why is this so? How does this relate to the antiwar movement in the United States?
5. How did Trotsky see the united front tactic helping to win over the social democratic workers to revolutionary politics?
6. Why does the united front require freedom of criticism between its participants? Can there be a united front around program as well as action?
7. How was the united front approach applied in the Russian Revolution?
8. What is wrong with the ultraleft concept of a "united front from below"?

Class 2. THE UNITED FRONT AND THE POPULAR FRONT

Reading: Les Evans, Alliances and the Revolutionary Party, Education for Socialists bulletin, pages 3-7.

Leon Trotsky, "For Committees of Action, Not the People's Front," in United Front vs. People's Front: selected readings, Education for Socialists bulletin, pages 9-11; also in Writings of Leon Trotsky, 1935-36, Pathfinder Press, pages 56-58.

James Burnham, "The People's Front: The New Betrayal," in United Front vs. People's Front: selected readings, Education for Socialists bulletin, pages 12-24.

Supplementary: Leon Trotsky, "On the United Front," The First Five Years of the Communist International, volume 2, pages 97-109.

Leon Trotsky, The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany, Pathfinder Press, pages 179-199.

QUESTIONS:

1. What is the basic political characteristic of the popular front?
2. How did the popular front line originate?
3. Ultraleft sectarianism and opportunism are often described as two sides of the same coin. How is this manifest in relation to the line of "united front from below" and the line of the "people's front"?
4. How is the Stalinist popular front line manifest in the United States today?
5. The Stalinists and Social Democrats seem to join together easily in popular fronts, but generally have to be pushed into united fronts. Why?

Class 3. THE POPULAR FRONT IN SPAIN, INDONESIA, CEYLON

Reading: Les Evans, Alliances and the Revolutionary Party, Education for Socialists bulletin, pages 7-11.

Supplementary: Leon Trotsky, "The Lessons of Spain -- The Last Warning," in Fourth International, April 1945.

Felix Morrow, Revolution and Counter-revolution in Spain, New Park Publications (British).

T. Seodarso, Catastrophe in Indonesia, Pathfinder Press.

Ernest Germain, "From Wavering to Capitulation -- People's Frontism in Ceylon," International Socialist Review, Fall 1964.

Les Evans, "Why Mao Defends the Bloodbath in Bengal," ISR June 1971.

N. Anthony, "Ceylon: Behind the Socialist Mask," ISR June 1971 (in section entitled: "Perspectives on World Revolution.")

QUESTIONS:

1. How did popular frontism in Spain pave the way for the Franco reaction? Is there a similar danger in Chile?
2. What do the Indonesian and Ceylonese experiences reveal about the similarities between Chinese and Soviet Stalinism?
3. Can the revolutionary party give political support to a popular front regime under any circumstances? Does the party utilize exactly the same tactics towards a popular front regime as towards an openly reactionary regime?
4. What is wrong with the "bloc of four classes" theory? With the "two stage" theory of revolution?

Class 4. CHILE: THE UNIDAD POPULAR OF ALLENDE

Reading: Allende's Chile: Is It Going Socialist? by Peter Camejo, Pathfinder Press.

Peter Camejo and Les Evans, "Chile: Reformism in Crisis," ISR February 1972.

"Chile: The Coming Confrontation," resolution of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, Intercontinental Press, February 21, 1972.

QUESTIONS:

1. The Unidad Popular (UP) government of Allende claims to be socialist-oriented. In this, it differs from the People's Fronts of the 1930s in Spain and France, which were explicitly committed to the defense of bourgeois society. Does this difference change in any way the fundamental political character of the Allende regime?
2. "Socialism" is sometimes characterized by supporters of the People's Front solely as "nationalization" of industry. Why is this false?
3. How is a false and demagogic concept of "anti-imperialism" used by the Communist Party to justify the Chilean popular front?
4. The more "left" sounding claims of the Chilean UP are the result of a deep radicalization of the Chilean masses. However, deep illusions about bourgeois democracy allow the UP to maintain, sometimes brazenly (as in the case of the old Chilean army) the old institutions and policies of capitalism. How can a revolutionary party intervene to change this?

SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL CLASSES ON TOPICS RELATED TO THE UNITED FRONT
VS. THE POPULAR FRONT

A. One or two classes on Lenin's Left Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder.

B. One or two classes on the united front vs. the "united front from below."

Readings for this topic can be selected from Trotsky's The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany and Whither France? Both are published by Pathfinder Press. (Excerpts are contained in the pamphlet, Fascism: What It Is and How To Fight It.)

C. One or two classes on Trotsky's writings on the Chinese revolution. The best selection of material on this can probably be obtained from Trotsky's The Third International After Lenin (Pathfinder Press). Other material is contained in the pamphlet by Trotsky, The Chinese Revolution: Problems and Perspectives (Pathfinder Press) and in the book Problems of the Chinese Revolution (Ann Arbor).

One of the questions that should be considered in such a class is the inapplicability of the popular front concept to the colonial and neo-colonial countries as well as to the advanced imperialist countries. Of particular importance is the analysis of the role of the national bourgeoisie and the theory of permanent revolution.

D. The Popular Front policy of the Communist Party in the United States.

Reading for such a class should include some selections from current CP publications, and recent articles in The Militant and International Socialist Review. Also, the section on "Capitalist Peace Politics" in Aspects of Socialist Election Policy, Education for Socialists bulletin.

PRINCIPLES OF LENINIST PARTY ORGANIZATION

(an eight-class series)

Summer 1972

(Note: There are numerous useful ways of studying the concept of the Leninist party. This study outline can therefore be easily modified and supplemented.)

Class 1. WHY A LENINIST PARTY. THE IMPORTANCE OF PROGRAM

Reading: Leon Trotsky, The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International (the Transitional Program). Pathfinder Press.

James P. Cannon, "The Vanguard Party and the World Revolution," contained in Fifty Years of World Revolution, Pathfinder Press, pages 349-360.

Leon Trotsky, The Third International After Lenin, Pathfinder Press, pages 1-24, 75-86.

Supplementary: V.I. Lenin, What is to Be Done, Chapter II, section A.

