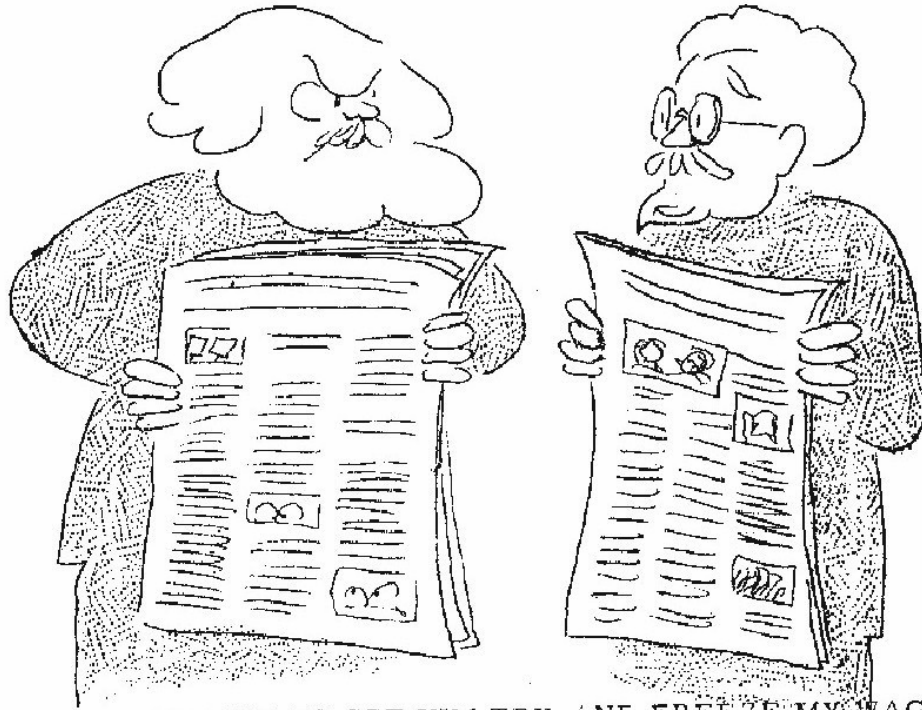


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BULLETIN



I'D LIKE TO SEE HIM TRY AND FREEZE MY WAGES!

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DRAFT THESES ON THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY By Michael Stewart

1. The New Economic Policy recently introduced by Nixon is only the beginning of a long-term attack on the working class. The immediate measures included: a wage-price-rent freeze; floating the dollar by refusing to exchange it for gold; imposing a 10 percent surcharge on imports; providing new investment tax credits for business; raising minimum tax exemptions by \$50 per person; cutting Federal employees by 5 percent; postponing welfare reform for a year and Federal wage increases for 6 months. The freeze was necessary in order to provide time to develop a more long range policy, since without it groups would have tried to take advantage of beating the date of imposition of a new policy. The 10 percent surcharge and floating of the dollar are aimed at forcing a devaluation of the dollar by the revaluation upwards of foreign currencies against the dollar. The rest are traditional fiscal policies to try to spur on the economy. The long range goals are to increase the competitiveness of American capitalism by increasing productivity, raising profits, restoring the confidence of the capitalist class, and reversing the process of stagnation and capital export from the US, and lack of capital formation for increased expansion of the means of production. (This also involves a process of rationalization of US capitalism; see thesis 7.)

2. These immediate measures, which represent a radical change of policy for the Nixon Administration, were necessitated by a conjuncture of events. First was the failure of Nixon's "game plans" to solve the twin problems of inflation and unemployment. Second was the existence of a trade deficit for an entire quarter, and the distinct possibility of a trade deficit for the entire year for the first time since 1893. This fact only made more acute America's overall balance of payments deficit, and intensified the less competitive position of the US in the world market. Lastly, and the main reason for the new economic policy being instituted at this time, was the dollar crisis, where the dollar was overvalued in the world money markets and where the US lacked the gold reserves to back it up. Just before the NEP was introduced, the international discipline concerning not turning dollars in for gold was breaking down, and this forced Nixon to act.

3. It would have been difficult for Nixon to attempt a solution to the dollar crisis without also attacking the other problems. This is not merely because the three problems are related, but also because the rest of the world could not have been expected to keep on paying for US inflation if the US was not trying itself to get it under control. Since World War II the dollar has served as the international reserve currency, and foreign governments have been self-disciplined not to try to convert dollars into gold. In effect, this constituted an interest-free loan, now approximately \$50 billion, to US capitalism in overvalued dollars. Yet as the balance of payments deficit built up, so did the amount of dollars abroad. These dollars did not disappear, but were used in financial transactions abroad, thus increasing the money supply in foreign countries and having an inflationary effect internationally. The trade and payments deficits are of course related to inflation, which has made US goods less competitive abroad and thus reduced exports. Thus the program of floating the dollar and imposing a 10 percent surcharge on all imports had to be combined with a program which was aimed at the basic causes of the trade deficit and inflation. Without this, the rest of the world could not have long been expected to pay for American inflation - indeed, the recent attacks on the dollar were the beginning of such retaliation.

4. The immediate problems are also the result of the long range problem facing America: the increased competition from the rebuilt economies of Europe and Japan. Much of the apparent stabilization of capitalism after World War II was the result of the fact that the US was the only healthy capitalism, and had an overwhelming share of the world's productive capacity. The US, while still the single most powerful capitalist country, no longer has such an overwhelming position, and in Nixon's words, must again compete.

5. Such competition is hindered by the problems of the relative lack of growth of productivity of

American industry and the high wages of American workers. It is those two factors which, from the capitalist point of view, are responsible for inflation and which are the main objects of the New Economic Policy.

6. Inflation is, however, actually a result of the increasing monopolization of American capitalism and the effects of the Permanent War Economy. Since World War II, the Permanent War Economy has functioned as a stabilizing mechanism by providing an outlet for investment which would not lead to a crisis of overproduction, and providing contracts and profits for the 200 giant corporations which dominate the economy. However, with the development of capitalism, the Permanent War Economy has led to increasing unemployment and inflation. The increase in technology, especially in the arms sector, has resulted in arms production providing fewer jobs today than it used to. And the increasing monopolization in industry has made it possible for the corporations to pass on the cost of the war economy through higher prices. Inflation also results from the corporations' monopolistic ability to protect their profits, even in the face of reduced sales, by raising their prices. It is the ability of the corporations to do this which is responsible for inflation. The New Economic Policy is not aimed at replacing the War Economy (the arms budget is rising to \$80 billion again) but only at supplementing it and controlling the adverse effects that it has.

7. The NEP also represents the beginning of a process of rationalizing US capitalism. The rest of the capitalist world offers a model of the direction this rationalization will take. Throughout capitalism's history there has been a tendency toward increasing concentration and monopolization, and this process will now be speeded up. Nippon Steel in Japan offers a good example of this, and it is also occurring in Europe. In the US, already National and Granite Steel have announced a merger, and it is rumored that Bethlehem and Youngstown will also merge. However, unlike in the past, concentration is increasingly being looked upon as an international weapon, necessitated because US capitalism is under attack. (This follows the European and Japanese models in which state participation is designed to increase competitiveness vis-a-vis other countries.) Indeed, the leading capitalist magazines have given precisely this motivation for mergers, as a way of making them more competitive internationally against the large monopolies overseas. We can probably expect the collapse of some companies, perhaps through takeovers as this process of rationalization occurs - and smaller companies will especially feel the crunch. In this situation, both reformers and some sections of business may call for opposing monopolization, trust-busting, etc. This solution is both backward looking and utopian: it is capitalist competition which gives rise to concentration, this is why the limitations upon concentration have become an impediment which US capitalism now wishes to do away with. Our response is nationalization under workers' control (see program).

8. It is obvious that this process of concentration could not occur without the active support of the state. Indeed, we expect to see the increasing reliance of capitalism on the state for planning and regulation, in addition to incomes policy, as already occurs in Japan and Europe. This occurs to a certain extent already through the mechanism of the Permanent War Economy. It represents a further step in the solution of capitalist problems through non-capitalist means - a further partial negation of capitalism, a further indication of the decay of the capitalist social system, highlighting its reactionary character and its historical future - either the bureaucratic collectivization of capital, or Socialism.

9. The freeze will be kept in effect until a new policy of a more permanent nature can be worked out. Thus the freeze will be replaced by some form of wage and price stabilization review boards. The model for these will likely be the Wage Stabilization Boards for the construction industry, with one added factor, they will also engage in productivity deals as well as wage restraint. Nixon has essentially bought Galbraith's plan (see Appendix). This relies on controlling only the big corporations and major industries, and the major unions, since these are the ones which play a central role.

Major union contracts are very public and easily controlled. So also are steel prices, car prices, etc.

10. The boards would be aimed at restraining wage increases, rather than permanently freezing them. Thus in the construction industry, while aiming at a 6 percent yearly increase in wages, the boards this year have reduced increases from 15 to 10 percent. It is, of course, important to note that no price stabilization boards for the construction industry have taken any actions nor proposed any guidelines. It is likely, as Galbraith argues, that wage increases will be tied to increases in productivity; if not initially, then that is what they will aim at.

11. The floating of the dollar and the 10 percent surcharge are aimed at providing some immediate relief to American capitalism by providing a de facto devaluation of the dollar, thus making US goods more competitive abroad. This alone would solve the problem only to have it reappear at a later time. In the long range, it is hoped that the program of rationalization and wage controls will make US capitalism more competitive, by slowing inflation relative to other currencies, and raising productivity. Of course, included in this is the raising of profits, so that confidence will be restored and capitalists will have the incentive to rationalize. It is not clear what effect the investment tax credit will have, since companies are currently functioning at only 75 percent of capacity. But in any event, "increasing productivity" means two counterposed things: increasing technological efficiency, and increasing the intensity of work. New plant equipment is not the only way to increase productivity, speedup is another. It is the latter which is being used most immediately. Already, Nixon has mentioned speedup in the Federal bureaucracy, as people have to work harder to do the extra work of those who are fired; and there are rumors that line speeds in auto will be increased. Both mechanisms will attempt to increase production with fewer workers.

