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IN DEFENSE OF THE INTERNATIONAL MAJORITY'S
PERSPECTIVES FOR LATIN AMERICA

by Richard Mitten (Internationalist Tendency), Chicago
Branch

Introduction

Both sides in the International claim that the Ninth World Congress initiated a turn for the world Trotskyist movement. This turn, as represented by both the "New Rise of World Revolution" and the Latin American resolution, was seen by the International Majority as the touchstone with which the International's sections could, given the correct theoretical and political understanding of the period and its tasks, transform themselves into organizations capable of taking political initiatives of a mass character in their own name, with the potential of triggering even broader advanced mass struggles. In short, the IMT saw the Ninth Congress as a turning point whereby the Fourth International had the real possibility of breaking out of its previous isolation and surging forward as the mass revolutionary International.

The comrades who make up the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency have analyzed the turn of the Ninth World Congress as markedly different in nature. To LTT supporters (that is, most of them—for as we shall see below, in 1969 Comrade Moreno was not quite as convinced as Comrade Hansen) the turn represented an abandonment of the method and lessons embodied in the Transitional Program; an adaptation to "Guevarism," "foquismo," and "rural guerrilla warfare"; and even, as they say in their "Balance Sheet," a rejection of the "lessons learned from the Trotskyist movement's own engagement in the peasant struggle in Latin America."

The experience of May 1968 in France, and the subsequent lesson which each tendency drew from that experience, have laid bare far more fundamental differences than just those over Latin America, around which the disagreements ostensibly began. The broader implications of the debate have tended to become obscured by the specificity of the discussion, and until now there was little opportunity for the sections in Europe to fully examine the ramifications of these differences. But now, with the SWP/LSA's rejection of "The Building of Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe," the full import of the chasm in the International becomes clearer. Beyond the differences over the question of armed struggle in Latin America there exist central political divergences between the IMT and the LTT, which we can summarize as follows: a complete incomprehension on the part of the LTT of the strategic requirements dictated by the change in the world situation since 1968 and the strategic turn articulated in the political resolution adopted by the Ninth World Congress (which was at that time supported by the SWP); a major error on the part of the SWP and LSA on the question which concerns them most directly—the construction of Leninist parties in the imperialist countries; the implicit rejection of the theory of the subdivision of the world revolutionary process into distinct sectors (the theory which was the essential theme of the 1963 reunification document, "Dynamics of World Revolution Today"); and a rejection of the basic concept of the democratic centralist

International, and of the pressing need to Bolshevize the F.I.

The formation of the two tendencies in the International can only be welcomed for it allows everyone in the FI to examine the full positions of the International minority, the cumulative total of which represent a rejection of the basic ideas around which the International is and must be constructed. Moreover, the increasing rapidity of the rightward drift of the SWP makes this discussion more urgent than that in 1969.

The present international debate cannot be fully understood in terms of previous conflicts within the International. Historically the questions which took on a decisive nature were largely restricted to the realm of analysis—particularly of the workers' states and of world Stalinism. The qualitatively different objective possibilities for Trotskyist interventions since 1968 have created a debate whose primary focus is on the concrete *practice* of the Fourth International. And practice is ultimately the final arbiter, in Latin America as in the imperialist countries.

This contribution to the discussion, then, shall outline the position of the Internationalist Tendency on the current debate on Latin America in the International, stating at the outset our categorical opposition to the method of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency in the International, and our complete support to the International Majority Tendency. We can agree with the LTT that the issues in debate center around the fundamentals of Leninism and Trotskyism, but we cannot share their assessment that the standard-bearer of such in the FI is the LTT.

On the Nature of Proletarian Revolution

As Lenin stated, "The basic question of every revolution is that of state power." The orthodox posturing of Comrade Camejo on the nature of the Cuban revolution, and Comrade Lorenzo's literary penchant for finding Russian analogies for everything in Latin America, is scarcely adequate to cover the *actual* revision of the Leninist concept of the state and of proletarian revolutions in general, and of the concomitant need to violently smash the state. The present discussion in the International has revealed a fundamental error on the part of the SWP, namely, that of avoiding revolutionary violence. This can be seen in the SWP's analysis of the social transformations in Eastern Europe, China, and most recently Vietnam (via a Fred Feldman "educational"), where the economic changes and other *comparative sociological criteria* were seen as primary in the determination of the class character of the state; where the smashing of the bourgeois state was seen as a secondary consideration, only beginning a process of revolution.

For examples of how this theoretical revision takes form, let us look at what some of the SWP's national "educators" have had to say about the "classical" Russian revolution: Comrade Les Evans, who is presently on tour educating on the history of the International, maintained

that Russia became a workers' state, not in October 1917, but late 1918, when the nationalizations occurred; Comrade Dick Roberts, speaking to the Chicago summer school, agreed that Lenin and Trotsky led the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie; Comrade Dave Frankel, who gave three talks in Chicago on the nature of the state, mentioned that the October revolution established the dictatorship of the proletariat, but *not a workers' state* (!). (We hope the tapes of these educationals will be made available to the ranks of the party so the real positions of the LTT are clearly and widely known.) In each case the comrades named used comparative sociology, not Marxism, to analyze the nature of the state.

Trotsky, in his article "Not a Workers' and Not a Bourgeois State?" is quite clear on this sort of methodological approach: "But does not history really know of cases of class conflict between the economy and the state? It does! After the 'third estate' seized power, society for a period of several years still remained feudal. In the first months of Soviet rule the proletariat reigned on the basis of bourgeois economy. In the field of agriculture the dictatorship of the proletariat operated for a number of years on the basis of petty-bourgeois economy (to a considerable degree it does so even now). Should a bourgeois counterrevolution succeed in the USSR, the new government for a lengthy period would have to base itself upon nationalized economy. But what does such a type of temporary conflict between the economy and the state mean? It means a *revolution* or a *counterrevolution*. The victory of one class over another signifies that it will reconstruct the economy in the interests of the victors. But such a dichotomous condition, which is a necessary moment in every social overturn, has nothing in common with the theory of a classless state which in the absence of a real boss is being exploited by a clerk, i.e., by the bureaucracy." (*Writings, 1937-38*, pp. 91-92, emphasis in original.)

Opposing Themselves to Trotsky, Our "Educators"

Basing themselves on such clearly anti-Leninist conceptions of the nature of the state and of the primacy in proletarian revolution of smashing the bourgeois state, it is easy to see the confusion—nay—the reluctance of the SWP/LTT when it comes to armed struggle in Latin America. To the LTT, the "Leninist strategy of party building" obviates the need for armed struggle. It is essential to understand the question of revolutionary violence to understand armed struggle, and such theoretical innovations on the part of SWP leaders can do nothing but obfuscate the issues in dispute.

The Place of Latin America in the Present Discussion

The LTT insists that the central question in the present discussion is that of the "guerilla warfare strategy" adopted by the Ninth World Congress. We do not share this opinion. The discussion on Latin America cannot be abstracted from the discussion of the other sectors of the world revolutionary process, particularly the advanced sector. We must, before proceeding to the specific, give an objective appraisal of the place of Latin America in the context of the entire international discussion.

At the time of the 1963 reunification of the world Trotskyist movement, one of the documents put forward as the basis for that reunification was "The Dynamics

of World Revolution Today." One of the central theses of this document was the concept that the world revolution, as it was unfolding today, is divided into three principal sectors: the colonial sector, the advanced sector, and a sector comprising the bureaucratically deformed workers' states. We can return to that document to see how it applies to the present dispute as to the centrality of Latin America.

As that document outlined, while the revolution in the advanced capitalist countries has a fundamentally proletarian socialist character, the dynamic of the revolution in the colonial sector is that of permanent revolution. Precisely because an immediate growing over *of the tasks* of the democratic revolution into the socialist revolution is an objective necessity for any real progress in these countries, even for the consolidation of the main acquisitions of the democratic revolutions, there can be no question of dividing the colonial revolution into stages. The forms of revolutionary struggle and the nature of the program to be advanced in these countries must differ substantially from those employed by revolutionaries in the advanced capitalist countries. This is due to the vastly different conditions prevailing in these two sectors. Included among these are the marked differences in the social formations existing in the two sectors; the combined democratic and socialist character of the struggles and historical tasks confronting revolutionary Marxists in the colonial sector; the very different subjective factors which are expressed in widely divergent attitudes among the masses in the two sectors towards such questions as the efficacy of armed struggle as a means for effecting social change; the stability, and role of the ruling strata in one as compared with the other; and the varying degrees of political democracy existing between the advanced capitalist countries and the colonial and semicolonial countries.

Thus, despite the interacting dynamic of the revolution in one sector with that in another, there are characteristic differences which obliged an understanding of the colonial revolution's own dynamics. Moreover, the lessons of the class struggle since 1917 have shown that the relative weakness of the colonial bourgeoisie vis-a-vis the imperialist bourgeoisie in effectively confronting a rising mass movement has allowed the proletarian revolution to triumph even with a blunted instrument (i.e., a non-Trotskyist party) at its head. This has, in fact, been the variant since the Russian Revolution. Witness the revolutions in China, Eastern Europe, Korea, and Cuba, where varying strains of petty-bourgeois socialist formations (Stalinist included) led victorious revolutions. Conversely, the strength of the imperialist bourgeoisie, and the cumulative lessons they have learned since 1917, makes the victory of the revolution in the advanced countries possible only through the leadership of the Leninist (i.e., Trotskyist) vanguard party. To think otherwise is utopian fantasy. As the 1963 document states: "As a result of the successive failures of the two major revolutionary waves of 1919-1923 and 1943-48, the main center of world revolution shifted for a time to the colonial world. The victory of the Chinese Revolution in 1949, following the post-war revolutionary wave in Europe, opened an uninterrupted series of colonial revolu-

tions. All the victorious revolutions after 1917, including the establishment of workers' states through revolutionary upheavals in Yugoslavia, China, Vietnam and Cuba, thus took place in relatively backward countries while the possibility of early revolutionary victory in the imperialist countries was postponed." "In the imperialist countries the working class, opposed by a powerful and well experienced bourgeoisie, not having to confront the explosive agrarian problem faced by the colonial bourgeoisie, can ascend to power only if a genuine revolutionary leadership fulfills its tasks, which include the following: 1) the establishment of unity in action inside the ranks of the proletariat, 2) the mobilization to the fullest extent the revolutionary potentialities of the working class, 3) to out-manuever an astute and supple ruling class, and 4) win over a part and neutralize another part of the petty-bourgeoisie."

"There do not exist situations without a way out from an economic point of view." (Lenin) In other words, capitalism can, under conditions approximating normality, and in the absence of a revolutionary victory, find its own way out in an economic sense. Capitalism cannot destroy itself without destroying humanity alongside it. It must *be* destroyed by the victorious proletariat. After the failure of a revolutionary wave, capitalism can temporarily stabilize itself, postponing new uprisings for a time.

In the colonial and semi-colonial countries, however, "the very weakness of capitalism, the whole peculiar socio-economic structure produced by imperialism, the permanent misery of the vast majority of the population in the absence of a radical agrarian revolution, the stagnation and even reduction of living standards while industrialization proceeds relatively rapidly, create situations in which the failure of one revolutionary wave does not lead automatically to relative or even temporary social or economic stability. The weakness of the enemy offers the revolution fuller means of recovery from temporary defeats than is the case in imperialist countries." (ibid.)

The experience of the class struggle since the Cuban revolution has shown that this relative weakness of the colonial bourgeoisie is mitigated by the direct interventions of imperialism (Santo Domingo) or indirect interventions of imperialism through its agents (Brazil). This situation, however, does not change the fundamental validity of the above-mentioned analysis of the temporary character of defeats in the colonial sector relative to those in the advanced sector.

By saying that the debate on Latin America is not the central question in the present discussion, we of course do not mean that the colonial revolution is somehow of minor importance. Indeed, we are the strongest opponents of the Menshevik "not ripe for socialist revolution" theory, which relegates the socialist revolution in the colonial sector to a "democratic," "anti-imperialist" phase.

Moreover, contrary to popular belief, the International Majority is in favor of building Leninist parties in Latin America *as one aspect of the revolutionary strategy there*. What we are saying is that the strategy for the advanced sector is of *decisive importance for the entire next period!* A defeat for the working class in Latin America, while it is obviously not satisfactory for the Fourth In-

ternational, nonetheless will not have the same weight for the international class struggle as a like defeat in the advanced sector would. It is important to keep this perspective of the international discussion, which the SWP supported in 1963, to fully understand and appreciate the issues in dispute.

Concerning the Debate Over "Strategy" and "Tactics"

The discussion in the International around Latin America has been consistently colored by the allegation, primarily by Comrade Hansen, that the central question was whether guerilla warfare was essentially a tactic or a strategy. Comrade Hansen holds that the IMT in 1969 projected a "continental strategy of rural guerilla warfare," and is no less obstinate in maintaining that for him, the real strategy is the "Leninist strategy of party building." First, we do not share Comrade Hansen's assessment of either the 1969 resolution or the subsequent interventions into the class struggle made by our Latin American sections. Second, we think that the debate is somewhat misdirected. That guerilla warfare is not a strategy we can all agree, so that is really not at debate. What Comrade Hansen, and the LTT *fail* to understand, is that they offer a no less incorrect counterposition in the "Leninist strategy of party building." For party building *in and of itself*, in Europe or in Latin America, is not a *strategy* either. In this respect, we feel that a discussion of the question of strategy and tactics is an important one.

Revolutionary strategy concerns a combined system of actions which by their association, consistency, and growth must lead the proletariat to the conquest of state power internationally. The conception of tactics, on the contrary, concerns the system of measures that serve a single current task or a branch of the class struggle.

Trotsky's major work in this field was his *Strategy and Tactics in the Imperialist Epoch*, which expresses the lessons and experiences of the revolutionary Marxist movement on this question. These lessons led to the inescapable conclusion that revolutionary strategy is, in the first instance, a global strategy: that it necessarily involves the construction of a vanguard party, the mobilization of the masses and the successful military operations of an armed struggle. These three elements are not counterposed to each other: they are all *necessary* to lead the proletariat to the conquest of power; all three elements must be combined within a correct revolutionary strategy. It is in this sense that each of these elements is disqualified as a strategy *in itself*. What is the mobilization of the masses without the vanguard party? *In themselves, party-building, mass action, and armed struggle are not strategies*. Revolution in one country is *in itself* only a tactical question. In themselves, they cannot lead the international proletariat to the overthrow of world capitalism.

The history of the correct application of revolutionary Marxism to our epoch, the history of Leninism, is the history of a successful integration of these elements into a theory and practice of revolution grounded in a scientific analysis of the historical-structural crisis of contemporary capitalism. What this entails is the study of each component of the revolutionary strategy in relation to the reality of the uneven and discontinuous develop-

ment of political class consciousness and the concrete tasks facing the proletariat in smashing the bourgeois state.

As they stand now, the lines presently drawn in the International on Latin America center around the critical question of whether or not armed struggle (which ranges in form from rural guerilla warfare to armed workers' militias) is to be included or excluded from the concrete policy of the Latin American sections, given the conjuncture of most Latin American countries. This further extends to an equally important dispute present in the FI: Whether it is correct to use armed struggle (again with its tactical variants) in the building of the party, or whether the armed struggle comes later, after some supposed linear organic growth of cadre.

Armed struggle in Latin America is today a strategic question in that a correct resolution of this question divides the revolutionary approach from the reformist approach. Any equivocation on this question will have grave consequences for those hoping to influence the Latin American vanguard.

The Ninth World Congress Resolution

Given that the theoretical necessity of armed struggle, in all its variants, had been agreed upon by all the sections in the International since reunification, and the absolute necessity of being on the right side of this question, we can see the significance of the Ninth World Congress resolution.

The Latin American resolution of the Ninth World Congress went further than merely projecting the ultimate necessity of armed struggle: it actually projected concrete and immediate application of armed struggle for our sections in Latin America. The International majority at the Ninth Congress continued to interpret the lessons of the Cuban revolution: the necessity of armed struggle and the necessity of building a Leninist party. As Germain, in his contribution to the international discussion stated, regarding the orientation of the Ninth World Congress: "Under the given circumstances, with the given social and economic instability in Latin America, the profound influence of the Cuban revolution on the vanguard of the mass movement, the decline of control of the traditional working class leaderships on that same vanguard, the explosive character of mass mobilizations which lead to rapid confrontations with the army, the emergence of the army as the mainstay of bourgeois power, not only materially but also politically, and its relative strength as opposed to the extreme fragility of all political formations of the ruling classes, a long period of gradual rise of mass struggles under conditions of relative (be it decaying) bourgeois democracy is extremely unlikely (except, as we said, in the case of Chile). The most likely variant is that a head-on collision between that mass movement and the army is unavoidable after a short period of emergence of mass explosions, a collision which could lead to a prolonged civil war, if the mass movement isn't crushed by capitulation or disastrous defeats. Even if the enemy succeeds momentarily in establishing a military dictatorship, such a civil war could go on, temporarily take the form of guerilla warfare and help to overcome the lull in the mass struggles after the partial defeat. Whatever may be the various combinations of forms of struggle, it is necessary to tire-

lessly prepare the masses for such armed confrontations, which are unavoidable, so that the workers and poor peasants should not face the army without arms and without preparation."

This analysis "does not apply to all countries, regardless time and space. It is not the final assessment of a historic period. . . . It is specific to a given phase in a given context, in Latin America and in the present it only has practical applications in a few countries for our movement."

It is clear that supporters of the International majority in 1969 do not share appraisal of the "turn" of the Ninth World Congress made by the LTT. It was not, as we are told, a universal call to "rural guerilla warfare," but rather an attempt to grasp the fundamental tendency of a whole period of the class struggle in that part of the world. The resolution rejected the basing of our strategy, in general, upon the traditional variant of prolonged or relatively prolonged phases in which the workers' movement would have the possibility of developing along the "classical" lines, legally and progressively strengthening its trade-union and political organizations up to the moment of the final phase of a general insurrection. This does not exclude the possibility of temporary legal interludes, in which certain brands of military reformism are employed to try and stem the mass movement. It does exclude a prolonged period of legal opportunities, resembling the forms of the classical bourgeois democracies. And while we of course should be prepared to decisively and flexibly exploit any possibility for strengthening ourselves when sops of "legality" are thrown up, we resolutely maintain that to believe that in possibilities allowing for a gradual, linear organic growth of the party, in the present conjuncture in Latin America, is utopian, and to orient our sections with such a perspective would be disastrous.

The document of the Ninth World Congress has the merit of outlining an essentially *correct* analysis, and it did not bypass the problem of armed struggle. It is now evident, however, that on many points the resolution was vague or ambiguous. This can be seen in the document's impreciseness on the possibility of temporary "solutions" which the bourgeoisie in Latin America was able to make, or perhaps in the over-emphasis of the center of the armed struggle as being rural instead of urban. But the fundamental analysis of the 1969 resolution remains valid for Latin America.