James P. Cannon, The IWW, Pathfinder Press

James P. Cannon, E.V. Debs, Pathfinder Press

QUESTIONS:

1. What is meant by the "crisis of leadership"? How important is the question of the party to the world revolution?
2. How does the program of the revolutionary party differ from that of the Stalinists and Social Democrats?
3. What has been the negative and positive historical experience verifying the need for a vanguard party?
4. Without a Leninist party, will the working class spontaneously come to see the need for a socialist revolution?
5. What is the difference between the party and a trade union? Can the same organization be both a revolutionary party and a trade union? What was the experience of the IWW in this regard?
6. What is wrong with the concept of an all-inclusive party?

Class 2. DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM

Reading: Farrell Dobbs, The Structure and Organizational Principles of the Party, Education for Socialists bulletin, pages 5-20.

Supplementary: The Organizational Character of the Socialist Workers Party, Education for Socialists bulletin (this is a resolution adopted by the 1965 convention of the SWP)

Farrell Dobbs, The Structure and Organizational Principles of the Party, Education for Socialists bulletin, pages 21-37.

QUESTIONS:

1. Give a brief definition of democratic centralism.
2. How do the structure and organizational principles of the SWP flow from the party's political outlook?
3. In what way does centralism aid democracy? How do the two inter-relate?
4. What is the purpose of democratic discussion in the party?
5. What is the purpose of centralism?
6. What are the responsibilities of leadership in the party?
7. What does it mean to say that the party must be politically homogeneous?

Class 3. THE ORIGINS OF AMERICAN TROTSKYISM

Reading: James P. Cannon, The History of American Trotskyism, Pathfinder Press, first six chapters, especially chapter five.

Supplementary: V.I. Lenin, What is to be Done Chapter I, section D.

QUESTIONS:

1. How does Trotskyism fit into the continuity of revolutionary politics?
2. In what ways did the early Communist Party represent an advance over the IWW and Debsian Socialist Party?
3. How did Stalinism reflect itself in the American Communist Party? What are the organizational methods of Stalinism and how do they differ from Leninism? Give some examples.
4. Why did Trotskyism originate as an international movement? Why were international questions always put in the forefront in the development of the Trotskyist movement?
5. The Lovestonites were at first far stronger numerically and organizationally than the Trotskyists. What proved to be the decisive advantage of the Trotskyist movement?
6. How did the Left Opposition first answer the question: what to do next? Why did it orient to the CP? When and why did the break with the Comintern come about?
7. How important were the creation of cadres to the building of the Trotskyist movement?
8. How did the Stalinists try to deal with the arguments of the Trotskyists?
9. How did the Trotskyist movement prove the validity of Lenin's famous slogan: "Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement"?

Class 4. THE BUILDING OF AMERICAN TROTSKYISM

Reading: James P. Cannon, The History of American Trotskyism, Pathfinder Press, chapters 7-12.

QUESTIONS:

1. What changes in the political situation had occurred that enabled the Trotskyist movement to turn to mass work?

2. How did the experience with B.J. Field show by negative experience the necessity of democratic centralism in the functioning of party members in the mass movement? How did the Minneapolis teamsters' strikes illustrate this lesson through positive experience? Why did the Trotskyist movement make a national campaign out of the Minneapolis strikes? How were mass work and party building inter-related?

3. Was the fusion of the Communist League with Muste's American Workers Party carried out on a principled political basis? What were the central questions that determined whether or not this was principled? Were the organizational concessions made by the Communist League permissible? Why? What was the purpose of the fusion?

4. What was the purpose of the entry of the Trotskyists into the Socialist Party? How did the entry tactic differ from liquidationism? How was the independence of the Trotskyists maintained?

5. If the Trotskyist movement had not been a movement of politically homogeneous cadres, could the fusion and entry tactics have worked out?

7. How does the history of American Trotskyism illustrate how both splits and unifications can be methods of party building?

Class 5. THE CHARACTER AND COMPOSITION OF A REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS PARTY

Reading: James P. Cannon, The Struggle for a Proletarian Party, especially pages 1-31.

Farrell Dobbs, The Structure and Organizational Principles of the Party, Education for Socialists bulletin, pages 16-20.

Jack Barnes, "The New Radicalization and the Revolutionary Party," in Towards an American Socialist Revolution, Pathfinder Press. Especially pages 123-128.

Supplementary: Leon Trotsky, In Defense of Marxism, Pathfinder Press, pages 1-32.

QUESTIONS:

1. How do serious factional struggles and splits in the party reflect the class struggle?

2. What social pressures were behind the petty-bourgeois opposition in the SWP? What was the central political issue in the faction fight?

3. Why must the party have a proletarian composition as well as a proletarian program? Why must the party be multi-national?

4. What is the difference between a proletarian and a petty-bourgeois attitude toward the party? How was the latter illustrated by Burnham?

5. Does the proletarian party have an anti-intellectual attitude? What does it ask of intellectuals who join?

6. What is the difference between professional intellectuals and students? Are students today comparable in all respects to students in the 1930s?

7. As the party becomes a mass party what must its composition increasingly become in terms of sex, nationality and class? Is the party likely to remain primarily young? How does the party's composition relate to its purpose?

8. How are non-workers assimilated into the proletarian party? What had changed in the objective situation by 1965 which required modification of some specific steps towards proletarianization of the party that had been delineated in 1940? Has anything changed in the long term perspective of the SWP?

9. What does it mean to be a professional revolutionist? Does this mean that only full-timers are professional revolutionists?

Class 6. ORGANIZATIONAL PROCEDURES IN THE PROLETARIAN PARTY

Reading: James P. Cannon, The Struggle for a Proletarian Party, Pathfinder Press, pages 31-82.

The Organizational Character of the Socialist Workers Party, Education for Socialists bulletin

Supplementary: The Structure and Organizational Principles of the Party, Farrell Dobbs, Education for Socialists bulletin.

QUESTIONS:

1. What is the only principled basis on which groupings can develop within the party? How does this illustrate the relationship between organization and program?

2. What is an unprincipled combination? Why was the Burnham-Shachtman-Abern grouping an unprincipled combination? What were the political views of each of the three components of this grouping on the question of the Soviet Union?

3. What is a clique? How does cliquism cut across principled politics? What was Abern's position on defense of the Soviet Union?

4. Can factions be principled? Is the formation of factions always desirable when differences of opinion arise in the party? Under what conditions is a faction fight necessary? Give examples. What is the purpose of a faction? Can a party long exist if it is permanently divided into factions? Do faction fights always lead to splits? Do they often lead to splits? Give examples of differences in the party that have been settled without the formation of factions. The Communist Party forbids the formation of factions; what does this lead to?

