

PARTY BUILDER

SWP Organizational Discussion Bulletin

Vol. VIII, No. 3

August 1974

TWELVE STUDY GUIDES FOR CLASSES

	<u>Page</u>
Twelve Study Guides for Classes, Introduction	3
History of the Russian Revolution	4
The Permanent Revolution in Vietnam	7
The Post World War II Transformations in Eastern Europe, China and Cuba	8
Speeches to the Party	10
History of the Fourth International: From the Left Oppo- sition to the 1963 Reunification	13
Appendix: Outline for Classes on the History of the Fourth International Before the Founding Congress	15
Revolutionary Defense Policies and Principles	16
Black Liberation and Socialism	18
Stalinism	21
A Marxist Approach to the Labor Movement	24
Teamster Rebellion	27
Teamster Power	29
Popular Frontism: Road to Disaster in Chile	30

40 cents

Published by

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

14 Charles Lane, New York, N.Y. 10014

TWELVE STUDY GUIDES FOR CLASSES

Included in this bulletin are twelve study guides prepared by the National Education Department for classes held in the past period. They include: (1) History of the Russian Revolution; (2) Vietnam and Permanent Revolution; (3) The Post-World War II Transformations in Eastern Europe, China, and Cuba; (4) Speeches to the Party; (5) History of the Fourth International: From Left Opposition to the 1963 Reunification; (6) Revolutionary Defense Policies and Principles; (7) Black Liberation and Socialism; (8) Stalinism, including a new sixth class on the program for political revolution; (9) A Marxist Approach to the Labor Movement; (10) Teamster Rebellion; (11) Teamster Power; (12) Popular Frontism: Road to Disaster in Chile, based on Disaster in Chile.

These study guides are a supplement to the class outlines published in the Education for Socialists bulletin, Guide to Marxist Education (\$.90).

The date when each study guide was originally prepared is given. Wherever possible, errors have been corrected for this printing. A few additional questions have been added, and in some cases the suggested reading has been updated.

The main objectives of the study guides are to assist

branch education by suggesting primary and supplementary readings and key questions for students, aiding lecturers in organizing talks and pinpointing important areas, and suggesting possible questions for discussion groups.

In addition, the guides can be very useful to comrades engaging in independent study of these subjects.

In making use of the study guides, branch educational committees and teachers should review them carefully, adapting them to the specific needs of their educational program. In many cases, for instance, it will be preferable to focus post-lecture discussion groups on three or four key questions rather than attempting to take up all of the questions included in a study guide for a given class. In other cases, it may be desirable to break one class into two in order to allow all the key points to be adequately covered.

Suggestions for new study guides or for changes in existing ones should be sent to the National Education Department

Suggestions for new study guides or for changes in existing ones should be sent to the National Education Department. Such suggestions have been quite helpful in the past period.

Fred Feldman
Gus Horowitz

National Education Department

THE HISTORY OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

October 1972

eight classes

Prepared by Bob Chester

Note: Page numbers listed below refer to the one-volume Ann Arbor edition of Trotsky's History of the Russian Revolution. References placed in parentheses refer to the three-volume Sphere Books paperback edition printed in England.

Class 1.

Required Reading: Preface, Chapters I, III, IV in vol. 1

Questions:

1. What were Russia's main peculiarities? How did they apply to the problems of the revolution?
 2. Compare the size of the proletariat and peasantry in 1916. How did this affect the problems of the revolution?
 3. What is the difference between an economic and a political strike? Give some examples.
 4. What is defensism? Defeatism? How is each implemented? Is it possible to compromise between them?
 5. Why did Menshevism take shape during the years of reaction?
 6. Explain the passage on page xviii (page 16 in paperback) "...the swift changes in mass views and moods thus derive, not from the flexibility of man's mind, but just the opposite, from its deep conservatism."
 7. What were the objectives of the workers at the beginning and at the end of the Five Days? Suppose the actions were stopped dead by the police in the first day, would the revolution have taken place?
 8. Does the disappearance of the police from the streets have a special significance?
 9. Would you consider the revolution a peaceful one? Was it democratically achieved?
- Discussion question: Give your own description of the law of uneven and combined development and its importance in Marxist theory. Give some examples from American history or your own experience.

Class 2.

Required Reading: Chapters IX, X, XI, and XII to page 220 in vol. 1

Questions:

1. Who organized the Soviets? Who elected its Executive Committee? What tasks did it allocate to itself?
2. What was the real relation of power between the Soviet and the Duma? Did the Soviet spokesmen accurately reflect the views of those they represented?
3. What was the paradox of the February Revolution? What threat did the bourgeoisie hold over the heads of the Soviet leaders?

4. What was the composition of the new government? What position did Kerensky hold? What was the attitude of the workers and soldiers to it?

5. Why is dual power usually a characteristic of a revolutionary period? What are its contradictions? How are they resolved?

6. What was the basis of authority of the Executive Committee? What was the role of the soldiers in the Soviets? What was the relation of the Petrograd Soviet to those in other cities?

Discussion question: Did the Bolshevik Party keep up with the events? How can a revolutionary party best meet the test of a critical revolutionary period?

Class 3.

Required Reading: Chapters XV, XVI. Also, if possible XVIII, XXII in vol. 1

Supplementary Reading: "Three Conceptions of the Russian Revolution," Writings of Leon Trotsky 1938-39, pp. 110-116; The Fourth International (magazine), November 1942; Stalin School of Falsification, page 235, Minutes of March Conference; Speech delivered to the caucus of Bolsheviks, April 17, 1917, Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 24 (page 139 of 1964 edition)

Questions:

1. What was the early attitude of the Bolshevik leaders toward the Provisional Government? What was the source of this attitude? What would have been the possible results of unity with the Mensheviks?
2. How important were the slogans "Democratic Republic," "Confiscation of the Landed Estates," and "An 8-Hour Day" in the history of the Bolshevik Party? How valid were these slogans after February?
3. What were the main programmatic and tactical points Lenin attacked at the April conference? What did he propose in their place?
4. How was Lenin able to win a majority in the Party so quickly?
5. How necessary was the role of the individual, Lenin, to the success of the revolution? Could it have succeeded if Lenin had been killed in April?
6. What were Miliukov's objectives in sending the April 18 note to the Allies? What were the aims of the workers' demonstrations? How did the April events indicate the real relation between the Executive Committee and the Provisional Government?
7. How was it possible for the workers to be 100 times further to the left than the Bolsheviks, when the Bolsheviks had a program to take power?

Discussion question: Discuss Trotsky's analysis of the time lag in all representative institutions, pages 351-352 (or 328-9 in paperback). Also, time lags in consciousness, pages 435-437 (or 403-5 in paperback).

Class 4.

Required Reading: Chapters I, II, III in vol. 2

Questions:

1. List as many conditions as you can that brought the tensions to the boiling point in July.
2. What touched off the July Days?
3. What motivated the Kadets in resigning from the government? What weapons against the Bolsheviks did they develop?
4. What was the contradiction facing the Bolshevik Party? How did they solve it? What would have happened if they had seized power?
5. Was it proper for Lenin to go into hiding?
6. How was the reaction able to organize so quickly? What were its first objectives?
7. Were the July Days a demonstration or an insurrection?

Discussion question: Were the July Days a necessary phase in the development of the revolution?

Class 5.

Required Reading: Chapters IX, X, XII in vol. 2

Questions:

1. What was the plan of Kornilov's revolt? On what pretext was it begun? Analyze Kornilov's Declaration, page 212 (208-209, paperback).
2. What was Kerensky's plan as against that of Kornilov?
3. What was Miliukov's role? Why was Kerensky impelled to oppose Kornilov when the showdown came?
4. List as many reasons as you can for the failure of the revolt, grouping them into categories of social, political and subjective reasons.
5. Why was it necessary to set up a Committee of Defense? How did it function? What were the Bolshevik tactics in this period?
6. Discuss the process of decline and split up of the S. R. and the Mensheviks. How did their left wings differ from the right wings? What was the role of Martov?
7. Why was the vote of the Petrograd Soviet on September 9 of such significance? How did it affect the relationship of the Soviets throughout the country?

Discussion question: How strong was the power of the Soviets from February through October? How pertinent was the slogan "All Power to the Soviets" in each period? How did the content of the slogan change?

Class 6.

Required Reading: Chapters I, II, in vol. 3. Also, "A Further Note on Nationalities."

Questions:

1. Why has the peasant question been of such vital importance throughout all European history?
2. How did the peasantry differ in various areas of Russia? What were the two stages of revolt between February and October?
3. What were the various organs representing the peasants? How significant were each of them? Why were the Soviets less important before August?
4. Why were the Social Revolutionaries the party of the peasantry?
5. How were the ties between the city workers and peasants established? What was the role of soldiers and sailors?
6. Why did the program of the Bolsheviks call for independent organs of peasant struggle? What were Lenin's views in April? Why?
7. What is a nation? How was Russia different from Western European nations in national composition? What forms did national oppression take in Russia?
8. Explain the difference in national composition between the cities and the countryside. How did the national question link up with the agrarian question?
9. What was the history of the Bolsheviks on the national question? What was their stand on the right of nations to self-determination? How did this contrast with the question of national differences within the party?

Discussion question: Is nationalization of the land a bourgeois or socialist step? What is the difference between the bourgeois and socialist stages on the land question?

Class 7.

Required Reading: Chapters IV and V of vol. 3

Supplementary Reading: Statement of Kamenev and Zinoviev contained in Towards the Seizure of Power, Volume XXI of Lenin's Collected Works (1932 edition), p. 328

Questions:

1. How was the Committee of Revolutionary Defense (Military Revolutionary Committee) set up? How did the Bolsheviks utilize the committee?
2. Why were the transitions of the garrisons from right to left so violent? What was the role of the Conference of the Garrison?
3. Why was the discussion of the "coming out" carried on so openly? Compare this with the concept of "conspirative seizure of power" peddled by our opponents.
4. Why was the legal framework of dual power still observed by both sides? Why were mass demonstrations unnecessary in this period? What was the tactical line of the Soviets?

5. How did Lenin establish the true relation of forces in such a confusing period? What did he consider the turning point that made the insurrection immediate?

6. What was Lenin's attitude toward the Bolshevik leadership? What was the crisis in the Bolshevik Party? What were the main line-ups at the Central Committee meeting of October 10?

7. What was the order of points in Lenin's motion? page 148 (page 142, paperback).

8. What were Kamenev and Zinoviev's main arguments? How prevalent were their views in the party? What was Stalin's role?

Discussion question: Discuss the importance of State and Revolution both as a theoretical work and as a guide to action. What is meant by Trotsky's statement that "the tactical mistakes of Lenin were for the most part by-products of his strategic power?" page 128 (123, paperback).

Class 8.

Required Reading: Chapters VI, IX and X in vol. 3

Questions:

1. Is there an element of "conspiracy" in even the most

popular revolutions? In what sense? Why? Analyze Trotsky's description of the Art of Insurrection, page 169 (page 160-161, paperback).