It could be said that the emphasis the document places on armed struggle gave rise to ultra-left deviations, but this is hardly the point. *Not* talking about armed struggle would give rise to reformist deviations. In this sense one could say that the SWP's, more specifically Comrade Novack's, continuous drift toward the Kautskyist concept of "pure democracy" was caused by the statement in the Transitional Program that the Fourth International "Indefatigably . . . defends the democratic rights" of the workers. Or that because it is tactically correct for the Canadian section to support the NDP in elections, as is written in their resolutions, that the LSA *necessarily* should tail-end the NDP as it does. In any case, the Latin American resolution does not advocate, nor does it lead to, guerilla madness. That document was a reflection of the state of the Fourth International five years ago as just getting its first concrete experience with these particular

problems. Remember, it is much easier and much safer to comment and criticize from the sidelines without really initiating or directing any campaigns. Since then more progress has been made in terms of practical experience and discussion, and it is on this level of historical development and concrete practice that the Latin American resolution must be examined. Remember also that the document was written to clarify the response which a revolutionary party must make to the problem of armed struggle. It does not make the mistake of counterposing the party to the necessity of armed struggle. Moreover, the experience of the POR in Bolivia to which we shall come shortly, has vindicated in action the orientation adopted at the Ninth World Congress. Having said this, there is no purpose in pursuing the debate on "rural guerilla warfare," "foquismo," "terrorism," ad nauseum, and if the LTT wishes to claim that it has succeeded in having the IMT change its positions, we don't share their opinion.

The Lessons of the Cuban Revolution

Since January 1959 a central focus of the debate in the revolutionary movement internationally has been the nature of the Cuban revolution, and the lessons to be drawn from it. This has especially affected the struggles and discussions of the vanguard in Latin America. In fact, it was the similarity of analysis of the Cuban revolution which prompted the reunification of the Fourth International in 1963. Once again the single socialist revolution in the western hemisphere has come into prominence, this time in the Fourth International itself. It is alleged that the FI majority has adapted to "Guevarism" by taking its unequivocal stand on armed struggle at the Ninth World Congress. As was shown above, the 1969 Latin American resolution represented nothing of the sort. But, to clear matters up once and for all, let us briefly re-examine the Cuban revolution and see what the lessons and limitations of that experience are, and how they fit in with the present discussion.

One day Castro landed in Cuba with 80 supporters at a time when Cuba was in a pre-revolutionary situation, and began his guerilla fighting in the Sierra Maestra. He was not playing hide-and-seek with the army in complete isolation from the rural masses, and only attacking the army at various times. He undertook political work with the masses, first of all among the peasants and later with mass mobilizations in the cities. Profiting from the fact that Cuba is an island, not a small country on the large South American continent; from the relative weakness of the national bourgeoisie; and from the hesitation (but hardly the "semi-neutrality") of the international bourgeoisie to directly intervene in the situation, the July 26 movement succeeded in leading the masses to power. Moreover, the Movement's leadership accomplished this without having constructed a revolutionary party. As in the case of other colonial countries, the proletarian revolution succeeded without the leadership of a consciously Trotskyist party.

Since the revolution, the Cuban leadership has still not established democratic institutions of the working class. It has made the unions part of the government, weakening these organizations as autonomous representatives of the working class and defenders of its rights. True

organs of proletarian democracy have never been established in Cuba, and it seems likely that this situation will not change markedly under the present leadership. Further, Castro has never built a Leninist party based upon the principles of democratic centralism. Finally, the Castro and Cuban Communist Party leadership have made their peace with the Soviet bureaucracy, with which they initially had a rift over the question of armed struggle. The Cubans' support to the Czechoslovakian invasion and the Allende regime in Chile, the Peruvian junta, and the Mexican student uprisings poses serious questions as to the nature of the leadership in Cuba, and a discussion around such questions, which would be invaluable to the membership of the FI as a whole, and should be undertaken soon.

Despite the problems mentioned above, Castro originally understood that it was necessary to extend the revolution to the rest of Latin America. As early as January 1959 Che Guevara had stated: "The example of our revolution for Latin America and the lessons which it teaches us have buried in the ground all the safe radical theories: we have shown that a handful of determined men, with the support of the people, and without fear of death . . . can face a disciplined army and destroy it totally. This is the fundamental lesson." Yet neither Castro nor Guevara were able to draw up a correct balance sheet concerning the organization of a party of the working class because, firstly, they were incapable of understanding the specific role of the working class in the revolutionary process in the colonial countries—in short, they did not understand the dynamics of permanent revolution; and secondly, they were incapable of understanding the place of the party, before, during, and after the revolution.

The original wave of support for the Cuban revolution felt that all that was necessary for the entire continent was to copy the Cuban example, completely disregarding the numerous features specific to Cuba which allowed for the blunted instrument to lead a successful revolution. Guevara theorized foquismo with Debray, and tried to apply it in Bolivia, with a result which is well known. Further, Castro tried to put his theory into the framework of a new international. OLAS died before it was born.

The empirical failure of the application of foquismo by Guevara in Bolivia, and Castro's growing affinity for the Allende regime in Chile, has caused the abandonment of this theory by its principle founder. Regis Debray, who has also become an enthusiastic member of Allende's cheering section and has also totally rejected the views of foquismo, which he began questioning as a prisoner in Bolivia. *Now the Leninist Trotskyist Tendency would have us believe that the FI majority is supporting a theory which has been abandoned by those who created it.*

We have gone to some length to explain the origins and subsequent evolution of the Guevarist theory of foquismo. It would seem unnecessary that such an explanation be made. But today the FI majority is accused of adapting to foquismo, among other things, and we felt it necessary to set the record straight. In 1963, the SWP leadership was in agreement with the entire Trotskyist movement

when they wrote, in "For Early Reunification of the World Trotskyist Movement": "Along the road of a revolution beginning with simple democratic demands and ending in the rupture of capitalist property relations, guerilla warfare conducted by landless peasant and semi-proletarian forces, under a leadership that becomes committed to carrying the revolution through to a conclusion, can play a decisive role in undermining or precipitating the downfall of a colonial or semi-colonial power. This is one of the main lessons to be drawn from experience since the second world war. *It must be consciously incorporated into the strategy of building revolutionary Marxist parties in colonial countries.*" (*Intercontinental Press*, May 11, 1970, p. 444, emphasis added.) Were these the words of some ultraleft sectarian, who perhaps is the real cause of the ubiquitous "danger of ultraleftism" presently rampaging the International? No, these are the words of the SWP Political Committee. We will not insult the comrades of the LTT by saying that they were adherents of "foquismo," "Guevarism," or "individual terrorism." We on the contrary think that the above quoted passage represented an initial understanding of one of the lessons of the Cuban revolution: the inevitability of armed struggle. Comrade Hansen particularly emphasized the question of armed struggle when, writing in the *ISR* on the OLAS conference in 1967, stated: "The question of armed struggle was thus taken up as the decisive dividing line, separating the revolutionaries from the reformists on a continental scale. In this respect it echoed the Bolshevik tradition." (*ISR*, November-December 1967, p.5) Now understanding that Comrade Hansen was a member of the Political Committee, we must recognize that the party leadership, at least in 1967, gave armed struggle of the Cuban type (which included rural guerrilla warfare) implicit support, if not uncritical endorsement.

To finally lay to rest the projections of the LTT regarding the danger of ultraleftism in the International, we should like to make a comparison between two contributions on Guevara or Guevarism. One article was written by a supporter of the LTT, the other by a supporter of the IMT. "The experience of several countries has shown that the revolutionists claiming to be Castroists have not rid themselves of putschist or adventurist tendencies despite grave setbacks and painful losses. *Their weakness lies notably in an arbitrary extension of some of the specific features of the Cuban process, in overestimating the importance of military techniques to the detriment of more strictly political factors, in the tendency to divorce the action of very small vanguard nuclei from the development of the mass movement. Our task is to warn against such errors, which, moreover, need I repeat, have already had very negative consequences in several countries.*" (*Quatrieme Internationale*, 1964, No. 24, emphasis added.)

Compare the above with the following: "I submit that to criticize a person (Che Guevara — RM), a revolutionary, who takes the road of armed struggle in conditions that exist in almost all of Latin America today, is to take the position that there should be no struggle at all, because there is no other way to struggle under those conditions. *It's either, or.*" (*Young Socialist*, December 1967, emphasis added.) We will let comrades make their own judgments on these two passages. But we should mention that the former contribution was written by the "mad guerrillista"

himself, Livio Maitan; the latter by SWP National Committeeman Ed Shaw, a supporter of the "Leninist strategy of party building," and a defender of the "fundamental principles of Trotskyism" in the International.

Comrade Camejo and the "Classical Revolution"

The theoretical foundation for the LTT's schematic formula for the arming of the masses rests on its concept of the "classical" revolution. Whether discussing the Russian revolution or any other, the LTT has a preconceived scenario of how the events must unfold. It goes approximately as follows: first, a revolutionary crisis which mobilizes the masses. As a result of the mobilization of the masses, soviets appear. Then a bourgeois-democratic government comes to power. There is a mass insurrection. The army collapses and rallies to the side of the workers. Voila, the bourgeoisie falls, almost without a fight, under the panic-stricken eyes of international capitalism. ABC. But this is a static, academic formula. The LTT never explain the socio-economic conditions which allowed the original of this model to occur, nor do they explain the lengthy period of *preparation* which made the Russian revolution possible.

Let us review briefly the foundations of 1917 in Russia. In Russia, a not unimportant detail was the construction of the Bolshevik party, with *What Is To Be Done?* as a basis, and Lenin as its principal leader. There was also the 1905 revolution; the struggle with Kautsky; the underground struggle of the Bolsheviks; and the arming of the proletariat with red guards nine months before the actual insurrection. The LTT has nothing to say in their analysis about the crisis of the bourgeoisie and its armed forces immediately after the beginning of WWI. Furthermore, after its editorial job on this perfect revolution, eliminating all connections with time and place, the LTT begins to see its ghost everywhere.

Eager to find the "classical revolution" hidden somewhere in the Sierra Maestre, Comrade Peter Camejo, writing in the November 1972 issue of the *International Socialist Review*, sums up in eight points what made the revolution possible. He states these as: "1) Mass support to the July 26 Movement's central demand, Down With Batista; 2) a substantial apparatus throughout Cuba, and in the colonies of Cuban exiles, capable of raising large sums of money and providing supplies to the guerillas; 3) demoralization of the army ranks and lower-ranking officers in response to popular hostility to the regime, resulting in a hesitancy to enter combat; 4) semi-neutrality of U.S. imperialism and a divided national bourgeoisie; 5) development of support among the peasantry of the Sierra Maestre and general peasant sympathy based on the demand for land reform; 6) the complete dismantling of the army and police after the triumph of the guerilla army; 7) the use of governmental power after January 1, 1959, to mobilize, organize, and arm the masses, above all the urban proletariat; and 8) the existence of the other workers' states." (p. 13)

As Germain, in "In Defence of Leninism: In Defence of the Fourth International," states, "The inadequacies of this 'summary of what actually happened in Cuba' are manifold and striking. The formula 'semi-neutrality of U.S. imperialism' is simply grotesque. Washington was arming and financing Batista till the very eve of his downfall.

In exchange 'liberal' imperialist journalists like those of the New York Times and the television networks wrote and spoke nicely about the 'bearded revolutionists.' If this is 'semi-neutrality' one might as well argue that British imperialism had been 'semi-neutral' in the Vietnam war.

"Mass mobilizations did not start only after the 'workers and peasants' government was formed. Nor is it correct to say that 'mass participation was organized after the seizure of governmental power.' In the first place, the government formed after January 1, 1959, was itself a coalition government and mass mobilisations only occurred on the call made by part of that government. But what this analysis leaves out was the successful general strike of January 1-3, 1959, which started *before* Fidel's revolutionary army reached Havana, and which played a decisive role in preventing the Cuban bourgeoisie from setting up an alternative bourgeois regime, an alternative military power and an alternative army leadership after Batista's downfall. Comrade Camejo also fails to point out that the mass mobilizations which continued in January and February had largely a spontaneous character, and were by no means made possible by the use of 'governmental power.'

"We cannot go on mentioning many other inaccuracies in this 'summary.' Its main weakness does not lie in these factual inaccuracies, but *in the near complete absence of social forces and of political strategy.*

Everything seems to be a function of clever maneuvers on the side of Castro's apparatus and stupid mistakes on the side of his opponents." (Pp. 22-23, emphasis in original.)

What else is wrong with Camejo's description? The sympathy of the peasants with the Castro guerrillas was not based on "the use of democratic slogans," but on the fact that Castro was carrying out armed struggle against the dictatorship. It was not based on a vague call for land reform in the "liberated" areas. The demoralization of the army was not a result of some vague "popular hostility" but on the very real blows being dealt it by the rebel army in actual struggle, and the class identification of the soldiers with Castro's armed struggle. Comrade Camejo fails to mention *who* the Batista army became hesitant to enter into combat *with*. And what about the mass movements Camejo brings forth with pride? Had the CP of Cuba ever failed to *call* for democratic demands? No. Did they lead the revolution? No.

We should finally like to take up Comrade Camejo's unusual fascination with Castro's use of "governmental power" to "mobilize, organize, and arm the masses, above all the urban proletariat." (p. 13) In doing this, Camejo slips into the SWP and the LTT's fundamentally wrong, and essentially Kautskyist-like concept of the state, replacing Lenin's insistence based on Engels, that in the last analysis, the state is a body of armed men, with Kautsky's confused "nation as a whole" nonsense. It is significant that Comrade Camejo lists the conquest of "governmental power" as one of the eight factors "that made possible the triumph of the revolution," as opposed to the actual possession of *state power* by the Castro forces after January 1, 1959. If Camejo means "governmental power" in the sense that the Castro forces used the power by the establishment of a workers and peasants government, then such a usage is confusing, to say the least. Trotsky used the term workers and peasants government as a *popular description of the dictatorship of the*

proletariat ("The important thing is that we ourselves understand and make the others understand that the farmers, the exploited farmers, cannot be saved from utter ruin, degradation, demoralization, except by a workers' and farmers' government, and that *this is nothing but the dictatorship of the proletariat*, that this is the only possible form of a workers' and farmers' government." *The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution*, pp. 159-160, our emphasis), and such imprecise usage of government does not help in clarifying the nature of the state, much more important than any abstract "governmental power."

But it is not just terminological confusion which calls Camejo's article into question: it is also the fundamental revision of the concepts of government and state which are at stake. Camejo, for example, notes: "Castro's break with the bourgeois representatives in government resulted in the formation of a workers' and peasants' government." Fine. But according to him, once this was accomplished, this process "could be concluded in only one of two ways: capitulation to the bourgeoisie and a retreat from the democratic promises, *or by expropriating foreign and domestic capital and creating a workers' state. With the nationalizations of the summer of 1960 the Castro regime placed itself squarely on the second course*, in the process advancing far beyond its original program." (p. 13, our emphasis)

Thus, for Camejo the Cuban revolution confirmed Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution. The bourgeois-democratic revolution could be achieved in the epoch of imperialism only through a socialist revolution: "The seizure of power (governmental?—R.M.) by the working class and the creation of a workers' state." (p. 13) On this we can all agree. But what Camejo is asking us to believe is that after the working class, with Castro at its head, had smashed the bourgeois state of Batista, a capitalist state could have been re-established without a counter-revolution! Or perhaps Camejo is saying that after Castro had seized "governmental power," a bourgeois state existed, which, in 1960, magically and *peacefully* transformed itself into a workers' state *without a revolution*, merely nationalizing itself out of existence.

Such utter confusion on the questions of the workers' and peasants' government, and the dictatorship of the proletariat (which is what Trotsky said the workers' and peasants' government actually was in fact) is reminiscent of Kautsky's revision of Marx's concept of the proletarian dictatorship. Kautsky states: "In his famous article criticizing the Social Democratic Party's programme Marx says: '*Between capitalist and communist society, there lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. Corresponding to this is a period of political transition in which the state can be nothing but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.*' Given our experience over the last few years we can now alter this passage on the kind of government we want, and say: '*Between the period of a purely bourgeois and a purely proletarian state, there lies a period of the transformation of one into the other. Corresponding to this there is also a period of political transition, in which the state will usually take the form of a coalition government.*'" (*The Labor Revolution*, 1926, pp. 53-54, emphasis in original)

Thus, between the time the bourgeois state is smashed (a purely bourgeois state) and the time when a workers' state (a purely proletarian state) is established, there is the period of the "workers and peasants government" in which the state is either bourgeois, or classless, or two class, depending upon how one reads the article. It is obvious that such muddle-headedness should not substitute for Marxism. But there is more yet to come.

By way of analogy, Camejo tries to compare the contradictory nature of the "workers' and peasants' government" (as he, not Trotsky understands it) to the experience in Algeria, thereby hoping to show that a workers' and peasants' government could indeed succeed in maintaining capitalism, peacefully. This analogy is totally false and amounts to a gross political error.

On page 14 of his *ISR* article, Camejo states: "The development of the Castro leadership, then, must be counted as another exceptional ingredient in the Cuban victory. Only three years later a much more powerful movement, the Algerian rebellion against French imperialism, succeeded in winning governmental power. It even established a workers' and peasants' government. But its leadership, whose class origins were similar to those of the July 26 leaders, failed to move forward toward socialism by mobilizing the masses and creating a workers' state." That, in a nutshell, is the zenith (or nadir, depending upon how one looks at it) of the SWP's theoretical revisionism on the nature of the state, and "governmental power." The Algerian FLN, Camejo tells us, succeeded in winning "governmental power," even establishing a "workers' and peasants' government." But what is wrong with this? As Marxists, we should look at the origins of the repressive apparatus. If one does look at the actual origin of that apparatus of repression, the state (and not the government), one would have to notice that it came in as a bourgeois army trained and staffed by elements of the Algerian bourgeoisie under the auspices of the capitalist states of Tunisia and Morocco. The state was consolidated when this army marched into Algeria. There clearly never was a workers' and peasants' government (again, we are talking in the sense that Trotsky used it to mean a popularization of the dictatorship of the proletariat) established in Algeria, unless of course Camejo wants us to believe that the dictatorship of the proletariat was overturned peacefully.

The question in Algeria was, then, not a question of who had "governmental power," but of which class had state power. The same is true of Cuba. The fact that Castro marched into Havana after the general strike of January 1-3 had effectively routed Batista's army, and existed as the organ of repression of the working class over the bourgeoisie, makes the "use of governmental power" to mobilize the masses sheer nonsense.

Comrade Camejo is obligated to explain whether Alende (who has more Marxist pretensions than Castro did) by using just the right amount of "governmental power," could transform Chile into a workers' state, and if not, why not. With his confused conception of what constitutes the state and a workers' and peasants' government, such an answer would be quite interesting.

We must close by posing to comrade Camejo: What is the future of the use of "governmental power" in present-day Latin America? Is it possible that it, and not the

"Leninist strategy of party building," is the strategy that he advocates for our Latin American sections to follow? A clarification of these important theoretical points is necessary before we can proceed further in the debate.