12. Internationally the policies are directed mainly at Japan. Indeed, the 10 percent surcharge is a form of blackmail to force Japan to revalue the yen. With the revaluation of the yen and the establishment of a new monetary system, the surcharge will be lifted. Japan is now the third largest industrial producer, and if current trends continued, would overtake the US in not too long a time. Needless to say the US was not about to let this happen. While Japan has announced that it has no intention of revaluing the yen, it is unlikely that they can hold out against the US and Europe. Such a revaluation would make Japanese goods less competitive in the world market. However, in the long run the US is going to have to make its economy as rational as Japan's.

13. In the international sphere, it has been clear since the new China policy that the US was looking for a realignment in Asia aimed mainly at Japan. The recent events merely provide more evidence of this. This will result in rearrangements in the imperialist camps. It is also becoming clear that the US no longer intends such a "cooperative" role vis-a-vis the other capitalist economies, but intends much more aggressive competition. The basis for this has been laid in developments since the early period of the Cold War. While Stalinism still remains the main US enemy on an historical scale, the immediate danger of Stalinist victory in the advanced countries is far removed by their economic recovery. The immediate danger in the advanced countries is capitalist competition. And in the underdeveloped countries US imperialism is beginning to fear its capitalist rivals almost as much as its Stalinist ones - at least in terms of many immediate situations. Thus Nixon's references to resuming our "traditions" of competitiveness, etc. (In these Theses, we assume that the US will be able to force through its international program, and that the dangers of anarchic international competition are long term ones; however, there is a possibility, less likely but real, that the immediate result will be a cutthroat international trade war. In either case the period of the US's lonely eminence is over.)

14. The new monetary system the US aims at establishing will include a devaluation of the dollar. This will make US goods cheaper abroad, and thus more competitive. It will also increase the profits of US companies. Not only through increased sales, but also because it is unlikely that the total gain to foreign countries will be passed on. That is, if the dollar is devalued by 10 percent, which is what they are aiming at, companies can pass on half of this and still sell their products cheaper. For instance, if a product sells for \$1 here, it would sell for 5 francs in France. With a 10 percent devaluation, it would now sell for 4.5 francs. Thus if the companies were only passing on half the savings, they could sell the product for 4.75 francs, which is cheaper than before, and still make a higher profit. This is what has usually happened when currencies have been devalued. However, devaluation means also that imported goods will cost more in this country. Thus while devaluation may increase production and provide some jobs, ultimately it is American workers that will pay for it.

15. The attack on the labor movement does not stop with the imposition of wage controls. For no incomes policy can be effective so long as dissatisfied unions are allowed to strike for a better deal. Thus the government will be forced to move toward limiting the right to strike. This will not only come through presidential bans and court injunctions, but also through new anti-labor legislation which is aimed at hindering the ability of the unions to fight. While publicly only those strikes for higher wages will be banned, this position is impossible to maintain. For a strike for slower line speeds in auto, for example, which would reduce productivity, is just as subversive to the overall program as one which is for higher wages. Furthermore, part of the program to restore the confidence of the capitalist class is the achievement of social peace, especially at the work place.

16. The reaction of the labor bureaucracy so far has been tough and militant - at least verbally. They had no choice. This is a result both of the blatantly discriminatory nature of the new policy and of the fact that no concessions at all were offered to the labor bureaucracy. Failure to provide a handle for the bureaucracy to accept the package and sell it to the ranks has been Nixon's biggest blunder. At this point Nixon is sitting on a powderkeg, which could explode in any direction. The bureaucracy is forced to wage a struggle over the worst aspects of Nixon's program, though the extent and duration of these struggles cannot be predicted and their militancy - willingness to strike, to defy injunctions, etc. - will vary in proportion to the pressure they feel or anticipate from the ranks, and also in proportion to the unity of the top bureaucrats themselves. (In the last several days, since Bridges and others first hesitantly defied the no-strike plea, the bureaucrats' stand has gotten stronger as they had the chance to meet, assure each other of backing, etc.) However, the basic position of the bureaucracy remains class collaborationist. They are for wage controls in general, as is the Democratic Party. They object to the freeze because they are completely frozen out, whereas they wish to become the junior partners of capitalism. To the extent that they struggle to overturn the freeze and against the worst aspects of Nixon's program, we are in support of the struggle, as we are for all trade union struggles. Yet we must continually point out their class collaborationist policies, and oppose their goal of getting wage-price boards in place of the freeze. In the immediate period, the concessions that could be offered would involve the establishment of the kind of boards labor is demanding, allowing for some flexibility in wages and the granting of increases already in contracts, and concessions, however illusory, on price controls. It is not clear that this will be enough to buy their cooperation, especially in the long run. During World War II, the government offered unionization, dues checkoff, and a guaranteed membership; in a word, power and security. Nothing comparable can be offered today. It is possible that the Administration will offer more security by insulating the bureaucracy from the ranks, and Nixon has proposals to do this by taking power to ratify contracts out of the hands of the rank and file.

17. The blatantly discriminatory NEP has also offered the bureaucracy a golden opportunity to solidify their position with the rank and file once again, and this will create many illusions in the ranks. However, the fact that they will lead struggles will also lead to a greater militancy and political awareness among the rank and file. Thus we are faced with a contradictory phenomenon, but one which raises political debate and consciousness in the class to a new, higher level. When the freeze yields to wage-price boards, the bureaucracy will have to take responsibility for enforcing their decisions. There is a political side also to the bureaucrats' willingness to fight; and political consequences. Their willingness to fight is conditioned in part by the fact that the Republicans are in office. The bureaucracy will attempt, and no doubt successfully, to deliver the labor vote to the Democrats in 1972 in as massive a fashion as in 1948. If the Democrats win in 1972, however, the bureaucracy will become more "responsible," and will attempt to enforce greater discipline for a DP administration. While we can expect to see greater support for independent political action among workers, it is unlikely (but not precluded) that this would either be massive or lead to a decisive break with the Democrats before the '72 elections. Nonetheless, there will be greater receptivity to propagandizing for independent labor political action.

18. Nixon's new economic policy and the programs to flow from it in the future represent an attack on the entire working class. The nature of this attack, being class-wide, raises the possibility of the development of a class-wide movement to fight against it. It directly links up all the struggles that workers are now engaging in. The rank and file response may be slow developing. The immediate grumbling will probably subside as more flexibility, granting limited wage increases, is allowed after the freeze; and illusions will exist about the bureaucracy. The discriminatory effects of the new policy and boards will have to be felt and become more obvious before we can expect much independent rank and file motion, and this may take place in different stages over the next several years. Even today, however, the new policies must greatly increase the political content of those caucuses that do exist, and this opens up possibilities for us. In the future, we can expect that as rank and file caucuses develop they will not remain limited to one shop, and that workers will begin to overcome the fragmentation that has been so characteristic of their struggles during recent years. We can also expect to see a greater number of wildcats and job actions in the long run, especially where the bureaucracy gives up struggles after having helped to raise expectations of militancy in the ranks. The class-wide nature of the attack is its most important characteristic, however. The beginning of the end of US capitalism's international supremacy has ushered in a new period in the epoch of capitalist decay, and the present developments are the first fruit of this period in the life of the American working class.

19. In the longer run, the rank and file pressure may result in the emergence of left-wing bureaucrats, a la Scanlon and Jones in Britain. While these bureaucrats may be willing to engage in a struggle now to fight against the new economic policy, they have no intention to carry that struggle to its logical conclusions, since these would break out of the framework of capitalist relations. But the development of left-wing bureaucrats should be exploited, since any split in the bureaucratic monolith opens greater possibilities for the rank and file.

20. The official position of the labor bureaucracy is for boards to be set up which not only control wages, but also prices, profits, etc. That is, they want a system which would be "fairer," and where there would be more "equality of sacrifice." However, this is not the motivation of the current program, and runs counter to the needs of capitalism currently. Thus Connally has made it clear that one of the aims of the current program is to increase profits, not control them. Regardless of the bureaucracy's rhetoric, it cannot oppose this as long as it remains the junior partner of capitalism. While it is not in theory impossible to control prices and profits, techniques could be developed, this is impossible to maintain under capitalism. Any serious attempt to curtail profits would lead to the flight of capital abroad in search of higher profits, and would

doom the country to economic stagnation and collapse. Since profits are the basis of capitalism, no serious control of them is possible under capitalism - at least, not by the capitalist class and its politicians, who have absolutely no interest in doing so. With regard to prices, these are of course related to profits, and to the extent that controls on prices would affect profits, these are impossible also. Beyond that, there are tremendous technical difficulties in controlling prices, due to the millions of products involved, loopholes due to product and model changes, and the fact that the companies have in the past refused to provide adequate information to enable price boards to function. This latter would force them to open their books, and disclose all their financial secrets, something they are not soon about to do. Of course, the capitalists are interested in slowing inflation, but only in order to preserve and increase their profits. (With regard to dividends, these could be controlled or frozen. However, the interesting thing about this is that the investor doesn't lose money, and may even make money. For dividends are not equivalent to profits. If profits were \$8 and the dividend allowed were only \$5, then the other \$3 could be invested, and would appear later on as capital gains for the investor, through the increased value of his stock.) Thus the bureaucrats' call for "equality of sacrifice" is at best an illusion. However, we call for controlling prices and profits - first, because this is necessary; second, because, although the capitalists and their parties have no interest in doing this, the working class does, and can do it, though to do so leads to a confrontation with capital (and would backfire as above if not led to its conclusion, the expropriation of capital)...for us, this is a transitional demand precisely because of this aspect.