5. Some working class parties have fallen victim to bureaucratism. What has been the social basis for this? What is the source of the bureaucratism of the SP and the CP? What is different about the SWP?

6. The petty-bourgeois opposition raised its organizational charges and grievances against the majority from the very beginning of the faction fight. Yet Cannon waited to write his reply until almost the end of the fight. Why? What did this show about the nature of the majority and the petty-bourgeois opposition?

Class 7. THE COCHRAN FIGHT

Reading: James P. Cannon, Defending the Revolutionary Party and Its Perspectives, Education for Socialists bulletin, pages 3-15, 24-31.

Supplementary: Al Hansen, lectures in The Cochran Fight on Tape, available from National Tape Service, SWP.

Harry Ring, A History of the SWP, available from the National Tape Service, SWP.

QUESTIONS:

1. How did the social composition of the Cochranite minority relate to its political outlook? What was comparable in this situation with the petty-bourgeois opposition of 1939-40?

2. Is working-class composition a guarantee of a revolutionary program? How do program and composition inter-relate?

3. What is the difference between a serious revolutionist's attitude towards the party and the attitude of a person retreating from revolutionary politics?

4. What is our attitude towards Stalinism? Is it sometimes useful to intervene in Stalinist circles? What is the necessary pre-condition for doing opponents work? How has the relative strength of the American Communist Party changed since the time of the 1953 resolution of the SWP?

5. Can splits be a method of party building? Under what conditions? Under what conditions are splits harmful to the party? Are unifications always beneficial to the party?

6. What is the role of leadership in the revolutionary party?

7. What is our concept of a leadership team? How does this contrast with incorrect concepts of leadership. How does the leadership team function on a local level? On a national level?

Class 8. INTERNATIONALISM

Reading: James P. Cannon, "Internationalism and the SWP," in Defending the Revolutionary Party and Its Perspectives, Education for Socialists bulletin, pages 16-23.

Jack Barnes, "The New Radicalization and the Revolutionary Party," in Towards An American Socialist Revolution, Pathfinder Press, especially pages 123-128.

Farrell Dobbs and Joseph Hansen, "Reunification of the Fourth International," in International Socialist Review, Fall, 1963.

"For Early Reunification of the World Trotskyist Movement," (1963 document) published in Intercontinental Press, May 11, 1970. (also, "A Note on Healy's Current Slanders," by Joseph Hansen, in same issue of IP, pages 440-445.)

QUESTIONS:

1. Cannon says, "We conceive of internationalism as international collaboration...." Explain.

2. Is internationalism merely desirable, or is it a necessity in building a revolutionary party? Can a revolutionary party be built in one country alone? What are some of our central ideas that have been developed in collaboration with international co-thinkers? What are some kinds of political campaigns that can be conducted internationally?

3. In what ways is a Leninist party multi-national? Why?

4. Why was the reunification of the world Trotskyist movement principled? Would it have been principled not to reunify?

5. Is the Fourth International democratic centralist?

6. Were all differences resolved before reunification could be carried out?

7. What have been the gains to the world Trotskyist movement as a result of the reunification?

A MARXIST APPROACH TOWARD THE LABOR MOVEMENT

(a five-session class)

Summer 1972

Class 1. THE TRADE UNIONS AND THE CLASS STRUGGLE

Reading: Leon Trotsky, Leon Trotsky on the Trade Unions, Pathfinder Press; especially the following sections:

"Communism and Syndicalism," pages 15-23;
"The Unions in Britain," pages 53-57;
"Trade Unions in the Transitional Epoch," pages 59-62 (also available in The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International [The Transitional Program] pages 9-12);
"Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay," pages 68-75.

Supplementary: V.I. Lenin, Left Wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder, Chapter VI, entitled, "Should Revolutionaries Work in Reactionary Trade Unions?"

QUESTIONS:

1. What are the major strengths and major limitations of the trade unions from the point of view of advancing the class struggle as a whole?
2. For revolutionists, is trade unionism an end in itself? Is it possible to bypass the trade unions? Is trade union work the sole means of political work within the working class?
3. In addition to the trade unions, what other forms of working class organization presently exist? What other forms may develop in the course of the class struggle?
4. What is the goal of revolutionary work in the trade unions? Why is trade union work important?
5. Can an organization at one and the same time fulfill the functions of a trade union and a revolutionary party? What was the error of the IWW along this line? What was wrong with the theory of red trade unions that the Comintern held in its third period?
6. For party members in the trade unions who are elected to trade union posts, what is the relationship between party discipline and trade union discipline?
7. What are some of the various possible relationships that may exist between the revolutionary party and the trade unions?
8. In the epoch of imperialist decay, what tendency is developing in the relationship between the trade unions and the capitalist state? What is the role of the trade union bureaucracy in this process? How is this reflected in the United States? Does this mean that trade union work is less important for revolutionists than previously?

Class 2. TWO KEY DEMANDS: THE SLIDING SCALE OF WAGES AND HOURS,
AND THE LABOR PARTY

Reading: Leon Trotsky, The Death Agony of Capitalism and the
Tasks of the Fourth International [The Transitional
Program] Pathfinder Press, pages 4-15, 20

Leon Trotsky, "Discussion With a CIO Organizer," in
Leon Trotsky on the Trade Unions, Pathfinder Press,
pages 62-68.

Leon Trotsky on the Labor Party in the United States,
Pathfinder Press, pages 21-31.

Farrell Dobbs, "The Case for an Independent Labor
Party," in Recent Trends in the Labor Movement,
Education for Socialists bulletin, pages 22-25.

Supplementary: James P. Cannon, "Campaign for a Labor Party!"
in Aspects of Socialist Election Policy, Education
for Socialists bulletin, pages 11-17.

Leon Trotsky, "Discussion on the Transitional Program"
in Writings of Leon Trotsky 1938-39, Pathfinder Press,
pages 43-45.

Art Preis, Labor's Giant Step, Pathfinder Press,
pages 301-310, 484-496.