On the Actuality of Civil War

Underlying Camejo's analysis of Cuba is a lack of understanding of the role of imperialism in Latin America. This misunderstanding becomes more apparent in the way he and the LTT neglect the prospect for civil war, and their attendant spontaneist conception of arming the masses only in the final phase of the insurrection. It is interesting to note that despite the volumes the *Militant*, *IP*, and *USLA Reporter* devote regularly to the subject of American imperialism, when it comes down to trying to figure out what can be done in a concrete situation in Latin America in trying to make a revolution, Camejo gives us the "semi-neutrality of U.S. imperialism." As was already mentioned, the SWP and the LTT scenario does not include the likelihood of civil war. Let us explain why the FI majority thinks that civil war is a likely variant for situations in Latin America, and what this means for our strategy.

In Latin America it is easy to demonstrate that every political situation in a country affects neighboring ones. No country is an island, in any sense. At the time of the August 1971 events in Bolivia, the Brazilian army threatened to intervene in the southern part of the country, an area which is economically dominated by Brazil. At the time of the Mitrione kidnapping in Uruguay, the Brazilian army was mobilized on the border. Any workers' state in Latin America will, at least initially, be surrounded by hostile bourgeois states. If neighboring countries fail to smash it, US imperialism certainly will try, and we have much history which indicates that the US would intervene. Where, then, is this "semi-neutrality"? Does the LTT conveniently forget Santo Domingo, the Bay of Pigs and all of Indochina? And what of the role of US "advisors in the murder of Che Guevara, the presence of rangers in Panama, US counter-insurgency schools for the Latin American bourgeois police forces, and the entire economic and political network which permits ITT and the State Department to confer about how they should intervene in the Chilean elections?

In such a situation, it is difficult to conceive of a revolution in one isolated country. Yet the schema of a simultaneous revolutionary upsurge on the entire continent is a utopian picture. If it happens, so much the better, but it is dangerous to prepare for the revolution with that perspective in mind. What, in fact, do we expect to see?

(Before proceeding, perhaps we should give some elementary definitions so that we can avoid a false or semantic debate. In the writings of Camejo and elsewhere, there is some confusion on the difference between a pre-revolutionary period, a pre-revolutionary situation, and a revolutionary crisis. A *period* is called pre-revolutionary when the bourgeoisie is blocked on the political level and a combative working class is hurling itself against the bourgeoisie. A *situation* is pre-revolutionary when the mobilization of the masses poses the question of the working class vis-a-vis the bourgeoisie. A *crisis* is *revolutionary* when the most oppressed people oppose those on top because the proletariat presents itself as the alternative to the bourgeoisie and confronts it as such.)

We expect a pre-revolutionary period on the continent; a pre-revolutionary situation in one or two countries; the organization of a struggle through a nucleus which, though under fire, is able to develop and continue the

struggle; and an effort to extend the struggle to other countries, followed by the extension and intensification of repression. The logical extension of this will be a continental situation of civil war. Remember the domino theory which the US is still applying in Southeast Asia and throughout the third world? This theory is based on precisely this understanding of the momentum of the process of the permanent revolution during this epoch. It means a swift, effective intervention, probably by a local arm of American imperialism. For the US ruling class, the general momentum of the struggle is more important than who happens to be leading it at a particular time. This was evident in Santo Domingo, when the US invaded the island to put down a fight led by a liberal wing of the military. But as both Indochina and Spain have proven, such a civil war is not the same thing as the victory of the revolution. It is clear that while there is a pre-revolutionary period in Latin America today, only certain countries are involved in advanced pre-revolutionary situations.

HOW THE FI MAJORITY VIEWS THE SITUATION IN LATIN AMERICA

When Latin America is discussed in the context of "foquismo", "rural guerilla warfare", or "terrorism," the overall analysis of the economic and political conditions seems to get passed over. Many comrades of the LTT state that they can agree with much of the general analysis of the Ninth World Congress document, just not with its call for a "strategy of rural guerilla warfare." But *it is precisely because of the economic and political analysis the FI majority made in 1969 that the question of armed struggle occupied such a prominent place.* It is on this general analysis that the IMT today stands on. We should therefore like to explain how we view the general situation in Latin America today.

The economic situation is dominated by US imperialism, which controls the industries and controls the bourgeoisie of Latin America. The majority of the population is peasant, under the domination of the "latifundia," or great landlords, living in abject misery and undernourished. The large urban centers serve to publicize the image of countries which are being developed and are, in fact, the openings for American exploitation of the labor force to realize immense profits. Each "center" is surrounded by slums inhabited by a large number of unemployed and by workers who have been drawn there by unrealistic hopes.

The political situation in Latin America is characterized by strong regimes, sometimes a repressive military dictatorship, as in Brazil, which act as watchdogs for American imperialism. There is one single country now with a political life close to that of a democratic bourgeois system, and that is Chile. There are weak Communist parties, often abandoned even by Moscow, which prefers to extend its political influence outside of these degenerated parties. This is the general picture of Latin America.

It is very well understood that there is no uniformity in the economic or political situation and that many variants exist according to country. But in *no case* on the continent is there a parallel with the USA, or even with the *least* developed European country. And during the last 15 years, almost *all* of these countries were touched by mass movements, indicating a pre-revolutionary period. Brazil - Uruguay - Paraguay - Peru - Bolivia - Argentina - Venezuela - Panama - Mexico - Chile — Only one country in Latin America made the revolution — Cuba. But in every

country, the problem of armed struggle was posed at critical moments. Faced with these movements, the bourgeoisie has opposed them with stronger and stronger regimes. The choice of the mass movement of these countries under those circumstances is to either do nothing or to confront them.

Even when the bourgeoisie has made an overture towards "democracy," as in Chile and Argentina, its incapacity to resolve the problems has made these short-term ventures, merely postponing the date of confrontation. The bourgeoisie has become accustomed to functioning in instability rather than taking the initiative, and is waiting for better days — but the problem is not eliminated when they do so.

This persistent instability in Latin America is characterized by a political life dominated by violence and the police; the presence of fascist groups, death squadrons, kidnappings and torture; the presence of labor unions whose very existence is constantly threatened; the presence of non-bourgeois parties without any legal rights to function politically; periods of calm which are brief and often take place at the height of a period of combativity, and disappear quickly as they did in Bolivia and Argentina.

Everyone knows these things to be true, but our discussion must take into account this reality of violence, which the Latin American vanguard must deal with on a day-to-day level. It is both scandalous and unbelievable that Comrade Camejo stated that it was easier to do political work in the trade unions of Argentina than in Europe (and apparently the United States if the SWP's concrete orientation is used as a barometer), speaking of Argentina as if it had the same sort of formal democracy as the U.S. Are the workers of Latin America combative? By and large, yes. Is it easier to do trade union work? No. To say that is to give the impression that military dictators such as Lanusse are almost bourgeois democrats — since they make political work so "easy."

The combativity of Latin Americans can be seen in the working class, which has engaged in numerous semi-insurreccional strikes; in the peasants, who have shown their willingness to fight in Peru with Hugo Blanco, and in Chile, around the question of land reform; and in the students, who in Mexico, Brazil and Argentina have been attacked en masse without ceasing their protests.

The actuality of the revolution and a generally explosive situation is described by all the newspapers, by the church, and even by the PST, until they took their next-to-the-last turn. They are all saying that revolution is the order of the day. But that is not to say that it will take place on one day or the other everywhere. It is a situation, and the successful outcome depends to a very large extent on the vanguard party. If there is no revolutionary direction, an organization capable of directing the masses in Argentina or elsewhere, a victorious revolutionary crisis is unlikely.

The pre-revolutionary periods and situations, and revolutionary crises are not stable; they vary from one country to another, according to the type of bourgeois state in each: whether it is an open dictatorship, or has taken on the appearance of democracy; and according to the historical traditions and the traditional organizational methods of the working class: that of social-democracy in Chile, and Peronism in Argentina, for example.

Even in a given situation, there is differentiation in consciousness. As for example, in a strike: even when

virtually *all* the workers are taking part, certain workers are simply staying at home, while others are actively building the strike. Moreover, the very same workers may divide up differently in the next strike. That doesn't change the overall significance of the strike, but it does indicate the differentiation in political consciousness of the working class; that this differentiation is the theoretical reason for the existence of a vanguard party, as explained in *What is to be Done?* What this implies for us, in *every* situation, is that political work must be directed to *all* the diverse degrees of understanding and not only to the lowest level.

All this repetition of definitions and background for Latin America is only to demonstrate that (1) we are not mechanists and are quite aware of the differences among the countries on the South American continent, (2) we are also capable of finding the common points which *do* apply to the different Latin American countries. If the LTT wants to emphasize *more* than we do the *differences* among these countries, they must explain the *implications* of these differences—more precisely, what are the completely different strategies which can be used to make the revolution? We submit that the LTT proposes the *same* strategy for every country in Latin America, in fact, for every country in the world, and that this strategy, codified in the "Worldwide Youth Radicalization and the Tasks of the Fourth International," represents not a defense of the orthodox "Leninist strategy of party building," but on the contrary, an abandonment of the working class itself, in the advanced countries as well as in Latin America.

The LTT and the Arming of the Masses

Closely linked with the LTT's silence on the subject of imperialism and the prospects for civil war is the erroneous conception they hold of the spontaneous arming of the masses. It must be admitted that the problem of armed struggle is a real one in Latin America and that nobody but an anarchist would be naive enough to think that it is sufficient merely to pick up a gun and fight, without preparation and without the leadership of the vanguard party.

What is the general outline proposed by the LTT to answer this problem? Do propaganda work in the army. As the revolutionary crisis deepens, they tell us, the army starts to disintegrate, parts of it join up with the workers' militias. The party has ostensibly been formed during this period. It then supplies the arms and organizational skills needed for fighting. It is really quite simple: the army thus becomes a cure-all for the problems of armed struggle. The preparation and confrontation for this struggle take place simultaneously, all during the final phase of the revolution. The obvious implication of the LTT's position is that armed struggle is something to worry about later. Unfortunately, the class struggle does not conform to the LTT's subjective desires. The problem posed by this non-strategy is that it then becomes impossible to get from here to there. This becomes very apparent when they try to explain the arming of the proletariat by saying "you do it with the transitional demands." This explains exactly nothing. Exactly what are these demands? When and how does the party announce them? Does it wait until the upsurge? Who organizes the masses? Who gives them guns and teaches them to use weapons? What does the party do with the workers if the army

doesn't go along with this plan?

It is necessary to bear in mind that when our Bolivian comrades predicted the confrontation, they were not asking whether or not to arm the workers, but how to prepare them to fight; how to make an army from the masses which cannot only fight but fight and win. This is not just talk about the mechanics of obtaining a gun. The LTT suggests work in the army—that is not answering the question posed. That work is necessary, but let us remember, it is the working class which will make the revolution and not the demoralized remnants of the bourgeois army. In the LTT's scenario the workers' militias become support groups, allies for the army. Another added touch is the romantic image the LTT presents for "appealing" to the army not to repress the workers (they might as well hand out rosaries so the unarmed workers can appeal straight to the top). Once again the scenario is based on a mechanical and an incorrect transposition of the Russian experience again ignoring the situational differences. The disintegration of the tsarist army was begun by the war. Its ranks were largely conscripts, unlike the repressive forces paid for and trained by US imperialism in Latin America today. Also, the international bourgeoisie has long since learned the lesson that it waited too long before intervening in the Russian revolution.

To sum up the position of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency, they portray the outcome of a revolutionary crisis as being dependent on a split in the military, and in doing so, transfer a great deal of the responsibility for their revolution from the workers under the leadership of a party, to the army. They imagine a spontaneous arming of the masses at the critical moment, and reach the conclusion from this scenario that there is very little more that need be said or done about it now.

The position of the International Majority, on the other hand, is quite clear and precise in this regard. We say that if the party hopes to create a split in the army during a revolutionary crisis, it must prepare strong workers' militias that the army can join, not vice versa. This perspective entails careful preparation: the preparation of such militias well in advance of the confrontation. We view this as a task of the revolutionary party. In the process of the construction of the party, the day-to-day propaganda work it does must prepare the militants for the necessity to organize with such a violent confrontation in view. The majority holds that this work is full consistent with party-building. It is the task of the revolutionary party to take up arms, with or without the mobilization of the masses, when it is necessary. Moreno went into ecstasy over the armed civilians who freed political prisoners and the armed students who took over the headquarters of the national police in Bolivia. He was talking about the comrades of the POR, our section, and the Maoists of the Zamora, not the masses.

This is, however, an excellent example of how to prepare the masses for confrontation. In this way, the road is paved for doing what we saw done in Cordoba and Mendoza. The masses learn through struggle that making a revolution means making a Cordobazo and generalizing it. And, they know how to begin. This is the type of political education over which there is now so much dispute in the Fourth International. This is what can happen when semi-insurrectional strikes take place in situations where revolutionaries have strong influence and

a clear sense of tactics and strategy.

It is in this same way that our work in the army must be prepared, rather than left to last-minute osmosis. Anti-militarist campaigns must be a part of the party's ongoing work. Even the Ligue Communiste, perhaps considered "guerrillaist" by some, carried out two successful campaigns against the army during its five years of existence. All this while building the party from a group of 150 to over 3,000 militants.

The FI majority's position on this question is not a departure from history or tradition. We support fully what the Bolsheviks did in building the Red Guards in February 1917. This was long before there was widespread talk of "armed insurrection." It was these Red Guards which gave the soviets their character of dual power. We understand that the masses will not be armed spontaneously and that the preparation for direct confrontation must be made *consciously*, implying a need to do political work with that perspective for years before the outbreak of a crisis. It means that consideration of the problem of armed struggle cannot be continually deferred until a later date. To do otherwise would be suicide for the revolution.

The Real Lessons of Bolivia or How to Rewrite History in Seven Easy Lessons

Comrade Anibal Lorenzo, in the "Balance Sheet," maintains that "In spite of the course of the class struggle in Bolivia, the POR(Combate) held stubbornly to its position that a socialist revolution would occur only via rural guerrilla warfare. Disregarding all the evidence before their eyes our Bolivian comrades remained steadfast supporters of the line adopted at the Ninth World Congress, a line that had ruled out almost everything heppening around them." One thing comrade Lorenzo says is correct: the POR(Combate) did follow the line adopted at the Ninth World Congress. However, after that, all the slanderous attacks and dutiful misrepresentations, which the LTT has so meticulously attempted to catalogue, fall to the ground. Bolivia indeed represents the clearest confirmation of the line of the Ninth World Congress and the turn it represented. Let us examine the case of Bolivia.

At the time of the last world congress, the comrades of the POR announced the imminence of a *revolutionary crisis*: that is, the imminence of a confrontation with the bourgeoisie which would directly challenge their right to rule. They did this on the basis of their previous experience with such violent confrontations in 1952 and 1963 and the important role they had played in both. Their question was simply how were they to prepare for this crisis?

It arrived sooner than they foresaw; but we know now that their prediction was correct. The construction of the POR could not have been accomplished *without* the perspective of armed struggle taking place in a fairly short period of time.

The Bolivian revolutionary crisis is interesting because: it shows us the realities of the situation in Latin America; it posed, to a very great degree, the question of armed struggle that we will encounter everywhere; it showed clearly the limits of the maneuvers open to the liberal bourgeoisie; it showed very concretely the role of Brazil as a counterrevolutionary force in the whole continent; and it forces us to consider *seriously* what activities are most important in a revolutionary crisis, especially when

the party is not large. Perhaps most importantly, the discussion around Bolivia in terms of *historical interpretation*, never in terms of facts, has revealed, beneath a mask of anti-guerrillaist phraseology, the LTT's *unwillingness* to assess the problems of armed struggle and the place of bourgeois democracy in the process of revolution, which may lead to dangerous deviations.

In order to pinpoint these differences, comrades should first of all be aware of what the POR represents for the Fourth International. It is one of the oldest sections, which grew out of continuous mass work in the mines of Bolivia; Bolivian comrades have always centered their activity around the labor unions in the working class and around the struggles of the peasants. They have been in the front ranks in all the confrontations with the bourgeoisie: in 1952, 1966, and 1971, and have acquired an international reputation as revolutionaries (and were regarded as such by everyone from the editors of *Le Monde* to Hugo Blanco). Because of their historical tradition, they were in no case able to be assimilated with those "conducting a guerrilla boy scout camp in the mountains." The priority of the POR's work in the mines was dictated by the fact that the whole political life of the country depends upon the working class in the mines who go to La Paz during a revolutionary crisis. The army, in order to repress the struggles of the working class, first attacks the miners — as they did in 1966 and in 1971.

What happened in Bolivia?

The MNR regime established following the victorious insurrection of 1952 collapsed in 1964 with the fall of Pas Estensorro. The military coup of Barrientos was a preventive coup aimed at blocking the upsurge of the masses; Barrientos was incapable of resolving the economic problems at the heart of the upsurge; he, with Ovando, conducted one of the most ferocious repressions in Latin America! He repressed the revolt of the miners with the army in 1964; he killed Che Guevara with the help of the United States; he suppressed all democratic liberties and carried out torture and assassinations. But these ruthless techniques and the military dictatorship had stopped the country from functioning at all. His death in an airplane crash in 1969 was a relief for everyone.

General Ovando, the murderer of Che, between 1969 and 1970, tried making an overture to the left through a Peruvian-style military reformism. He tried a partial break with US imperialism with partial nationalization, but at the same time he used repression against the revolutionaries in Teoponte, and by assassinating a Chilean journalist and his wife. Even if this repression was less ferocious than that of Barrientos, and that of Torres was not equal to that of Ovando, it became more and more evident that the mass movement, notably in the university, must be confronted. The bourgeoisie attempted a badly prepared coup with Miranda, which failed in the face of mass mobilizations. A part of the army pushed Torres to power in 1970-71, thinking that they would be able to profit from his reformism long enough to set up a stable regime. But Torres was very soon faced with a mass mobilization without precedent in Bolivia; and he soon appeared to be the puppet he was in such a storm. The bourgeoisie prepared its next coup scientifically, with the aid of both Brazil and the United States; after only nine months, Torres fell and Banzer came to power. In recent history, there were only *nine months* of so-called

democratic government under which revolutionaries were able to work without open repression.

The comrades of the LTT say that the POR missed the boat and was unable to adapt its political line to take advantage of this period. Let's look at what they did. Under Pas Estensorro and since, they continued their political work in the mines, with solid trade union work in the COB; in 1953 the mines were organized under the control of the workers at the initiative of *our comrades*. Under Barrientos the situation became very explosive after the murder of Che, and a new political current was drawn to Inti Peredo, who had been a true mass leader in 1968-69. The repression became very hard, which meant that all legal activity was impossible; no papers could be sold, comrades were hunted by the army. Trade union work was done clandestinely. The POR decided to *prepare for armed struggle*; for them, the confrontation was inevitable and due to arrive very soon. The prepared, on a modest scale, without waiting for the final phase of the insurrection. That is to say, they began, *at the same time* that they were carrying out their traditional political propaganda work, to stockpile arms, and under the dictatorship, they envisaged the unleashing of certain guerrilla actions as a tactical support for their propaganda work.