21. Beyond the above, the position of the bureaucracy in favor of wage-price boards and "equality of sacrifice" is further evidence of their class-collaborationist politics. This position assumes that there is equality of responsibility for the country's economic problems, and that the current distribution of wealth is in the main equitable. It accepts a "freeze" of this inequity. In essence, it attempts to deny the class struggle.

22. The wage-price spiral, or "cost-push inflation," is in actuality a result of the class struggle, and is a permanent feature of capitalism. It is the result of each of the contending classes attempting to enlarge its share of the economic pie, workers by getting higher wages, capitalists by holding back wages and raising prices to increase profits. Furthermore, during the '60s, wages have not been leading prices, but rather, workers have been struggling to catch up. Even that struggle has not been completely successful, as the general wage level of the working class has fallen behind the cost of living.

23. PROGRAM. Any program must include not only the immediate actions necessary to fight against the NEP, but also a program for solving the economic crisis itself. Such a program is one we put forward to arm the militants in the shops, a program they can use to mobilize the rank and file to fight for their unions to adopt. The following provides such a program:

1. FIGHT THE OFFENSIVE AGAINST LABOR

1. No compliance with the wage freeze - for a one-day work stoppage and massive demonstrations to roll back the freeze.
2. Payment of all wage increases due under contracts, enforced by strike action if necessary.
3. United labor action to back unions threatened with sanctions.
4. Unlimited right to strike.
5. No labor participation on wage-price control boards - no productivity deals.

2. A PROGRAM FOR LABOR TO SOLVE THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

1. Control prices and profits, not wages - Nationalize inflation-producing monopolies under workers' control.

2. Jobs for all at a union wage - 30 hours' work for 40 hours' pay.
3. Convert the war economy to rebuild the cities.
4. Immediate withdrawal from Vietnam - Withdraw all troops from foreign countries - No trade and tariff wars.
5. Oppose the anti-labor Democratic and Republican Parties - independent political action by labor in labor's interest - for a political party of the working class.
6. Build rank and file organizations to fight for this program.

* * *

24. The new period we are entering due to the NEP offers significant opportunities for the IS. The work begun a year ago to orient the IS toward intervention in the working class and the development of an industrial base must be continued and strengthened. This means continuing our industrialization program, since there is still no substitute for direct involvement on the shop floor. But it also means regarding the whole organization to take part in and support our working class work. This is not to deny our limitations, we still have only a toehold in industry. However, as the NEP and its effects lead to greater militancy among the rank and file, and a greater politicization of their struggles, this will not only increase our effectiveness on the shop floor, but also make it easier for us to gain some influence from the outside. Our job will be to fight to give the struggles that break out the ideology and political direction that they need to be successful. More and more militants will be looking for advice, and we must ideologically and organizationally arm ourselves to be able to provide advice, support, and leadership.

Of course, we don't expect the massive recruitment of workers or the burgeoning of the IS overnight as a working class organization. However, more and more workers should be open to our ideas, especially as time goes on. We must, of course, aggressively attempt to recruit militant workers. Beyond that, the most immediate benefits will be in making contacts throughout the working class, and developing relations with other rank and file groups. This will greatly increase our contact with the working class and provide us with more opportunities for direct involvement.

August 20, 1971

Amended and adopted by the NAC

* * *

APPENDIX

J. K. Galbraith, New York Times Magazine, June 1970: "For, in fact, the only answer is one that has for so long been dismissed as too disreputable. That is to act directly on the wage-price spiral - to have wage and price control where the spiral contributes actively to inflation.... This must be real control.... Also voluntary measures are highly discriminatory. They favor the individual or organization which refuses to comply and penalize those that are cooperative.... Given wage and price controls, interest rates can be reduced for they will not have to carry the present burden of inflation control, which they cannot carry anyway.... Such wage and price action, it is said, interferes with free markets. This is self-evident nonsense. The policy interfered with markets in which the interference of unions and corporations is already plenary. It fixes in the public interest prices that are already fixed.... Only prices that are so set by strong unions and corporations need to be (or should be) controlled. Prices of farm products, most services, and products of small manufacturers need not and should not be touched. These are still subject to market influences. ... The most practical proposal is not mine, but that of Robert Roosa.... He would simply freeze all prices and wages for six months. During this time, presumably, there would be extensive consultation with firms and unions to work out a more durable system of restraint.... And immediately after the freeze, all small enterprises - those employing, say, fewer than a hundred people - should be exempted.... The long-run objective is, of course, an annual wage gain that accords

roughly with the increase in productivity and thus requires no general increase in prices.... Controls are not a temporary expedient. There must, alas, be a permanent system of restraint. This is because we will continue to have strong unions and strong corporations and a desire to minimize unemployment. The combination in the absence of controls, is inflationary. It will not become otherwise in the future.... But if it is confined to the unions and the corporations with market power, as here proposed, the administrative structure need not be vast. Dealings will be with only a few hundred unions and a few thousand firms, and for the latter it is sufficient to specify the limits within which average as distinct from individual prices may be moved."

Flow chart illustrating the proposed administrative structure for price controls. The chart shows a hierarchy starting with 'Federal Government' at the top, leading to 'Federal Reserve Board', which then branches into 'Federal Reserve Bank of New York' and 'Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago'. Below these are 'Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland' and 'Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis'. The chart continues to show 'Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta' and 'Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas'. At the bottom, it lists 'Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco' and 'Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis'. The chart also includes 'Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City' and 'Federal Reserve Bank of Denver'. The chart is a complex network of lines and boxes representing the organizational structure of the Federal Reserve System.

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A Discussion of the Union-staff Job Question
with an Addendum on Industrialization

from a letter by S. Jacoby

The question you raise is complex, but not an impossible one for the I.S. Immediately at hand is the matter of professionals of a particular scientific discipline like psychologists, psychiatrists, doctors and chemists. If unions desire to hire people in these professions, it is usually to obtain the benefit of their technical-scientific expertise on a temporary basis. All the information that they provide a union, or at least a significant part of it, will probably be used to benefit the membership, not to the degree that we would like, but nevertheless to that benefit. It is the responsibility of the professionals, such as those with expertise on questions of mental and physical health, pollution and tension, to make constant tests and checks to obtain the maximum assurance possible that their labors are being put to positive use. It is always possible that they could find evidence to the contrary. The groundwork for obtaining the ability to make checks should be laid at the time of hire. Reasonably but firm, professionals should make it clear that they expect to see all the material in which the information they supply is used. Under these conditions the professional can in most instances maintain his or her integrity. And their labors will be going to far better social purposes than when working as small entrepreneurs, for a corporation or "non-profit" hospital. If they discover that in some way the union officials are using them, then they will quit or they will be hurting themselves. To quit a job under these conditions is no catastrophe.

It will be necessary for professionals to evaluate the officialdom that seeks to hire them. If they have a character similar to that of the type dominated by a Maurice Hutcheson or Tony Boyle, then the chance that the health and safety project planned by that officialdom is a sham. Besides, anyone who is hire on staff in any capacity in unions headed by the Tony Boyles is forced to kiss a mile and a half of ass before even making application and then to geometrically expand on that after hire.

Suppose, however, that the officialdom in question, within the boundaries of their ideology, wants to do a job for the ranks in the area of health and safety...if a professional can perform this socially necessary labor without loss of political independence and individual integrity, then the officialdom's limitations take on a secondary importance.

Reservations: 1) There is a difference between periodic consulting jobs that professionals in the hard sciences are asked to take and steady employment. If it is the latter, then professionals, like everyone else, and particularly in a tight job market, tend to get dug into a job. They get a big personal investment in it. After a while, anything that threatens the security of one's livelihood causes that special terror. All the insecurities instilled in us by this society join chorus inside to tell us to hang onto what we have. Those in authority are quick to sense the fear in those they hire. It is at such times that the professionals who have been maintaining their independence will be asked to begin to fully identify in both public and private ways with the ideology of their employers. "We know we are not perfect and that there is always room for improvement, but isn't it better that the union be led as it is now than by some crude bunch who lack sophistication on the question of Negroes or have a position to the right of

ours on the war?"

If a person has made the decision to keep a job and to do so certain attitudes are required, you can bet that the employee will outwardly develop those attitudes. If the outward attitudes are maintained long enough, then you can bet that they will also become the inward attitudes as well.

2) We make close friends on most jobs that we take and loyalty to them becomes a major factor in our lives. On our own, we sometimes get swept up in the job and the people. A job for a union can and often does become a substitute for the radical movement. Union jobs tend to be more than eight-hour-a-day jobs.

3) We urge far more caution about the taking of staff jobs upon those who have not had previous experience and exposure to the labor bureaucracy and most importantly on those who have not had time as yet to assimilate the materialist philosophy. It is precisely the inability to fully discard the liberal bourgeois philosophy and replace it with the materialist philosophy that allows social democrats and good people of the SP-YPSL variety to become the captives of the labor officialdom.

4) There is little chance for professionals in unions to develop contact with the ranks. In most instances, whatever contact there is is too brief. The lack of a political atmosphere in the American labor movement and the present smallness of the socialist groups makes a quality recruitment of a worker to socialism a rewarding but a long and individualized job. Even if the time is obtained and the recruitment is accomplished, if the success is repeated a few times, it becomes improbable that the professional will remain secure in his or her job. The same is true even when contacts get followed up by someone else.

There will be times when a new & somewhat different type of union official will tolerate or even for a time encourage radical staff to recruit to their politics. During the time that it is allowed it will be considered one of the fringe benefits. That time will have its own problems. For now, staff jobs for professionals in disciplines like those mentioned can teach and provide insights that otherwise would be unavailable. The great increase in worker concern and (class) struggle about both mental and physical health and safety in industry has given a new dimension to the job market for professionals. It gives them the chance to use their skills to bring limited but nevertheless real and immediate improvement to the lives of others. This can be a new freedom for professionals in a number of employment circumstances and is to be greeted.