QUESTIONS:

1. The Transitional Program gives prominence to the demands for a sliding scale of wages and a sliding scale of hours. Why? Why are these demands necessarily inter-linked?
2. In what way are these demands transitional? In what way do they strike at the capitalist class? Do they seem reasonable to the workers? What about the question of realizability of these demands?
3. How does the sliding scale of wages and hours help overcome the divisions in the working class between organized and unorganized workers? Between young and old? Between employed and unemployed?
4. How does the sliding scale of wages and hours relate to the needs of women, Black, and Chicano workers?
5. How are the demands for the sliding scale of wages and hours linked with other demands in the Transitional Program, such as a public works program, opening of the corporate books to workers' inspection, workers control, committees on prices, etc. Discuss how our fight for the sliding scale of wages and hours differs from the way the labor bureaucrats sometimes adapt to these demands -- for example, their acceptance of the government cost-of-living and unemployment figures and their attempt to limit concessions to the privileged strata of the working class. Do the labor bureaucrats want a head-on collision with the capitalist class?

6. Is "30 for 40" identical to the sliding scale of wages and hours? Does it move in that direction? What about the "Guaranteed Annual Income" concept? What are the deficiencies in the ILWU's "Guaranteed Annual Wage" and the UAW's "Supplementary Unemployment Benefits"?

7. Why do we call for a labor party? What are the objective conditions in the United States that underlie this slogan?

8. What program do we advocate for a labor party? Would we support a labor party with a reformist leadership?

9. Given the composition of the industrial unions, and the working class in general, what is the inter-relationship between the calls for independent Black and Chicano parties and the call for a labor party?

10. Is the labor party slogan propagandistic or agitational?

11. What is wrong with the Workers League concept of the labor party slogan?

Class 3: BASIC OUTLINES OF THE PRESENT TRADE UNION POLICY OF THE SWP

Reading: "Memorandum on Trade Union Policy," adopted at the May 1968 Plenum of the SWP National Committee. Internal Information Bulletin, June 1968.

"Black Caucuses in the Trade Unions," Political Committee memorandum adopted April 18, 1969. SWP Discussion Bulletin Vol. 27, No. 11, August 1969.

Farrell Dobbs, Recent Trends in the Labor Movement, Education for Socialists bulletin, especially the article entitled "Unions Need Class Conscious Leaders," pages 29-31.

Leon Trotsky, "Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay," in Leon Trotsky on the Trade Unions, Pathfinder Press, pages 68-75.

Supplementary: Frank Lovell, "Summary of Trade Union Panel Report and Discussion (23rd National SWP Convention, 1969)" Internal Information Bulletin, No. 6 in 1969.

"Trade Union Workshop," Activists Panels, Vol. 1 No. 1, October 1970.

"Trade Union Panel, 1971 SWP Convention," Internal Information Bulletin, October, 1971. No. 4 in 1971.

QUESTIONS:

1. What is the difference between a class struggle program and a class collaborationist one? Why is there a necessity for building a class struggle left wing within the unions? Why can't the labor bureaucracy reform itself?

2. What are some of the central demands that must be included in the program for a class struggle left wing? Are these demands limited to "bread-and-butter" type demands? Why not?

3. How must a class struggle program in the labor movement relate to the demands being raised in the antiwar, women's, Black and Chicano struggles?

4. Why should the main fire of a left wing program be directed at the class enemy rather than the labor bureaucrats? How will this aid the struggle against the bureaucrats?

5. What are the objective conditions behind the rise of Black caucuses in the trade unions? What does this show about the inter-relationship between the class and national struggles?

6. In what sectors of the working class is a class struggle left wing likely to find its strongest support? It's strongest opposition?

7. Trotsky says that "There is one common feature in the development, or more correctly the degeneration, of modern trade union organizations throughout the world: it is their drawing closely to and growing together with the state power." How is this illustrated in the United States today?

Class 4. THE PRESENT OVERALL POLITICAL SITUATION AND THE LABOR POLICY OF THE SWP

Reading: Perspectives and Lessons of the New Radicalization, 1971 political resolution of the SWP, especially the four sections entitled:

"Making the Workers Pay for the War";

"How the radicalization has affected the working class";

"Government offensive against the unions";

"A dogmatic view of how the workers will radicalize"

Jack Barnes, [Political] Report to the SWP National Committee, (March, 1971). Especially sections 7,8,9.

The above two documents are available in the November 1971 ISR and in A Revolutionary Strategy for the 70s, Pathfinder Press. Also, SWP Discussion Bulletin Vol. 29 No. 1, 1971.

Supplementary: Towards an American Socialist Revolution, Pathfinder Press, pages 152-178 (1969 SWP political resolution).

Relevant sections of:

"Towards a Mass Feminist Movement," 1971 SWP resolution;

"The Struggle for Chicano Liberation," 1971 SWP resolution;

"A Transitional Program for Black Liberation," 1969 SWP resolution

QUESTIONS:

1. How does the evolution of the world capitalist economy and the changing world economic and political situation of U.S. imperialism affect the American working class?
2. How does the ruling class try to make the workers pay for the war in Southeast Asia?
3. What are the two main prongs of a capitalist "incomes policy" and how does this relate to the demand for a sliding scale of wages and hours? How important is this demand?
4. What changes have occurred in recent years in the composition of the work force in the United States? How has the radicalization of youth, women, Blacks, and Chicanos affected the working class? What evidence is there of antiwar sentiment in the unions?
5. Why does the 1971 political resolution say that "key economic issues today are increasingly fought out on a political level" and what does this imply for our policy in the labor movement?
6. How does our policy in the unions differ from that of all our opponents on the left?
7. What is the general outline of our program in the unions? Why do we avoid general tactical prescriptions applicable to all unions? Why do we center our main attack upon the capitalists?
8. Why do we say the "ascending industrial-union movement was a vast social movement"? What were the main failures of the radicalization of the 1930s and why isn't the present radicalization a "rerun" of the 1930s?
9. Do we see the trade unions as the only possible organizational form for the struggles of the workers?
10. Does the strategic power of the workers increase or decrease with the increase in the sophistication, automation and mechanization of the advanced capitalist economy? Why? What is wrong with the New Left theories about a "new working class"?

Class 5. IMPLEMENTATION OF SWP TRADE UNION POLICY

Reading: Les Evans and Linda Jenness, The Wage-Price Freeze Swindle, Pathfinder Press

Political Committee Statement of August 30, 1971 on the wage freeze (this was forwarded to all organizers and members of the National Committee).

Letter to SWP Organizers and NC Members, November 10, 1971, from Barry Sheppard and Frank Lovell.

Linda Jenness, "Organize a Congress of Labor to Fight Wage Freeze," in The Militant September 3, 1971.