2. What is Blanquism? What are its positive aspects as well as its basic weakness? Is guerrilla warfare Blanquism?

3. Why is timing so important in an insurrection? Why is it necessary to bring over the wavering elements, especially sections of the middle class?

4. What was the role of the Red Guard? How did its existence act as a thermometer of the stage of the revolution?

5. Why are defensive formulations so important, especially in a period of insurrection?

6. Could the revolution have been forestalled by a bold action of the provisional government?

7. What were the first measures proclaimed by the new government? What was the purpose of the Bolsheviks taking over the S. R. land program?

8. What was the Bolshevik attitude toward the Constituent Assembly before and after the seizure of power?

Discussion question: Do the lessons of the History of the Russian Revolution apply to the present period in the advanced countries as well as the underdeveloped ones?

THE PERMANENT REVOLUTION IN VIETNAM
Summer 1973

Class 1. Permanent Revolution and Vietnam

Required Reading: War and Revolution in Vietnam, by Doug Jenness (Pathfinder Press); The Permanent Revolution and Results and Prospects, by Leon Trotsky, pp. 29-35, Preface to Results and Prospects; Chapter 10 of The Permanent Revolution.

Supplementary Reading: The Logic of Withdrawal, by Howard Zinn, Chapter 5, Boston: Beacon Press

Questions:

1. In 1946 Ho Chi Minh signed an agreement with the French that would have provided for "independence" for the Northern part of Vietnam as a capitalist country within the French Union (a referendum was to be held on the future of the Southern part). Why did the French immediately violate this agreement? Why did the other capitalist powers back France's efforts to re-establish colonial rule?
2. How did the pressures of the permanent revolution reflect themselves in the events that followed 1946?
3. The questions of land reform and national independence have been the central questions of the Vietnamese revolution. How does this relate to Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution?
4. "Neutralist" capitalist governments have held power for periods of time in Laos and Cambodia, and one is currently in office in Laos. Regimes of this type are also called for by leaders of the liberation movements in Cambodia and South Vietnam. Why can't such a regime settle the fundamental problems facing those countries?

Class 2. World Stalinism and the Vietnamese Revolution

Required Reading: Nixon's Moscow and Peking Summits, by Joseph Hansen and Caroline Lund (Pathfinder Press); The Meaning of the Vietnam Accords, by Barry Sheppard and Dick Roberts (Pathfinder Press); The Revolution Betrayed by Leon Trotsky: Chapter 8, The Army and Foreign Policy; Appendix: Socialism in One Country (Pathfinder Press)

Supplementary Reading: "Vietnam and World Politics," by Dick Roberts, in December 1972 International Socialist Review

Questions:

1. The French Communist Party--in concert with Moscow's policies at the time--supported the French effort to compel Vietnam to remain within the French colonial sphere. Why?
2. Why are the Soviet and Chinese bureaucrats willing to sacrifice the Vietnamese revolution for a detente with the United States? How does the theory and practice of "socialism in one country" lead to such actions?

3. Why was the demand for a governmental united front between China and the Soviet Union in defense of Vietnam important?

4. Would greater aid to Vietnam from China and the Soviet Union have heightened the danger of nuclear conflict with the U. S. ?

5. Do the policies of China and the Soviet Union preclude successful revolutions in semicolonial countries? Would the absence of Soviet or Chinese aid necessarily mean a defeat? Have there been any successful revolutions that were not supported by the Soviet Union and China?

6. Moscow and Peking and their supporters are predicting an era of "national reconciliation" in Vietnam as a result of the accords. Have the accords halted the class struggle in Vietnam?

Class 3. Stalinism in Vietnam

Required Reading: "On the Nature of the Vietnamese Communist Party," by George Johnson and Fred Feldman, in the July-August 1973 issue of the ISR; Three Documents of the NLF, edited by Gabriel Kolko (Boston:Beacon Press), section three; The Chinese Revolution: Problems and Perspectives, by Leon Trotsky (Pathfinder Press) pp. 2-7, 11-15

Supplementary Reading: The Struggle for Indochina, by Ellen Hammer (Stanford University Press), Chapters 5-8

Questions:

1. What are the differences between the "two-stage" theory of revolution advocated by the Vietnamese CP and the theory of permanent revolution?
2. How is this theory and the theory of socialism in one country reflected in positions taken by Hanoi and the NLF, such as hailing the January 1973 accords as a "victory?"
3. How did Trotskyists in Vietnam relate to the Viet Minh during the 1946-1954 war?
4. The Vietnamese CP has been at the head of a very deep-going revolution. Has their program helped or retarded that revolution? How?
5. The Vietnamese CP has been involved in intense armed struggle at several points in its history: 1930, during the Second World War, 1945-54, and 1960 to the present. Did these military campaigns represent a break from Stalinism?
6. A February 23, 1973 statement issued by the Vietnamese Communist Party states: "It is a certainty that our compatriots in the South will, .. without distinction of the poor and the rich, political affiliation, religious belief, and nationality, pool efforts in the struggle to preserve peace, achieve genuine independence, exercise democratic liberties, materialize national concord, heal the wounds of war, rebuild the country, and bring a life of plenty to the entire people." Why do such statements harm the Vietnamese revolution?

THE POST WORLD WAR II TRANSFORMATIONS IN EASTERN EUROPE, CHINA AND CUBA

November 1973

four classes

Class 1. Precedents for the Overturns in Eastern Europe

Required Reading: In Defense of Marxism, by Leon Trotsky, pp. 15-23, 54-59, 87-90, 129-137, 170-178; "From World War II to the Cold War," by Cliff Conner in Education for Socialists bulletin, Towards a History of the Fourth International: Part I--Three Contributions on Post-War Developments

Supplementary Reading: "The Evolution of the Buffer Countries," Resolution of the 7th Plenum of the IEC of the Fourth International, in Education for Socialists bulletin, Class, Party and State and the Eastern European Revolution; The Limits of Power: The World and United States Foreign Policy, 1945-1954, by Joyce and Gabriel Kolko (Harper and Row, New York, 1972), chapters 7, 14

Questions:

1. In what ways did the Soviet occupations of the Baltic states, Eastern Poland, and Finland presage the later developments in Eastern Europe? What were the differences between the East European overturns and those analyzed by Trotsky in In Defense of Marxism?

2. What circumstances compelled the counterrevolutionary Soviet bureaucracy to eliminate capitalist property relations in Eastern Poland and later in the Baltic states?

3. Did the Soviet bureaucrats set out to create workers states in Eastern Europe in 1945? How and why did Stalin's policy shift between 1945 and 1948?

4. What did the resolution of the 7th Plenum of the International Executive Committee mean by "structural assimilation"?

5. Why are property relations decisive for Marxists in determining the class character of the state? Why didn't the presence of the Soviet army ("bodies of armed men") make these countries workers states in 1945?

Class 2. Theoretical Conclusions of the Discussion on Eastern Europe

Required Reading: From Class, Party and State and the Eastern European Revolution: "The Problem of Eastern Europe," by Joseph Hansen, pp. 20-35; "Evolution of Eastern Europe," report to the Third World Congress of the Fourth International by Pierre Frank, pp. 47-53; "The Yugoslav Revolution," resolution of the Third World Congress, pp. 56-61; "The Wohlforth Way: A Methodological Mutation," by Tom Kerry, pp. 3-10

Questions:

1. When was the Fourth International's discussion on

Eastern Europe concluded and what conclusions were reached? What criteria led Pierre Frank to conclude, as Joseph Hansen had earlier, that the East European regimes were workers states?

2. Joseph Hansen writes: "The question of the class character of the state is the touchstone of the proletarian revolution and the heart of Marxist politics." Why is this the case? What errors might have flowed from a different outcome of the East European discussion?

3. How did the transformations confirm our evaluation of the class nature of the Soviet Union?

4. All the transformations in Eastern Europe except for that in Yugoslavia occurred without a civil war taking place. What is the essential function of civil war in a revolution? Was this function accomplished peacefully in Eastern Europe? If not, what performed the function normally played by a civil war?

5. Many comrades feared that recognizing that these countries were workers states would require us to conclude that Stalinism was no longer counterrevolutionary, since it could lead revolutions. Does our characterization of Stalinism as "counterrevolutionary" still hold true in spite of these overturns?

6. What were the key differences between the way capitalism was overturned in Yugoslavia and the method of its abolition in the other Eastern European states where overturns occurred? Does the 1951 resolution on Yugoslavia stand up in all respects? What problems existed with the position of the Third World Congress that the Yugoslav CP had "ceased to be a semi-Stalinist party and evolved as a centrist party?" How do we evaluate this party today?

Class 3. Theoretical Problems Posed by the Chinese Revolution

Required Reading: "Report on the Chinese Situation," by Peng Shu-tse in Education for Socialists bulletin, The Chinese Revolution, by Peng and Chen Pi-lan, Vol. I, pp. 23-34 and 42-50; "The Third Chinese Revolution and Its Aftermath," resolution adopted by the 1955 SWP convention, in Education for Socialists bulletin, The Chinese Revolution and Its Development; "Peasant War in China," by Leon Trotsky in The Chinese Revolution: Problems and Perspectives (Merit Publishers, New York). This work will appear in 1974 in the collection of Trotsky's writings on China being published by Pathfinder Press; "The Transitional Program," (the section on Workers and Farmers Governments) in The Transitional Program for the Socialist Revolution (Pathfinder Press, 1973), pp. 93-95

Supplementary Reading: "The Myth of the Mao-Stalin

Rift," by Tom Kerry, International Socialist Review, September-October 1969; Introduction by Joseph Hansen to Ten Years: History and Principles of the Left Opposition (Part V of Education for Socialists bulletin series, Towards a History of the Fourth International, \$.40)

Questions:

1. What factors led Trotsky to conclude that the Chinese CP was a petty-bourgeois party? What are the criteria that we use in making such an evaluation?

2. In the Transitional Program, Trotsky writes, "...one cannot deny categorically in advance the theoretical possibility that, under the influence of completely exceptional circumstances (war, defeat, financial crash, mass revolutionary pressure, etc.) the petty-bourgeois parties including the Stalinists may go further than they themselves wish on the road to a break with the bourgeoisie. In any case, one thing is not to be doubted: even if this highly improbable variant somewhere at some time becomes a reality and the 'workers and farmers government' in the above-mentioned sense is established in fact, it would represent merely a short episode on the road to the actual dictatorship of the proletariat."

How does Trotsky's suggestion shed light on the actual course of the Third Chinese Revolution? What conditions made it possible for the transition from a workers and farmers government to a workers state to take place under the leadership of Stalinists instead of revolutionary Marxists (an outcome Trotsky had not expected)?

3. Did the overthrow of Chiang by Mao go against the interests and orientation of the Soviet bureaucracy at that time? How were the various turns undertaken by Stalin reflected in the policy of the Chinese CP?

4. Did the policies followed by the Chinese CP before and after World War II serve to advance the Chinese Revolution? If not, in what ways did these policies retard that revolution?