The POR never renounced the construction of the party. On the contrary, they hoped that by showing the example of what was possible, they would encourage the masses to prepare themselves for the struggle.

I hope that there is nothing wrong in saying that the party must set the example. That is why, *even when* the POR was working with the ELN, it *always* remained politically distinct. The ELN had a Castroist understanding of the place of the party and of mass work, but you must remember that the ELN was *not* the ERP of the POR. The POR was *never* obliged to respect the decision of the Castroists—and it was for that reason that *they did not take part in Teoponte* later on.

What were the suggestions of Moreno's La Verdad group at this time? It is not by chance that in Moreno's present crusade against guerrillism, he does not even mention what took place in Bolivia after the death of Che. At that time, Moreno's group was not even supporting the so-called guerrillism of the International Majority, but adhered to the Cuban strategy for guerrilla warfare and tried to influence events in Bolivia through support for that line. Some examples of that can be read on pages 10 through 12 of Germain's document. Full documentation would be found in Moreno's book *Le Revolution Latinamerica, Argentina y Nuestras Tareas*, chapter 5. Perhaps it will be made available through Pathfinder Press so that you can see an opportunist in action. Roughly, the points of this position were: 1) even the struggle in Argentina was to be subordinated to the struggle in Bolivia, 2) not only did they call for guerrilla warfare on a continental scale, but they said that OLAS, the abortive 3-1/2 International of Castro, "with its national combat organizations of armed struggle is the only organized vehicle for power," 3) dismissed all but ELN and FALN: "Which revolutionary class organs do we propose today to take power, to combine them with 'Constituent Assembly, Down with reactionary governments, Federation with Cuba, etc.?' The trade union organizations as in the past? We think categorically no! The organizational class dynamics for power concretizes itself

in '*All power to the ELN in Bolivia, to the FALN in Venezuela,*' and so on in the same way." (As you can see, while the POR differentiated itself from the ELN politically, the La Verdad group under the leadership of Moreno did not.) The La Verdad group saw their role in this way: The OLAS was the only organization capable of leading the armed struggle; Moreno's party, as part of the OLAS in a country bordering on Bolivia, had to first save and then consolidate the ELN: "To save Inti is our principal tactical task; to develop the armed struggle in Bolivia is our principal strategic task as Trotskyists. We must demand that our International, and especially the whole Trotskyist movement of Latin America, concentrates itself on Bolivia." "Let us intervene urgently in the armed struggle in Bolivia, key of our own revolution."

Had the POR followed Moreno's advice, they would have put themselves completely under the command of the ELN and a leader who was conducting a typical "foquista" form of rural guerrilla warfare and would have stopped their important trade union and mass work. Under Ovando the POR realized that the situation had changed, even though Ovando continued to persecute revolutionaries and the party was still illegal. While the principal leaders were still in prison and some of them subjected to torture, the POR started to publish a semi-legal paper and reentered the unions. They raised a whole series of appropriate demands including the release of political prisoners and the reestablishment of freedom in the trade unions. They never stopped speaking about armed struggle and their prediction of a confrontation with the bourgeoisie, but they were *not* calling for guerrilla warfare under those conditions. *They* saw that the armed struggle would take militias of workers and peasants. That is why the POR did not go to Teoponte with the ELN; from the beginning of the fighting there under Ovando until its resolution under Torres, not a *single comrade* of our section died in this fight! The dead of the POR were to fall later fighting on the barricades, not carrying out rural guerrilla warfare, as the LTT would have us believe. The POR was busy carrying out its mass work, the work Moreno would have had them abandon, and realized that this tactic was correct during that period.

Under Torres the comrades of the POR continued to prepare for an open confrontation and to announce that another coup was imminent. They were working to reinforce the mass organizations, with the trade unions and with the peasant labor unions and its leader, Thomas Chambi, member of the central committee of the POR. They were working to reinforce the political direction of the movement by proposing alternatives which would *transform* the Popular Assembly into a soviet. They also took advantage of the situation to actually attack the prisons and liberate political prisoners (Lorenzo mentions that fact in his section of the "Balance Sheet" *without* mentioning the fact that it was comrades of the POR who did it, not just some students and workers). More importantly, they called for immediate arming of the workers and peasants, and they tried to extend the revolutionary process to the countryside.

We know now that the Banzer coup, which the POR predicted, arrived in only nine months. We know that the now-famous Popular Assembly was not able to arm the workers, was not transformed into a Soviet, was incapable of politically directing the insurrection. Our comrades had done everything possible to prepare for the confrontation and when it came, Thomas Chambi and

others dies on the barricades of La Paz, not in Teoponte.

But what had happened to the position of the La Verdad group? The PRT(Verdad) dropped out of the ranks of the Guevarists, right past the position of the POR, to the position of the minority of the International. They stopped talking about armed struggle and began to glorify the Popular Assembly in the Lora-Lambertist style of declamation. This Popular Assembly was called the "First Soviet of Latin America." In fact, it was composed of bourgeois politicians, reformists and revolutionaries. And it was a consultative body with no real power, which proved to be totally incapable of leading the revolution. So much for the "first Soviet." And after Banzer's coup, Moreno developed the perspective of insurrection based essentially on work inside the army. He reproached the POR for having been absent from the struggle except at the very end, for having a false line and for not having done sufficient work inside the army in nine months to assure the support of a part of the army which would have insured the victory of the revolution. Let us pause to consider the POR's actual line. What were their demands on Ovando? Release of all political prisoners. Freedom to operate in the trade unions. These demands, criticized afterwards by Moreno, were the very demands which the masses pushed for, and within a year realized all of them. This success inspired the masses to push yet further, precisely what we *hope* to achieve with transitional demands.

Was it incorrect to call for the arming of the workers under Torres? The transformation of the Popular Assembly into a real Soviet? An extension of the revolution to the countryside? We feel that these demands were precisely in keeping with the objective needs of the situation.

Was the POR late and hesitant to understand the importance of the Popular Assembly??? Members of the POR were participants from its inception. They requested representation for the POR as a party, a request that was blocked initially by Lora and the Stalinists. Finally, just before the Banzer coup, this decision was reversed. During the entire assembly members of the POR were present, representing various trade unions. Out of 180 members, the POR had no less than 12, over 6%! This demonstrates the falsity of the charge that the POR was isolated from the masses.

Another accusation is that the POR failed to launch the slogan, "All power to the Popular Assembly." This criticism implies the false contention that the assembly was really a kind of soviet. We must examine this assertion in detail.

In the "Balance Sheet," the LTT treats us to such juicy passages as "the Popular Assembly was a very advanced united front formation enjoying the full confidence of the masses. The correct moves need to strengthen it and to make it something more than an incipient soviet were to democratize it and to organize local supporting bases for it throughout the country." It is quite clear: all that was required was to extend the unarmed and essentially powerless assembly throughout the country. But where is the crucial task—that of the arming of the masses? It is so important that the comrades of the LTT do not even raise it as a slogan. To struggle for the creation of dual power—actual dual power—was and should have been the line of the POR.

But precisely what does dual power consist of? Lenin was quite clear: "What is this dual power? Alongside the Provisional Government, the government of the *bourgeoisie*, another government has arisen, so far weak and incipient, but undoubtedly a government that actually exists and is growing—the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies." (emphasis in original.) Lenin continues: "What is the political nature of this government? It is a revolutionary dictatorship, i.e., a power directly based on revolutionary seizure, on the direct initiative of the people from below, and *not on a law* enacted by a centralized state power. It is an entirely different kind of power from the one that generally exists in the parliamentary bourgeois-democratic republics of the usual type still prevailing in the advanced countries of Europe and America. This circumstance is often overlooked, often not given enough thought, yet it is the crux of the matter. *This power is of the same type* as the Paris Commune of 1871. The fundamental characteristics of this type are: 1) the source of power is not a law previously discussed and enacted by parliament, but the direct initiative of the people from below, in their local areas—direct "seizure," to use a current expression; 2) the replacement of the police and the army, which are institutions divorced from the people and set against the people, by the direct arming of the whole people; order in the state under such a power is maintained by the armed workers and peasants *themselves*, by the armed people *themselves*; . . ."

For Lenin, dual power existed in the presence of soviets alongside the provisional government. But the essence of the soviets, the real basis of soviet power, was based upon the armed workers and peasants, not on some "law" proclaiming it as such. Further, we can see that the POR (Combate) correctly understood that the essence of dual power existed in opposing armed camps: thus their central focus on the arming of the workers in Bolivia and their insistence that the Popular Assembly was a meaningless body unless it put into action its paper resolutions calling for the arming of the working class.

Finally, it is clear that the Popular Assembly was not a Soviet, as Comrade Lorenzo claims. It lacked representatives of the rank-and-file bodies of the workers capable of mobilizing the masses in struggle; the peasants did not identify with it; the Popular Assembly was set up and remained an advisory body to Torres, incapable of effectively breaking the workers from the hold of the liberal bourgeoisie; it made no effort to arm the workers, instead telling them that Torres would arm them when the time came. In no sense can the Popular Assembly be considered a soviet.

We must end, once and for all, the ridiculous misinterpretation of the political and practical orientation of our Bolivian comrades which alleges that the POR withdrew its essential forces "to the hills." The real debate must center on the need or possibility of the Bolivian section's taking initiatives to organize the armed struggle in the light of a concrete perspective and possibility for mass insurrection.

For a Class Struggle Perspective in Argentina

When the party has a perspective of preparing the masses for insurrection long before it comes about, it interprets the political operations of the bourgeoisie differently

than it would otherwise. Especially a phenomenon such as Peronism, which represents a kind of cease-fire in the class struggle, which has reappeared in Argentina recently. How do revolutionary parties deal with Peronism? Let us review a little history: Peron left Argentina in 1956, when he was faced with a choice between arming the workers to overthrow the bourgeoisie or saving the bourgeoisie by leaving the country. The image of victorious class struggles has remained in the minds of the Argentinian working class, since many of the present Peronistas are too young to have known anything but the legend.

Lanusse, confronted with mounting revolutionary sentiment, tried a political deal with Peron which would lead the working class out of the streets and back into parliamentary struggles. Campora, the protege of Peron, was sworn in as President, with mass popular support. But he had two big problems to solve: satisfying the workers who have opposed the bourgeoisie; and satisfying the bourgeoisie that is oppressing the workers. And both had to be done very quickly. Therefore, the situation is unstable. The elections solved nothing at all. That this is so can be seen clearly by the most recent events. Campora, once in power, was unable to stem the mass movement, as he was expected to do, and has forced the bourgeoisie to turn to Peron himself, whose sole selling card is that he still has a legend. But this situation as well cannot last long, and is extremely unstable.

In the six semi-insurrections which have occurred since May 1969, the bulk have come from provincial towns and not in the greater Buenos Aires area. All of these semi-insurrections saw mass confrontations with the police and the army, the violent interventions of these forces in unions, in factories, against revolutionary groupings and individuals. Thus in that sense, in Argentina, the question of armed struggle became posed before a broad vanguard of the working class, not as a result of ultra-left speculations or "foquista" adventures, but as an outcome of the development of the class struggle itself.

As Germain states, under such conditions, any revolutionary party worthy of the name "would see as one of its main tasks to prepare the masses for new and bigger clashes, to organize and train armed self-defense detachments of the workers, to project and prepare—within the limitations of its own relatively weak forces—the transition from spontaneous, fragmented and locally isolated semi-insurrections into a nationally coordinated prepared and generalised uprising." (*In Defence of Leninism: In Defence of the Fourth International*, p. 15.) They would explain that the main lesson since 1969 is that a general insurrectionary upheaval, coordinated nationally, has been lacking, especially in and around Buenos Aires. A revolutionary party would have explained that parliamentary action, even in a period of "democracy", could change nothing for the conditions of the working class; that extra-parliamentary mobilizations by the masses are the only way to insure defense against the inevitable attacks of the bourgeoisie.

Thus the minority correctly states: "Since May, 1969, the situation in Argentina has been pre-revolutionary." Yet what has been the main focus of the Moreno group? Parliamentary elections. While we are sure that there is noth-

ing wrong in principle about participating in bourgeois elections, we also know that it is *not* principled to participate in *all* bourgeois elections. The part played by *revolutionary parties* must therefore be assessed critically. We will assess the PST's role anyway.

After the semi-insurrectional strikes of Cordoba and Mendoza, eight months before the elections, and in face of a political operation aimed at smashing the offensive of the of the working class, La Verdad answered by launching an election campaign, absorbing Juan Carlos Coral's PSA, a completely reformist group, in order to have a legal base and guarantee their political operation. Even the CP was more subtle about participating.

Granted that this was the right political decision, we could have expected a revolutionary group to campaign around two main political focuses: the fraudulent nature of the elections, taking place as they were under a military dictatorship; and how to extend the Cordobazo to pose the question of power.

The PST was in a country under a military dictatorship. The strikes of Cordoba and Mendoza logically posed the problem of overturning the regime. A political operation such as the elections was a game to defuse the working class.

During a number of months, the PST denounced "Operation Peron." Yet after Peron's visit to Argentina in December, and seeing the popular enthusiasm he evoked, the PST decided to take a turn. On the front page of *Avanzada Socialista*, they asked Peron to include in his plan for struggle such demands as 80% workers candidates, saying that "if the fault doesn't lie with Peron, we shall thereby help him to break the encirclement of the bureaucrats."

Naturally, Peron refused. Therefore the PST presented its candidates, who were to constitute the "socialist pole" in the elections. They proceeded to explain socialism only in terms of economic demands. But those kinds of demands had *already* been posed by the masses in struggle. The job of a revolutionary party was to lead the masses to overthrow the regime.

What did they propose in order to make a generalized and victorious Cordobazo? Where was the denunciation of the dictatorship? And the torture of political prisoners that we read about in the USLA Reporter? Where was the denunciation, not only of the fraudulent nature of these elections, but of *all* bourgeois elections? Where was the candidate who could explain that workers must engage in *extra-parliamentary* struggles that will be violent in order to obtain satisfaction? Indeed, *did we need a "socialist pole" or a revolutionary party?*

The PST has explained the importance of taking advantage of the democratic overtures of Lanusse, but did they also explain that this situation was transitory? Did they begin to organize the self-defense of peasants and workers and students, as even the MIR *correctly* did during Allende's campaign in Chile?

The limitations of this sort of strategy are evident. They preferred advertising the party to leading the struggle. Moreno himself has accused others of opportunism and tailending electoralism. You may remember his attack on the PRT of Uruguay for taking part in the elections of the Frente Amplio. What he neglected to mention was that *he had directed it!* He even led others to believe that this

had been done by the PRT(Combatiente); and, in doing so he must have taken the comrades of other sections for imbeciles. But, by now, "Moreno" has become another word for "opportunist" and "PST" has become its trademark.

When *Avanzada Socialista* interviewed the trade union leader, Tosco, asking him what he thought of the idea of a workers' slate in the elections, he replied that one first of all must say that these are fraudulent elections. Such an ABC lesson coming from CP sympathizer Tosco must have been humiliating indeed for comrade Moreno. But Moreno can drench his opportunism. Juan Carlos Coral does not even cover his tracks. We hear Juan Coral, in an interview published in *IP*, make the assertion, when asked to explain the fact that a Marxist party was plunging into elections, "I think you are mixing up the class struggle with violence"(!).

You see, Coral envisions the class struggle as peaceful, and to insure that his ballot status not be jeopardized, corrects the reporter on the real position of Social Democracy. In an admittedly pre-revolutionary situation; when enormous class battles—*violent* class battles—are on the agenda; when armed struggle and the need for not only the explanation but the implementation of revolutionary violence become pressing priorities, what does Coral say? "I think you are mixing up the class struggle with violence." (Intercontinental Press, Feb. 12, 1973, 157.)

Further, Coral was asked what his position is on the army. He said, "We will impose popular control over the armed forces and stop them from being an army of occupation defending ideological frontiers. We will make them into the armed instrument of the people. Along the same lines, we call for community control of the police in the neighborhoods and small towns as the only way to safeguard their security and the interests of the working people." (Ibid.) There you have it. Coral, proceeding from a fundamentally idealist concept of the state, conveniently *forgets* that the only way in which the working class can "transform" the state is to *smash it*. He conveniently *forgets* (Oh, that ballot status again) that the basis of the bourgeois political regimes (excepting two) in Latin America is the armed forces. Clearly Lenin saw it differently than Coral: "It is clear that the liberation of the oppressed class is impossible not only without a violent revolution, but also without the destruction of the apparatus of state power which was created by the ruling class." To speak of reforming the state at a time when that state is constantly used to repress the workers struggles, is worse than a sad joke. Perhaps Coral is mixing up the class struggle with violence. To paraphrase Lenin, Coral tried his utmost to conceal from the reader the fundamental feature of this concept, namely revolutionary violence. But now the truth is out: it is a question of the contrast between peaceful and violent revolution. That the SWP is attracted to such ilk is not surprising, for Coral parrots the SWP's own line on community control of the police. One can only conjecture as to whether the SWP is mixing up the class struggle with violence.

But at last the real politics of the PST are laid bare, through careless editing we are sure, in the *IP*. In the June 18, 1973, issue, an article entitled "PST Opposes Social Truce in Argentina," we find a statement of the PST from which the following was taken: "We think that in order to extend democratic freedoms changes must be

made in the constitution and sanctioned by the sovereign will of the people, that *the constitution must be made into an adequate framework for the period of transition to socialism*. Calling a constituent assembly is, therefore, one of the most urgent tasks of the new government." (Emphasis ours.) Eduard Bernstein could not have said it better. If anyone ever had any ideas about the PST being a revolutionary party, the above lines should dispel such notions. Not only is Coral advocating reform of the state, but the *PST itself* wants the bourgeois constitution to be "made into an adequate framework for the period of transition to socialism." Is this the position of the SWP leadership? Or of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency? This is the group posing as the "Trotskyist" alternative in the Argentinian vanguard; joining in the august block which goes by the name of LTT "in defense of the fundamental principles of Trotskyism." This is the group the LTT is proposing to be the Argentine section of the Fourth International. Yet it is just this kind of reformist tripe which makes the politics of the *PST incompatible with membership in the Fourth International*. Membership in the Communist International was made conditional upon recognizing "the necessity for a complete and absolute break with reformism and with the policy of the 'centre,' and to advocate this break as widely as possible among their members. Without that no consistent communist policy is possible." The Fourth International makes no exceptions.

But what of the PST's gains? We are expected to believe that we should accept the PST because they "recruited." Are the comrades of the LTT forgetting that the L. C., with a "false" line, grew from 150 to 3,000 militants in four years, and other European sections have multiplied by ten with the same line? Besides, it's easier to recruit to a reformist organization than to a revolutionary one; numerous groups like the PST recruit from demonstrations in Europe, even the United Socialist Party and Manifesto. Therefore, you don't recruit for the sake of recruiting; it's contrary to one of the solid principles of Leninist organization, which demands the *selection* of militants.