Supplementary: Frank Lovell, "Wage Controls and the Unions:
What the Record Shows." ISR, April 1972.

QUESTIONS:

1. What is the reason for the government's wage controls?
2. Why have real wages remained constant over the past six years even though there were no government controls on wages until August 15, 1971? If wages remained constant without controls, what is the purpose of the controls? Why would the capitalist class want to drive down the standard of living of the workers in this country?
3. What are the basic causes of inflation? Are higher wages a cause? What is the role of the Indochina war?
4. How are wage controls enforced? Why are price controls a fraud?
5. What is our answer to inflation? How does our demand for control over rising consumer prices differ from the capitalist fraud? (note: in this connection, see also the Transitional Program [The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International, Pathfinder Press, page 20.])
6. Why can't each union acting alone -- or in concert with most others on an industry-by-industry level only -- beat back the government's attack on wages?
7. Why do we call for the union movement to convene a congress of labor? What would a congress of labor look like? How would it differ from a regular AFL-CIO national convention? What would a congress of labor need to do?
8. Why did we launch a propoganda campaign around the axis of the call for a congress of labor? How does such a campaign differ from an agitational campaign? Under what circumstances would we move from a propoganda campaign to a campaign of agitation?
9. What is the relationship between our party-building tasks and our campaign against the government's "incomes policy"? What is the relationship between our campaign against the wage controls and our activity in mass movements like the Black, Chicano, women's, and antiwar movements? How does our present campaign relate to our longer term goal of building a class struggle left wing in the unions?

Memorandum to Educational Directors for Teaching Classes
on a Marxist Approach Toward the Labor Movement
(Including questions suggested by the reading material).

from Frank Lovell

Summer 1972

I.

Leon Trotsky on the Trade Unions, 80 pages.

This pamphlet is required reading for those giving classes on trade union problems.

It is neither necessary nor advisable to assign this pamphlet as required reading for a short course (of two classes) on trade unions today. Some parts may be recommended, as follows:

1) All of part I: "Communism and Syndicalism" deals with the relation between union and party. Class leaders should study this carefully.

2) Part II: "Problems of Union Strategy and Tactics" may be recommended as a basis for general introductory discussion, and as a way of introducing and calling attention to this important work by Trotsky.

a) Preface to Part II, pp. 42-44. Why should revolutionists be interested in changes in the trade unions? Why do changes within the unions present new problems of strategy and tactics for revolutionists? Trotsky is quoted: "Trade Unions are not ends in themselves; they are but means along the road to proletarian revolution." (p. 45) What is your interpretation of this statement?

b) "Trade Unions in the Transitional Epoch," pp. 59-62. This is excerpted from the Transitional Program, written in 1938. At that time Trotsky referred to "ultraleft doctrinaires" who preach that unions have "outlived their usefulness." Have we any such "ultraleft doctrinaires" to contend with today? Who are our most serious opponents within the union movement? (p. 60)

Under what circumstances would the SWP advance the demand for "Factory Committees"? (p. 61)

How does this relate to our current propaganda slogan for a congress of labor?

c) "Discussion with a CIO Organizer" (pp. 62-68) The CIO organizer asks Trotsky, "What would you yourself do in the United States today (1938) if you were a trade union organizer?" (p. 65)

Does Trotsky's answer apply today? How could a union organizer introduce the concept of a sliding scale of hours and a sliding scale of wages in the unions today? How is this idea of the sliding scale of wages incorporated in some union contracts today? (escalator clause). What unions have sought to embody the concept of a sliding scale of hours in their contracts with employers? (30 hour work week at 40 hours pay, "30 for 40").

The above general questions are, of course, not answered in the text. A study class cannot be expected to find definitive answers to them in its initial session. The only purpose in raising such questions is to introduce the Trotsky pamphlet and to return briefly at the end of the class series to these same questions in order to allow the participants in the class to measure for themselves what they have learned.

The following questions are based exclusively upon the short (6 pages) discussion between Trotsky and a CIO organizer in 1938, (Leon Trotsky on the Trade Unions, pp. 62-68). One of the reasons this is selected is to illustrate the approach of revolutionists to the union movement, and to contrast the revolutionist with the progressive unionist.

Other sections in the pamphlet, Leon Trotsky on the Trade Unions, deal more specifically and directly with the question of the relation between the revolutionary party and the union movement, particularly those polemics against syndicalism.

1. What do you think of a policy that aims at "preventing complete unemployment?" p. 62. How is this similar to and different from the present policy of the trade union officialdom? How does this relate to present efforts (such as they are) to reduce unemployment by the Nixon administration (government subsidies to industry); by the AFL-CIO officials (a Federal Works Program)? Do you know of any efforts by particular unions to combat unemployment? (Railroad unions, longshoremens, auto workers, steelworkers). What can we say in a union about this problem? What would we propose in a union meeting? Should we submit a resolution or motion? If so, what?

2. "The crisis of American capitalism has 'American' tempos and proportions." p. 63. Do you think the present crisis of world capitalism is comparable to that of 1938? Compare and contrast the economic situation, the social instability, the political impasse.

3. This discussion is about the imminence of Fascism. (Hague) p. 63. Do you think a fascist danger exists in this country today? Under what conditions can such a danger arise? Do you think the present leaders of the union movement are "tasting the joys of today without worrying about tomorrow"? (p. 64. Do the workers share such an attitude? Is this part of "the psychology of the American workers"? How do you explain that many fewer than 15 percent of the organized workers attend union meetings today? Is it only that the leaders have nothing to say?

4. Trotsky says Marx and Engels predicted the decline of capitalism in 1848 (p. 63), that in the "classical epoch of capitalism" there were fluctuations but general expansion (p. 64), that "today there isn't the slightest hope for such a thing" as the reversal of the general decline. What is the prospect now, 1972? Trotsky predicted "the CIO may collapse as quickly as it arose." What happened? Did the CIO collapse? How is it different now from 1938? Is it possible for the union movement to collapse in the near future? What are its present prospects?

5. "The economic situation is such that we are forced to hold back the workers, to put brakes on the movement, to retreat." (p. 64) What gave the CIO organizer this idea in 1938? Do you think the trade union officialdom feels this way today?

6. Trotsky says "the problem is not leaders, but program. The correct program not only arouses and consolidates the masses, but also trains the leaders." (p. 65) What is the problem today? What is the program?