5. Did Mao set out to create a workers state in 1949? What factors led him to overthrow capitalist property relations?

6. What considerations led the SWP to call for political revolution in China in the resolution adopted in 1955?

7. Why is it incorrect to refer to the Chinese Communist Party or the Mao regime as bureaucratic centrist?

Class 4. The Cuban Revolution

Required Reading: From Education for Socialists bulletin, The Nature of the Cuban Revolution: "Draft Theses on the Cuban Revolution," Political Committee resolution submitted on December 23, 1960; "What the Discussion on Cuba is about," by Joseph Hansen; "The Character of the New Cuban Government," by Joseph Hansen; "Workers and Farmers Government" (Extracts from documents of the Fourth Congress of the Comintern), Supplementary Reading: "The Algerian Revolution from 1962 to 1969," and other material in Education for Socialists bulletin, The Workers and Farmers Government (\$1.00)

Questions:

1. What are the differences and similarities in the social transformations that occurred in Cuba, Yugoslavia, and Eastern Europe?

2. The Fidel Castro leadership did not originate out of the Communist Party or out of any other historical current within the working class. Under these conditions, did the Cuban Communist Party help advance the Cuban revolution forward to the establishment of a workers state?

3. Based on the criteria we use in evaluating the class character of political groupings, what was the class character of the Castro grouping at the time it smashed the Batista regime and took power?

4. Some comrades held that Cuba became a workers state in October 1959 when a massive popular militia was formed. Discuss Hansen's reasons for opposing this view. When did Cuba become a workers state?

5. What is a "workers and farmers government"? How does it differ from a labor party type government, such as in Australia? From the dictatorship of the proletariat?

6. Is the progression from a "workers and farmers government" to a workers state inevitable? What lessons can we draw about this from the Algerian revolution?

7. How did the transformation process confirm the correctness of the theory of permanent revolution?

SPEECHES TO THE PARTY
Spring 1973

(A four-class series on the 1952-1953 fight with the Cochran-Clarke-Bartell faction based on readings from James P. Cannon's Speeches to the Party, Pathfinder Press, 1973, \$3.95 paperback, \$10.00 clothbound.)

Additional Resource Material: This material is primarily for background use by teachers or class organizers. It may be ordered from the National Education Department, Socialist Workers Party, 14 Charles Lane, New York, N. Y. 10014

- Tapes: 1. The Cochran Fight on Tape. Three talks by Al Hansen plus speeches by James P. Cannon. (Classes will probably want to schedule special sessions to listen to the tapes of Cannon's speeches.) 2-track, \$20.00; 4-track, \$12.00
2. The History of the SWP. Ten talks by Harry Ring. 2-track, \$16.00; 4-track, \$9.00

Education for Socialists Bulletins:

1. Toward a History of the Fourth International, Part I. Articles on the post-WWII Fourth International, by Cliff Conner, Les Evans and Tom Kerry. \$.40 (These articles are recommended as supplementary reading assignments if time permits.)
2. Towards a History of the Fourth International, Part III. International Committee Documents, \$4.00
3. Towards a History of the Fourth International, Part IV. International Secretariat Documents, \$3.25
4. Class, Party and State and the Eastern European Revolution. Documents of the International Discussion. \$1.00
5. The Development and Disintegration of World Stalinism. Contains the 1954 resolution on The Rise and Decline of Stalinism. \$1.25
6. The Structure and Organization Principles of the Party. Three lectures by Farrell Dobbs. \$.65

Class 1. Background of the Developing Differences

Required Reading: Introduction, by Al Hansen, pp. 5-23; Report and Summary to the 1952 Convention, pp. 24-50; Letters to Comrades, pp. 223-230, 231-233, 240-243, 249-251. (All from Speeches to the Party)

Supplementary Reading: Theses on the American Revolution, pp. 323-337; Letters to Comrades (other than above), pp. 223-255

Questions:

1. At the 1952 convention of the SWP, what dangerous implications did Cannon point out in the prognosis of "cen-

turies of deformed workers states?"

2. What was entryism "sui generis" as outlined by the Third World Congress and the Tenth Plenum of the International Executive Committee (IEC)? Discuss Cannon's attitude to this policy. What differences between the American political scene and that in other countries influenced his views? How did entryism "sui generis" differ from Trotsky's proposal in the 1930s for entry into some social democratic parties?

3. Why does Cannon put special emphasis on the effort to build and maintain an independent party during a period of reaction and labor conservatism? What factors would make an "entryist" tactic toward the Stalinist and social democratic milieus more dangerous in such a period?

4. What was wrong with Clarke's proposal for a "propaganda campaign"? Isn't an SWP election campaign really a "propaganda campaign"?

5. How does a faction of any type differ from others kinds of groupings in the party--e.g., an ideological tendency?

6. What rights do minorities have in relation to the SWP Internal Bulletin? How is the bulletin "edited"? Can the majority exclude or change articles submitted by supporters of a minority? (pp. 252-253)

Class 2. The Character of the Cochranite Opposition

Required Reading: Trade Unionists and Revolutionists, pp. 51-66; Letters to Comrades, pp. 256-289

Supplementary Reading: The Roots of the Party Crisis, pp. 338-399

Questions:

1. Discuss the relationship between social composition and factional alignments in the revolutionary party. Do all political disputes reflect social composition? What were the similarities and differences between the Cochran grouping and the petty-bourgeois opposition of 1940?

2. Cannon describes the trade unions as a "culture broth of opportunism." Why is this the case? He discusses the seniority clause as having a dual character--one result being the creation of a more conservative layer of high seniority workers. What attitude do revolutionists have toward seniority rights in the unions? What effect does the demand for "preferential hiring" of Blacks and Chicanos have?

3. Why did the Cochranite trade unionists embrace an orientation to the American Stalinists proposed by Clarke and Bartell? What was the real political direction of Cochran's grouping? What did the two orientations have in common?

4. Why is so much fire directed against the "combinationist" character of the Cochranites? Must all elements of a grouping be in complete accord on every question in

order for a grouping to be principled? What defines a principled and unprincipled faction? How is the combinationist character of the Cochran-Clarke-Bartell grouping reflected in "The Roots of the Party Crisis"?

5. A central issue in this dispute was the prospects for an American revolution. The Cochran-Clarke-Bartell faction tended to denigrate these prospects, particularly as expressed in the "Theses on the American Revolution." There later proved to be an area of agreement on this between the Cochranite minority and Pablo. For instance, the December 1953 plenum of Pablo's IEC stated: "Historically, the American revolution seems, as before, to take its place most probably as the final link in the chain of world revolution, and not as one of the next successive links.

"Furthermore, preparation for the virtually inevitable struggle of the revolutionary forces throughout the world against the last stronghold of reaction--Yankee imperialism--must be freely accepted with all its consequences."

What does this statement indicate about the revolutionary potential of the American workers? How did it fit in with the Cochranites' pessimism about the future of the party? What were Cannon's views on this question? What was Trotsky's position on the role of the American revolution? Why is this a fundamental question?

Class 3. International Questions in the SWP Faction Fight

Required Reading: Discussion Preceding the Third World Congress, pp. 400-411; Internationalism and the SWP, pp. 67-91; Stalinist Conciliation and Stalinophobia, pp. 290-301

Supplementary Reading: The Stalinists and the United Front, pp. 315-322; "What the New York Discussion Has Revealed," by Joseph Hansen in Towards a History of the Fourth International, Part III, vol. 1, pp. 30-43; "The New World Reality and the New Confusion: What Hansen's Document has Revealed," by Harry Frankel, in Towards a History of the Fourth International, Part IV, vol. 2, pp. 62-81

Questions:

1. In the discussion preceding the Third World Congress, Clarke asserted that it was correct to characterize the Stalinist parties as "not exactly reformist." What did he mean by this? What was wrong with his position?

2. Clarke argued that it was incorrect to call Stalinism a "national reformist bureaucracy and an agency of imperialism in the world labor movement." He said that the Communist parties could not be reformist parties because they "do not rest on a bureaucracy and a labor aristocracy deriving its privileges from the superprofits of imperialism." Comment on Clarke's argument. Why do we call Stalinism a "national reformist bureaucracy and agency of imperialism in the world labor movement?"

3. The positions of the SWP were characterized by the Cochran-Clarke-Bartell grouping as an expression of Stalino-

phobia. How did Cannon answer this argument? What is Stalinophobia? How did the positions of the SWP on issues like defense of the Soviet Union, the Korean war, and the civil liberties of Stalinists contrast with those of actual Stalinophobes like the Shactmanites, etc.? What is the difference between Stalinophobia and the view that Stalinism is an entirely counterrevolutionary force in the world labor movement?

4. Contrast Cannon's concept of the role of an international leadership with that of Pablo--e.g., the intervention of the International Secretariat in the French section. What factors make democratic centralism on an international scale different in application from the democratic centralism that can be applied in a national party?

5. Why is Cannon opposed to the international leadership intervening organizationally in national disputes? What special dangers arise when such intervention is carried out without the knowledge of the national leadership? Does this mean that leaders of the international should express no opinion on disputes in national sections or fraternal parties?

6. Is organizational intervention by the international leadership ever justified? If so, under what kind of circumstances could it intervene?

7. What does Cannon mean by the "natural selection" of national leaderships? Is there a process of natural selection for developing international leaders? How does an international leadership gain authority?

Class 4. The Split in the Party

Required Reading: Report and Concluding Speech to the May Plenum, pp. 136-171; Factional Struggle and Party Leadership, pp. 172-192; American Stalinism and Our Attitude Toward It, pp. 124-135

Supplementary Reading: Speech to the 16th National Convention, pp. 193-221; Mass Work and Factional Struggle, pp. 302-313

Questions:

1. The May 1953 resolution on American Stalinism and Our Attitude Toward It describes work in the CP milieu as "opponents work." What is opponents work? Would any current activities of the SWP and the YSA fall into this category?

2. Later the same resolution states: "The struggle of tendencies in the next upsurge of labor radicalism will have the double aspect of continuing struggle for the leadership of the broad mass movement and continuing struggle for the leadership of the vanguard." What is the relationship between the two?

3. In The Struggle for a Proletarian Party Cannon emphasizes the subordinate role of organizational questions in a political fight. Yet, in his speech to the May 1953 plenum, he seems to say just the opposite with regard to the fight with Cochran-Clarke-Bartell, that the "organizational question, all wrapped up in the struggle for power in the

leadership... has all other questions subsumed into it." (p. 149) Discuss the relation between political and organizational questions. (Note the concluding sentence in this paragraph of Cannon's speech.)

4. Cannon states that in opposition to Pablo, the SWP believes that the only way to resolve the leadership crisis of the working class is through building the party. He goes on to say further that "the problem of the party is the problem of the leadership of the party." (p. 182) What does he mean by the second statement?

5. What are the characteristics of the "leading cadre" concept of party leadership? What is the real relationship between leadership, program and composition? Contrast the

SWP's concept of leadership with those of opponent political groups.

6. In the light of Cannon's earlier statements about the need to proletarianize the party, what do you make of his observation at the 1954 convention that the campus work of the Detroit branch is "revolutionary trade union work of the highest significance"?

7. Cannon writes that "Trotsky once remarked that unifications and splits are alike methods of building the revolutionary party." Discuss this statement in the light of the fight with the Cochran-Clarke-Bartell faction. Under what circumstances does factional struggle have a destructive effect on building a revolutionary party?