Further, the implication that the *administrative* side of the party is the principal one is to be considered. You *cannot* insist that the PST or any party is revolutionary on the basis of its ability to carry out a campaign or print a newspaper, by the number of halls it has or even the number of militants. The *program* of the PST is less known than the arithmetic of its membership, even after Moreno's document. It's very difficult to see the connection between their economist demands and the political struggle which they describe in static, economist terms. Daniel Zadunaisky's comment on armed struggle was simply that that was not the problem now.

It is significant that they have put aside this problem and prefer to speak of another: the struggle for legality. The activity of a revolutionary party is always limited by repression, and it is encouraged by mass movements. During a revolutionary crisis, when the mass movement is strong, the party can operate openly without risking immediate repression. But a struggle for legality can mean more than one thing; it can either mean creating mass movements in order to act freely, or it can mean making concessions to the bourgeoisie so that you will be tolerated.

On the first: you don't create mass movements *so that* the party can act freely, but in order to *educate* the masses to struggle for the revolution; and *these movements can be made around a multitude of demands, not just democratic*

ones. If the PST was able to carry out its campaign, it was not thanks to the struggle for legality, but thanks to Mendoza and Cordoba. Democratic demands can play a role but they do not constitute a goal.

On making concessions: In order to keep the party before the public at a crucial time, it will make concessions to the bourgeoisie, such as carrying on an electoral campaign under a military dictatorship. You make your choice according to the situation, but if you want to remain "legal" on *all* occasions, that's different, because it means pulling back very far from the lines of struggle.

One example of this can be seen in the elections, when the PST's campaign for political prisoners became the last subject on the agenda of their electoral campaign. It was a political choice, in which they left the struggle for political prisoners to the PRT-ERP.

In the eyes of a revolutionary party, revolution has nothing to do with bourgeois legality. It chooses to do, on each occasion, whatever advances the political consciousness of the masses. "The party must know how to combine the legal activities with the illegal ones at the same time." Lenin made the point very clear; important illegal activities are not to be delayed to a later time, after everything possible within the framework of bourgeois law has been accomplished. And in terms of building the party, that means that militants must be educated about the importance of clandestinity and self-defense. You don't wait for a full scale repression before you start talking about it. Particularly in Latin America, that means you should take up these subjects immediately.

The struggle for legality is a means, not an end. To consider it as an end favors the arrival of bourgeois democracy so it will be easier to work. It means voting for Allende rather than making the revolution. It means voting for Peron or the Frente Amplio in Uruguay. And, for a party, it can mean overlooking the *totally repressive* nature of the Lanusse regime because it permitted the PST to participate in the elections. And not pointing out to the masses what a farce the elections were, when, at the very same time the elections were being held, Lanusse was sending his army into the factories; when he was imprisoning trade union leaders, and killing political prisoners inside the prisons, including Pujal, leader of the PRT, who was tortured to death, and the wife of Santucho (the present leader of the PRT) who was killed with 16 other revolutionaries in Trelew Prison.

One Case Study in Opportunism or Will the Real Nahuel Moreno Please Stand Up?

So long as the SWP leadership confined the debate on Latin America to pronouncement on such truisms as "armed struggle must be subordinated to the mass movement" or "we do not support individual terrorism," it was difficult to see what the whole debate was about, because everybody in the International agrees with these statements. But now the SWP leadership's perspective has found a real material incarnation in the Moreno group in Argentina, which has been given uncritical coverage for over a year.

At first sight, there is ground for being superficially impressed: a lot of trade-union work, a rapid growth, and not only that, but Moreno is an orthodox Trotskyist. His group was a supporter of the International Committee, just like the SWP between 1953 and 1963, when Pabloite liquidationism was exerting its ravages in the world Trotskyist movement. Moreno even set up a Latin-American Secretariat of Orthodox Trotskyism, the SLATO. A closer look at the political history of the Moreno group

will give us a better idea of this orthodox anti-Pabloite, and will give us a first example of anti-Pabloite liquidationism, and should cool the ardor of anyone hoping to find a Marxist party under his leadership.

Throughout the 1950's, the Moreno group was distinguished by the crassest tail-ending of the most right-wing Peronist currents. In the early 60s, Moreno would publish Maoist proclamations uncritically. In the mid-sixties he was a fervent Castroite, advocating that the Bolivian comrades accept the discipline of OLAS. Today he tried to pose as a left-wing social-democrat inside Argentina, and for the benefit of the international audience, as an orthodox Trotskyist.

The PST is not the first example of a Moreno group that has, through opportunist tail-ending, multiplied its membership ten-fold in less than a year. In 1953, while denouncing Pablo's entryist tactic as a supporter of the International Committee, Moreno began his own entryist operation in the Peronist movement. The first operation was an entry into the Peronist Socialist Party of the National Revolution, a small splinter group of the Socialist Party. The Moreno group, then called Grupo Obrero Marxista (GOM), succeeded in capturing the federation of Buenos Aires. However the whole thing collapsed when the 1955 military coup d'etat banned all Peronist organizations. The Moreno group then started describing itself as working-class Peronism. At that time the Peronist movement was split between an illegal wing of the CGT, whose goal was the general strike and insurrection. (This was the authentic CGT.) And a social-democratic wing, initiated by the CIA and given legal status for its collaboration with the dictatorship. This was the wing that Moreno group was practicing entryism in. In the metalworkers union, the Moreno group even led the legalist CGT tendency, and a member of his group, Bengochea, was a member of the CGT-32 steering committee. At that point in 1956-57, the Moreno group had over 2,000 members and its paper sold over 70,000 copies. All was going well until an amnesty was granted to the illegal Peronist movement and it swept the whole union movement. The Moreno group collapsed down to a couple of hundred members. The economist practice of the Palabra Obrera group and lack of political education of this membership was the reason for this collapse, as it will probably seriously hamper the development of the present PST.

Following this collapse, the Moreno group, while continuing to call itself revolutionary Peronist, turned to student work and began to adopt a Castroist ideology in its usual eclectic fashion. This was the time when Hugo Blanco, Creus, and others were sent to Peru to begin armed struggle. At the same time in Argentina, the Moreno group supported the formation of a military group from within its own ranks to carry out armed expropriations. Bengochea was the leader of this wing, and the proceeds were split 50/50 with the Palabra Obrera group. Later on, after they had split from Moreno, part of the Bengochea group blew itself up in an accident. The police began to suspect the Moreno group, and Moreno then denounced them as ultra-left. This was the time when Moreno was going through his big Maoist phase. The comrades can get a sampling of his support for the revolutionary Maoist bureaucracy from the book *50 Years of World Revolution*.

Based on this eclectic Maoist-Castroist philosophy, the

Palabra Obrera group carried out a fusion in 1964 with a Castroist nationalist current, based in the north of Argentina and led by Santucho. This was the PRT. During the whole period from 1964 to 1968, there never was any real fusion of the two groups within the PRT. Moreno was happy to coexist on the basis of uncritical support to the Castroist OLAS. In 1968 Moreno even advocated that the Bolivian comrades in the POR enter the guerilla group of Inti Peredo and accept its political discipline. The only difference between the PRT majority and the La Verdad group when the split took place in 1968, was that one represented armed Morenoism while the other was unarmed Morenoism. Both supported armed struggle. It is obvious from that that Moreno bore a heavy part of the responsibility for the state of the PRT in 1968.

Now some comrades may say that Moreno has changed. But it is not sufficient to just change one's mind. A balance sheet must be made and an explanation given for the many 180-degree turns of the organization over a period of 15 years.

And What About The Part Everyone Is Waiting For—What Do We Think of The PRT?

If the Militant next week were to announce a forum with a comrade from the PRT, we are certain most comrades would be scandalized, and half the comrades in the National Office would have a heart attack. But what could be more natural than hearing someone from the official wing of the IRA (especially two or more years ago) or Al Fateh? But these groups are 1,000 times more terrorist than the PRT has ever been and more ultraleft. The international campaign of the bourgeoisie against terrorism, which was, in fact, an international campaign to terrorize not only revolutionaries but those whom the elite repression had decided, according to their racist logic, were *potential revolutionaries*, singled out the Fourth International as the "Terrorist International," and featured Ernest Mandel as terrorist-chief.

It is understood that revolutionary violence will always be labeled "Terrorist." It is pretty apparent when you see non-violent reformers being labeled "terrorist," too. That's a fact of life for revolutionaries. The important thing, however, is the political result of our actions. And the more effective those actions are, the more degraded the vocabulary of the bourgeoisie will become when they describe it. And who cares what the bourgeoisie says, anyway?

At the time of the recent events in Mexico, we were happy to see dozens of revolutionaries escaping torture; and we were happy to see the political propaganda that small group was able to have broadcast to thousands of people. But it is still the case that one cannot solve the problems of revolution like that.

And that is the basis for the differences between the FI Majority and the PRT, which have been apparent for over a year. The majority could be criticized for hesitating too long taking the offensive against the political degeneration, but this seems to contradict the LTT's other suggestions about a federated International. Moreover, the PRT has recently left the International, so the LTT's charges against the IMT are somewhat misdirected. A solid case has been built to show how and when the PRT went too far, but to attribute such to the Ninth World Congress Latin-American Resolution, shows a complete misunderstanding of the history of the PRT and Moreno's

role in that history. Moreover, the International will take up that discussion without engaging in a simple-minded fight between "terrorists" and "party-builders," between "bad guys" and "good guys." *But what has the PRT been doing?* First of all, keep in mind that the PRT is still alive and kicking despite the number of comrades who were killed or imprisoned—as is evident from recent newspaper headlines. The PRT is not a group in individuals with no influence or who are isolated from political reality. It is simply not true to say that the PRT is carrying out only military actions and has turned its back on the real struggle.

When the LTT identifies the PRT-ERP as "terrorist," they do not, we hope, mean it in the same sense as *Newsweek*. The LTT is putting the PRT on a par with the Russian populist-terrorists and they are revealing their lack of understanding of the situation in Argentina. What are the differences we have with the PRT? Germain states: "Our differences with the PRT comrades fall into two categories: the general ideological evolution of the PRT and the concept of the revolutionary army." (*In Defense of Leninism, In Defense of the Fourth International.*)

We will not, however, belabor ourselves with a discussion of the PRT's many political and theoretical errors, as their deviations are not the responsibility of the FI majority. Though it makes for good polemic by the LTT, the position of the PRT are not those of the IMT, and any such attributions could only be interpreted as politically unserious. But for further elaboration of the differences with the PRT, we can refer comrades to "Some Fundamental Differences Between the PRT and the International Majority," IID volume X number 7.

Some of these criticisms may be recognized—others may not. What should be apparent is that, contrary to the general impressions given by the LTT, time has not stood still since the last world congress. While they are still perfecting the arguments that could be used to oppose the line of the majority of the Fourth International with regard to the PRT, the debate has moved on.

The LTT would have everyone believe that the worst dangers to revolutionary parties today come from the left in the form of Guevarism and ultraleftism. Wherever they find guerilla warfare and minority actions, they propose the building of mass struggles around democratic demands. But where they find mass struggles around democratic demands which must be pushed farther or degenerate, they have nothing to say. They think that the existence of a Kerenski makes it clear that the masses need revolution; but when they find one of his modern-day counterparts, they don't know what to do with him either. They have been so busy watching out for attacks from the left that they have no strategy for dealing with the middle.

The Significance of the Latin American Debate

There is only one living International: the Third International is dead; the attempts of the Cubans and Algerians to create OLAS, the Tricontinental International for the Third World expired with Che Guevara in Bolivia. The Maoist International never existed. The global network of revolution which exists is that between Trotskyists around the world.

It is the task of this International to lead the revolutions around the world. In order to carry out that task, it must

combat right opportunist deviations and ultraleft deviations. It has to fight the ideology of revolution in one country projected by the Stalinists wherever we find them. And we have to do it at a time when the pressure for revolution is being mounted as never before in the history of humanity. The tremendous growth of the Fourth International since the last world congress is evidence that we can take on this responsibility. But it makes the building of the International an urgent task and an immediate one.

For a long time, the International was reduced to a group of intellectual propagandists. In the past five years, it has multiplied by five and European sections which practically didn't exist at the time of the Ninth World Congress, represent more than half of the International now. A group of propagandists and kibitzers, who sat on the sidelines and tried to explain what was going on, has emerged as the leadership of the class struggle around the world. It's because of the responsibility we have taken on that we can no longer consider international debates to be family quarrels. Thousands of revolutionaries are awaiting the outcome of this debate.

The Trotskyist movement has acquired a reputation as splitters which has made it difficult to build credibility in the working class. We must show that however violent this debate may be, the International is stronger and that it provides the only framework for resolving differences democratically and carrying out our crucial international work. As a matter of fact, this discussion is part of building the International; there would be no progress without discussion, because it is one of the primary tasks of each party and not a diversion from the activity of the party.

When we say we want to build the International, we are saying that we realize that races, nations, temperaments, and all other *divisions* between the oppressed parts of humanity are all products of bourgeois ideology. The International recognizes that it is possible and necessary to synthesize the experience of revolutionaries all over the world. For revolutionary parties must be able to share with and learn from the personal experiences of other revolutionaries. Not to do so means leaving up the walls constructed by the bourgeoisie precisely to isolate and then destroy. The Social-Democratic internationals were all built on the federal concept and reinforces the divisive lines of nationalism. Whenever they were challenged by the reality of the class struggle, which is now and always was an international struggle, they failed miserably. Their models belong in the archives of our movement under the heading of *HOW NOT TO BUILD AN INTERNATIONAL!*

The International means more than exchanging letters, telephone calls, and internal bulletins; it must be built along Leninist lines. And just as we do not wait for certain favorable conditions to start building a Leninist party, we must not wait until the year 2000 before we start building the Leninist International.

If the theme of the LTT is party building, that of the majority of the International is "International building," and the present debate is part of that work. After reading the document of Mandel, it will be apparent that the majority's position is not frozen and that a lively discussion

is taking place within the majority, concerned with advancing the theoretical understanding of the problem of armed struggle, of arming the proletariat, and building a party which can accomplish those things.

We have stated earlier that while the present discussion on Latin America is important and essential, it is not *the central* question in the International. The main question, and one which the SWP politically-led International minority fails in answering, is that of building the Fourth International. Comrade Hansen launches a schematic orthodoxy to cover the SWP's wretched practice. By counterposing the so-called "Leninist Strategy of Party Building" to armed struggle, Comrade Hansen himself exposes his misconception of the tasks required to lead the working class to power. The problem of armed struggle in Latin America is something which arises out of the class struggle itself, and to avoid the question by talking about the "Leninist Strategy of Party Building" is, shall we say, extraneous. Moreover, there is no such thing as a Leninist conception of party building separate and distinct from a correct strategic orientation and correct tactics. Finally, by the counterposition which Comrade Hansen makes in presenting party building as something distinct from the elements of the living class struggle, he gives credence to those who are fundamentally anti-Leninist in their conceptions of armed struggle.

Yet the strategic orientation Comrade Hansen outlines for Latin America is the exact opposite as that which is practiced in the United States. Comrade Hansen quotes Comrade Peng's opposition to guerrilla warfare, but neglects to mention that the other part of "Return to the Road of Trotskyism" contained within it an orientation to the working class in the advanced industrial countries. Why does Comrade Hansen omit such things in the interests of factional gain? Comrade Peter Camejo, who is so interested in doing union work in Argentina (he even says that it is easier to do union work there than in Western Europe), is one of the major proponents of the sectoral analysis for the advanced countries. In the Barnes-Sheppard document "The Real Meaning of the Proletarian Orientation" they consistently, to their credit, advocate an orientation to the students in Latin America. ("They also attack *The Worldwide Youth Radicalization and the Tasks of the Fourth International* and our evaluation of the 1968 May-June revolutionary upsurge in France. They single out for attack Comrade Hansen's 'Assessment of the Draft Resolution on Latin America,' which outlines the position of the SWP on the issues before the last World Congress of the Fourth International. Comrade Hansen's document centers on the central need to orient the world movement towards the radicalizing youth, primarily the student youth at this stage of its development, as the next key step in increasing the cadres of the world Trotskyist movement. We reject ultraleft shortcuts flowing from the inexperience of young cadres. This was especially noted in our position on Latin America. Apparently the leaders of the Proletarian Orientation Tendency disagree. If we understand them correctly in 'The Meaning of a Proletarian Orientation,' they stand for elevating colonization of unions from a tactic to a general strategy not only in the United States, but in every Trotskyist party in the world, and NOW!")

All these comrades, save Peng, who today scream loud-

est about party building in the working class in Latin America have totally ignored the same for the advanced countries.

The most crucial discussion in the International is that on the building of the International in the advanced capitalist countries. "The Building of Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe" is a precise codification of the correct method which should be employed. This method's correctness in Latin America at crucial junctures has already been shown. The SWP, on the other hand, has shown its inability to build the FI in Latin America. This inability is not an historical accident. It flows di-

rectly from their inability to address the *class* question in the advanced countries, the acid test for all revolutionaries. That the SWP is caught in a contradiction should be obvious by a *cursory* reading of their "Balance Sheet" for Latin America and their Political Resolution. We would therefore urge all comrades to do just that, and to reject the petty bourgeois sectoralism of the SWP in favor of the revolutionary tendency in the International, the International Majority Tendency.

Forward to a Proletarian Orientation for the entire world, including the United States!

Forward with the Fourth International!

July 28, 1973

FOR A LENINIST RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
PARTY AND YOUTH
by Mark L. and Debby P.
(Internationalist Tendency), Chicago Branch

In this contribution to the party convention discussion we would like to deal at some length with a question which is at once both a political and an organizational question. That is, the relationship between party and youth in the revolutionary movement. In order to do this, it is necessary to at least touch briefly upon several other questions. They include: the purpose of a party; the role of youth in the struggle for socialist revolution; the most advantageous way of organizing the youth; and, finally, what is the best relationship for a youth organization to have with the revolutionary vanguard party?

The first of these questions, why a party, can be dealt with quite briefly. In his fundamental work, *The Transitional Program*, Trotsky says the following: "The economic prerequisite for the proletarian revolution has already in general achieved the highest point of fruition that can be achieved under capitalism." "The world situation as a whole is chiefly characterized by a historical crisis of the leadership of the proletariat." The party, as it is clear to revolutionary socialists, provides the transmission belt, from the rotten over-ripe objectives, to the subjective conditions necessary for the liberation of humanity. That is, a proletariat which is conscious of its needs and knows how to fight for them. A proletariat which, under the leadership of a vanguard party, can smash the bourgeois state and seize power in its own name. The Fourth International is the only such vanguard party in existence.

The second question posed, that is, the role of youth in the struggle for socialist revolution, also can only be taken up in much abbreviated form at this time. Proletarian youth will form a large part of those militants who are mobilized in revolutionary anticapitalist struggle. This is the case for several reasons. Youth are easier to get into motion, fewer of them are tied down with the burdens of family and childrearing. They are more underpaid, on the average, than older workers who have more seniority. They have had less time to be miseducated, misled and thus suffer less from the cynicism and demoralization, the

frustration and hopelessness, of many older workers. They have not struggled hard and become bitter with countless losses, based on Stalinist and Social-Democratic misleadership. These factors are enhanced, in the advanced capitalist countries today, by certain specific circumstances. The youth of today are products of the fifties and early sixties. They are, in large part, particularly in the U.S., products of relative prosperity. They thus have higher expectations and demands than the workers of the thirties, who in many cases, had walked the streets hungry and were happy for any job, at any rate of pay. Youth of today do not place an extreme of emphasis on material values; they do however, have much higher standards of what constitute basic necessities, things which they expect as a matter of course, to be provided for them. Another factor in the high level of combativity of the young is leisure time. Youth who are students, whether high school or college, have much more leisure time than older workers with families. This time can be devoted to reading, study and thought. Consequently, it is among this youth layer, it is among students, that the ideas of revolutionary socialism are often first discussed, first studied.