Lawyers and Social Science Professionals

The conformity demands that labor officials put upon legal and research staff is far greater than upon those just discussed above. Staff lawyers, journalists, economists, educators and general brain trusters are most often looked upon as house people and family loyalty is demanded of them. This is especially true at the top (international level). There will be some exceptions, mainly at the lower (regional and local) levels where the newer, younger and more radical officials are in charge. The public unions like the AFT and AFSCME are a case in point. A condition of polycratism exists in those unions, due to the absence of the condition that creates nationwide contracts, and it encourages local autonomy. The condition will commonly arise in private industry unions in the not-too-distant future, but it is with

us now in the new public unions: there are employment opportunities for the type of professionals that develop most rapidly and best in the radical movement, that is, organizers and journalists. The two usually come in some kind of combination. They are in national demand in the public unions.

Only twelve of the fifty states have collective bargaining laws for public employees. Each month, in states without laws, a union member can revoke his or her membership. The organizing process never ends. Each time a state gets ready to pass a collective bargaining law, it creates a crisis in the public unions. The big, established unions like the Teamsters then consider it worthwhile to make an investment in signing up the civil servants. With the law come contracts and the inability of employees to revoke membership except for the few, far-apart dates designated as escape periods. This forces AFSCME and AFT to obtain beach-heads right now in the large public employment arenas...on a much broader basis than the older unions. The approach of the more conservative organizations like the NEA and the Teamsters will concentrate on pay envelope issues. AFSCME and the AFT find it hard to compete on this basis. It is forcing them more and more to concentrate on working conditions and social issues. They have found receptive audiences. The workers in the low-paying public jobs usually do not have, in the early stages of organization, in large numbers all the special types of organizing and journalistic skills needed to do the job of getting a union local established. All unions are short of people with these skills. Nowhere can people with these skills be found who also have the social vision and idealism that is needed to organize in public employment if the radical political movements are omitted as an employment source.

It is inevitable that numbers of our people and friends will be offered union staff jobs organizing public workers. There are no more attractive prospective employees on the labor market. The jobs will be attractive, too, particularly for the young who have not yet established families. They will involve travel and, most of all, the opportunity to get some licks in against a section of the employers...right now. In some instances the restrictions on the political freedom of this new staff by the officialdom will be minimal. Taking the job will not mean that the taker is a bureaucrat in the negative sense of the term, nor that a political integrity has been sold. It will probably mean, however, that the organizer becomes so involved and overworked that it in effect removes her or him from active participation in the life of their radical organization.

That is the present and clearest of the dangers. The radical professional union organizer is daily involved with people who are in immediate need of all the help that that radical can provide. Out of the best that is in her or him they give a hell of a lot more to the job than the nonradical who takes the job. If it becomes the choice between attending a radical organization meeting, reading or studying political questions or attending a class on radical politics, as opposed to some work that will win a terribly underpaid member of the army of working poor some money or a right that they have unfairly been denied, then the decision that will be made is clear--the victimized human or humans directly in front of them will get the benefit of their time. How to obtain longer-range change will tend to get neglected. Often it becomes difficult to understand the value of all those theoretical discussions the people back in the branch are constantly involved in or the seriousness and heat of those discussions. At the same time, what commonly escapes notice is that although the organizer has a great deal of contact with rank and file workers, he or she is not of them. When one workplace gets or-

ganized, they must start on another, leaving the people in whom they have instilled so much hope to the union administrators or business representatives.

The regional offices of some public unions are so small that the organizer and administrator are often the same person. Business rep jobs cut away at respect for the rank and file. Overworked, the rep's hours are made longer by grieving members. Like the organizer, the home phone of the rep rings at all hours. On the other end are people with problems and insecurities who need assurance. Sometimes they have been able to phone only because they have received the aid of some alcohol. The rep's private life suffers. Few jobs are harder or more exploiting of the individual's energies and personality. Cynicism flowers. Those who can keep the pace and their health stay on. After having been at it several years it appears all but impossible to return to the place where you were before you took the job. Too often you stay on because there is nowhere else to go. Politically, you are lucky if you can keep the spirit to remain a social democrat, let alone a revolutionary.

The entire downgrading process gets accelerated in the long run by new officials and their special problems. Badly in need of hot, young radicals during the period of organization, the needs change with the passage of the state collective bargaining law and the signing of the contract. "All of us on the staff and in the ranks sacrificed and fought, and now we finally have a contract. No one should conduct themselves in such a way as to jeopardize that contract." The tactics and strategies used by the young radical organizer (and by her or his boss as well) often went outside the "rules". It had to be that way. But no more. Too much is at stake. Unless and until the American labor officialdom obtains a new and more radical ideology, and that is not an impossible development, the signing of a contract remains a conservatizing experience. In many ways, AFSCME and AFT are now among the most progressive of unions. By contrast with business unions like those in the building trades, they are social unions. There are, for example, serious and important differences between the union ideologies of Jerry Wurf and David Selden, on the one hand, and George Meany and I.W. Abel, on the other. But the differences are not of a fundamental enough nature for the public unions to overcome the virus that abounds in the months right after the signing of a contract with an unconditional no-strike pledge.

In the period beyond this one, when a newer and younger and more open-minded labor leadership will attempt to jettison the most negative aspects of the present type of collective bargaining by eliminating the compulsory arbitration of grievances and by substituting the right to strike and making the overall strike pledge conditional, in a number of ways, the opportunities for all kinds of braintrusting by radicals will open up. Some will take the form of requests that we give benefit of our counsel, ideas and advice. Others will come in the form of offers of staff employment. Both can happen simultaneously. Again, each has to be examined independently and without prejudice. There will be instances wherein it will be warranted that we help. Even in these instances we have a rule. In fact, it is more than a rule, it is a principle. We do not as an organization give of our energies to a point that it jeopardizes our long-range goals. We do not drop what we are doing to help a progressive new official, to the neglectful detriment of our own base. In this sense, unlike social democrats, we do not work "for free".

The trap is not a difficult one to fall into and is by no means limited to public employment situations. We have arrived at a time when the new and younger are getting top local offices. By contrast with the incumbents,

they demonstrate that they are clearly worthy of our support. Our people all experience isolation at the workplace. In most instances the leaders are not kindred souls. Then one day there develops the possibility that a new officialdom could be put in office and it could be one that is friendly to us instead of downright belligerent...not only politically, but on a personal basis as well. We need more job security and it wouldn't hurt to have someone with power half-way friendly to us. And there is no question that the young challenger would not do a better job for the ranks. He or she has to be supported. This very early stage is most often the decisive one. If we properly put the matter up for discussion we will then be able to pose the decisive questions: Are we going to be followers of the aspirant or critical supporters? By what method can we give the candidate public support and at the same time be reasonably unsectarian people, all the while maintaining our own base and independence? If we do not raise our criticisms in an astute and mature manner, we lose touch with both ranks and challenger. If we do not assert our independence from the very start, we will be led an inch at a time to a point that cramps the ability to make that assertion. It is bad enough for a political to be isolated on the job, but worse to be isolated after work. The progressive young challenger easily becomes a friend. Deep personal loyalties ensue. The aspirant can win and then comes the offer of a staff job and a little privilege, or both. If this delicious bit of power is accepted it may be months before the entrapment is discovered. As the young radical comes to see the trap, he or she goes through a period in which the only solution may seem to be to get out of the plant, and he or she begins to take a variety of risks and actions for which there seems no apparent logic. It is probable that the fault is ours to the degree that we might have avoided it by examining in detail the sorts of traps that are out and the forces that laid them.

A young union official cannot climb over history. If he or she is pushed into a position of power to replace a member of the old bureaucracy without an ideology that is different from that which created the basis for the decadence of the old bureaucracy, then the length of the young official's progressive period after taking office is limited. The criticisms of his or her young radical friend or friends will appear unreasonable, their suggestions and ideas will probably seem impossible. In effect, they will appear to be asking that he or she step down from office. Bitterness and vindictiveness result.

A problem that is very close to that one raised by the offer of staff jobs is likely to come up at some time over policy and direction of small newspapers which our people help workers to edit or edit for workers. Some among us may begin to be critical of the content of those small papers and start to criticize those who edit. It may be that the criticisms are correct and that our person or persons helping with the paper have not made enough effort to keep others informed. That leads to a condition in which our person in that activity has, in effect and very early, taken a job with a potential new officialdom. On the other hand, it could mean that the critics are mainly to blame. From the outside and without first-hand knowledge, they are unfairly criticizing our person who, by direct involvement in the situation, has a much better feel for what must be done. The built-in potential for conflict is a secondary reason why we always seek to help the workers native to the situation to take leadership and editorship, with us in supporting roles but still independent. The editorship usually eliminates our ability to give the representation to our politics that it should get and which we can give if we are a responsible part of but not the leadership of a caucus. The primary reason why we stay out of the leadership, however, is

that the rank and file revolts are still young and isolated. There has been as yet no substantial centralization of their power on a city, regional or national basis. That centralization is a prerequisite of the independent political developments to come. Thus, the newness of the revolts defines this as a time when even the most brief and temporary excursions into the bureaucracy by revolutionary socialists can only bring exhaustion and demoralization. Some of the up-and-coming new officials we help will come to power at the local level. Out of the Thirties the SWP had a person here and there who, for example, stayed on as editors of newspapers well into the years of World War II when those papers were pushing bonds and when the leaders had long since abandoned a rank and file program. Confronted, they would answer your question with another: "Which would you rather see, some reactionary in this job or someone like me who will maintain the maximum pressure on the bureaucracy from within?" Permeationism, as always, is an open passageway between revolutionary socialism and social democratism. The contagion can hit anyone and those most apt to be exposed are often our most active people.

There is an ideology for every time. The technology and the level of struggle between the laboring and employing classes pick the time. In overwhelming majority our people are destined to be denied positions of official leadership of mass organizations until the ranks of those organizations are ready to begin to operate on the basis of a socialist program on a day-to-day basis. Those who try to jump out of historical turn attempt the impossible. To wait for that turn is difficult, but not impossible and does not imply idleness. Idleness now is to miss the turn when it comes.