7. Do you think the workers can "provoke" reaction, that if the unions today do not "try to help make Nixon's program work" (Meany) they will be held responsible for the inflation? Does it now appear to many as if the unions, especially the building trades, were responsible for rising prices? If the workers, or the unions, do not provoke reaction, what does? Why is this line of reasoning -- to caution the workers against "provocation" -- typical of social democracy? What are the practical consequences?

8. Trotsky says, "the basic task consists in laying the foundation for a better economic system, for a more just, rational, and decent utilization of the productive forces in the interests of all the people." p. 67. How can unions today lay the basis for a better economic system? What are the "ordinary, 'normal,' routine methods of the trade unions"? How can these be broken?

9. In 1938 it was said that a labor party was a good idea, "but Roosevelt's popularity is still too great." Many today will agree that the labor party is a good idea. What is the reasoning now for not organizing a labor party? The reason most often given? The real reason?

II.

Leon Trotsky on the Labor Party in the United States, 35 pages.

This is also required reading for those leading classes on trade union problems.

This pamphlet, like the other compilation On the Trade Unions should not be required reading for a class on trade unions today. But this question of the labor party is sure to arise in the union movement very soon. What Trotsky had to say on this question is valuable now. Many who complete the classes on unions will want to study further the labor party question and they should know where to go for such a study.

The introduction (pp. 3-5) is very useful and ought to be assigned reading. The concluding sentence ends, "...it is absurd to view the present quiescence of the American working class as eternal or even assured of longevity." This was written in 1969. What events since then have confirmed this judgement?

III.

Recent Trends in the Labor Movement, by Farrell Dobbs

This is required reading for anyone leading a class on trade unions. It will be the basic text for the classes.

This series of articles was published in The Militant between December 19, 1966 and May 8, 1967.

The trends that were then beginning to appear are more clearly discernible today.

The sections that ought to be given most careful attention are "Meany vs. Reuther -- basic issues reflected" (p. 10), "The New Left and the Working Class" (p. 19), "The Case for an Independent Labor Party," (p. 22), "Labor's Role in Social Change" (p. 25), and "Unions Need Class Conscious Leaders."

It will probably not be possible to cover all this material in one or two sessions. The instructor should decide which one or two of the suggested sections would serve best.

After reading this series, the students should be asked to list and bring with them what they understand to be the main (not necessarily the most recent) trends in the labor movement.

The following questions are intended as a study guide to these sections. Answers are in the text.

Recent Trends in the Labor Movement

Reading: "Meany vs. Reuther -- basic issues reflected" (written January, 1967)

1. What were the key issues impelling workers toward struggle in the close of 1966 and the beginning of 1967? (this was the year the last auto contract was signed, the last negotiated by Reuther. p. 10)

2. What answer does Reuther give to these problems different from Meany? p. 11 (see "actual disagreement")

3. Why is the Vietnam war "the most vital question facing the working class...."? p. 11

4. How did Reuther differ from Meany on the foreign policy question? p. 11

5. What did Reuther mean by a "negotiated settlement" in 1967? p. 12

6. How did Reuther differ from Meany on the questions of "equal rights" and Black power? p. 12

7. What was Reuther's idea of a "truly liberal party"? p. 12

8. What do we advocate as an "effective left-wing" program in the unions? p. 12

Reading: "The New Left and the Working Class"

1. What do the "new left" theoreticians think of the ability of the working class "to play a vanguard social role"? What is the source of their misunderstanding? p. 19

2. How do workers become class-conscious? What is the material basis of reformism in capitalist society? p. 20

3. What is the objective effect of "fringe benefits" in the collective bargaining process? p. 20

4. Why will the move of the unions to form a labor party "most likely begin around a program of reforms"? p. 21

Reading: "The Case for an Independent Labor Party"

1. What common feature is basic to the old AFL-Gompers political policy and the labor-Democratic Party coalition of the CIO? In what respect do the two policies differ? p. 22

2. What was the sign of "growing alienation of rank-and-file workers from the labor-Democratic coalition" in 1966? p. 24

3. Why must "Labor's Friends" continue to support the anti-labor assault in the Congress? p. 25

4. Why are anticapitalist moods developing within the ranks of the unions? What are some signs of this? p. 25

Reading: "Labor's Role in Social Change"

1. How did "substitution of dependence on capitalist politicians for use of the workers' power" pave the way for bureaucratization of the CIO? p. 26

2. How did the 1955 AFL-CIO merger help to "resuscitate outlived official policy"?

3. What was the heavy price paid for labor's entrapment in capitalist politics? (p. 27) What indication is there of a breakdown of the broad coalition of labor and the Democratic Party? Does such a breakdown threaten the two-party system? p. 27

4. Do the reforms advocated by the "new left" represent a break with capitalist politics? p. 28

5. What is the relation between independent Black political action and the move toward a labor party? p. 28

Reading: "Unions Need Class-Conscious Leaders"

1. Why is it not of much use to replace present union bureaucrats with some new faces, well-meaning workers? p. 29

2. What is the program for a left wing in the unions today? p. 29

3. What are the signs that the union movement is "as yet only in a preliminary state of change"? p. 30

4. Why is it important for the militant trade unionist always to center his attack on the employers, and not be distracted by the sellout practices of union bureaucrats? p. 31

5. What will be the nature of a labor party? p. 31

6. Why is it necessary to organize the revolutionary socialist vanguard party now and always? p. 31

7. What will the workers do when they take control of government and reorganize the economy? p. 31

IV.

A Class on the Beginning of the Modern Labor Movement

Reading: James P. Cannon, "The AFL and the Start of the CIO," Speeches for Socialism, pages 77-82, Pathfinder Press

Art Preis, "Three Strikes that Paved the Way," and "Industrial vs. Craft Unionism," (chapters 4 and 5 in Labor's Giant Step, Pathfinder Press)

Supplementary: James P. Cannon, "Sixty Years of American Radicalism," chapter 6 in Speeches for Socialism, Pathfinder Press

QUESTIONS:

1. Why were the old craft unions of the AFL unable to organize the unorganized workers in 1935?

2. What was the difference between William Green and John L. Lewis? (See Cannon, Speeches for Socialism, page 79) Can you list other differences besides the one mentioned by Cannon?