March 1974

four classes

Class 1. From the Third International Through the 1933 Preconference of the International Left Opposition

Required Reading: From Documents of the Fourth International, 1933-40: "The Evolution of the Comintern," pp. 113-131; "The International Left Opposition, Its Tasks and Methods," pp. 19-43; from Towards a History of the Fourth International, Part II, (Education for Socialists bulletin, November 1973): "How the Fourth International Was Conceived," pp. 3-5; "Trotsky's Struggle for the Fourth International," pp. 6-9

Supplementary Reading: "Ten Years: the History and Principles of the Left Opposition," by Max Shachtman, with an introduction by Joseph Hansen, in Towards a History of the Fourth International, Part V (Education for Socialists bulletin, April 1974). Also available from Pathfinder Press in a Red Books edition with an introduction by Tariq Ali; "The Fourth International," by Pierre Frank, in Intercontinental Press, March 13, 1972, pp. 257-261 and March 20, 1972, pp. 298-301

Questions:

1. Why did the defeat of the revolutionary upsurge in Germany in 1923 mark a turning point for the Communist International?
2. Why did Trotsky feel that the positions on the Anglo-Russian Trade Union Unity Committee, the Chinese Revolution of 1925-27, and the economic policies of the CPSU were the keys for defining the Left Opposition? In what way did the Right Opposition differ on these questions?
3. Why did the Left Opposition continue to act as a faction of the Communist International, even after it had been expelled?
4. Why did Trotskyists describe the policies of the Stalinist bureaucracy in the 1920s as bureaucratic centrist? Why don't we use this term to describe Stalinism as it exists today?

Class 2. From the 1933 Break with the Comintern to the 1940 Emergency Conference

Required Reading: From Documents of the Fourth International, 1933-1940: "On the Need for a New German Party," pp. 51-55; "Declaration of the Four," pp. 55-59; "The Present Situation in the Labor Movement," pp. 60-65; "Minutes of the Founding Conference," pp. 284-302; from Towards a History of the Fourth International, Part II: "The Fourth International," by Michel Pablo, pp. 10-26

Supplementary Reading: "The Fourth International," by Pierre Frank, in IP, March 27, 1972, pp. 336-339; Transitional Program (In Documents of FI, pp. 180-220).

Questions:

1. Why did the Left Opposition change its orientation toward the Communist International?
2. In what way did the "Declaration of the Four" and the "French Turn" reflect similar responses to different situations?
3. Why was the decision made to form the Fourth International in the face of adverse conditions? How did Trotskyists refute the argument that revolutionary Marxists were too isolated from the masses and a new international was therefore "premature"?

Class 3. From 1940 to 1951

Required Reading: From Towards a History of the Fourth International, Part II: "The Fourth International," by Michel Pablo, pp. 27-39; from Towards a History of the Fourth International, Part I: "From World War II to the Cold War," by Cliff Conner, pp. 3-9

Supplementary Reading: "The Fourth International," by Pierre Frank, IP, April 3, 1972, pp. 370-374, April 10, 1972, pp. 394-397; "Criticism of the Theses of the February 1944 Conference," in the second volume of Documents of the Fourth International

Questions:

1. What were the key differences between the revolutionary Marxist approach during World War II to occupied semi-colonial countries like China and occupied imperialist countries like France?
2. Did a world revolutionary upsurge occur after World War II as Trotsky had expected? Were the international's predictions about the results of the war borne out?
3. What criteria were finally used to determine that the Soviet-occupied states of Eastern Europe (except Austria) had become workers states?

Class 4. From 1951 to 1963

Required Reading: From Towards a History of the Fourth International, Part I: "The Fourth International from Split to Reunification," by Les Evans, pp. 9-19; "Problems of Methodology in the 1953-1954 Split in the Fourth International," by Tom Kerry, pp. 19-24

Supplementary Reading: "The Fourth International," by Pierre Frank, IP, April 24, 1972, pp. 466-469; May 1, 1972, pp. 502-504; May 8, 1972, pp. 532-536; Towards a History of the Fourth International, Parts III and IV (Education for Socialists bulletins)

2. What were the key organizational questions in the dispute? How were Pablo's organizational methods related to his political views?
3. What is meant by "entryism sui generis"? How does

it differ from other forms of entryism?

4. What factors in the development of the International Secretariat and the International Committee led to reunification?

OUTLINE FOR CLASSES ON THE HISTORY OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL BEFORE THE FOUNDING CONGRESS

I. Brief description of origins of Internationalism--Communist Manifesto, First International, Second International, Zimmerwald and Kienthal, healthy period of Third International. Why Marxists have always been internationalists.

II. 1923-1933--Rise of Left Opposition as faction of CPSU and Communist International (CI).

Divided into two periods: 1923-29; 1929-33

1. 1923-29-- Based and centered in Soviet CP. Struggle waged around internal and international questions.

a. Internal questions--bureaucratization, socialism in one country; industrialization, kulaks, etc.

b. International questions--socialism in one country; 1923 German revolution; 1925 Anglo-Russian Committee; 1925-27 Chinese revolution.

--Whole period one of defeats for international proletariat and strengthening of Soviet bureaucracy. Connection between two.

--Small opposition groups develop in CPs around world on one or another question. No contact or coordination with Opposition in CPSU.

--Initiation of 1928-34 "Third Period" ultraleftism of Stalin faction internally and internationally. Struggle against Bukharin and Right Opposition.

2. 1939-33--Expulsion of Trotsky to Turkey made first international collaboration possible. Beginning of process of clarification, sifting, consolidation, homogenization of opposition groups and politics.

--March 1929 Trotsky begins circulating documents to clarify positions internationally. Need to differentiate three factions of Comintern internationally (Left Opposition, Trotsky and followers; Centrist tendency, Stalin and followers; Right Opposition, Bukharin, Lovestone, Brandler, etc.). Emphasizes that it isn't enough to oppose Stalin regime. Must oppose Stalinist political line from left. Three key questions differentiate Left and Right Oppositions: (1) Anglo-Russian Committee; (2) defeat of Chinese revolution; (3) economic policies of Soviet bureaucracy.

--Other major questions debated from 1929 in Turkey: class character of Soviet Union (workers state or state capitalist?); function as faction of CI or as independent organizations building new international?

Left Opposition consolidates around:

a. program of first four congresses of CI

b. common assessment of Stalinism, including class character of USSR and need to work within Comintern.

April 6, 1930, International Left Opposition officially formed in Paris conference. Elected "Provisional International Secretariat," began issuing International Bulletin to share experiences and prepare for holding formal conference as soon as possible.

February 1933 "Preconference" held in Paris. One week after Hitler came to power but before German working-class organizations crushed.

a. Contrast positions of Trotskyists and Stalinists on Germany and fascism (including "united front from below," "social fascism," "red trade unions," "after Hitler us," etc.).

b. German defeat led to conclusion, in three steps, that Comintern could no longer be reformed and that ILO had to break with it: March 1933 decision that German CP hopeless, build new German party; July 1933 (after Executive Committee of Communist International upheld record of German CP), CI dead; October 1933, CPSU dead, build Soviet section. As symbol of change, ILO's name changed to International Communist League (ICL).

III. Laying basis for Fourth International, 1933-38. Period of probes, entries, fusions to build nucleus of new international.

1. Turn toward left-moving centrist groups that drew some of lessons of German events (1933 "Declaration of the Four," fusions with Musteites in U. S., suggestion of British entry into ILP). Orientation to centrists was largely played out by 1935 Stalinist "Popular Front" turn which brought most centrist groups back toward Stalinists, although we continued to work in this milieu in some places.

2. "French turn." First formulated in 1934. Increasing radicalization in Europe in 1934 (Spanish revolution and French crisis) led to development of big, young left wings in many SPs. Proposal that Trotskyists enter SPs to win over radicalizing left wings. Problems with sectarianism in French (major problem) and American sections regarding entry.

3. July 1936, ICL sponsored "International Conference for the Fourth International."

a. Events directly before and after conference showed crisis of both European capitalism and Stalinism (June, sitdown strikes in France; July, beginning of Spanish Civil War; August, first Moscow Trial).

b. Trotsky, now in Norway, wanted conference to form Fourth International. Conference only went as far as changing name to "Movement for the Fourth International."

4. 1936-38 saw:

a. Intense struggle against any adaptation in ranks to centrism. Example of POUM in Spain. Need for clarity against "Popular Fronts," class collaboration. Defection of elements like Sneevliet over Spain.

b. Major step-up in Stalinist attacks against Fourth Internationalists (agents and agents-provocateurs had always been problem--Etienne, Senin-Soblevious brothers, etc.--but now escalated with murders of Erwin Wolf, Ignace Reiss, Leon Sedov, Rudolf Klement, etc.)

REVOLUTIONARY DEFENSE POLICIES AND PRINCIPLES

May 1974
three classes

Class 1. Defense of Democratic Rights

Required Reading: Defense Policies and Principles of the SWP (Education for Socialists Bulletin), pp. 1-15; The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution (Pathfinder Press, 1973, First Edition), pp. 51-68

Supplementary Reading: The Case of the Legless Veteran, by James Kutcher (Monad, 1973) Chapter 14; Democracy and Revolution, by George Novack (Pathfinder Press, 1973), Chapters 10 and 12; The First Ten Years of American Communism, by James P. Cannon (Pathfinder, 1971), pp. 159-165; Notebook of an Agitator, by James P. Cannon (Pathfinder Press, 1973), pp. 3-71

Questions:

1. What are the origins of democratic rights in bourgeois democracies? What happens to the attitude of the bourgeoisie towards these rights as capitalism develops? What historical examples can you find of this process? What role do the institutions of bourgeois democracy play in protecting democratic rights? Can revolutionaries have confidence in bourgeois courts and legislatures as protectors of democratic rights?

2. Explain the difference between the defense of democratic rights and defense of bourgeois democratic institutions. How does the revolutionary approach to this question express the method of the Transitional Program?

3. What is the value of the slogan, "An injury to one is an injury to all?"

4. How did the International Labor Defense help to originate the idea of a united front defense policy?

5. In what way does a properly conducted defense campaign or committee resemble a united front? How does it differ?

6. How have the Stalinists violated the concepts of united front defense and labor solidarity?

7. How is the concept of a defense campaign as a forum for revolutionary ideas compatible with the concept of a non-sectarian, united front defense campaign?

8. Why is it important that control over the defense policy in a political case remain with the defendants rather than with the lawyers?

9. What are the differences between a revolutionary defense policy and a liberal or reformist one?

Class 2. Ultraleftism Vs. a Revolutionary Defense Policy

Required Reading: "Defense Policy in the Minneapolis Trial," by Grandizo Munis and James P. Cannon, in Socialism on Trial (Pathfinder Press, 1973), pp. 128-177; "How We Overcame Ultraleftism in our Defense Work," Interview

with James P. Cannon in Intercontinental Press, January 14, 1974

Supplementary Reading: Socialism on Trial, pp. 1-127; Leon Trotsky Speaks (Pathfinder Press, 1973), pp. 15-32; The Case of the Legless Veteran (Monad, 1973) Chapter 19

Questions:

1. Why was the government's charge in the Minneapolis trial that the SWP called for violent overthrow of the government not true?