There is an exception to every general rule and so, too, there is exception to past experience and tested theory. Therefore there will be that rare instance wherein it will be correct for the radical political to take an organizing job and positions of local leadership other than on the floor of the workplace. As long as the rarest exception is possible each situation must be examined anew.

Above all else we have to avoid a repressive or authoritarian stance on this entire matter. Jobs will continue to be offered. Putting aside the kind of job offered, let us assume for a moment that after we have become acquainted with the pertinent facts that we consider it inadvisable or even wrong to take the job. We do not then in one of the numerous ways let it be known known we are going to look down on them or think that they will be less than they were before. To do this successfully it has to be believed by us first. We cannot play act. We state openly: "We feel that based on what we know of this job and our past experience that it would be a mistake to take this job. You think you should take the job and you could be right. We think you may well run into the following kinds of problems on the job and that you will probably be put in a compromising position as a result...Yes, we are prejudging. If you decide to take it, then take it with a positive approach, do a good job for them and we will help in whatever way we can. We hope to learn from your experience." If we handle this sort of situation by either glum politeness or open insults we will probably lose our friend almost immediately.

To be a revolutionary socialist is to be in a very small minority whose values to most people still seem quite different from the majority. Regular middle class society and the establishment-oriented think it insane to in any way limit a bourgeois career for proletarian politics. Our people usually have high status only among the people with whom they work and in

our own circles. If we withdraw respect and status from them we have made a deep gash upon their self-image. Thus, rudeness committed by revolutionaries against themselves or anyone else has a suicidal quality. The last place on earth that one of our people should feel alone is in one of our own meetings. Any idea of discipline or rigidity that ostracizes people because of the type of employment they hold is beneath the humanist stature of our ideas and goals. When a friend takes a job and we conditionally warn of the possible consequences and those consequences do not materialize, then we have risked nothing, our friend has a good job that will benefit him or her and therefore us. If our warnings materialize we have done a service and fulfilled a responsibility. In fact, as the things we have warned of begin to occur, it will impress our friends and cause them to place a higher value on our and their abilities...providing we have acted properly and have not therefore created any basis for their believing that there are unspoken "I told you so's" flying about.

A Negative Aspect of Industrialization Programs

It is inevitable that in a period when it is imperative that we emphasize industrialization that questions and differences arise about the kind of employment our people have. Socialists have a right to work wherever they desire and can obtain it. We have a need for socialist barbers, bartenders, dentists, beauticians and airline stewardesses as well as steel workers, longshoremen and waitresses. If we are to grow we cannot expect that people will come to us and necessarily want to change their type of employment. Right now we are properly encouraging our people who have jobs that they consider to be marginal and to which they have no deep attachment to get jobs in the industrial mainstream. We disrespect no one who is doing socially necessary labor. However, we have recently had so much discussion and concentration on industrialization that every single one of us feels just a little bit less if we do not have industrial work, blue collar in particular. This must and will pass. Today there are all sorts of possibilities for professionals of many types to join or organize unions. As they do, they will then have access to militant blue collar workers who are quite eager to communicate with white collar brothers and sisters in the new unions. Our people who are in industrial employment, public and private, seldom can do much of the necessary organizational work to sustain our movement. It may be that some time will pass before they will be able to recruit. When they do, however, we will need numbers of people ready to accomplish already planned educational work.

Keeping in mind the kind of a division of labor that must be maintained, we have still to attract enough people to industry. There exists the idea that once into industry the door is closed and one can never leave it and retain prestige or remain a socialist. The idea abounded in our predecessor organizations. Consequently, when one of our people became fed up with industrial work, we automatically lost him or her. We would have been better keeping them whether they went on campus, on welfare or got a spot in the violin section of the philharmonic orchestra. And there is still more than enough to do on the campuses, the welfare people need more organizing and the classical musicians in most major cities have been on strike or formed unions.

It is possible for us to take quite a different attitude. Our people can go into industry with the idea that if they do not like the type of work

they find in their first industrial workplace or industry that they will then seek out another industrial job until they find the most suitable industrial employment for them. Young industrial workers do this almost uniformly the first few years of their working lives. They job shop until they light on one that is the least distasteful, after they have tested by direct experience what they themselves can adapt themselves to. All of us are different and there is no one industry. We have preferences based on our speculations and that is just what they are...preferences. We push our preferences with the logic of our speculations. It is likely that there will be fairly wide agreement on those preferences. A person seeking work finds a job in one of the preferred places and while he or she continues to agree with the preference, the job, for any number of reasons, may be an impossible one...for that person. They can continue to be miserable and finally drop out feeling a failure and rejecting us, or they can find other industrial employment more suitable for them. If they do, they will be able to do better all the way around for all concerned. It may even turn out that their empirical preference produces more than the others.

What if we have people who find after a trial period in a number of workplaces that industrial work is not for them? The answer is a simple one. They should quit. It is no goddamned crime. Rather, it is the common sense thing to do and so they will survive as revolutionaries. And common sense also dictates that they not stay so long after they have learned that they are not suited for industry that they begin to develop resentments. If they leave when it is time, it may be that they will obtain work that allows them to be available to do some of the many very necessary things that are not now getting done in our organization. It may also turn out that union struggles develop on their new jobs and that they remain a part of the union movement.

The necessity of each period, as each one of us feels it, sets the tone and attitudes of that period and what it calls forth from us both as a group and a collection of individuals. There will come times when because we recognize the need for certain types of activity that large numbers among us will rush to do it. When we see this happen it will signal that we have obtained a high degree of political clarity and consensus, that the working class has in big ways been recently demonstrating its ability to lead on a societal level and that we have ideologically, organizationally and individually been a part of that demonstration. That time will make a number of things easier for us as an organization, but inevitably that time will produce among us some who will tend to be more loyal to organization than ideas. For now, however, at the beginning of a new upward and left turn, we have only just begun to feel the confidence in the rush of events. The working class has not "come into the streets" to openly state an independent battle position. Thus, by and large, our ability to act with any uniformity as an organization depends on our ability to convince one another in majority of the correctness of our views in the freest sort of atmosphere. Add to this that we are essentially a youth organization at this time. More, we are a youth organization whose members have come from and been used to the very highest degree of personal freedom of movement and very little exposure to industrial work routines. In fact, the generation of the Sixties, the one containing the most radicalized youth in thirty years, is the one molded in a period when there was the least necessity for the young (middle class in particular) to obtain employment. There is a relation between the two factors and we in no way apologize or attempt to hide the middle class origins

of many of our people as do some socialist groups. The skills accessible to the middle classes are too often denied the workers and we are making some of these skills available to the workingclass movement.

Sum up the major factors and it can be seen that our imperative industrialization program cannot be successful in an uptight atmosphere. It has to have that freeswinging quality that allows easy participation and experimentalization by a much wider section of our people. At present, some of our people view a move into industrial life as if it also contained a commitment similar to that which one takes when joining a hairshirted order or special tactical guerrilla affront group. We will find that entering industry does not mean facing the necessity of breaking all ties with previous life, life styles and friends. If it does then there will be some hard-to-say goodbyes.

As much as possible workers try to maintain a freeswinging quality in their lives. Very often the discipline they build into their lives is first and foremost to allow them to obtain that quality. They put in their eight hours and then they get out and see their friends and seek to get some pleasure out of each day. It can't happen every day but they have learned that it is a way of surviving over the long haul. It is true that workers are exploited, but that does not mean that all gratification, freedom and leisure has been placed beyond their reach. They don't like to carry the job home on their shoulders. They try to walk away and forget it until it is time to return.

There are periods ahead in which workers will involve themselves in sustained struggles to the neglect of all their normal activity. But that is not now the general case. We cannot expect that the people who enter industry will in this early stage of a left turn soon demonstrate the full results and the correctness of our industrialization program. That will come when it comes and it will happen because we are there and have first of all developed, each with our own modifications, a workingclass life style that allows some daily happiness. For now, that is the primary goal when obtaining industrial work. Without worry and because we have learned to be a natural part of our work society, the opportunities will arise aplenty and with the same naturalness.

We will learn that we cannot force the time unnaturally. The leaflets that get passed out after a brief time at work, prominently pushing the labels "International Socialist" and "Workers Power", only makes those who become identified with them appear to be outsiders. It appears foreign and it is doubtful that such leaflets would be viable tools even in Europe. The labels become the obstacle which has to be overcome to get the audience to identify with the content. Then, too, workers want first of all to keep their jobs and they know that identification can later or sooner mean the receipt of a pink slip. To overcome this problem, the often-used tactic is to make no other identification than the impersonal p.o. box number, or telephone number or listing of special place where the leaflets can next be obtained. This does not increase security. For those of us who are there and able to observe at close range, it only adds to the feeling of being alien and isolated.

The best test of such leaflets is the results they bring...none, or very little at too great an expense. They are attempts to forcibly tele-scope time which result from a political analysis that sees this historic

left turn much farther developed than it is in actuality. But there is no period or turn in which there are big payoffs with such brief investment. When our people get jobs let us be slow to get itchy fingers for the handle of the mimeo. In very few instances is anyone in shape to tell others what to do with only six months on a job. It takes that long to get used to the routine and that much longer to be able to imagine what it must be like to face 40 years of that routine. Until we can imagine clearly what that means and how it affects the way workers react on most questions, we have little basis for offering leadership. When we have begun to learn what that means we have the job of teaching it to others. Having waited and learned we will usually find that there are others on the job with whom we can ally. With them we achieve an identity, an on-the-job identity, and all things being done with some measure, when this group is ready to put out leaflets, no one will have to hide. The group will not move toward politics like ours in an even way. Some will move only a little or to that point where they don't speak out against our politics because they like and respect us personally. But some, one here and two there in this period, will be able to move the full distance if we are the responsible and respected (as opposed to respectable) left wing of the group.