Do youth have special interests, as youth? Our answer to this is, yes, *but the fundamental interests of youth are divided by class*. There are bourgeois youth and there are working-class youth. Their basic interests are not similar, in fact, they are categorically opposed. We therefore do not see a basis for organizing youth as an age grouping. Any organizations of youth that are build must be *class* organizations. Why then, if youth do not have special interests as a group, should we organize youth separately? Let me state at the outset that we view this question as a tactical one. Youth groups can, at least in certain periods, serve several functions. First and foremost, the function of a youth group should be to carry out revolutionary propaganda and agitation among proletarian youth and the youth of oppressed minorities. In some instances this propaganda will center around

questions which particularly interest young people. Issues such as the right of young people to free higher education, opposition to capitalist conscription, the fight for free birth control and abortion, job-training and jobs for all, are issues of particular concern to proletarian youth. Youth are the hardest hit by unemployment, the first to be laid off in periods of slack created by the capitalists. This is particularly true of the young members of racial and national minorities in this country. Job discrimination hits them in three forms. Lack of education and training, racial discrimination, and age and lack of experience. Most issues and struggles around which a youth group can and should be organized are the issues which face the workers' movement as a whole. As Trotsky says in his theses, "Unity and the Youth," "And for youth? The same thing. There are not two policies: one for the youth and the other for adults. Insofar as the youth carry on politics—and that is their duty—their politics must be adult."

There has been some criticism in the SWP lately on the abandonment of youth groups by several sections of the Fourth International: Germany, France, England. We view this as a tactic of the conjuncture. It is clear that these sections, despite the lack of formal youth groups, are carrying out work among young people. In fact most of the cadres recruited by these sections in the past period have been youth. The Ligue Communiste, for example, has cells based on the campuses and lycees throughout France. It was the prime force behind this spring's high school demonstrations. The forces mobilized by the Ligue in its fight against the fascist Ordre Nouveau have been overwhelmingly young. The demonstration build recently in Milan in defense of the Vietnamese revolution was primarily a demonstration of young students and workers. Here in this country too, it is clear that the party has, at times, been able to win large numbers of youth to Bolshevism, without a formal youth organization. In the period immediately following World War II when the party grew by hundreds, were these old people it drew in? Certainly not. They were young veterans, returning from the war, discovering that the society they returned to had no real place for them. They found their jobs taken, their wages inadequate, and the society they returned to unable to provide for their needs, despite its verbiage of a warm welcome home. It was these young workers, returning from the front, who were the basis of the 1945-46 strike wave and the post-war radicalization. During this entire wave of large-scale recruitment to the party, of unprecedented growth, not equaled yet today, there was no youth organization!

This is not to say, by any means, that youth groups should never be organized. In the mid-to-late fifties, the party began to work again in a specifically youth milieu. The 1956 Khrushchev revelations about the nature of Stalinism had profound effects on the left in this country, particularly on the Communist Party and its substantial periphery. The monolith of Stalinism in the radical movement was shaken, allowing the SWP opportunities to work with forces which had previously shunned it as a monstrous Trotskyite counterrevolutionary deviation. There was also a simultaneous development of a left wing among the Social Democrats of the Young Socialist League, youth group of the Independent Socialist League. From among these youth of the YSL left wing the dissolving Stalinist Labor Youth League and young members of the SWP a loose group was formed, based around

the publication of the *Young Socialist* newspaper. Most of the forces were from the YSL left wing, with only a few actually coming from the LYL. There were several main political features which distinguished the Young Socialists of that time. They were unalterably opposed to capitalist candidates in the elections, they defended the Soviet Union and the other workers' states but called for socialist democracy. They recognized the need for a revolutionary party and saw the working class as the decisive agent of revolutionary social change. Here is a quote from the document, *Where We Stand*, adopted at the April 1960 founding convention of the Young Socialist Alliance. "The revolutionary socialist youth are well aware that by themselves youth cannot lead the working class to power. That is the historic task of a working class revolutionary party." Further on in the same document, the *Young Socialist* supporters defined their relationship with the SWP in the following way. "The Young Socialist Alliance and the Socialist Workers Party are the only revolutionary socialist groups in the United States today. The YSA recognizes that only the SWP of all existing political parties is capable of providing the working class with political leadership on class struggle principles. As a result of its three year development the supporters of the *Young Socialist* have come into basic political solidarity, on the principles of revolutionary socialism, with the SWP."

Let us move on from here to deal with the central question posed at the start of this contribution to the discussion. What should be the relationship between a revolutionary vanguard party and a revolutionary youth organization? Let us begin with some remarks on the question by James P. Cannon, then national chairman of the SWP. In a letter to P.C. members in New York, dated May 24, 1961, Cannon pointed out, "We learned long ago that organizational forms are not sacred in themselves, but must always be adapted and subordinated to political purposes." He gives an excellent example, pertaining to party-youth relations of just such a situation, where the political questions were, of principled necessity, the first consideration. "During the First World War he (Lenin) supported the *independence* of the youth movement for excellent reasons. . . . His primary motivation was political, not organizational. It was a question then of a struggle against the social patriots, in which a considerable section of the youth movement was taking a revolutionary stand. It was certainly correct for him to advocate the complete independence of the youth movement under such conditions."

While we agree with Comrade Cannon that questions of principled class politics take precedence over organizational form, that concept must not be misused. The basic formulation worked out by Lenin in connection with the founding of the CYI (Communist Youth International) was, "organizational autonomy and political subordination." We view this general schema, not as an abstract, but as a generally correct guideline. It is on this basis that the Fourth International projected and aided in the founding of the World Youth Congress of the Fourth International, established in September of 1938. This grouping established its general political solidarity and agreement by adopting as its own program, the Transitional Program. Its relationship to the Fourth International as a whole was defined in the following way by Nathan Gould, the American delegate to the congress. "The resolution on relations between the youth and adult Internationals accepted the *classical Leninist concept of these relations*. The Youth International, which accepts the proletarian revolutionary

international leadership of its adult body is to be *politically subordinate to and organizationally autonomous of the Fourth International.*" (Our emphasis.) These remarks come from the *Socialist Appeal* dated October 22, 1938. It is on that basis that the early youth groups of the Fourth International were built, including the Spartacus Youth League and YPSL (4th International) in the U. S.

Let us now proceed with some more recent history and analysis, history and analysis of the YSA-SWP relationship as it has developed over the past several years and what these developments mean for the Fourth International today.

The leadership of the SWP defines the revolutionary socialist youth organization, the YSA, as "An independent organization that makes its own decisions." This definition is incomplete at best, obscuring more than it clarifies. It is partial in that it deals merely with organization and not with politics and it is obscurantist in that it hides the reality of SWP-YSA relations. In our opinion, the YSA is, de facto, the SWP's youth organization, with a deformed relationship to it and deformed functions in the political and organization spheres.

The current examination of party-youth relations does not arise in a vacuum. The SWP is currently entrenched in factional warfare, both within the American party and on a world scale. This fight is bound to have profound repercussions and reflections in the youth. As was correctly pointed out by the P.C. in a June 1957 *Letter on P.C. Youth Policy*, "As a matter of fact, all the great struggles within the party were invariably paralleled in the youth organization. Or, as you mentioned, under certain circumstances, found their major arena in the youth movement. Such was the case with regard to the left wing in the international social-democracy. And no-one who held the Leninist view of the revolutionary party's relation to the youth movement has, to my knowledge, ever attempted to introduce the practice of a party fraction in the youth movement. This has been the case in the history of our movement in the U.S. and internationally, the early period of the Communist Party, the social democracy before World War I, and the Russian Bolsheviks after the revolution. Only the Stalinist and social-democratic bureaucracies ultimately imposed their control over the radical youth—in the name of party discipline and 'no factionalism.'"

In the SWP this situation arose following the 1971 convention and with a very different policy handed down. Many party members were, in effect, gagged as the party leadership made it clear that differences which had been disputed within the party at its '71 convention could not be raised in the YSA by YSA party members. The same was the case in 1972 when the party P.C. suppressed a contribution to the discussion, submitted by former minority party members in the youth. In this way, the party leadership succeeded in thwarting a democratic and Bolshevik discussion at the 1972 youth convention. (See Appendixes I and II.)

In our opinion, the SWP leadership has consciously kept the status of the YSA as a Trotskyist youth group ambiguous in order to prevent the youth from being "contaminated" by the influence of party dissidents, and in general to "protect" the youth from the dread disease of critical thinking. In the history of the YSA there have been a number of cases of party minorities raising criticisms in the YSA. To name a few: Robertson, Wohlforth, Fox, Chase-Meske-Barzman-Sherril, and most recently, Dick and Carol Merrill of the 1971 YSA "Minority Tendency." Only

in the last case did the SWP take any disciplinary action (expulsion in this case). This, being the most recent incident, points to a general drift of the party leadership away from Leninist norms and to its fear of any left-wing tendencies developing in the YSA.

The party took quite a different approach in 1967 with the Chase, Meske, Barzman and Sherrill document which posed a critical assessment of antiwar work. The discussion on their action began with a criticism of CMBS by former comrade David Fender. (SWP DB Vol. 26, No. 9). Comrade Fender used, at that time, the same arguments used by the party leadership today in restricting the expression of critical thought. He argued, "Such a procedure of discussing different political lines in an outside organization can only place the party in a most impossible situation, and can in no way be tolerated by it. While party members have a right to offer their criticisms, they do not have a right to present a different political line in the way comrades CMS and B did. If they felt they had a political position different from that of other party comrades, they should be raising their differences and fighting for them in the present party discussion." Although to many comrades, trained in recent years in the SWP, this may sound correct, Comrade Fender was firmly taken to task at that time by Comrade Kerry, a P.C. member. Kerry charged Fender with "sterile schematism" because Fender did not understand that ". . . the party leadership acts in accordance with the principle that political considerations take precedence over questions of party organizational procedure." (SWP D.B. Vol. 26, No. 12.) Comrades Bolduc and Seigle, 1968 and 1969 National chairpeople of the YSA, in their contribution "On Party-Youth Relations: Setting the Record Straight" further echo Kerry's charge and disagree with Fender. They pose the concept that the YSA is not an "outside organization" and support the political conclusion that would logically flow from this, that is, no party discipline in the youth. Bolduc and Seigle have the following to add in response to Fender, who asks, "Does this mean that party members in the YSA leadership are not subject to the 'direct supervision, direction and control of the Political Committee of the SWP'?" Bolduc and Seigle reply, "Yes, Fender, that is exactly what it means. Moreover, we think it would be a mistake for the P.C. to do so." They further state, "The YSA is not an 'outside organization' which requires SWP members to function, *under party discipline, within.*" "The YSA is a Trotskyist organization, it actively supports and helps build the SWP. . . . Moreover, there is no reason to believe that at anytime in the foreseeable future Trotskyism will be in a minority position in the YSA, thus requiring us to change our approach to it" (p. 15).

But the party leadership today acts in accordance with Fender's "sterile schematism." Today the party leadership is not motivated by "political considerations" of a dynamic youth organization, trained by the party's revolutionary *example* to use the dialectic as a guide in the class struggle, but is instead motivated by a bureaucratic fear of the youth "getting out of control," that is, taking a critical stance toward the party's current practices. The ambiguity of the relationship, as outlined above by contradictory words and deeds can only serve the narrow interests of the current party leadership and not the interests of a Bolshevik party or youth organization. On the one hand, in our opinion, the party dominates the YSA leadership in all

the YSA's formal bodies (National Committee, National Exec. Comm., and local executives wherever there are party branches) and, on the other hand, the party leadership says the YSA is not formally the youth section and uses this as justification for pouncing on the rights of dissidents who seek to raise ideas in the youth. Whereas there is nothing wrong with SWPers playing leading roles in the YSA, the extent of this policy reflects the party's lack of trust in the youth. The PC is unwilling to go along with their own statement, printed in the "Worldwide Youth Radicalization and the Tasks of the Fourth International" which states that the youth should "decide their own policies, organize their own actions, make their own mistakes and learn their own lessons." In our opinion, it is only in the most abstract and formal sense that it can be claimed that the YSA is independent of the SWP. In our opinion, what the SWP calls "fraternal collaboration" has developed into a policy of paternal domination. This "fraternal collaboration" is expressed in joint fractions (both for external and some internal work), joint educationals, and the YSA's role as main organizer of support groups for party election campaigns. The "collaboration" went so far at one point that the YSA had liquidated its press in favor of selling the party organs, *The Militant* and *ISR*. Since its inception in 1960 as an organization, YSAers have been recruited with the understanding that the SWP is the revolutionary party. The above evidence, both organizational and political, points to the YSA's real role, in our opinion, as de facto SWP youth section.

Another aspect of the SWP official policy of "fraternal collaboration" is the suppression of left dissidents who hold joint membership in the party and YSA. It is only natural that many criticisms raised in the YSA would come from party youth. These comrades have, in general, been in the movement longer, have a firmer grasp of Bolshevism, and have more direct contact with the political trends in the party and International. The party leadership uses its double-edged sword on these comrades. It educates them to think that the YSA is a Trotskyist organization, with fraternal ties to the party. However, when these comrades seek to bring up their ideas in the youth they are told that the YSA is not the youth section of the party and that therefore differences which exist in the party should not be raised in the YSA. Disciplinary action is threatened, or as in the previously cited case of Dick and Carol M., actually imposed.

Differences raised by the right wing, as you will see, are not treated in the same way. Bob Gebert, a party member, announced in writing in the 1971 YSA discussion bulletin that "I'm one of the comrades who secretly violated our discipline by keeping our gayness a secret before the decision was made at last year's convention to allow gays in the YSA. Actually, there were lots of us, including a goodly number who have become leaders of the American Trotskyist movement." (Vol. 15, No. 8.) While we strongly disagree with this restrictive membership policy, it is noted that Comrade Gebert was indeed raising party questions in the youth. At the same time as this, the Merrills were expelled for signing the "Minority Tendency's" political resolution. The party leadership has never documented, for the membership, the Merrills' trial or expulsion proceedings. In 1972, Comrade Gebert continued his policy of raising questions in the youth, this time by

raising what was in essence a counterline on women's work and gay work, including that the Trotskyist movement should advocate a "women's party." Again no disciplinary action was taken. This points to a factional basis for the differences in treatment. Comrade Gebert's open revisionism is, in many of its aspects, the logical extension of the SWP majority's politics. It is only Gebert's brashness and openness which bothers or embarrasses the Political Committee. Indeed, the SWP found Gebert's logical extension to be such an embarrassment that he has just recently been tried and expelled in San Francisco. This is a logical act for the leadership of the party at a time when they are attempting to pose as the "orthodox" Trotskyists in the International, via the so-called "Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency." Most frightening to the SWP leadership must have been the fact that Gebert's open reformism found a whole receptive layer inside the YSA as was shown by last year's discussion on the "revolutionary" content of "youth culture." Such dissidence on the right was unanticipated by the party leaders.

At this same 1972 convention, two comrades, supporters of the former Proletarian Orientation Tendency at the '71 party convention, sought to raise mild criticisms of certain areas of YSA work. Although this contribution was not even a counterline resolution, the PC suppressed their document, raising the "red-herring" "fig leaf" of organizational "independence" of the YSA. This "independence" as we have seen in fact, means anything the party leadership wants it to mean. (See Appendixes 1 and 2 for letters to the PC and a transcript of the suppressed contribution.)

It hasn't been Comrade Gebert alone who has offered deviations from the party's program and analysis in the YSA. The YSA NEC resolution offered their innovation on Leninist conceptions on the role of the vanguard party by subjecting it to the *necessary* task of building a youth group in order to seize power. The NEC claimed that the "revolutionary struggle against capitalism . . . can only be accomplished through a multinational revolutionary party *and* youth organization." (YSDB Vol. 16, No. 2, p. 30, our emphasis.) One would have to assume from this statement that they feel that sections of the Fourth International such as the Ligue Communiste and IMG are not carrying on "revolutionary struggle against capitalism" since they have, at this point, no youth sections. This innovative contribution breaks with the idea of a world struggle for communism and the necessity to express this through a world organization. No longer must the working class assemble its most conscious and combative elements around a revolutionary program, into a single international party, but also *must* create a youth organization! While we do think, as we have expressed earlier in this contribution, a revolutionary youth group may be an important *auxiliary*, history has not proved that it is *indispensable*. This position is particularly strange as the Bolsheviks did not have a national youth section until *after* the seizure of power.

There are a number of other indications that the YSA is, in practice, in our opinion the youth group of the SWP. If it is not, one would have to conclude that the SWP leadership is guilty of indiscipline far graver than their outburst in the press following the Sallustro kidnapping.

1. YSA members are invited to attend the internal discussion and internal "educationals" taking place in the SWP on the disputes in the Fourth International. If the YSA were a totally independent organization, independent

of the Trotskyist movement, then the SWP leadership has taken the initiative of bringing our internal affairs to the public. Since August 1972, in particular, there have been numerous "educational" in branches across the country on the history of the debate and issues currently being discussed in the Fourth International. Every single reporter has been a spokesperson for the "Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency," a minority position within the International. While the party leadership has both the right and obligation to make its positions clear to the youth, they also have the duty to see to it that the other side, the majority of the International, has a chance to present its case. We demand that the SWP leadership stop using its organizational control of branch "educational" as a one-sided extension of the debate, an unchallengeable opportunity to line up the youth. The party leadership cannot be permitted to use the YSA as a club against the Fourth International. The declaration by the party members who in our opinion control the YSA National Committee that the YSA supports the LTT (with no rank-and-file discussion) is just such an attempt to use the youth as a factional club.

Finally, we, as International Majority supporters, don't think that YSAers are so stupid that they will sit through two months of preconvention discussion and a convention without wanting to further question the various positions that are put forward. We reject the notion that we have to play "dumb" after YSAers have heard us defend the IMT for months, and then say that we have no differences. We make a distinction between those who are *outside* the Trotskyist movement and to whom we present the party majority's views, and those *inside* who we are trying to recruit to our own ideas.