2. How does this position square with the revolutionary criticisms of reformist illusions about a "peaceful transition to socialism"?

3. Explain the concept behind the term "defensive formulation." How do such formulations express reality? Why are such formulations an aid to effective propaganda?

4. What was wrong with Munis' criticism of Cannon's formulation on "submitting to the majority"?

5. Do revolutionaries' defensive formulations undergo a change in a period of revolution?

6. Why is it important for a revolutionary party to defend and extend its legal rights? Does this compromise a revolutionary party's efforts to expose the undemocratic nature of capitalist society?

Class 3. Revolutionary Defense Policy and Violence Within the Workers Movement

Required Reading: From Against Violence Within the Workers Movement (Education for Socialists Bulletin): "Introductory Note on Violence Within the Movement," by Caroline Lund, p. 3; "On Workers Democracy," by Ernest Mandel, pp. 4-7; "Our Defense Against the Goon Attacks Launched by the NCLC," by Barry Sheppard, pp. 26-31; and "Letter to the Attorney-General of Mexico," by Leon Trotsky, pp. 31-2

Supplementary Reading: History of American Trotskyism by James P. Cannon (Pathfinder Press, 1973) Lecture 4, "The Left Opposition Under Fire"; Teamster Power by Farrell Dobbs (Monad, 1973) Chapter 11; Notebook of an Agitator by James P. Cannon (Pathfinder Press, 1973), pp. 238-241

Questions:

1. What does the term "workers democracy" mean in relation to capitalist countries? How does this concept differ from the bourgeois concept of democracy?

2. Why would it be counter-productive for a genuinely revolutionary organization to use force to suppress its working-class opponents--for example--opportunists in the union

movement? Why do so many of our opponents--from the CP to the Spartacist League--resort to such methods?

3. Does it mislead the masses to call on a bourgeois government to defend democratic rights?

4. When can a call for action by the authorities be of use in a campaign against violence from within the workers movement? (Give examples.) How large a part can such a call play in a defense campaign?

5. Is it correct to call for a bourgeois government to sup-

press a fascist or racist organization? Why not?

6. Was it correct to call for the exclusion of the NCLC from public meetings? Why was it incorrect for some groups to call for the revocation of campus charters of NCLC groups?

7. How can the use of violence within the workers movement be used by government provocateurs? What is the attitude of the bourgeoisie toward such outbreaks?

8. What factors must be considered in determining the tactics of self-defense?

BLACK LIBERATION AND SOCIALISM

May 1974

six classes

This study guide is based primarily on readings from Black Liberation and Socialism, (Pathfinder Press, Inc., 1974, \$2.45) but also assigns other readings relevant to the Leninist approach to the national liberation struggles of oppressed peoples and the combined character of the coming American revolution.

Class 1. The Leninist View of the National Question

Required Reading: "The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination (Theses)," by V. I. Lenin, 1916, (Collected Works, Volume 22, pp. 143-156). These theses appear in various editions, including Critical Remarks on the National Question; The Right of Nations to Self-Determination, which is presently available from Pathfinder Press; From Black Liberation and Socialism: "Lenin's Real Views on Nationalism," by Tony Thomas, pp. 177-197

Supplementary Reading: Other articles by Lenin on the right of oppressed nations to self-determination

Questions:

1. What does it mean to say that democratic demands such as for the right of self-determination are bourgeois-democratic demands? What are other examples of bourgeois-democratic demands? Why can revolutionary socialists support bourgeois-democratic demands?
2. Did Lenin think that semi-colonial countries that had formal independence like China and Turkey no longer needed to fight for national liberation?
3. Do Leninists favor the right of self-determination for all nationalities under all circumstances? What are the criteria?
4. Why did Lenin view support for the right of self-determination of oppressed nationalities as the basis for internationalist unity of the working class? Is it sufficient to advocate unity of the working class against the class enemy, irrespective of posing the question of self-determination? Why not?
5. How was Lenin's advocacy of self-determination for all oppressed nationalities consistent with his view that national boundaries and the national state have become outdated?

Class 2. The Leninist View of the National Question (Continued)

Required Reading: the same as for Class 1

Supplementary Reading: "Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism," resolution of the LSA/LSO, Canadian section of the Fourth International, in the July-August 1973 issue of International Socialist Review

Questions:

1. How does the fight for self-determination of oppressed nations tie in with the socialist revolution in the imperialist epoch? How does this fit in with Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution?
2. Lenin often pointed to the danger presented by bourgeois trends in the nationalist movement for self-determination. Why do such trends have less social weight among oppressed nationalities in this country than they did in the European nations that Lenin was writing about? Why would it be a mistake to reject the struggle for self-determination because of the presence or leadership of such trends? Did Lenin feel that such tendencies could fight consistently for self-determination?
3. Discuss Tony Thomas' criticism of Wohlforth's views on Black nationalism. Tim Wohlforth asserts that the "bourgeois democratic revolution was completed long ago" in the USA. How does this distort reality? Wohlforth asserts that "Lenin saw no validity to the right of self-determination in such countries." How does this distort Lenin's actual views? Did Lenin recognize the existence of oppressed nationalities within bourgeois imperialist countries? How did he evaluate the status of Black people in the U. S.?
4. Why did Lenin oppose the demand of the Austro-Marxists for "cultural-national autonomy?" What was meant by that demand? How does that demand differ from present-day demands by Black people for control of their communities or language demands raised in Quebec? Did the Bolsheviks raise demands analogous to Black control of education in the Black community?
5. What is the difference between Quebecois nationalism and English-Canadian nationalism?

Class 3. The Roots of the Combined Character of the Coming American Revolution

(Note: Suggested points to be taken up in this class include slavery and the molding of a Black nationality; the Civil War, Reconstruction, and the Thermidor of the Second American Revolution (1876-1900); the role of Blacks in the U. S. economy in the 20th Century; and the combined character of the socialist revolution in the USA.)

Required Reading: From Black Liberation and Socialism:

"The Combined Character of the Coming American Revolution," by Derrick Morrison, pp. 22-28; From Towards an American Socialist Revolution: "The Course of U. S. Imperialism and the Revolutionary Struggle for a Socialist America," 1969 Political Resolution of the SWP, pp. 163-167; Selection from "Political Report to the Twenty-third National Convention of the SWP," by Jack Barnes, pp. 142-146, and "Summary

of Political Report to the February 1970 Plenum of the National Committee of the SWP," by Jack Barnes, pp. 197-202; From Leon Trotsky on Black Nationalism and Self-Determination (Pathfinder Press pamphlet, \$1.05) "Self-Determination for American Negroes," pp. 20-33

Supplementary Reading: From Marxist Essays in American History (Pathfinder Press, \$2.45) "Slavery in Colonial America" (Two Articles by George Novack), pp. 33-39; "The Emancipation Proclamation," by George Novack, pp. 81-86; "Two Lessons of Reconstruction," by George Novack, pp. 87-91

Questions:

1. What key tasks of the Second American Revolution (the Civil War) were completed? In whose interest? What do we mean when we say that the Second American Revolution was incomplete?
2. How did the formation of Black people as a nationality come about? What about the questions of common territory? national origin? What about common language? What is decisive in characterizing Black people as a nationality? What was Trotsky's view?
3. What is inadequate about the view that Black people are only a specially oppressed sector of the working class? What is the historic origin of Black oppression? Why are Blacks oppressed today?
4. What special conditions have led to the creation of other oppressed nationalities in the U. S. ? The Chicanos? The Native Americans?
5. What is the difference between supporting the right of self-determination and advocating separation?
6. What is wrong with the argument that self-determination is impractical? Why do Black people need the right to self-determination in order to assure their liberation?
7. Why can the Russian Revolution and the coming American Revolution both be described as combined revolutions? What characteristics do they have in common from this point of view? What are some of the important differences?
8. What does the combined character of the coming American revolution indicate about the relationship between the class struggle as a whole and the Black liberation struggle?

Class 4. The Position of the SWP on Black Nationalism

Required Reading: From Black Liberation and Socialism: "The Combined Character of the Coming American Revolution," by Derrick Morrison, pp. 13-32; "Black Nationalism and Confused Marxists," by Tony Thomas, pp. 115-123; "In Defense of Black Nationalism," by Tony Thomas, pp. 128-134

Supplementary Reading: "Freedom Now," 1963 Black Struggle resolution of the SWP (Pathfinder pamphlet, \$.25)

Questions:

1. Why do the ruling class and the labor bureaucracy try to compartmentalize and separate the national question from the class struggle as a whole?
2. Why is it correct to say that an independent Black struggle will be a central component of the coming American revolution? Why is the independent organization of Black people necessary?
3. What characteristics give the Black struggle a vanguard role in the American socialist revolution? How has that role been manifested so far? How will the development of independent Black organizations help advance the class struggle as a whole, including the development of independent working class political action?
4. In "In Defense of Black Nationalism," Tony Thomas writes, "The industrialization and urbanization of African-Americans in the Twentieth Century has deepened our sense of 'nationhood.'" (Black Liberation and Socialism, p. 150) What does this indicate about the claim that Black nationalism has bourgeois or petty-bourgeois roots? What are the material roots of Black nationalist sentiments?
5. How do we define Black nationalism?
6. Is it likely that Black nationalism will decline in influence among Black people in the U. S. as the entire working class radicalizes?
7. Is nationalist consciousness of oppressed nationalities incompatible with Marxism? What has been the fate of tendencies in the Black movement like the Black Panther Party and the Black Workers Congress that claimed to embrace Marxism-Leninism but rejected Black nationalism? What has tended to be the evolution of tendencies, like that led by Imamu Amiri Baraka, that seek to embrace Black nationalism while rejecting Marxism? What do these experiences indicate about the relationship between the two?

Class 5. Lessons from the Twentieth-Century Struggle of Black People

Required Reading: From Black Liberation and Socialism: "Leninism, Stalinism, and Black Nationalism," by Tony Thomas, pp. 157-176; "Malcolm X and the Struggle for Independent Black Political Power," by Derrick Morrison, pp. 84-91; "In Defense of Black Nationalism," by Tony Thomas, pp. 134-143

Supplementary Reading: Black Liberation and Political Power: The Meaning of the Gary Convention, by Tony Thomas and Derrick Morrison (Pathfinder Press pamphlet, \$.35); Marxism and the Negro Struggle by Harold Cruse, George Breitman, and Clifton DeBerry (Pathfinder Press pamphlet, \$.75); The Fraud of Black Capitalism by Dick Roberts (Pathfinder Press pamphlet, \$.25)

Questions:

1. What were the real differences between W. E. B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington in the early years of this century? Did either of their strategies offer an effective

road of struggle for Black people? Was Booker T. Washington a Black nationalist?

2. What was wrong with the Communist Party's "Black belt" theory and its demand in the 1930s for a separate Black state in the "Black Belt"? How does it differ from the SWP position of unconditional support to the right of self-determination of Black people?