As the "Document on Industrialization" by J.W. presented to the last NC indicates, some of those now in industry have begun to feel resentment about the smallness of their number and help received. But nothing is to be gained from that document's proposal that "we should begin to discuss what demands the organization should make on the perpetual graduate students". The proposal is the most destructive of all types of action. It leads to demagogy that can only beget demagogy. Explicitly, the document begins to throw out dependency upon political consciousness and turns toward obtaining action by ukase. J.W.'s subjectivity is understandable. He has felt the isolation and has lacked company. He is not the only one to have developed these bitter attitudes, but he put them on paper and so they can be discussed. Everyone who has been where J.W. has, has felt the bile against "the others". It is probably an accurate guess that the document was written in isolation and without preliminary discussion. But the document came before the NC and failed as basis for amendment because of a tie vote and failed as perspective by one vote. Most of the absolutely wrong ideas were amended out of the document and it was passed. It should not have been passed in any form. No matter how many good ideas it contained, no matter that all the amendments were finally acceptable, it was written in its totality with key motivational ideas in it that are central to the total document and that are absolutely incorrect. We do not know now whether the people who voted for it originally have rejected those incorrect ideas by accepting the amendments or that they accepted the amendments because that was as much of the document as they thought they could get passed at that time. Discussion at the NC gave indication that there are resentments in the leadership against the ranks. The sounds come across as follows: "We put out the paper and it is a major effort, yet the paper does not get used to full advantage because not enough people have gone in and the paper is designed primarily for people who have gone in and the work they are doing". It is our version of the most common disease to be found in the labor movement. Our leadership works hard and often at too great personal sacrifice, living at much lower level of consumption than the ranks. They provide the tools that they believe are those needed and which assembled in convention, ranks have voted for under their leadership, and then the ranks fail to use those tools. One of the most common topics of conversation in the best sections of the labor leadership are the similar failures of the

ranks and the consequent recriminations. The counterpart of this rejection exists in the ranks and so the gap between them widens. In the unions, no matter who voted for what at the convention, it is easy for us to see that the leadership is supplying tools and vehicles for the ranks that the ranks either reject or are in no position to use, or for one reason or another find are not related to the present reality of their lives. The same is true for us. Some of our best people go to a strange town to work for us full time. That keeps them away from the mainstream of life in the town. Being new, they have no roots in the town to start with. It is doubtful that in that town intellectuals will ever overcome a feeling of isolation as intellectuals. Tremendous pressures force our leadership into an ingrown existence and artificial dependency on one another...and dependencies can create frictions of their own. Finally, by the very nature of things, branches begin to feel a lack of direction, and putting out the paper gets to be the major function of the center, who have difficulty understanding why more people don't get industrial jobs, don't put out more papers at plant gates and let large portions of the bundles pile up unused in branch headquarters.

The smallness of our number in industry, first of all, indicates that there are some who are not fully convinced politically. (And here political conviction is used in the full sense of the term, referring to much more than the correctness of industrialization.) Our people feel the eclectic and lack of integration in our total program and theory. They rightly vote for industrialization, yet they may find themselves unable to make the move out of what in a sense is a lack of political confidence. The feeling has a dual aspect. Many have become socialists recently and this in turn makes them feel that they have not yet become equipped to test the program of their organization. Anyone newly come to the movement has had the experience of listening to a more experienced person and having that person sound very correct, only to hear another and opposing view a short time later that sounds equally correct. Without the existence of mass class struggle organizations that are able to test ideas in the large arenas, the disturbing experience occurs at intervals for some time after joining. Though we often forget it, it happens to everyone and the only comfort lies in the fact that it happens less often as exposure to ideas expands.

Second of all, the smallness of our number in industry is in all probability an unwillingness on the part of some of our people to risk the disrespect that will be earned if they get industrial jobs and then decide that for one reason or another they do not want to stay. Of necessity, great importance has been put on the need to industrialize. In the process, other kinds of activity have suffered. A major if the the major foundation stone of our politics has always been that social progress is dependent upon the leading role of the working class. Yet our turn to industrialization was too hard, abrupt and unnatural for a young organization to respond to without some negative results. It is probable that the sudden and abrupt turn of the New Left toward the working class exerted undue influence on us. We are now faced with making some correctional adjustments. Most humans do not mind risking small failures for big rewards. Our vanities recuperate. But to go into industry to attempt success at a task that is felt so important that one can feel the tension whenever it is discussed, is also to risk monumental failure...and in front of the very people who brought us to Marxism, people for whom we have the highest respect and whose respect we want to retain. This contributes to those things holding

full hospitality... something that is difficult when identities are unsure. The integrated development of our ideas also reverses the process that created the leadership gap. Instead of our leaders being those with more experience in how to operate than we have, we all obtain a certain type of equality and autonomy, with a majority operating by and large on the same body of jointly arrived at theory, we find we operate on our own initiative with a new facility. Under these circumstances it is the job of the leadership to supply the overview and overall tests. Ideally because of their national and international observation vantage point, they will be the first to come forth with documents suggesting change in the theoretical body. Under these circumstances the discussions that follow achieve a very full participation because the ranks, too, have been working with the same theories, testing, clarifying and redefining them. In fact, full and complete preconvention discussion lasting several months, which allows the development of opposing documents, is not a panacea, but it is the closest thing to one that we will ever get. To the degree that we accomplish it, everything changes.

Suppose for a moment we have a couple of our people working for a railroad and the government takes it into temporary receivership because the owners have totally mismanaged. We do not simply come out for clean-cut and complete nationalization. We are more than anti-capitalist. We know that the importance given acts that were simply opposed to the private ownership of the means of production by earlier radicals indicated the illusions they had. We have observed Stalinism and the British Labor Party in power. We know from the Hungarian Revolution that an elitist bureaucracy demands as forceful a revolution to be removed from power as does a system controlled by corporate entrepreneurs. We are Third Campers. Our friends working for the railroad will possibly put forth an idea consistent thereto, something like the following: That a committee of working railroaders from both the operating and non-operating classifications be elected to oversee the books of the railroad and to propose overall plans to guide the continuing overall operation of the company, but that immediately and in the interim that the workers employed by that company take full charge of operation and maintenance, so that the capital investment which the railroad workers in this union now view to be collectively owned can be responsibly protected. The idea may or may not catch on, it is now no more than an example being used here to demonstrate a point, but if it catches on only a little, that is, if a few workers in our people's local show real interest and possibly the idea catches on in a local or two other than their own, they will feel the special sense of pride and confidence. If the example given has a base in what "could be" then it is likely that the same idea might be put forth by a couple of our friends who are merchant seamen in relation to the almost total subsidization of American merchant fleets and their absolutely irresponsible management. Under this sort of circumstance for us, if our two railroaders and two seamen were a few years earlier cursing those of us who are graduate students or beauticians, it is doubtful that they are any longer. It is even more probable that they no longer define what they are doing as a big sacrifice and some special sort of heroism or heroism. In fact, it is probable that if they ever were, they will have stopped being exclusive and distant. Their ability to operate successfully will have meant that they decided to learn to live in industry because that is what they wanted to do, regardless of what others were doing. Their very close relations with us, despite the fact that a lot of us are not in heavy industry, will be based on ideological agreement and in

the many other necessary activities being conducted, including the aiding of them in their particular situation. Besides, there was only one of them in each of the industries to start with. At the point that they got over their irritation and made an adjustment to industrial life, they were able to demonstrate what the life was like and some of its rewards to others of us, and that enabled a doubling of the number.

But back to the forthcoming convention. There is always a collective responsibility in our movement. Right now, however, it is the particular responsibility of the political leadership to glue their collective rears to chairs in front of typewriters until there is a basis for the start of a full discussion. When the initial documents are out, the responsibility shifts to the branches. Discussions should be held in the number and length necessary to allow those who cannot agree, to write their own documents and give them full circulation to all the other branches. The time is past when we could allow convention delegates to receive documents on arrival at the convention hall. The type of discussion this calls forth is now unthinkable. We have a leadership crisis signaled most strongly for all of us by the Reorient split. It was a great loss and a warning that must be heeded. If we clear the political air we end this type of loss and attract those who are leaving groups whose politics have been unable to withstand the tests...and that type of opportunity is increasing.

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REPORT ON AFT CONVENTION

Some Brief Background. . .

The AFT leadership is embodied in the Progressive Caucus ("PC") a bloc including the largest locals--NYC, Chicago, Phila. (NYC Local #2 has 70,000 members or almost 1/3 of national total) The leader of the Progressive Caucus is Al Shanker of the NYC local. Many of the leaders (including AFT Pres. David Selden and Velma Hill of NYC) are SP members and the PC has roughly the SP line. The PC has had little serious opposition in the past few years. An opposition grouping, the New Caucus, was formed several years ago largely around the race issues by some black leaders and white radicals. The blacks later dropped out of the caucus and functioned in the Black CAucus which opposed Shanker and the PC on the race issue but had no serious differences or program. The New Caucus was held together for the past couple of years by Comrade Steve and consisted of white radicals with little base.

The crisis in education has of course shaken the AFT--the staff cuts, defeats of strikes; the obvious need for national funding since local taxes cannot be increased; the defeat of the AFT in Hawaii and other CB elections. It is in this context that two (related) developments occurred to build a significant opposition.

Following the Newark strike some black leaders especially Carol Graves, Pres. of Newark local, moved away from black nationalism and wanted to re-group an opposition on more than the race question. Prior to the convention Graves met with Steve, and Graves and other black leaders decided to merge the black caucus with the new caucus and did so under the name United Action Caucus ("UAC"). Carol Graves sent a letter to the Black Caucus members informing them and asking them to join the UAC.