2. The SWP, last fall, in our opinion drastically altered its perspective for the antiwar movement (perspectives which it held for seven years), through the medium of the 1972 YSA convention. This was done with no discussion in the party whatsoever. The YSA NEC resolution, which came out in September, reflected the party's traditional approach. It stated, "We will be involved in organizing national demonstrations and conferences called by NPAC and the SMC." However, by November, when the YSA convention was held, the SWP P.C. had altered its position. Party member Geoff Mirelowitz, in presenting the YSA's International Report, outlined our work as propagandistic and did not project *any* conferences or actions. Thus, while we were putting our participation in NPAC and SMC into virtual cold storage, the curious method of overturning a long-term party perspective, as well as the YSA's resolution, was accomplished through the vehicle of the YSA convention. The PC, in all likelihood, chose this method of presenting the new perspective because of its correctly based fear that to initiate it through the party would have produced substantial opposition, and for the subsidiary benefit since the YSA was having its convention at a "convenient" time. Thus, in our opinion the PC changed party policy, adopted at the last party convention, and all this through the "independent" YSA! Quite a feat!

3. As was mentioned before, the YSA National Committee at the last plenum decided to support the LTT in the Fourth International. We hold that these comrades do have a right as party YSAers to express their positions. We also hold the view that party YSAers who support the International Majority Tendency should have this right. It would be a gross travesty of Bolshevik norms for majority SWPers to be allowed to attack the program

of the Fourth International, while those who agree with this program are virtually bound and gagged. This would be the case under the party's current "dual rules." In our opinion, if the party majority wishes to continue the "independence" shell game, then it is *incumbent* upon them to fight for the line of the Fourth International majority in the YSA! In our opinion if the YSA is "independent" they must, as loyal supporters of the F.I., subordinate their differences and project the majority's program of the Fourth International.

For a Return to Leninism in Party-Youth Relations

We think that the YSA should openly emerge as the youth section of the American sympathizing section of the Fourth International. The same sort of fraternal collaboration which existed historically between the Communist League of America and the Young Spartacus League of the early '30s and the SWP and the YPSL (Trotskyist) in the late '30s should be reinstated between the SWP and YSA. The Leninist formula of "organizational independence and political subordination" should again become a reality. What this means in practice is that the youth group should set its own tasks and priorities while accepting the adult party as the leadership of the proletarian revolution. The youth must discuss and resolve the question of program and conjunctural analysis. In doing this, they welcome the contributions of the party. This should not mean, or imply, that party minorities are not allowed to raise their differences. Our tradition is just the opposite. Let us quote further from the 1957 P.C. letter in this regard. "The Political Committee has unambiguously re-affirmed its view that it is opposed to forming a party caucus in the new youth organization, whatever its exact form may be. And we do not ask SWP members to refrain from expressing differences they may have with majority party positions in the course of the discussion within the new youth organization. . . . The concept of the responsibility of a minority to confine its struggle basically to the party has *never* implied limiting the freedom of expression of supporters of a minority within a revolutionary youth organization." Trotsky's discussion with representatives of the Communist Youth International who had earlier raised questions at the Third World Congress is one historical example. This relationship allows the youth to be trained in the use of dialectical materialism and the practice of democratic centralism. It also allows for the youth to criticize the party's positions, while safeguarding against an open rift (unless the movement splits, as with the Shachtmanites), since the youth, in the final analysis, accept the party's role as the proletarian leadership and voluntarily subordinates its differences in the *public* arena. We feel that a return to the Leninist concept of party-youth relations would assist both the party and the YSA in defining their functions and end the nonsense of YSA schizophrenia in its seeking to be a student organization and, at the same time, acting like a mirror-image junior party.

We also fully support the Internationalist Tendency of the YSA and call for the YSA to adopt the political program of the Fourth International. This would be a tremendous step in converting the YSA from its present immersion in the privileged, largely white student milieu, permeated with liberalism, to a militant Trotskyist youth group, with an orientation to young workers and members of oppressed minorities. The SWP has stated clearly that it would like to see all sections build youth groups in the

image of the YSA. This concept is also very clearly put forth by the "Tendency" in the IMG, with its opposition to the IMG decision to dissolve the Spartacus League into the section. The comrades of the "Tendency" project a British version of the YSA. Programatically, the SWP would like to see these groups built around the programs enunciated in the "YSA Program for the Campus Revolt" and "Worldwide Youth Radicalization and the Tasks of the Fourth International." For the European sections this would be a major political step—*backward*. When a section does decide it is tactically feasible to build a youth group, we feel it should be built in accordance with the "Resolution on Youth," adopted at the founding conference of the Trotskyist Youth International. The SWP has retreated a long way since that time, both in its political identity of youth as students and in its alteration of the traditional Leninist organizational norms outlined above.

We must return to the revolutionary approach and transitional method of the Trotskyist Youth International. We must formulate our program in the spirit that "The struggle for these demands cannot be separated from the struggle for the demands of workers as a whole, both employed and unemployed. The final disappearance of unemployment among the youth is closely linked to the disappearance of general unemployment. The struggle for raising the school age and for compulsory technical re-education is closely linked with the struggle for the sliding-scale in wages and working hours. The struggle to drag out of capitalism those reforms which aim at developing the class consciousness of working youth is closely linked with the struggle for workers' control of industry and factory committees. The struggle for public works is closely linked with the fight for the expropriation of monopolies, for the nationalization of credit, banks and key industries. The struggle to smash back all efforts to militarize is closely linked to the struggle against the development of authoritarian state tendencies and against fascism, the struggle for the organization of workers' militias. It is within the framework of the transitional program of the Fourth International that the present program should be developed and applied. It is under the banner of the proletariat fighting for power that the Fourth International will win the demands of exploited youth." (International Conf. of Youth of the Fourth International Lausanne, September 11, 1938. *Documents of the Fourth International*,

al, p. 283.)

It is this position that the supporters of the international majority will fight for in the YSA. We must seek out and win the militant working youth, and, especially, the most advanced elements among the exploited youth: women and members of oppressed national minorities. This task necessitates a political reorientation along the program of the International Majority Tendency.

The 1973 YSA Convention

Comrades are aware that a tendency has been formed in the YSA, based on the program of the Fourth International and the document, "Building of a Revolutionary Party in Capitalist America" submitted by the Internationalist Tendency of the SWP. These comrades are exercising their rights as members of a Trotskyist organization and have adopted a course consistent with the alignment of the YSA NC with the LTT and the remark by Comrade Geoff Mirelowitz in the International Report at the 1972 YSA convention that, "We (the YSA) are in solidarity with it (the F.I.) and take a real interest in its growth and activities." According to Caroline Lund in the August 1969 introduction to the "Worldwide Youth Radicalization and the Tasks of the Fourth International" the only barrier preventing the YSA (and SWP) from belonging to the F.I. is reactionary legislation in the United States.

If this is the party majority's real position then we must clarify party-youth relations. The inadequate formula of "fraternal collaboration and organizational independence" must be corrected by the Leninist guideline of "political subordination and organizational autonomy." In our opinion the concrete situation exists that in the largest and most important YSA locals a majority of active YSAers are members of the SWP. If the P.C. again decides to restrict party comrades in the upcoming YSA convention discussion (as they did with Comrades M. and L. in 1972), we will be confronted in our opinion with the situation that the SWP majority will *predetermine* the vote in the YSA. We unequivocally reject such a situation and call upon the P.C. to suspend discipline at the 1973 YSA convention, as did the LSA in an analogous situation which occurred at the 1972 Young Socialists convention. Only by doing this can the P.C. ensure a democratic discussion in the youth and the beginning of a return to the Leninist concept of relations between party and youth.

July 25, 1973

APPENDIX I

Introduction: YSA document and letters to and from Political Committee

The two comrades who wrote the following contributions felt it necessary to scrutinize certain aspects of the YSA's line which represented and, even more so today, represent, a liquidationist program and practice. They sought to do this in a comradely fashion and in the form of a contribution to discussion, rather than a counterresolution. They felt it to be a necessary step because they, and others, were charged by the local YSA leadership (party

members) with "hiding their differences"; differences which they were told should be brought out, both in writing and in the discussion.

According to John Studer, then organizer of the Oakland-Berkeley YSA, the comrades who were charged with expressing "political differences" were to "Feel absolutely no bar from putting those ideas in writing and sending them into the national political discussion." Although the comrades were so assured, several things made them cautious: the expulsions of the Merrills and Communist Tendency

and the sending of approximately fifty party and youth comrades to the Oakland-Berkeley branch and local to attempt to isolate minority supporters and bureaucratically remove the elected leadership of the YSA local. Consequently the comrades took the precaution of sending their contribution to the party P.C. first for its approval to submit it in the YSA. The P.C. then began the old shell game of "independence"; an approach which was appropriate enough when the YSA was a loosely knit group of newspaper supporters with several component political tendencies in it. This has not been the situation, however, for over ten years.

As comrades will note in reading the YSA document, it employs the leadership's formulation of advocating, "fundamental social change." No one expression more clearly reveals the revision of Trotskyist concepts by this leadership. To this vague and equivocal formulation we counterpose the dictatorship of the proletariat, established through armed insurrection; the socialist revolution as concretely expressed at this conjuncture in the documents of the Internationalist Tendency.

We seek to establish a policy of *consistent* (rather than factional) application of party discipline. In Comrade Andy Rose's introduction to the Class Struggle Tendency's document (for the same YSA convention) he brought out, in print, to the YSA, the *internal* factional groupings and differences in the party. Does the P.C. support Comrade Rose's bringing of internal party affairs to the YSA? Obviously yes, in this case where the party leadership saw the possibility of factional gain. It is only when the ideas expressed are not their own and are out of their control that they invoke "independence" and suppressed documents!

It is on a basis of our experiences, concretely laid out here in writing, that we felt it necessary to study the question of party-youth relations and place it in an historical and political context. . . . to set the record straight on the Leninist concept of relations between party and youth and to motivate, on a political basis, our request that the party assure our democratic rights as sympathizers of the Fourth International by dropping its internal party discipline in the YSA during the 1973 YSA convention discussion.

THE CURRENT RADICALIZATION AND THE TASKS OF THE YOUNG SOCIALIST ALLIANCE

by Mark L. and Cathy M.
Oakland-Berkeley YSA

Once again our organization takes upon itself the enormous task of examining the world and domestic conditions to determine how we may best extend the international struggle for state power by the working class and concomitant with this goal, how to best aid in the building of the revolutionary workers party. The collective knowledge and experience of our membership is required in the writing of documents, in discussions and at the convention so that we may come to a better understanding of capitalist society and how to overthrow the existing order in favor of a workers state and Socialist North America.

The "Youth" Radicalization

Before we analyze the roots of the student movement it would be helpful to define a few terms. Firstly, youth is a multiclass (bourgeois, middle class, working class), multiracial, multisexual and multipolitical (fascist, revolutionary socialist, etc.) category. Youth is not confined to students! Students are youth who go to school (high school, university, trade, etc.). They are not only in universities. This exercise in simplistics is necessary because of the confusion that reigns in the national leadership as to what type of social movement we have intervened in. We are active in a *student* movement. To recognize this fact is important for understanding the present situation and where to direct our work.

The student movement made its first stirrings when the United States had not yet fully emerged from the McCarthyite hangover which was the capitalist way of socially and politically stabilizing class relations after the post-war labor upsurge (the workers' price for not making a revolution). In the early sixties the civil rights struggle of Black workers and students began to attract larger numbers of white students. At the same time, a narrower layer of more political students and radicals were crystallizing around the Cuban revolution and its defense.

At its birth the student protest movement was spurred on not over their own social problems, but in active solidarity with the most oppressed section of the American working class and by the international proletarian revolution. That the politicalization unfolded with students and intellectuals coming to the fore in the beginning stages should surprise no one with an understanding of the laws of motion in capitalist society. After a period of reaction, intellectuals who are less susceptible to coercion and more giving to critical thought would be among the first, even on a wide scale, to question and denounce the policies of the capitalist rulers.

Above all else, it has been the revolutionary war waged by the Vietnamese to end U.S. intervention and remove the Saigon clique that has repeatedly brought hundreds of thousands of students into the streets in protest of the imperialist war. The student movement (unorganized and amorphous) continued to grow among the university students who exist in a similar position in society. Within the "radicalization on campus," street demonstrations and student strikes there existed small radical groupings which were grappling with the problems of theory and daily practice. (With the demise of SDS there was no cohesion nationally, which furthered the process of differentiation into anarchists, Maoists, spontaneists, etc.) The YSA was able to provide a unity in analysis and strategy on a national scale. This obvious advantage allowed us to act somewhat as a crystallizing point within the forming radical section of tens of thousands of students who thought in terms of the irrational existence of capitalism *as a system*.

The years 1967-70 mark a massive expansion of the antiwar movement: October 1969-February 1970 saw a Moratorium of two million, a mass demonstration of a million in the capitol and a Student Mobilization Committee conference of 4,000 militants. This display caused many radical students to become inflated with a feeling of "power" where only potential existed. This effervescent

mood overflowed into our own ranks, with many comrades seeing students in of themselves as a revolutionary force for change. A more sophisticated version saw students as the leading component of a movement encompassing all the "oppressed." This type of thinking leaves the real motor force of revolutionary change—the working class—relegated to a position of one of many oppressed groups making the socialist revolution. For us, there can be no question that the American proletariat will carry through the socialist revolution and in so doing begin to solve the social problems of oppressed social groups such as women and national minorities.

For the antiwar student the desire of "Peace Now" was an expression of their moral indignation over the U.S. propagated slaughter in Vietnam. However, the student movement was not a single-issue movement. Coalescing within the movement was a highly political layer that looked beyond the boundaries of the university or the issue of Vietnam. This layer temporarily linked itself with the Black student groups as the winter of 1968-69 saw the struggle for Black studies spread across the country. The struggle was short lived because of the lack of wide support by the white students and on virtually all universities the small number of Black students and their general isolation from the Black community. A second important current that arose around 1969 was a growing interest in the workers' struggles. (The October '69-February '70 General Electric strike was the first and one of the only strikes the SMC was to relate to on a national scale.)

If we mark 1961-1970 as the rise of the student movement, 1968-70 was its height. Those years were electric for the student radical. They saw the Tet Offensive, a prerevolutionary situation in France, the Mexican mass mobilizations, the invasion of Czechoslovakia, and the spread of the Black Panthers ushering in a new period in world politics. It is with this setting of an increasing section of the student movement actively studying the Marxist classics, a concern over major social problems other than the war, the experience of militant antiwar and "Third World" strikes, that the student movement was posed before the April 1970 invasion of Cambodia by President Nixon.

May 1970-November 1972: Lull or Decline?

The invasion and subsequent murders at Kent State let loose the anger and frustration of years. Mass meetings were held to discuss and decide the course of action. Repeated clashes with the police brought out the National Guard across the country. While the followers of the liberal bourgeoisie were attempting to divert the strike into the halls of Congress, the most advanced antiwar activists were directing the masses of students, with their message, to the workers (often "to the community"). There was an intense feeling that "if the workers would join us, we'll not only end the war, but turn America on its head as the workers and students did only two years ago in France." Yet deep contradictions were imbedded in this upsurge reflected in the remarks of one activist who declared, "What we must do is tear the system down and then elect some Democrats responsive to our demands!"

However, there was virtually no response on the part of workers. Without the involvement of the class, the possibility of ending the war most favorably for the world

revolution (no concessions wrought from the Vietnamese) had to go unrealized. This mighty social contradiction of a social layer in motion, unable to achieve its goals and the class that could remaining passive, hurled the student movement from its heights down into its present lull. The May 1970 strike had as one of its consequences the acceleration of a conscious feeling of powerlessness which was beginning to permeate the student movement.

After May 1970 a large section of the antiwar movement became demoralized. A situation solidified where millions of students were against the war, *but saw no prospect of action that could bring about their goals*. Hadn't they marched for years? Now the explosion of May! Weren't the workers continuing "business as usual"? What else could be done? The lack of decisive social weight of students to bring about fundamental social change could be expressed in two forms. A revolutionary consciousness would explain the tremendously important role a mass student movement could play arousing the workers and GIs, explaining to them the imperialist nature of the war, how the war was not in their interests, linking the war with their own demands, and that they were duty bound to come out in active opposition to the war. But a student movement that saw power lying on the campuses and restricted their movement to the campuses could not "Bring All the Troops Home Now!" With overinflated hopes that students themselves could end the war and the heavy legions of the working class too long delayed entry into battle, such a movement had to decline.

The year 1970-71 was one of demoralization and confusion. Many students initially abstained from politics "waiting to see what would happen." The waiting degenerated into apathy and soon religion, occultism, music and any other excuse was used to escape political responsibility. Today only a rump student movement independent of the bourgeois politicians remains. The antiwar activities of May 1972 were *explosions of a movement in decline*. It is not simply that students are preoccupied with the elections, or have electoral illusions, but the politically active students are working for the bourgeois candidates and expect one of the two to solve the major social problems, above all the war in Indochina. This fact we must face truthfully if we are not to go astray from the revolutionary path.

That the student movement can find itself after a two-year decline entrapped in the two-party system indicates that the student movement was not a revolutionary movement, but largely based on middle-class radicalism and moral indignation over some of the cruder aspects of capitalism. The radical students of yesterday have not become doorbell pushers for the capitalist candidates. In fact an estimated 25 percent of students are fed up with both capitalist parties and think a new party should be organized; 11 percent think the task of the day is to create the conditions for a revolution! The former figure represents over two million students. But it is precisely these students who are no longer active. At the same time new layers are being thrown up into action, but action of the worst type—bourgeois electoralism. It will take some time for these new recruits to break from their present dead-end course. We can aid in the process of breaking these activists for the bourgeoisie away toward independent action, but at this time can not decisively stop the trend.

Let it not be said that the independent student movement is dead. But let us not hide either that it is in decline and the thin layer of radicals remaining are becoming increasingly isolated. The student movement will be revived by the radicalizing high school students, but not on the old basis. We can hope for a reversal in the present decline and increased prospects for revolutionaries in the rise of the workers' struggles. No matter on what basis the student movement shall rise again, it will be our job "to explain to the mass of 'academic' protesters the objective meaning of the conflict, to try and make it *consciously* political, to multiply ten-fold the agitation carried on by the Social-Democratic groups of students, and to direct all this activity in such a way that revolutionary conclusions will be drawn . . . and that our slogans . . . should once again become a subject of discussions and the touchstone of political concentration for fresh generations." (Lenin, *Young Socialist*, Dec. 1969, pp. 16-17.)

Bourgeois America in Crisis

With the economic boom of the early 1960s and the resulting "full" employment, the working class was able to fight for and win a larger portion of the value they produced. At the same time a rise in social expenditures and cost of the Vietnam war, the capitalist class had to resort to an inflationary economy and higher taxes which fell largely on the back of the working class.

Since 1965 real wages have declined, but inflation was not sufficient to reverse the portion of value workers received for their labors. By 1970 it was evident that neo-capitalist policies had died an inglorious death with unemployment, that aged harbinger of hard times, increasing. For the benefit of the capitalist economy wages would have to be brought under *control*. The employing class must continue their offensive and already we hear reports of wage controls at a 4 percent level.

American capital has had an advantage on the international market because of its advanced technique and economies of scale. As the other advanced capitalist countries (in particular West Germany and Japan) began to challenge the U.S.'s level of productivity, this advantage disintegrates if the American proletariat's wages remain two or three times the European workers'. In order for American capital to increase its rate of profit and compete internationally, it must accumulate capital by extracting more surplus value. For the worker this means lower wages, a fall in the standard of living, speed-up, worsening work conditions, etc. Despite any temporary economic stabilization, as the trade deals with Moscow and Peking could produce, it will occur in the context of a *system in crisis*.