3. How does the CP's opposition to Black nationalism and an independent Black political party fit in with its general class-collaborationist political line? Give historical examples.

4. What was the progressive significance of the civil rights movement? Does support for Black nationalism contradict support for struggles that raise integrationist demands? What is the revolutionary socialist position on questions like open housing? School integration? Busing?

5. What is wrong with Harold Cruse's position that the internationalism of Marxists requires them to oppose the nationalism of the oppressed Black nationality?

6. Harold Cruse believes that the goal of the Black struggle is the establishment of Black capitalism. What is wrong with this concept? How is it an example of failing to recognize the combined character of the coming American revolution?

7. What were the differences between Malcolm X and Martin Luther King?

8. What political problems was the Black Panther Party unable to solve?

9. Discuss the significance of the Gary Black Political Convention in 1972 and the Little Rock convention in 1974.

Class 6. A Strategy for the Black Struggle Today

Required Reading: From Black Liberation and Socialism: "A Transitional Program for Black Liberation," 1969 SWP Resolution, pp. 33-58; "The Case for an Independent Black Political Party," pp. 59-83; "How to Fight Racism," by Andrew Pulley, pp. 84-91

Questions:

1. What demands does "A Transitional Program for Black Liberation" put forward to oppose the national and class oppression Black people face in unemployment? On the job? In the schools and universities? By the police?

How do these demands relate to the present consciousness and needs of the Black masses? How do struggles around these demands tend to lead toward advancing the socialist revolution?

2. What is the relationship between the demand, "Jobs for All" (as discussed in "A Transitional Program for Black Liberation") and the demands for preferential hiring of oppressed nationalities, etc.? How does utilization of such demands fit in with our general program for the American revolution as a combined revolution?

3. The demand for "Black Control of the Black Community" is a democratic demand. Can the ruling class grant this demand? Does it seem reasonable to the Black community? What effect does capitalist opposition to such demands have in educating the masses about the reality of capitalist "democracy"?

4. "A Transitional Program for Black Liberation" calls for Black control of key institutions in the Black community. But it does not call for Black control of the police. What demand does the program put forward in this area?

5. The document, "A Transitional Program for Black Liberation," was developed through Marxist analysis of the experiences of the Black struggle. Give examples of how some of these demands and issues arose through the concrete experience of struggle. Has the document tended to be validated in the years since 1969? What new demands and issues would be added to it today?

6. What is the difference between the concept of working class unity against capitalism found in "A Transitional Program for Black Liberation" and that of the Communist Party? of the anti-nationalist sectarians?

7. What is our view of Black caucuses in the unions? What kind of demands can such formations raise?

8. What is the relationship between the demand for a Black party and the demand for a labor party? Why do Black people need their own party? Why would the formation of a real Black party represent a major break from capitalist politics? What would be the class character of a Black party?

9. How does "A Transitional Program for Black Liberation" project the socialist perspective of the struggle for Black liberation? How does its approach to the Black masses distinguish it from ultra-left strategies? from class-collaborationist strategies?

Class 1. Why Stalinism Triumphed

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

Supplementary Reading: Leon Trotsky, The Revolution Betrayed, Chapters 1-4, 6, pages 5-85, 115-143, Pathfinder Press; "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"

Required Readings: 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 Reading: 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

Required Readings: 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 Reading: 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:

- the rise of fascism in Germany;
- the Spanish civil war;
- the French Popular Front period in the late 1930s
- the Stalin-Hitler pact;
- World War II
- the post-war revolutionary upsurges.

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 fun-

damental 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

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

Supplementary Readings: 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," Black Liberation and Socialism, 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?

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

9. 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

Required Readings: Jean van Heijenoort, "How the International Was Conceived," in Education for Socialists Bulletin Towards a History of the Fourth International, Part II; Leon Trotsky, The Revolution Betrayed, Chapters 9, 11, pages 234-256, 273-290, Pathfinder Press

Supplementary Readings: 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 101-192, 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?

Class 6. The Program for Political Revolution in the Workers States

Required Readings: The Struggle for Socialist Democracy in the Soviet Bloc, by Gus Horowitz (Pathfinder Press, \$3.60); Solzhenitsyn in Exile, by Allen Myers (Pathfinder Press, \$3.35); The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution, page 102-106, by Leon Trotsky, (Pathfinder Press, \$2.45); Section III of the resolution, "Decline and Fall of Stalinism," published in the Education for Socialists bulletin entitled The Development and Disintegration of World Stalinism, pages 38-43

Supplementary Reading: Samizdat: Voices of the Soviet Opposition (Pathfinder Press, \$3.95, Introduction by George Saunders, pp. 15-44); Writings of Leon Trotsky, 1939-40, pages 44-54, 74-75, 86, 90-92 (Pathfinder Press, \$3.95); "The Twilight of Bureaucratic Reformism in Eastern Europe," by Cliff Connor in June 1972 International Socialist Review

Questions:

1. What changes have occurred in the objective conditions that allowed the bureaucratic castes in the workers states to hold power? How have these changes affected the outlook of the masses in the workers states?

2. What are the forces favoring capitalist restoration? Are these forces stronger or weaker today as compared with the 1920s? Discuss the experience of the anti-Stalinist struggle in East Europe in 1953-1956 and 1968-1971. Have these struggles tended to favor capitalist restoration?

3. What are some of the demands that workers have been putting forward in their struggles against the bureaucracy? What kinds of organizational forms did the workers develop in their struggles in Hungary in 1956? in Czechoslovakia in 1968? in Poland in 1970? What likely changes would a political revolution produce in the economic priorities of the workers states? How would the economic plan be developed? How would the role of the trade unions change? How does our program differ from that of the technocrats?

4. What is the revolutionary Marxist program to counter the special high material privileges enjoyed by those in gov-

ernmental or administrative authority?

5. What is the position of revolutionary Marxists on the rights of oppressed nationalities in the Soviet Union? What was Lenin's policy? (for instance on the question of Georgia in 1923, or on "Ukrainization" process described on pp. 22-23 of Samizdat)? How did Stalin's policies differ from Lenin's and in what ways did they hark back to Russia's pre-revolutionary past? What current developments indicate that the national question will be a key factor in the struggle against the bureaucratic caste? In 1939, Trotsky proposed raising the slogan of an "independent Soviet Ukraine." How do we answer those who express the fear that this would break up the unity of the USSR?

6. How important are demands for democratic rights likely to be in the political revolution? What is our position on freedom of speech? Freedom of assembly?

7. What is the attitude of revolutionary Marxists to the rights of political tendencies and parties to exist in the workers states?

8. Do we support the civil liberties of intellectuals and artists in the workers states, even when they express reactionary ideas, as in the case of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's most recent statements? Why? What was the Leninist policy towards artists and writers, even during a civil war against outright counter-revolutionary armies?

9. What demands would a revolutionary Marxist leadership in the workers states put forward on the rights of women?

10. What kinds of demands have students been making for socialist democracy (as in the case of Yugoslavia in 1968)? What do we think of the bureaucracy's claim that students are bringing bourgeois culture into the workers states because of the influence of Western students on them? Who is really bringing bourgeois habits and concepts into the workers states?

11. What has experience shown about the ability of the bureaucracy to reform itself or lead a struggle for democracy? What were the lessons of "de-Stalinization" in the Soviet Union? Of the Czechoslovak movement of 1968?

12. Why do we think the working class is the only force capable of overthrowing the bureaucratic caste and instituting socialist democracy? What are the objective limitations of other layers and trends, even when they are in opposition to the bureaucracy?

13. How important is the political revolution for the world revolution as a whole? What would be its effect on the colonial revolution? On the revolution in the advanced capitalist countries?

14. Why are concepts of revolutionary internationalism and opposition to "socialism in one country" important in the political revolution? Are these concepts likely to develop at the very beginning of the struggle?

A MARXIST APPROACH TO THE LABOR MOVEMENT

May 1974

five classes

Class 1. The Trade Unions and the Class Struggle

Required Reading: Leon Trotsky on the Trade Unions, (Pathfinder Press), especially the following sections: "Communism and Syndicalism," pp. 15-23; "The Unions in Britain," pp. 53-57; "Trade Unions in the Transitional Epoch," pp. 59-62; "Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay," pp. 68-75

Supplementary Reading: 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 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?
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. Can an organization fulfill the functions of a trade union and a revolutionary party at the same time? What was the error of the IWW on this line? What was wrong with the Comintern's "Third Period" theory of red trade unions?
5. What is the goal of revolutionary work in the trade unions? In what ways does the attitude of revolutionary Marxists toward the trade unions differ from that of most militant workers? From that of the union bureaucrats?
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? How does the party's approach to this question differ from that of the Stalinists and Social Democrats?
7. In the epoch of imperialist decay, what tendency is developing in the relationship between the unions and the capitalist state? What is the role of the union bureaucracy in this process? How is this reflected in the United States? Why won't increased trade union militancy alone suffice to counteract this trend?

Class 2. A Key Demand: The Sliding Scale of Wages and Hours and the Fight Against Inflation

Required Reading: Leon Trotsky, "The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International (The Transitional Program)" in The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution, pp. 76-88 (Pathfinder Press, New York, 1973, First Edition); Inflation: What Causes It, How to Fight It, by Linda Jenness and Dick Roberts (Pathfinder Press)

Supplementary Reading: Leon Trotsky, "Discussion with a

CIO Organizer," in Leon Trotsky on the Trade Unions, pp. 62-68

Questions:

1. What are the basic causes of inflation? Are higher wages a cause? What is the role of military spending? What advantages and disadvantages does inflation have for the capitalist class?
2. What was the reason for the government's wage controls? Why were some elements in the ruling class willing to lift controls? Have their objectives changed?
3. How are wage controls enforced? What are price controls a fraud?
4. Why does the Transitional Program give prominence to the demand for a sliding scale of wages and a sliding scale of hours? What are these demands necessarily linked?
5. How does the sliding scale of wages and hours help overcome the divisions in the class between organized and unorganized workers? Between old and young? Between employed and unemployed? How does the sliding scale of wages and hours relate to the needs of Black, Chicano, and women workers?
6. How does the sliding scale of wages and hours link up with other demands in the Transitional Program, such as the opening of corporate books to workers inspection, workers control, committees on prices, a public works program, 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 instance, their acceptance of the government cost-of-living figures and their attempt to limit concessions to the privileged strata of the working class.
7. In what way are these demands transitional? In what way do they strike at the capitalist class? Do they seem reasonable to the workers? How were these demands derived?
8. Is "30 for 40" identical to the sliding scale of wages and hours? Does it move in that direction?
9. Why can't each union acting alone--or in concert on an industry-by-industry basis--beat back the attack on living standards?