At the same time the PC experienced some defections. Bill Simons, Pres. of the Washington DC Local (majority black) declared his candidacy for AFT delegate to the AFL-CIO convention as an independent candidate against the PC slate. Simons had broken with the PC over failure to agree with Shanker on civil rights. Also Herrick Roth, a vice president of AFT and head of the Colo. State Fed of Labor broke with the PC, and is probably interested in running for Pres. of AFT next year. The day before the convention began Roth and Simons decided they wanted into the UAC and met with Steve who insisted on a programmatic basis (see program of caucus) which they accepted reluctantly but made it plain they weren't interested in a program. They specifically questioned the opposition to wage-price controls in the program but agreed to leave it in. Little did they know. . .

Thus the nature of the caucus we were in changed overnight. It was no longer "ours" but now under the leadership of the left-bureaucrats who split from the Shanker leadership. The UAC had support from Washington DC, Newark, some from Detroit, and smaller locals especially those in California. Of the 1200 delegates at the convention (representing some 3300 delegate-votes), some 150-200 delegates enrolled in the UAC during the convention.

The issues of the convention. . .

The issues were clear before the convention began. Shanker would push for a strong move into the Presidential campaign (and other campaigns) to Beat Nixon; he would tell us to support progressive Democrats (thats all Democrats) be they "hawk or dove". Since the election at the convention was for delegates to the

AFL-CIO convention he would give unqualified support to Meany's policies. The UAC program called for opposition to the war and fighting Meany on the war and other issues; and on the decisive issue of how to fight the attack on education the UAC called for mass action as an alternative to lobbying and electing good guys in 72.

The war was the first issue to come up. Shanker was for "no position" since the war is not a labor issue and because we can't be "complainers" within the AFL-CIO. The UAC was for immediate withdrawal and for fighting within the AFL-CIO convention on it and for supporting marches etc. We intended to raise issue of mobilizing labor's strength against the war (workstoppages) but did not because of other opportunities to make the same point and because the sharp polarization (two poles) on this issue we would have appeared sectarian. Jeff Mackler of the SWP and Hayward FT had spent a month before the convention organizing support in Calif for a motion which included boosting NPAC. We supported his motion but did not regard NPAC as a central focus! We could not persuade him to include workstoppages in his motion. Mackler was swept aside and Shanker narrowly defeated the antiwar/UAC position (1800-1600) on a roll call vote. To do so the Chicago local (and other locals) which was on record against the war was called upon to vote with Shanker. Shanker therefore allowed them to introduce on the following day a watered-down antiwar resolution which had no implementation and which called for withdrawal "with safeguard for the safety fo those supporting our side". Our comrades amended out the objectionable part and the motion passed overwhelmingly.

On the second day of the convention Nixon announced the wage/price freeze and greatly intensified the issue of political action for the AFT and the labor movement. On this issue Shanker took the offensive: he used every opportunity to present his program of electing Democrats, supporting Roy Wilkins and other "friends of Democrats" while denouncing black militants and critics of Meany very sharply. Our weakness, Al said over and over, is our inability to unite behind good guys, raise a million dollars for them, and set up committees, etc. Ramsey Clark was brought in for a speech in the right to strike as an example of a good guy we had under Kennedy.

Within the UAC we were for a direct response to the leadership on this most important issue. We pushed for an attack on the freeze and for mobilizing labor to oppose it. We pushed for the adoption as part of the UAC program the formation of a labor party. The UAC leaders had no answer to Shanker, since they essentially agree with him or in some cases are just confused. They went along with a strong stand on the freeze and Bill Simons presented a motion as a Special Order of Business that we oppose the freeze, denounce both Nixon and Democrats for it, and call upon the AFL-CIO exec council to call an "extended labor day" work stoppage. Shanker denounced this foolishness saying that many teachers would still be on vacation then and that shows how pompous the complainers are, and went on to defend Meany's stand on the question and Meany's ability to successfully fight it, while saying we needed to oust Nixon. We got significant support on this, perhaps 30%. On the labor party question we introduced in the UAC a motion that it be part of the caucus program and got 45 votes to 80 against. We got support from Newark and scattered elsewhere. We later issued a leaflet with signatures of delegates "Political action and the AFT" to the entire convention.

The left-bureaucrats/leaders of the UAC were backed up in their vacillation by the CP and its friends, especially from NY. In general the CP played the role of

AFT convention/3

"Loyal supporter" of the UAC leaders, opposing "splitters" and using Angela Davis as their entry/legitimacy.

The vacillation of the UAC leadership was clearest in the election. The election was for 8 delegates to the AFL-CIO convention and for 2 vacancies on the exec board of the AFT. For AFL-CIO delegate we were for the UAC running more than just the one declared candidate, Bill Simons, since we wanted an opposition and not a one-man-show. The caucus voted to run three but the other two dropped out so we were left with just Simons against the PC slate of 8. Shanker (and Velma Hill) again took the offensive and Simons had no answer except some criticism of the lack of democracy and that we need a "new direction". For Exec Bd. of AFT the UAC ran Carol Graves and Saul Mendelson, Chicago college teacher. Simons lost roughly 2200 to 1700 and Graves similarly. Since Mendelson was not well known, and rather un-dynamic speaker, his vote of 800 (25%) may be taken as the base of support for the UAC.

Since the UAC could not face up to the main issue before the AFT, it was easily sidetracked by CPers and some kookies (from Oadland especially) onto the Angela Davis issue as a primary focus. They introduced a long resolution on the subject and spoke in the worst corny emotionalism; the only decent speaker for Free Angela Davis was Comrade Sam. The Progressive Caucus, feeling pressure from blacks, introduced a "fair trial and reasonable bail" resolution and won easily. The UAC and the Blacks also had a demonstration at the jail, which we supported. They then proceeded after the demonstration to march thru the convention yelling free angela to the embarrassment of the UAC leaders (and us). Also some of the ranks of the UAC introduced a long motion on racism which was liberal breast-beating and allowed Shanker to murder them on the issue.

The future. . .

The UAC elected an 11 person steering committee and intends to publish a regular newsletter. Comrade Steve is on the sc and hopefully we will be able to get our stuff published altho the UAC leaders have indicated they would like to close us out, its just that they need us. Whether or not the newsletter comes off, the caucus will certainly continue in some form. The factors which caused its leaders to move to the left (away from Shanker) will not disappear but intensify. The caucus leaders hope to win at the next national convention which will be a convention that will elect a new AFT Pres and other officers. For this to occur there will have to be further splits of (or within) big locals from the PC. The fact that the convention will be a few months before the U.S. 72 election will make fence sitting more painful.

I.S. functioning. . .

There were 10 comrades attending as delegates and several others as non-delegates. Mostly from Calif but also from NY and Ill. In addition there were a couple of friends functioning with us. The ISCo people (primarily Lick B.) had evolved no strategy of their own and in general co-operated with us; Dick spoke for our motions, and they signed our leaflet, etc.

We made contact with some good people at the convention from Newark, Detroit, LA, and SF. We are hoping to firm up contacts with all of them, and send them our documents, invite responses, etc. Lots of contacts at post-conv. IS party..

AFT convention/4

We issued in addition to the "labor party" leaflet signed by 30 people, two leaflets signed by I. S. One was on women's liberation, given to a rather small meeting of women in which we did some good low-profile work. The other was on the war, given to the convention. After the convention we had a thorough discussion of our functioning--we agreed we did well but there were serious weaknesses, mostly attributable to our inexperience and lack of prior organization. There were no significant political disagreements; one minor difference was the degree to which we should have an "I. S. presence". This came up regarding how we should sign leaflets, etc. We all generally agreed that an actionable or immediately relevant issue (e. g. labor party) we were not for the I. S. carrying it under its own name. On a more general question (like imperialism) the I. S. could do so.

We chose a steering committee of the fraction of Marilyn, Steve, and Joel. Marilyn was chosen coordinator. Steve is assigned to write a perspectives paper before the IS national convention. Wayne is assigned to write an article on "socialist critique of education" for use in contacting various radical teachers groups, which tend to be going in a more political direction. Other assignments were made re. NUC, contacts, California State convention.

Attached are motions, leaflets, etc.

NAC MINUTES AUGUST 18

jack absent

1. MAL - a new member was accepted in Cincinnati. Cincinnati now becomes an organizing committee.

2. BRIEF NATIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT ---

In NY, they are busy organizing a trade union division for the August 26 march. A leaflet we wrote is being distributed to working women, by us and also by some of the official unions. A ~~xxx~~ pamphlet on Abortion and the Women's Movement is also being prepared to sell at the demo (copies will be sent to all the branches). (On a later report, we also are going to have one of the featured speakers at the rally, speaking on political action.) With regard to the Feliciano case, 100 Puerto Ricans demonstrated at the ~~xxx~~ first court session, demanding Free Feliciano, Free Puerto Rico, causing court to be suspended for the day. The bail is expected to be lowered, allowing Feliciano to get out on bail.

In Cincinnati, they were able to distribute a lot of WPs to GE workers, this is the issue with the interview of the leader of JOB. They are making a lot of new contacts. We hope to have a report soon on the regional ~~xxx~~ meeting of all Ohio members soon.

Also reported that Sy will be available for a national tour in September. For a report on the AFT-convention, see enclosed.

3. FUND DRIVE -- The following branches have accepted their w quotas: NY, Chicago, Detroit, Chapel Hill, Cincinnati, National Office, and tentatively NJ. We have also heard from Berkeley and Seattle that they will be discussing it soon. We still need to hear from the other branches. Also, we need to know who is put in charge of the drive, and what plans you have made to fulfill your quotas. (We have also just heard that San Francisco has accepted their quota.)

We have had a request to draw up a letter for sympathizers. The NO has agreed to do this, and hopes to be able to send it out soon.

4. IRELAND -- demonstrations have been held in Seattle, NY, and Chicago. If other branches are holding demos, they should send in reports on them to the NO. We are preparing a statement of solidarity to be sent to Irish comrades, and also trying to get an article for ~~UPXX~~ UPS.