3. What were the different political tendencies in the early CIO movement?

4. Why would the revolutionary tendency be pushing further and further into the AFL at the time of the CIO formation?

5. What was the trade union policy of Stalinism in 1934-35, and how did this influence the CIO in the beginning?

6. What made it difficult for the old AFL bureaucrats to expel radicals in 1935, as contrasted with the free and easy way they kicked out all opposition in the earlier period?

7. Do you think workers in 1935 were inspired with the revolutionary idea that they can establish themselves as the masters of the whole world? Did this idea motivate and inspire the CIO movement? To what extent?

REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST STRATEGY IN ELECTORAL ACTION

(a five-session class)

Summer 1972

Class 1. WHY REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALISTS INTERVENE IN CAPITALIST ELECTIONS

Reading: Aspects of Socialist Election Policy, Education for Socialists bulletin, pages 5-8.

Doug Jenness, Lenin as Election Campaign Manager, Pathfinder Press.

Barry Sheppard, "Elections as a Weapon of Struggle," in Revolutionary Analysis, Strategy and Tactics Today, Pathfinder Press, pages 3-5.

Supplementary: V.I. Lenin, Left Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder, chapters 7 and 9.

QUESTIONS:

1. What is the relationship between mass action and socialist electoral policy?
2. How can socialists say that they aren't "working in the system" when they run in capitalist elections?
3. Under what conditions, if any, do socialists boycott elections?
4. What is the difference between boycotting and abstaining from elections?
5. What is the difference between a revolutionary and a reformist approach to electoral strategy?

Class 2. THE CASE FOR A LABOR PARTY

Reading: Leon Trotsky on the Labor Party in the United States, Pathfinder Press.

James P. Cannon, "Campaign for a Labor Party!" in Aspects of Socialist Election Policy, Education for Socialists bulletin, pages 11-17.

Farrell Dobbs, "The Case for an Independent Labor Party," in Recent Trends in the Labor Movement, Education for Socialists bulletin, pages 22-28.

Supplementary: Art Preis, "Labor Political Action," in Labor's Giant Step, Pathfinder Press, pages 237-253.

David Thorstad, six articles on the New Democratic Party, Canada's labor party. The Militant, February 25, March 3, 10, 24, 31, and April 14, 1972.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why did Trotsky change his position on the labor party in the United States in the 1930's?
2. What is the difference between a propaganda campaign and an agitational campaign for a labor party?

3. What is wrong with the Workers League approach to the labor party?

4. Would revolutionaries support a labor party with a reformist program and reformist leadership? Why?

5. What program would revolutionaries advocate for a labor party?

Class 3. WHY SOCIALISTS SUPPORT INDEPENDENT BLACK AND CHICANO PARTIES

Reading: The Case for an Independent Black Party, Pathfinder Press.

"Black Democrats," section V of Aspects of Socialist Election Policy, Education for Socialists bulletin, pages 62-74.

Towards an American Socialist Revolution, Pathfinder Press, pages 197-205.

The Struggle for Chicano Liberation, Pathfinder Press (also available in SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 29 No. 13, and ISR, November 1971.)

"The Gary Convention and Black Liberation," May 1972 ISR by Tony Thomas. (also in Black Liberation and Political Power, Pathfinder Press.)

Supplementary: A Transitional Program for Black Liberation, Pathfinder Press.

La Raza Unida Party in Texas, Gutierrez and Compean, Pathfinder Press.

La Raza! Why Chicano Party? Why Chicano Studies?, Pathfinder Press.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why do Marxists say that Black and Chicano parties are nationalist parties?

2. Do socialists advocate independent parties for all oppressed nationalities?

3. For Black and Chicano parties what would be the relationship between direct action and running in elections?

4. Would socialists support a Black or Chicano party with a reformist pro-capitalist leadership?

5. Is the program of the Raza Unida parties reformist or revolutionary?

6. Could a person be a member of the SWP, a Black or Chicano party, and a labor party?

7. If the Gary Black convention had formed a Black party would Marxists have supported it?

8. What program do socialists advocate for a Black or Chicano party?

Class 4. BLACKS, CHICANOS AND WOMEN IN THE 1972 ELECTIONS

Reading: Betsey Stone, "Women and the 1972 Elections," February 1972 ISR.

Cindy Jaquith, "Where is the Women's Political Caucus Going?" May 1972 ISR.

Linda Jenness, "Open Letter to Shirley Chisholm," March 24, 1972 Militant

QUESTIONS:

1. Do Marxists advocate the formation of an independent feminist party?
2. Would Marxists support independent feminist candidates? What would be the factors in considering this decision?
3. If the Women's Political Caucus ran candidates would we support them?
4. What do Marxists propose that feminists do in the electoral arena?
5. Do Marxists consider the Women's Political Caucus and the Black Congressional Caucus as steps toward a break with capitalist politics?
6. If members of the Congressional Black Caucus ran as independents would we support them?

Class 5. WHAT IS THE CHARACTER OF SWP CAMPAIGNS

Reading: "Reports and Discussion: 1969 and 1970 SWP Campaigns," in SWP Internal Information Bulletin, No. 1 in 1970.

"Election Campaign Panel," 1970 Socialist Activists and Educational Conference Reports, Vol. 1 No. 3

Socialist Workers Party 1972 Election Platform.

QUESTIONS:

1. What do we mean when we say that we do not want to run routinist campaigns?
2. What do we mean when we say that our local campaigns can help make the SWP a political force in the cities where it exists?
3. What is the relationship of our campaigns to our participation in mass movements and circulation of our press?
4. How are our campaigns party-building activities? How do they help recruit new members?
5. What is the attitude of SWP campaigns towards "winning"?
6. What do we mean when we say that we conduct socialist propagandist campaigns?

(Note: Although this study guide is somewhat dated, it is still very useful.)

THE NATIONAL QUESTION AND THE BLACK STRUGGLE

Study Guide, 1970

Class I. The Marxist position on the national question

reading: Lenin, articles on "The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination" and "The Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up." Available in several different anthologies.

supplementary: Trotsky, "The Problem of Nationalities" in History of the Russian Revolution, vol. 3, pp. 56-61

Trotsky, "Independence of the Ukraine and Sectarian Muddleheads" in Writings of Leon Trotsky (1939-1940), pp. 74-78.

discussion:

- A. How do nationalist demands have their historical roots in the bourgeois revolution?
- B. What does it mean to say that the demand for self-determination is a "bourgeois-democratic" demand?
- C. The character of the fight for self-determination in the imperialist epoch. The significance of bourgeois-democratic demands in the fight for socialism.
- D. Support for the right of self-determination as the basis for class unity and internationalism. Why it is the only concrete way of taking an anti-capitalist and pro-socialist approach.