Over the past couple of years the bourgeoisie has fortified its position with extended use of all the tentacles of power. Congress has discussed various bills to strengthen existing antilabor laws, has issued injunctions against railworkers and the longshore strike and has endorsed wage controls. In California a proposition is being proposed in the November election that would legally eliminate the right of farmworkers to strike. The National Guard had its first lesson in strike-breaking in the 1970 postal strike. In addition, Nixon was recently sponsoring extensive antistrike legislation in the transportation field before the Teamster officialdom backed him for president. The courts have done their part by issuing strike and

picket injunctions in local strikes, and fining and jailing militant strikers. Finally, the police, who have been heavily armed and received practical "riot" training against students and Blacks, are being increasingly used to bolster up the bosses' bargaining position. As the past two years have seen an evolution toward a strong state, it offers proof to the Marxist axiom that under *bourgeois democracy* every serious struggle by the working class flares into open clashes with the state and its repressive forces. More and more desperate will the attempts become to confine the union movement.

As for the labor fakers, they have shown no desire to even raise their voices after the major attack on the class launched with the wage freeze. The official misleaders only demand more of a say to arbitrate the future of the class they pretentiously represent. The "right" of the state to interfere in union affairs has gone unchallenged. Union records and funds have come under federal investigation and the building trades (the first union to have their wages come under control) racist apprenticeship quotas were policed by the capitalist state, e.g., the Philadelphia plan. The bourgeoisie is developing and improving its weaponry for the struggles to come. The next step is attempted *direct* regulation of the union movement.

To help carry out the class enemy's economic and political program the labor bureaucracy is prepared to apply all the techniques of class collaboration and betrayal. The struggle for socialism necessitates tearing the unions out of the state apparatus, purging them of the labor lieutenants of capital and welding them into weapons of revolutionary class warfare. We can no longer abstain from the hardships and battles the class, with working youth in the fore, will be facing in the immediate future.

The Working Class and Middle Class Sectarianism

"An intensification of the exploitation of labor, in particular a speed-up in big industry, has produced a structural transformation of the American working class in certain fields. This speed-up has led to a work rhythm that is so fast that the average adult worker is virtually incapable of keeping up for long. This has radically lowered the age structure in certain industries, such as automobiles or steel. Today, since it is increasingly difficult to stay in plants (under conditions of speed-up) for 10 years without becoming a nervous or physical wreck, *up to 40 per cent of the automobile workers of the United States are young workers.*" (E. Mandel, "Where Is America Going?" *Young Socialist*, September 1969, p. 23, our emphasis.)

The majority of workers in basic industry are either Black, Chicano or under 30. There are hundreds of thousands of Vietnam veterans in factories, rail, construction, transportation, and as public employees. The telephone and postal systems have a high proportion of women. Despite the leadership's document's seeming interest in Blacks, Chicanos and women, there is nothing but "leftist" abstractions when these Blacks, Chicanos and women are working youth. The continued abstention in relation to the working class cannot simply be explained by the fact that comrades feel more comfortable in the student milieu. Fundamental to this is the belief that students will detonate the American revolution or, even more, students will play a vanguard role in the seizure of power. Stu-

dents and the other "sectors" of the population—Blacks, Chicanos, women, gays—will fight for socialism through the "mass movements." Or as the document expresses one variation: ". . . power lies in the mobilization of masses of people" (p. 15). The only revolutionary class in modern society—the proletariat—is relegated to a contingent in the "mass movement"! But we know both from theory and the history of the workers' movement that to seize state power (and talk of any other type of "power" is nothing but confusionism), more is needed than a "mobilization of masses of people." The masses require a resolute leadership which is armed with the program of revolutionary Marxism and the will to struggle toward armed insurrection. If the mass movements in France and Spain in the thirties have taught us nothing about the need for revolutionary leadership, the lesson of Bangladesh in 1971 should.

The Only Road

Our situation differs in many ways from our forerunners of the thirties and forties. New and fresh forces have replenished the ranks of the class, which are not confronted with the political hegemony of the Stalinists or Social Democracy (though the trade-union bureaucracy is more powerful and entrenched). At the same time, the historical memory of the class has nearly been obliterated as a result of the "Cold War" period. We must champion problems facing working youth on a day-to-day basis and at the same time draw the general political lessons of the day and propagandize the Transitional Program. In this way we can begin to establish our credentials and win the ear of the most active and militant workers. Our work in this arena can be facilitated by our experience and base in the student movement.

Taking place today are the beginnings of the radicalization of the American working class. While the combativity exhibited by the class is centering on traditional trade-union demands, the workers' grievances are not limited to these issues. Their demands are going beyond those of only a few years ago. Construction workers demanding "Jobs Now" marched in the streets last June in mass demonstrations of 20,000 and 35,000. Some 25,000 auto workers in eight cities have gone out in local strikes over line speedup. This is an elemental movement for aspects of workers' control and strikes at the heart of one phase of the bosses' attempt to increase the rate of exploitation. We should, as Trotskyists, become a part of this process, learn from it and help direct and educate the workers' movement as to its historical tasks.

The following slogans will of course undergo changes as we come into contact with young militants and as the real class struggle unfolds:

1. Immediate and *Unconditional* Withdrawal of All U. S. Forces from S. E. Asia;
2. End All Controls on Wages and Unions;
3. Equal Pay for Equal Work;
4. Jobs For All, 32 hrs. Work—40 hrs. Pay;
5. Workers' Control of Industry (veto over investment, line speed, closure of plants, etc., *no* responsibility for maintaining profits);
6. For a Labor Party Based on the Trade Union Rank and File (the non-commitment election stance of Meany opens up limited possibilities for this slogan).

In addition to the above we should raise the following immediate demands:

1. Union Democracy: for the election with immediate

recall of all officials, the right to vote on contracts and strikes, right of caucuses, etc.;

2. End Discrimination in Hiring and Promotions for Black, Raza and Women Workers;
3. No Restrictions on the Right to Strike (Farmworkers and public employees are restricted or denied this right. Every worker faces this possibility.);
4. Minimum Wage of \$3.00/hr.—Jobs or Full Wages;
5. An Escalator Clause in Every Contract Equal to Cost of Living—No Sacrifices for a Capitalist Economy!;
6. Organize the Unorganized.

The above slogans are advanced as an *action* program. Every conflict the class or a section of the class engages in must be popularized, extended and the lessons drawn. Even the wage struggle can no longer be fought for as in the past, for inflation devours any gain in too short a period. We must drive home that the economic struggle must be conducted through political means independent of the exploiting class.

The National Executive Committee's Proposed Resolution

The proposed resolution contains within it both accurate analysis and glaring mistakes. We put forward this contribution not as a counterresolution, but to help strengthen the Marxist appraisal of events by comrades.

1. Seeking to penetrate the future development of class consciousness the NEC provides us with the following: "The politicalization and radicalization of the working class will be the combined result of *both* the sharpening struggle around economic questions *and* the issues raised so far in the radicalization" (p. 10). Nothing could be farther from reality; nothing could be more dangerous if believed for our organization. To date the "mass movements" have largely raised only democratic demands. In a period of a lack of a *general* radicalization of the working class and moreover a decline in the student radical movement there can be no mass *revolutionary* movement. To pose as our task the "building of the mass movements" as it is posed by the NEC is a call for rallying the masses to the banner of democracy, not socialism. Any real analysis of the present international situation will reveal that nearly every setback has been with the masses, arms in hand, struggling for strictly democratic demands. The world crisis of leadership is primarily a question of program, not organization. In the colonial and neocolonial countries, the bourgeois demands can only be met by struggling for and establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat. We see our epoch as one of socialist revolution, not national-democratic revolutions; lacking a revolutionary program the working masses will be defeated. The Palestinian and East Bengali people are absorbing this lesson from a negative experience. Chile, facing a national strike by desperate sections of the middle class, offers a graphic illustration. Bourgeois democracy in crisis will be abolished either through a victory of the working class or the triumph of the reaction.

In the advanced bourgeois-democratic countries it is sheer nonsense to project a mass movement on the slogans of democracy (the foremost "right" of which is the exploitation of labor!). We should *intervene* in movements based on democratic demands and try to transcend those limits by projecting *transitional* demands and a Marxist outlook. We should continue organizing and educating the antiwar activists around immediate and unconditional withdrawal—a defeatist slogan. Finally, there can be no illusions about "building mass move-

ments" unless one is seeking to do this in the present period on the basis of a democratic program (the program of Social Democracy).

It is a mistake for comrades to counterpose the "Red University" tactic to directly reaching working youth. Inherent within the tactic of the "Red University" is a large-scale mobilization of students on a partial or national scope. The concept was conceived of in struggle as a means to break down the isolation of students from the working masses. The mistake is compounded when it is raised as an immediate prospect for our work, with the student movement in a deep lull.

2. The NEC resolution must be corrected on the proposition that students are "socially-necessary skilled workers" (p. 18). Rather than smother over the class foundation of the student movement we should take into account university students' privileged position in society. Without a correct appreciation of the social weight of students, we will make such unbalanced statements as: "The most significant of these (victories—L. & M.) was the withdrawal of most ground troops from Vietnam" (p. 18). It is without doubt that the U.S. and international antiwar movement had an effect on the imperialists' tactical retreat on the use of ground troops. However, the determining factor was the realization after the Tet Offensive that a military victory could not be won on the ground. The Vietnamese workers and peasants have wrought this victory aided by the demonstrations of solidarity. The fact is, students have become so important for the NEC that *nowhere in the entire resolution* is the necessity of working with antiwar GIs highlighted. The army is of crucial importance in the war and the struggle for socialism.

The crescendo of errors reaches its height with the bold declaration that ". . . the best immediate opportunities to participate in such struggles (against the wage controls and other economic issues—L. & M.) will be found among high school and college students" (pp. 10-11). Abstentionism can produce some profoundly wild delusions! Within the past year there has been a demonstration of 1,000 aerospace workers (some walking off the job) in San Francisco. The meatcutters union staged strikes across the country directed against the Pay Board and strikes including the powerful miners and longshore have successfully exceeded the limits of the wage controls.

With a realistic eye we can discern that the student lull is more profound than electoral illusions. The lull is rooted in the social composition of the student movement. No middle-class movement independent of the working class in an advanced industrial country has been able to sustain itself more than temporarily. The social contradiction of a movement unable to achieve its goals, and the class that *could* remaining politically passive, has wrought the present lull.

3. "YSAers have been in the forefront of the effort to spread feminist ideas and build the movement by involving the largest possible numbers of women in struggle" (p. 25). This is a concrete extension of the "building mass movements" strategy. In order to attract the "largest possible numbers" we go over to feminism. Feminism represents the ideology of the middle class. It poses that women can achieve equal social status under capitalism by fighting "as women," and raises demands aimed at reform. This is counterposed to the Marxist understanding that

women can only achieve full emancipation through the dictatorship of the working class and the reintegration of women into the productive process. We must work toward the vanguard of the class incorporating the struggle for the liberation of women into its program. We should also raise general political issues, including socialist propaganda, among women.

4. If we comprehend the real danger that the world conspiracy of Washington-Moscow-Peking poses to the Vietnamese revolution, then it is of crucial importance to understand the nature of the Indochinese war and what will issue from a cessation of the conflict. The proposed resolution sees as central to the role of Vietnam in the world socialist revolution that ". . . the stakes increased as Vietnam more and more became a test of strength between *imperialism and the colonial revolution*" (p. 5, our emphasis). However, 1971's political resolution saw Vietnam as a test between "revolution and counter-revolution on a world scale" (p. 5). The revolutionary process in Vietnam has unfolded under the historical setting of imperialist domination including military intervention, interwoven with the struggle against the old land relations and the domestic rulers who sought to preserve the exploitative social relations. Contrary to the NEC's resolution, as the Vietnamese engaged in a life-and-death battle with the U.S., the war more and more became a conflict between *U.S. imperialism and the workers states*. It was not until 1965, prompted by Johnson's escalation, that the DRV introduced ground troops which were later to assume the brunt of the fighting. Negotiations also reveal the predominance of the DRV vis-a-vis the NLF. The fighting in the South takes on the character of defense of the workers state. The resistance could not have been sustained without assistance from the USSR and the Peoples Republic of China.

Only a scoundrel could deny that the chief enemy of the Vietnamese workers and peasants is U.S. imperialism. The role of Moscow/Peking with its shift from half-hearted succorer of the DRV to a well wisher of Nixon has added pressure on the Vietnamese. The revolution also faces an internal danger—that of the Stalinist leadership. The 1972 NEC resolution refers only to its "Stalinist background." It is the highest duty for the NEC to explain how the Workers Party of the DRV and the NLF underwent a qualitative transformation from a Stalinist party. When did this change take place? What are the consequences for the Trotskyist movement if Stalinist parties can transform themselves under the "pressure of events"? We hope the drafters of the NEC resolution will answer these questions before pre-convention discussion ends.

The question of leadership is not academic. In the history of Vietnam, the Stalinists have heaped two major defeats on the backs of the Vietnamese—1945-46, return of British-French imperialism and 1954, entry of U.S. imperialism. The program of the PRG includes establishment of a capitalist coalition government and "peaceful coexistence" with world imperialism, hallmarks of Stalinism. These are not paper tigers; they pose a material threat by the bureaucracy in the DRV which is defending its social basis of existence, a deformed workers state. A settlement could be reached detrimental to the workers' interest if the DRV leaders feel it offers adequate protec-

tion for North Vietnam and their counterparts in the PRG, that is "peaceful coexistence," a coalition government, withdrawal of U.S. troops and . . . "socialism" in the North. A healthy workers state cannot be created in Vietnam under the present leadership. If a cease-fire were negotiated with the existing relation of forces, a coalition government would give way to a deformed workers state, though it may be some time before such an overturn came about. The revolution can best be guarded and extended by a truly proletarian internationalist leadership. The best grounds for such a Trotskyist party to arise in Vietnam would be with the military victory of the DRV-NLF. We must aid in every possible way the victory of the workers and peasants movement. Negotiations or not, in the U.S., we recognize only one solution to the war—*immediate and unconditional* withdrawal of U.S. imperialism.

In Conclusion: A Crisis of Leadership

The student radicalization of the sixties and seventies was the first indication of a new rise in the workers' movement in the advanced industrial countries. Since May-June 1968 and the proletarian explosion in France, the working class is increasingly coming to the fore in the political arena on its own behalf. Even as close to home as Quebec, this fact is given sharp relief. Comrade Ernest Mandel has pointed out that trade-union consciousness "creates a major revolutionary potential once the system is no longer capable of satisfying basic trade union demands. Such a transformation of American society under the impact of the international competition of capital is today knocking at the door of U.S. imperialism." ("WIAG", YS, Sept., 1969, p. 23). Since August 15, 1971, we can say that the door has been knocked ajar. Under the impact of economic, domestic and world events the working class is once again finding its collective spirit and will for combat.

While the "right" of the U.S. to play world imperialist cop is not yet massively challenged by the working class, the majority of workers are in favor of immediate withdrawal from Vietnam even if this implicitly means Communist "takeover" in the South. To question U.S. rule abroad is to begin to question its rule at home. The innumerable threads that bind these two issues—Vietnam and the economy—reveals more and more to every thinking worker the indissoluble bond between their struggle and that of the Vietnamese.

The fact that Trotsky wrote that "The world political situation as a whole is chiefly characterized by a historical crisis of the leadership of the proletariat" can be quoted by anyone! We must feel this "historical crisis" to our bones or we will contently remain on the sidelines of the huge class battles to come. One week ago an old union official told us that he believed there were a thousand Lordstowns in the country. We can only add that in these Lordstowns there are tens of thousands of working youth who are militant and developing embryonic class consciousness. If we are not prepared to reach them, then we abandon the duty of leadership to the Communist Party-Young Workers Liberation League and the labor skates. We can think of no better way of ending this contribution than a quote from a Ford worker in Brook Park, Ohio, during a campaign stop by Shriver.

The worker says, "The whole working class of people is looking for leadership. We're looking for something that makes sense for the working man and right now we don't know where to turn." (*S.F. Chronicle*, Oct. 1972.)

APPENDIX II

Oakland, Calif.
November 5, 1972

Political Committee Socialist Workers Party
14 Charles Lane
New York, New York 10014

Dear Comrades,

We are submitting for your consideration our contribution to the 1972 Young Socialist Alliance convention. As Comrade Barry Sheppard made clear at the August 1971 educational conference the YSA in an organization *independent* from the SWP. This has been reiterated by the local party and YSA leadership. YSA organizer, Cynthia Burke, stated in explaining party-youth relations that, "The YSA is an independent organization that makes its own decisions." In fact, local YSA leaders, members of the party including EC YSAer Gordon Fox, have told us to submit our ideas as expressed in preconvention discussion.

In our opinion, the Oakland-Berkeley YSA, as other locals, has a majority of members that are also in the SWP. Clearly, if the PC denied our right to participate in the YSA discussion on the basis of our document, SWPers would, in our opinion, *pre-determine* the vote in this local. All in all we think our document is consistent with participation in the YSA preconvention discussion and does not infringe on our loyalty as party members.

We would be thankful for immediate recognition of receipt of this letter and the document. We would also remind you of the November 13 deadline for contributions to be submitted to the YSA for printing. It is therefore necessary for a decision to be made in advance of this date so that, if it is accepted, a copy of the document could be received by the YSA N.O. in time. If a decision is reached at a late date, we request that you submit the PC's copy directly to the YSA N.O.

Comradely,
Mark L.
Cathy M.

Oakland, Ca.
November 10, 1972

Political Committee
Socialist Workers Party

Dear Comrades,

As of this date we have received no indication of your decision in regards to the L/M YSA discussion document entitled "The Current Radicalization and the Tasks of the Young Socialist Alliance." We would remind you that the deadline for material to be accepted by the YSA N.O. is *November 13* (unless this limit is extended). We await your reply.

Comradely,
Mark L.
Oakland-Berkeley

14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
November 14, 1972

OAKLAND BERKELEY

Dear Comrades L. and M.,

At its 1961 convention, the party unanimously adopted the following motion concerning party-youth relations:

"Despite possible variations in formal party-youth relations at given stages of objective development, as in all other areas of party activity, party members in the youth organization remain subject at all times to Article VIII, Section 1, of the Party Constitution which states: 'All decisions of the governing bodies of the Party are binding upon the members and subordinate bodies of the Party.'"

The document, which you enclosed with your letter dated November 5, 1972, which you indicate is your "contribution to the 1972 Young Socialist Alliance convention," contains a line contrary to the line decided by the party at its 1971 convention.

For your information, the party National Committee has made no decision to permit party members to take positions contrary to the line decided by the party into the YSA, an independent organization. The proper place and time for you to raise your views will be during the next pre-convention discussion period in the party. I am returning your document to you.

Comradely,
Barry Sheppard
National Organization Secretary