Class 3. The Labor Party

Required Reading: "How to Fight for a Labor Party in the U. S.," discussion with Leon Trotsky in The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution, (Pathfinder Press) pp. 113-124; "Campaign for a Labor Party," by James P. Cannon in Aspects of Socialist Election Policy, (Education for Socialists bulletin), pp. 12-17; "Election Policy in 1948," Report and Summary in Aspects of Socialist Election Policy, pp. 21-34

Questions:

1. Why do we call for a labor party? Why didn't we call for such a party in the early 1930s? What are the objective conditions in the United States that underlie this slogan?
2. What program do we advocate for a labor party? Would we support a labor party with a reformist leadership?
3. Why did Cannon propose an agitational campaign in the labor party slogan in 1942? What changes in conditions justified this? What is the difference between propaganda and agitation? Is the labor party a propagandistic or agitational slogan for us today? What is wrong with the Workers League concept of the labor party slogan?
4. What are the differences between a labor party and a party like Henry Wallace's Progressive Party?
5. What is our attitude toward social-democratic labor parties like the British Labor Party or the Canadian New Democratic Party? What are our objectives when we work in such formations? Is a reformist labor party an inevitable stage of the class struggle in the U. S. ?
6. 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?
7. How do the objective conditions and needs of the workers lead them toward support for the labor party slogan?

Class 4. Basic Outlines of the Present Trade Union Policy of the SWP

Required Reading: From Selected Documents on SWP Trade Union Policy, "Class Struggle Policy in the Unions," Resolution of 1954 SWP convention, pp. 3-9; "Memorandum on Trade Union Policy," adopted at the May 1968 Plenum of the SWP National Committee, pp. 10-13; "Black Caucuses in the Trade Unions", Political Committee Memorandum adopted April 18, 1969, pp. 15-17; "Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay," from Leon Trotsky on the Trade Unions (Pathfinder) pp. 68-75

Supplementary Reading: "Trade Union Panel, 1973 SWP Convention" Internal Information Bulletin No. 4 in 1973

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 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" demands?
3. How must a class struggle program in the labor movement relate to the demands being raised in the Black, women's and Chicano movements? What are the opportunities that formations like Black Caucuses or Coalition of Labor Union Women present revolutionists for advancing their program in

the unions?

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 were the considerations involved in the party's cautious attitude toward campaigns for union posts in the 1954 resolution? What contradictions would a party member holding a union post find him or herself in if there was no left wing development in the union? What illusions did the resolution seek to guard against? What considerations determine our attitude toward such campaigns today?
6. In what sectors of the working class is a class struggle left wing likely to find its strongest support? Its 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? What is the alternative to this process? Can unions simply return to their relative independence of the past?
8. The 1954 resolution states, "The integration of the Social Democrats into the CIO leadership strengthened the grip of the bureaucracy by giving it new weapons of social demagogu..." Does this statement still hold true for the AFL-CIO today?
9. The 1971 Political Resolution states, "The decisive mass of workers will not be politicalized until the underlying international crisis of American imperialism forces it into a show-down with the labor movement." Why is this the case? Have events moved toward such a confrontation?

Class 5. The Present Political Situation and the SWP's Labor Policy

Required Reading: "Perspectives and Lessons of the New Radicalization," 1971 SWP Political Resolution, especially the following sections: "Making the Workers Pay for the War," "How the Radicalization has Affected the Working Class," "Government Offensive Against the Unions," and "A Dogmatic View of How the Workers Will Radicalize;" Jack Barnes, Political Report to the SWP National Committee, March 1971, especially Sections 7, 8 and 9. These two documents are available in A Revolutionary Strategy for the 1970s (Pathfinder Press) and in SWP Discussion Bulletin, Volume 29, No. 1. "Draft Political Resolution," 1973 SWP Political Resolution, especially the following sections: "The Evolution of Ruling Class Strategy," "New Struggles," "Undocumented Workers," "The Farm Workers Struggle," "Inflation and the Meat Boycott," "Our Answer," General Characteristics of the Radicalization," and "The Unions"

Supplementary Reading: Towards an American Socialist Revolution, Pathfinder Press, pp. 152-178 (1969 Political 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. Why is the ruling class seeking to lower the living standards of the workers? What weapons are they using? What conceptions underly the response of the top union leaders?

3. What changes have occurred in recent years in the composition of the work force in the United States? How has the radicalization of youth, Blacks, women and Chicanos affected the working class?

4. How does our policy in the unions differ from that of all our opponents on the left?

5. Why do we hold that the comparatively high living standards to which many American workers have become accustomed can become a spur to labor radicalization under changed conditions?

6. Why does the 1973 resolution state that "substantial social reforms and concessions on the scale of Social Security won in the 1930s can be wrested from the ruling class only as a result of massive upsurge of the working class"? What is the political significance of this conclusion?

7. What is the general outline of our program in the unions? Why don't we lay down general tactical prescriptions applicable to all unions?

8. Why do we say the "ascending industrial-union movement was a vast social movement"? What features of the radicalization of the 1930s assure that the present radicalization won't be a "rerun" of the 1930s? What tasks did the earlier radicalization accomplish? What tasks did it fail to accomplish?

9. What does the struggle of the farmworkers tell us about the interrelationship of the labor movement and the struggle of oppressed nationalities?

10. Does the strategic power of the workers increase or decrease with the increase in the sophistication, automation, mechanization of the advanced capitalist economy? Why? What is wrong with the New Left theories about a "new working class"?

11. 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 should a congress of labor do?

TEAMSTER REBELLION

May 1974

two classes

Class 1. The Organizing Campaign and the May Strike

Required Reading: Teamster Rebellion, by Farrell Dobbs, (New York: Monad Press, 1972, \$2.25, paper), pp. 17-105

Supplementary Reading: American Labor Struggles, 1877-1934, by Samuel Yellen (New York: Monad Press, 1974) Labor's Giant Step, by Art Preis (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1972), Chapters 1-5

Questions:

1. What developments, locally and nationally, provided the "opening wedge" for a union organizing drive in Minneapolis? What prompted the coal drivers to strike in February?
2. How did the Teamsters bureaucracy try to block the strikes? Why didn't the union organizers bypass the reactionary leadership of the AFL and start a new union under more militant auspices? Why did the Trotskyists direct their main fire at the coal yard and trucking bosses rather than at Cliff Hall and other bureaucrats? How did such a "flanking" tactic help to strengthen the militant wing? How did these tactics contrast with those advocated at the time by the Stalinists?
3. What is the significance of continuity and tradition in the development of a revolutionary movement? What is their significance in the development of the workers movement as a whole?
4. What were the pitfalls and hidden opportunities of deciding to organize coal yard workers and drivers in Minneapolis in 1933? What was the "plan of battle?"
5. What is the difference between real and formal leadership? How can the two be separate and yet coexist? Why is this often necessary? Could the "general mobilization" of the truckdrivers have been undertaken otherwise?
6. What were the advantages and disadvantages of having a Farmer-Labor Party governor of Minnesota? How did the Trotskyist union builders deal with the opportunities this situation presented?
7. What conditions made it possible for the workers to organize physical combat to fight off the strikebreaking cops and deputies? Why haven't we advocated similar methods against the goons that have been used against the farmworkers strike?
8. Why is a degree of compromise involved in all contract settlements with the bosses? What necessitates such compromises? In view of the gains made by the strikers in May, why would it have been incorrect to simply call the agreement an unqualified victory?
9. Did the union officialdom present a solid front to the Trotskyist organizers? What were the differentiations

that appeared in the course of the struggle?

19. What was the role of the revolutionary party in such a situation? What would you conclude were its central tasks? How were these carried out?

Class 2. Winning a Decisive Battle

Required Reading: Teamsters Rebellion, pp. 108-190

Supplementary Reading: History of American Trotskyism, by James P. Cannon (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1972), Lectures VII-VIII, pp. 118-168

Questions:

1. What are the employers chief weapons when open class warfare begins? How are they able to make use of federal intervention? Police? The courts? The press? Hospitals? Red-baiting?
2. One of the tactics utilized by the employers in labor disputes is to mobilize other sectors of the population against the striking workers. How did Local 574 cut across this tactic in winning the support of other unions? Women? The unemployed? Farmers? How did the attitude of the strike leaders contrast with the attitude of top union leaders today?
3. What was the role played by regular publication of the Organizer?
4. Why was coldblooded murder unable to stop the strike? Why was it necessary to disarm the strikers of handguns, etc.?
5. Governor Olson had been put into office by a party built by workers and farmers, and based on the union movement. Did this mean that Minnesota did not have a capitalist government? What did Olson's activities during the July-August strike indicate about this?
6. What was the role of "impartial" arbitrators in the July-August strike? Is impartial arbitration of labor disputes possible? What was the difference between the attitude toward arbitration of Local 574 (even while accepting the Haas-Dunnigan proposal) and the attitude of top union leaders today?
7. What hampered military strikebreaking and finally prompted all AFL unions to demand the removal of the National Guard?
8. What was the role played in the Minneapolis organizing campaign by mass democratic decision-making meetings? How should negotiations be carried on to assure that the decision-making power of the ranks is unimpaired?
9. How did Local 574 finally win the July-August strike? How was the contradiction between the formal and the actual leadership of the local resolved? In what important respects had the union changed and what were the

tasks ahead?

10. What were the fundamental revolutionary attributes necessary to expose and defeat the trickery of the employing class and its political agents? Did involvement in leading a massive strike change the fundamental tasks facing a revolu-

tionary party? Was it contradictory for a small propaganda organization to lead a struggle of such scope?

11. Why did the American Trotskyist movement wage a national campaign around the Minneapolis strikes? How was this campaign implemented?

TEAMSTER POWER

May 1974

two classes

Class 1. A Fight for Survival Against the Union Bureaucracy

Required Reading: Teamster Power, by Farrell Dobbs (New York: Monad Press, 1973, \$2.95 paper), pp. 8-132

Questions:

1. How were close ties maintained between the leaders and members of Local 574? How did the leadership practices of the Local 574 leaders differ from those of trade union bureaucrats then and now?
2. What were the characteristics and purposes of the class struggle left wing in the Minneapolis labor movement that was organized by the leaders of Local 574? Why and how did this formation avoid the implication that it was creating an alternative structure to the existing labor movement?
3. What consistent aspects of the strategy and tactics of Local 574 enabled it to help other unions in Minneapolis--the hosiery workers, ornamental iron workers, and others--to win strikes? What caused the defeat of the Fargo, North Dakota strike? Why was Tobin afraid of the growing influence of Local 574?
4. In his attempt to read Local 574 out of the labor movement, why was Tobin insistent on keeping "inside workers" out of the union? How did Local 574 win over AFL unions to support their fight to survive? What was the role played by the national AFL leaders in the fight and how did Local 574 respond to it? What were Tobin's objectives in giving the go-ahead for goon attacks on union members and leaders? How were these attacks met by Local 574?
5. Why was it preferable for the unemployed to be organized within the organized labor movement rather than in independent formations?
6. What were the main points of the offer made by Pat Corcoran for readmitting the truckdrivers union into the Teamsters Union? What conditions in Local 574, in Minneapolis, and in the nation convinced Dobbs that the militant leaders could strengthen their position through this agreement? What risks did he see in rejecting it? Why did Cannon, who questioned this view, decide to back up the judgment of the local leaders?