5. BLACK WORKERS CONGRESS -- it is now scheduled to take place labor day weekend in Chicago. Not clear why it was postponed and moved, though it might have something to do with the split in the League. Our latest info on the split is still not all that clear. We have been unable to contact Watson. Reports we have give the following account. The League claims that Watson, Foreman etc. are petty-bourgeois, and looking for an alternative social base. The other side claims that the League no longer had a working class base, but was lumpen and engaged in lumpen activities. When this was realized, Watson and company pulled out.

NAC MINUTES AUGUST 19

jack absent

- 1. SPECIAL PAMPHLET ON NIXONS NEP. -----
Motion: We put out a special agitational pamphlet in tabloid form -
Passes 3-1(kit)

Motion: we devote the next issue of the paper (#40) to the NEP and distribute it in lieu of a pamphlet -----Fails 1-3)

Pamphlet to include - 1. NEP as anti-working class and bureaucracy's refusal to fight, 2. NEP as response and solution to capitalist crisis, 3. Our solution and program, Passes - 3-0-1(kit)

- 2. Editorial meeting on Workers Power --
- 3. Discussion and ~~dox~~ adoption of the Theses on the NEW Economic Policy -
accepted 4-0

These have already been sent out to branches, and will be included in the next bulletin, to be sent out with the papers.

The Theses ~~xxx~~ provide the basis for a major discussion at the NC. Anyone who has ~~and~~ amendments, or counterpositions to all or part of the theses should try to get them into the NO as soon as possible, so that we can try and distribute them before the NC. Also, the NAC would like to be informed of any disagreements with the document before the NC, so if you cannot have a document prepared before then, we would appreciate ~~ix~~ it if you could send us a letter outlining your disagreements.

~~Ma~~ There will also be a delegated women's caucus meeting over the labor day weekend in Detroit, and many non-NC members will be attending. This means that there will be many people here who will need housing. We would therefore appreciate it if comrades we could let us know if they are coming so that we can prepare housing before you arrive.

Many branches still owe the NO and WP money. They should all make a serious effort to pay off the debts as soon as possible, and especially before the fund drive starts. Otherwise, this may hinder the drive, and without that money, we may go broke before we get any of the money from the drive to cover increased expenses.

An Open Letter to the SWP

Dear Comrade Dobbs:

The war in Vietnam has been more than a political, military, and moral disaster for American imperialism. It has also sharpened the domestic social struggles and intensified the contradictions of America's permanent war economy. Inflation, mounting taxation, growing unemployment, decline in social services — these are indices of the deepening social crisis which we of the International Socialists believe will continue to grow as American capitalism finds it increasingly difficult to dominate the colonial and advanced industrial countries.

Meanwhile the class struggle has intensified throughout the capitalist countries, notably in France in 1968, Italy in 1969, and Britain today. It has been joined by a symmetrical development in the Stalinist countries, in Czechoslovakia in 1968 and Poland in 1970.

In Europe the revolutionary movement has used this opportunity to implant itself within the working class and to challenge the leadership of the Social-Democratic and Stalinist bureaucrats. The creation of revolutionary parties is once more on the agenda in Europe. Such a revolutionary party draws its meaning from its ability to base itself in and provide leadership for the advanced layers of the working class.

In the United States such opportunities are now beginning to develop. There has been a growth of working class militancy and class struggle — evidenced by the growing strike wave, wildcats, contract rejections, the spreading of unionism to traditionally backward layers of the class (public and service employees), and the first hesitant steps to organization of the rank and file rebellion.

This situation opens enormous possibilities, and creates enormous responsibilities, for the revolutionary movement. The spontaneous struggles created by capitalist contradictions, if they are to be successful, must be joined by a working class socialist cadre intimately participating in the day to day struggles of the class and capable of providing political leadership.

So far, however, the separation which developed between the working class and the Marxist movement during the Cold War-McCarthy era has not been bridged. The socialist movement which revived with the radicalism of the 1960's has still not been able to find its way to the working class. Failure to meet this test, the supreme test that faces any revolutionary organization, can only lead, as Trotsky contended, to political degeneration.

It is this situation which makes the decisions to be taken by the Socialist Workers Party at its convention important. The SWP could aid in helping to build and organize the rank and file movement.

The IS has in the past year been industrializing significant portions of our cadre. Our experience shows that such a program can be fruitful now. Although time has been short, we have been able to organize fractions in auto, steel, telephone, hospitals, Teamsters, the AFT, and AFSCME. Without exaggerating our role, we have played a part in the

development of broad, rank and file oppositions in these unions.

But we are not sectarians. To build a left wing in the working class, a much larger revolutionary cadre is needed within the class. We are eager to collaborate with other radical tendencies, including the SWP, in working toward what we believe to be the primary task of socialists today.

Although we have important differences with other groups, we believe that the industrialized cadre of the several socialist tendencies could collaborate in transforming the union movement into a militant, democratic movement of class struggle.

Of course, industrialization doesn't solve all problems; it is only the prerequisite for any trade union work. Thus some other points must be made clear.

As all revolutionaries recognize, the working class struggle faces not only the direct opposition of the capitalists and their state, but also the resistance of the trade union bureaucracy. If the working class is to succeed, it will have to throw out the present fossilized leadership and establish its own democratic leadership in its place. That is why revolutionaries have always worked to organize and build the rank and file struggle. When demands have been placed on the bureaucrats, it has been done not in order to win them over (although some may be) but in order to expose them and mobilize the rank and file.

Therefore, collaboration among revolutionaries in union work would have to be based on an unremitting struggle to mobilize the rank and file and an uncompromising opposition to the bureaucracy.

A concrete program must be developed, based on experience and taking account of the conditions of specific industries. The basics of such a program would include the recapturing of workers' control over the unions; the extension of workers' control to production; fighting racism and sexual divisions; opposing unemployment and deteriorating working conditions; and fighting for an independent party of the working class.

Many specifics would have to be worked out, for example in the area of working conditions: in our work, we have raised demands for a stronger shop steward system, for the right to strike during the life of the contract, for "innocent until proven guilty" in discipline cases, and others. Some of these are classic demands of the rank and file movement, others are new; the experience gained in action would sharpen and define these points.

Of course, in our view, the commitment to a working class orientation does not stop at the shop floor. It pervades all our work in other movements. Indeed, the success of these movements depends on the eventual development of links to the working class.

Rather than presenting such a working class approach in the anti-war, women's, and black liberation movements, the SWP has presented a classless approach. In the anti-war movement the SWP has aimed at getting endorsements

from liberal democrats and labor bureaucrats. Courting the labor bureaucracy in the anti-war movement has made the SWP hesitant to fight the bureaucracy in the unions, or to propose those labor actions against the war, such as work stoppages and strikes, which the bureaucracy considers to be a greater evil than the war itself. Similarly in appealing to the bureaucracy and the liberal Democrats, the SWP has not consistently championed independent political action in the anti-war movement.

While we are for united fronts with reformists, genuine united front work demands a continuing revolutionary criticism and opposition to the politics of the reformists in the front, exposing their politics and using the united front to draw their rank and file to revolutionary positions. Otherwise, the united front becomes the bridge for abandoning revolutionary politics. This raises the question of whether the SWP is subordinating trade union work in a futile attempt to placate the union bureaucrats in the anti-war movement.

In the women's liberation movement, the SWP made a promising start by championing free and legal abortion, equal pay for equal work, and 24-hour child care as the demands for the movement. These demands could appeal to working women and create the bridge to the working class so vital for the success of the women's liberation movement.

Now the SWP has abandoned this approach and attempts to subordinate the women's movement to a single-issue abortion struggle. It has gone even further — by abandoning the demand for free abortion. In the name of a classless united front, it has chosen to abandon appealing to the broad masses of working women and minority women, to have a spurious unity with middle class women on the terms of the latter.

While we have our historic differences with the SWP on the Stalinist countries, which we contend are bureaucratic class societies, we do not believe such differences, and even

greater ones which we have with other tendencies, are necessarily a bar to collaboration in trade union work. We are both for revolutionary opposition to the bureaucracy and for workers' democracy. We do believe that the reluctance of the SWP to champion a similar approach to Cuba, or even to forthrightly oppose the anti-working class actions of the Castro regime (forbidding the right to strike, the "vagrancy laws," etc.) are further indications of retreats from a proletarian socialist line.

Similarly while giving military support to the NLF and other national liberation movements against imperialism, we as revolutionaries maintain our political opposition to these movements which do not fight for socialist revolution and workers' democracy.

We have these and other differences with the SWP, which we are not interested in watering down or ignoring. Yet in France, despite differences, our comrades of *Lutte Ouvriere* are discussing unity with the *Ligue Communiste* on the basis of a working class orientation. In the United States the level of development is different, and while there is still no basis for revolutionary regroupment of tendencies, there is a basis for the active collaboration of socialists in rebuilding the revolutionary movement within the working class.

It is this test which is presented to us, the SWP, and all other socialist tendencies. Failure to meet it will be a setback for the entire movement.

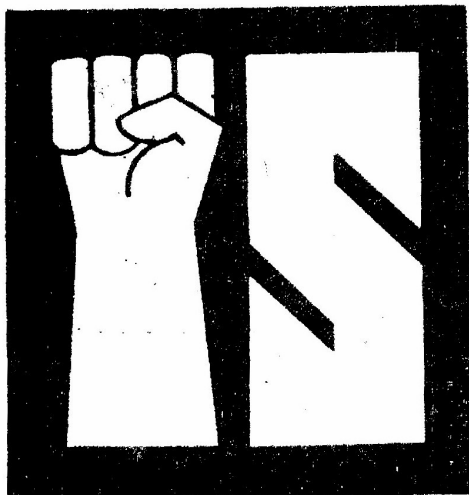
We propose that where there is agreement we collaborate together in joint industrial work. We would like to meet with you to discuss such collaboration in specific unions.

Awaiting your early reply,

Comradely,

Joel S. Geier

National Secretary
International Socialists



international

socialists

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