Class 2. Self-determination and the United States

reading: Leon Trotsky on Black Nationalism and Self-Determination

supplementary: Vernon and Browne, Should the U.S. Be Partitioned?

Articles on "Black Nationalism as a Touchstone" in Revolutionary Analysis, Strategy and Tactics Today.

SWP 1969 pre-convention discussion bulletin vol. 27, no. 12, articles by Morrison and Breitman
Jenness, "What was the CP's 'Black Belt' Theory?" in The Militant, February 27, 1970.

discussion:

- A. The oppression of Black people as a national oppression, not just a case of extra-class oppression.

- B. The difference between the nationalism of the oppressed and the nationalism of oppressor nations.
- C. Why is there an anti-capitalist thrust to the struggle of oppressed nationalities?
- D. Is it likely that Black nationalism will decline in influence among Black people in the U.S. as the working class in general radicalizes?
- E. The difference between the demand for self-determination and the demand for equality. Does support to self-determination exclude support to demands for equality?
- F. Why do revolutionaries make no concessions whatsoever to the racist attitudes of white workers?
- G. Is nationalism equivalent to separatism? Is support to the right of self-determination qualified in any way? Is support to the right of self-determination equivalent to demanding separation? Who decides the question of separation, the revolutionary party or the Black masses? What was wrong with the CP's theory of independence for the "Black Belt?"
- H. What is wrong with the argument that self-determination, up to and including the possibility of separation, is "impractical?"

Class 3. The Revolutionary Dynamic of Black Nationalism

reading: Breitman & Novack, Black Nationalism and Socialism
 "The Course of U.S. imperialism and the Revolutionary Struggle for a Socialist America," -- 1969 SWP political resolution, contained in International Socialist Review, November-December 1969, or SWP Discussion Bulletin Volume 27 No. 11
 Barnes, Political Report to SWP 1969 Convention, Internal Information Bulletin No. 8 in 1969.

supplementary: "Black Caucuses in the Trade Unions" (Political Committee Memorandum) SWP Discussion Bulletin Vol. 27, no. 11
 Boutelle, "Should Blacks Run on a Multi-national Ticket?" The Militant, November 21, 1969

discussion:

- A. Can the demands of Black people for national liberation be satisfied within the capitalist system?

- B. The vanguard role of Blacks in the struggle for the socialist revolution. The different ways in which this will be manifest.
- C. The dual class and national character of Black demands.
- D. The effects that the predominantly proletarian social composition of the Black masses will have.
- E. The combined character of the American socialist revolution. The convergence and interdependence of the socialist and nationalist struggles. In what sense is this an American manifestation of the permanent revolution?
- F. The multinational character of the revolutionary socialist party.
- G. In the History of the Russian Revolution, Vol. III, chapter II on "The Problem of Nationalities," Trotsky says: "Bolshevism at the same time made it a verily sacred task to unite as closely as possible, by means of voluntary class discipline, the workers of different nationalities. Thus it flatly rejected the national-federation principle in building the party. A revolutionary organization is not the prototype of the future state, but merely the instrument for its creation. An instrument ought to be adapted to fashioning the product; it ought not to include the product. Thus a centralized organization can guarantee the success of a revolutionary struggle -- even where the task is to destroy the centralized oppression of nationalities."

This has a profound meaning for the character of the revolutionary party in general and for the dynamic of the national liberation struggle.
Discuss.

Class 4. Black Nationalism Today

reading: Vernon, "White Radicals and Black Nationalism," International Socialist Review, Winter, 1964
Two Speeches by Malcolm X
The Black Uprisings: Newark, Detroit 1967
 Breitman, Malcolm X: The Man and His Ideas
 1969 YSA resolution, "Strategy and Tactics in the Struggle for Black Self-Determination."

supplementary:

Malcolm X Speaks
 Breitman, The Last Year of Malcolm X

discussion:

- A. The development of Black nationalism as a rejection of American capitalist society.
- B. How the nationalist struggle comes into confrontation with the institutions of bourgeois society.
- C. Black nationalism as the form of expression of the urban working class sector of the Black community.
- D. The evolution of Black nationalism, contrasting the struggles of the Black liberation movement prior to 1965 with those after.

Class 5. Strategy and Tactics for Black Liberation (two sessions)

reading: The Case for a Black Party

A Transitional Program for Black Liberation

DeBerry, "Report on the Transitional Program for Black Liberation" (1969 SWP convention, Internal Information Bulletin No. 6 in 1969.)

"Report on Strategy and Tactics in the Struggle for Black Self-Determination," in To Make a Revolution: Proceedings of the 9th National Convention of the YSA

discussion:

Session 1.

- A. The nationalist character of the current radicalization.
- B. The importance of a transitional approach to the Black struggle.
- C. The necessity to give organization form to the Black struggle.
- D. The Black party as a vehicle for organization and struggle.
- E. Would a Black party be solely or mainly an electoral instrument?
- F. What is the nature of the present period and what does this mean in terms of organization and program?
- G. Describe how the Transitional Program for Black Liberation includes both democratic and transitional demands.
- H. The Transitional Program for Black Liberation says, "Taken point by point, the program can seem modest, perhaps even feasible under capitalism if one were to take at face value the propaganda about capitalism standing for democracy, a good

living, and a free world.... But how does such a program tie in with the struggle to overturn capitalism and build a socialist society in America?" Explain.

- I. Our political line as opposed to that of our political opponents in the radical movement.

Session 2.

- A. The need for mass struggles as a step toward the Black party -- as opposed to the ultra-left or reformist approaches.
- B. From what source does ultra-leftism flow?
- C. What is wrong with the "dual" or "syndicalist" concepts which try to combine vanguard and mass forms in one organization? What has been the concrete experience of these types of groups. Give examples.
- D. Would the Black party be a revolutionary cadre organization?
- E. What have been the positive and negative experiences of the Black Panther Party?
- F. The effect of nationalist consciousness on Black workers and how this will affect the labor movement in general.
- G. The importance of revolutionary socialist cadre at this stage of the radicalization. How can the YSA and SWP, with as yet limited numbers of Black cadre, best intervene in the Black liberation struggle?