Class 2. The Over-the-Road Organizing Campaign

Required Reading: Teamster Power, pp. 133-250

Questions:

1. What did the dissolution of the Citizen's Alliance in Minneapolis signify? What were the indicated changes in

employer tactics? Why did political class consciousness become more important in the face of such a shift and mere fighting militancy less adequate?

2. What are the reasons for the attitude expressed by Dobbs on no-strike pledges in union contracts? On the length of union contracts? On squeezing additional gains from the bosses during the term of a contract? How do these positions fit in with the attitude Dobbs was trying to convey to the new young leaders on page 236?

3. Our sectarian opponents often project left wings in the unions as pure-and-simple "rank-and-file" formations directed against union officials. How did the approach of the Trotskyists differ from that of the sectarians? How was this manifested concretely in their attitude to the members of the Executive Board of Local 574 during the 1934 strikes? In their attitude to the former leaders of "Local 500" after the truckdrivers union was readmitted to the Teamsters? How did flanking tactics aid in "sorting out" the union officialdom?

4. How did the Trotskyist leaders of Local 574 win Tobin's support for the over-the-road organizing drive? What were Tobin's motivations in finally accepting the campaign? On what key questions did he have to give ground in order to support the campaign?

5. What do the final discussions between Dobbs and Tobin, and between Dobbs and Sandy O'Brien tell us about the fundamental differences in outlook between "business" unionists--even relatively militant ones--and revolutionary socialists in the union movement?

6. What are the main factors in the radicalization of workers? What is the main advantage that revolutionists have in winning the leadership of the workers? How was this advantage reflected in overcoming bureaucratic obstacles to the over-the-road organizing campaign?

7. How was the democratic involvement of the ranks maintained in the over-the-road organizing drive given the greater dispersion of the drivers and the greater centralization needed for negotiating an area-wide contract?

8. In the end, the Trotskyists were not able to build a massive left wing movement in the Teamsters Union against the Tobin bureaucracy's class-collaborationist practices. Does this mean that the strategy followed by the Trotskyists was wrong? Would a frontal attack on Tobin have made the organization of a left wing more successful? What objective factors acted to prevent the preparatory work of the Trotskyists from coming to fruition in a massive left-wing formation? What short- and long-term gains did the revolutionary party make out of its work in the over-the-road campaign?

POPULAR FRONTISM: ROAD TO DISASTER IN CHILE

May 1974

three classes

This series is based on selected readings from Disaster in Chile, edited with an introduction by Les Evans (Pathfinder Press, 1974, \$2.95). The balance of the book should be regarded as supplementary reading. Other supplementary readings will be noted below.

Class 1. The Unidad Popular Comes to Power

Required Reading: "Introduction," by Les Evans; "Allende's Chile: Is it Going Socialist?," by Peter Camejo, pp. 29-49; "The History of Popular Frontism in Chile," pp. 50-62; "Chile--the Coming Confrontation," December 1971 Statement of the Fourth International, pp. 77-94

Supplementary Reading: From The Spanish Revolution, 1931-39 by Leon Trotsky: "Introduction," by Les Evans, pp. 21-48; "The Lessons of Spain--the Last Warning," by Leon Trotsky, pp. 306-326

Questions:

1. What was the program of Unidad Popular? Was it a program for socialism, as many radicals thought?
2. What parties made up the Unidad Popular coalition in Chile? How would you characterize the class character of these parties? What criteria are used to define the class character of these parties?
3. What criteria were used in the required readings to characterize the Unidad Popular as a popular front? To characterize the Unidad Popular government as a bourgeois government?
4. Supporters of Allende placed many of their hopes on an alliance with "anti-imperialist" sectors of the bourgeoisie. What are the real relations of a bourgeoisie like that of Chile with imperialism?
5. What was Allende's political background? Did the Chilean bourgeoisie fear that his regime would threaten capitalism? What were they afraid of? Had such governments appeared previously in Chile? What was their effect on the workers movement?
6. What agreements were made by Allende with the bourgeois parties in order to be allowed to take office in 1970? The Christian Democrats said that this agreement was to "reinforce democracy." What did the agreements really reinforce?
7. What was the attitude of the bourgeoisie toward the Popular Unity government in the first phase of the regime?
8. What was Allende's attitude to the army? To the formation of popular militias? To land seizures by the peasantry? To U. S. imperialism? To the working class and its struggles? What did Allende's firm reliance on bourgeois institutions signify about his professions of

"socialist" goals?

9. Why was Allende ultimately unable to satisfy either the bourgeoisie or the workers? What were the workers pressing for? What did the bourgeoisie need?

10. What are the essential characteristics of a "popular front"? How do the actions and program of the Allende government point up the difference between a popular front and a united front of workers organizations? Why could the 1971 United Secretariat statement describe Unidad Popular as a "popular front" despite the relative weakness of the outright bourgeois parties in it? Under what kind of circumstances does a popular front government usually rise? What use can the bourgeoisie make of it?

11. The December 1971 statement of the United Secretariat held, "Revolutionists cannot participate in such a coalition even by offering it electoral support. (Revolutionary Marxists can, in certain situations, vote for a labor candidate but not for a candidate of a front that includes petty-bourgeois and bourgeois forces)." Discuss this statement. What damage was done to the revolutionary struggle when militants like the MIR supported such a formation?

12. What reforms did the Unidad Popular regime introduce? Under what pressures? Can revolutions support such measures even while opposing the government that carries them out?

13. What program of demands did the United Secretariat statement put forward to deal with the land question? The struggles of workers? Ownership and control of industry? The army and police? Parliament? How did these measures differ from the program and policy of Unidad Popular?

14. What kind of government did the United Secretariat statement propose to replace the Unidad Popular government? What are the differences between a workers and peasants government and a popular front government?

Class 2. Deepening Class Polarization: Allende Turns to the Army

Required Reading: "The Deepening Political Polarization," pp. 109-120; "Allende Declares a State of Emergency," pp. 121-4; "The Army Moves to the Fore," pp. 124-9; "The Workers Move Forward--as Allende Retreats," pp. 132-142; "The Generals Leave the Cabinet," pp. 155-58

Questions:

1. What was the meaning of Allende's efforts to focus the attention of the masses on the March 1973 elections?

Why couldn't the outcome of these elections solve any fundamental problems?

2. Why was the bourgeoisie able to mobilize the middle classes against Allende's policies? Was this because he was too radical? How did Allende's policies discredit socialism in their eyes?

3. What would have been the policy of a workers and peasants government toward inflation? Unemployment? The national debt? The distribution of food and other necessities? Why couldn't the Allende government undertake these measures?

4. Against what elements did the Allende government use repression? What role did the CP play in this? Why were Allende's attempts to repress the right doomed to ineffectiveness? What kept Allende from using more repression against the left than he did?

5. What was the attitude of Allende toward the appearance of incipient organs of dual power as in Concepcion? What did this indicate about his fundamental attitude toward the bourgeois state?

6. Why did Allende become more and more dependent on the Communist Party for support of his policies? What were the goals of the CP? Why had his own Socialist Party become a less reliable ally in Allende's eyes?

7. What was the "bosses' strike"? How did Allende respond to it?

8. What was the response of the workers to the "bosses' strike"? What was Allende's position on what to do with the factories seized by the workers during the bosses' strike? How did the workers respond to this?

9. Why did Allende include generals in his cabinet? How did this serve to lull and disarm the masses in the face of the rightist threats? Did the leaders of the Socialist Party left wing or the MIR openly oppose this move? Why was it impossible for them to arm the masses or appeal to the ranks of the army with such a policy?

10. Why did the generals leave the Allende cabinet after the March 1973 elections? Did this indicate a shift to the left in Allende's strategy? Did it change the character of his government?

11. Why did the outcome of the bosses' strike and the maneuver with the military leave Allende's attempt to preserve bourgeois-democracy more isolated than ever? How had the mood of the workers changed? The strategy of the bosses? The mood of the middle classes?

Class 3. Crisis of Leadership and Defeat for the Workers

Required Readings: "The Workers Organize Distribution," pp. 162-165; "The UP's Right Wing Consolidates," pp. 165-168; "The Sharpening Struggle," pp. 173-175; "Workers Organize to Meet the Rightist Threat," pp. 178-181; "The Workers Cordones Challenge the Reformists," pp. 182-185; "The Miners Strike Poses a Dilemma for Allende," pp. 185-88; "The Struggle Revives," pp. 188-191; "The Coup" (concluding sections), pp. 224-229;

"Why the MIR Did Not Win the Leadership of the Workers," pp. 239-42; "Interviews with Survivors," pp. 242-59

Supplementary Reading: Fascism: What It Is and How to Fight It, by Leon Trotsky (Pathfinder pamphlet, \$.60); From The History of the Russian Revolution by Leon Trotsky, material on the Kornilov insurrection, pp. 201-242 in Volume Three of the Sphere Books paperback edition or pp. 203-249 in the University of Michigan single-volume clothbound edition.

Questions:

1. What were the JAPs? Why did the workers feel the need to organize distribution themselves? How did Allende seek to keep this tendency under government control?
2. What were the cordones industriales? How did they tend to bypass the bureaucratic grip of the top union leadership? What were the advantages of the cordones in organizing the workers in crises? What was the response of the reformists to the cordones? What further developments would have been necessary for the Cordones to fully challenge capitalist power?
3. Did the beginnings of workers power in the cordones and the JAPs represent dual power in the full sense of the word? Compare this situation with the situation in Russia in 1917.
4. Why did such developments convince the bourgeoisie that strong repressive measures would now be necessary to preserve capitalism? What is the value of a popular front government for the bourgeoisie and why had Allende's government failed to accomplish this purpose? How did Allende respond to this situation? How did the CP respond to a threat of a coup?
5. What was the correct revolutionary attitude toward the miners strike despite its right-wing leadership? How were the bourgeois parties able to use Allende's opposition to the workers' demands against the Popular Unity government?
6. Was there a wing of the army that attempted to oppose the coup? What was Allende's attitude toward these groups? How could rank-and-file soldiers have been won over to the workers?
7. Was it correct for revolutionaries to defend Allende's government? Against whom? How? Did the Trotskyists call on the masses to arm and overthrow Allende? Could capitalism have been overturned without ultimately removing the UP regime?
8. The MIR and others called for armed struggle at various times, and there was some armed resistance to the coup. Yet the masses were rapidly beaten by only 50,000 troops. How could this happen? What role did the support given by advocates of armed struggle to the Allende regime play in this? How could the outcome have been different if a strong revolutionary party had existed?
9. Was the coup an example of fascism? What role did fascist organizations play in the events leading up to the coup? How does this contrast with their role in Germany,

Italy and Spain?

10. What kind of a grouping was the MIR? What were its policies and how did they change? What was its relationship to the UP? What were its key failures? How did these confirm the criticisms made by the United Secretariat in its December 1971 statement?

11. What role did the left wing of the Socialist Party play? Why was it incapable of providing leadership in the

struggle against the coup?

12. What role did the example of the Cuban revolution play in influencing the class struggle in Chile? What role did Fidel Castro play?

13. How was imperialism responsible for the coup? Why is it important for revolutionists not to allow the crimes of imperialism in Chile to blind them to the role played by the UP and its political supporters?