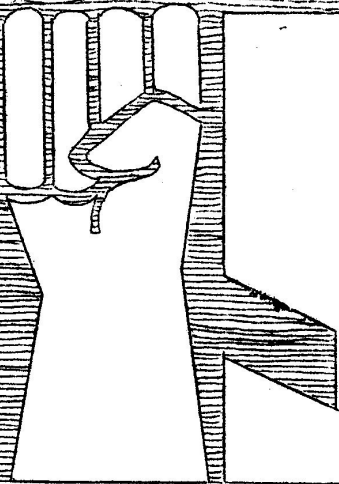


Peace Is at
Hand?



BRUNNEN

GOOD-BYE
VIETNAM?

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NAC STATEMENT ON RECRUITMENT OF "ORTHODOX TROTSKYISTS"

The IS is based upon the world outlook of third camp socialism. This position is more than an irreconcilable opposition to the imperialist war camps, or a position on the "Russian Question." It is an updating of Marxism as a guide to revolutionary action, as deep-going as Lenin's was for an earlier period of imperialism. ✓

Third camp socialism starts from the recognition that unlike the days of the Communist Manifesto, the struggle for world leadership is not confined to the class forces of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, but is now a three-cornered one between the bourgeoisie, the Stalinist bureaucracy, and the proletariat. Our politics start from the necessity for an independent proletarian policy in revolutionary opposition to the two other main classes of the modern world. *(more required here)*

The impact of Stalinism required our reexamining the question of working class rule, of what is both necessary and fundamental to socialism. This reexamination was in no way a moving away from Marxism, or Leninism, but a wiping away of the revisionist overlay glossed on to their revolutionary content during the period of the degeneration of the Russian revolution. It led us to the resumption of Marx's view that nationalization is progressive where the state which nationalizes property is the proletariat organized as the ruling class. Nationalization of property without workers' rule, directly or indirectly, is not sufficient to characterize a state as progressive or a workers' state. A workers' state exists only when the proletariat is raised to the position of ruling class, where it establishes its democracy. Without workers' democracy, without Soviets, parties, unions, or factory committees, without workers' control of production and the state, there is no workers' state. We do not accept the proposition that any other group can rule for or in the name of the working class, any more than we accept the revisionist idea that some other group can make the revolution for and without the working class, setting up workers' states in its wake. The emancipation and rule of the working class are the tasks of the working class itself.

These ideas are not just a position on Stalinism, they are the basis for our conception of revolutionary socialism from below. They are our guide to both theoretical questions on world politics, and to practical revolutionary activity, informing our attitudes to the question of working class consciousness and self-activity as the road to revolution, the relationship of the revolutionary party as leader, not substitute for the class, and the importance of workers' democracy within the revolutionary movement.

It is these ideas which make the IS a distinctive political tendency, with a distinctive world outlook. These politics were developed in, and out of the experiences, of the Trotskyist movement, the revolutionary Marxism on the 1920's and '30's. After 1935 the Trotskyist movement stood for revolutionary opposition to Stalinism, and later for the right to a multi-party system under socialism, gradually rejecting conclusions it had previously accepted in the process of the degeneration of the Russian revolution. The Trotskyist movement however never fully understood the nature of the bureaucracy; continually underestimating it, not believing it capable of playing an independent class role, first in Russia, then internationally, not believing it capable of extending its "revolution," expecting it to restore or at least pave the way for the restoration of capitalism. It was likewise confused on the nature of workers' states - maintaining that it

was possible for the working class to be politically usurped yet still the ruling class through the juridical form of nationalized property. Yet the working class has no other way to establish its class rule (unlike previous ruling classes) except politically, democratically, and collectively. It is this quality, inherent in the proletariat and no other class, which makes it the bearer of socialism.

While Trotsky was alive the position on Russia was an evolving one; with his death it has become frozen. Life itself, however, has not allowed the question to be frozen. The expansion of Stalinism, through Russian imperialism in Eastern Europe, and through the conquest of state power by indigenous Stalinist bureaucracies in Yugoslavia, Albania, China, and Cuba, are all indices that this social system is not an historical aberration from the degeneration of a workers' revolution, but an independent class force, alien and antagonistic to the proletariat and its revolution. To accept these states as workers' states, however qualified, requires a revision of Trotskyism and Marxism much greater than our own - a revision which says that it is possible for other social groups to carry out social revolution establishing the proletariat as ruling class, that a revolutionary workers' party and international are, no matter how desirable, not necessary.

The contradictions which the expansion of Stalinism introduce into "orthodox" Trotskyist politics has led to an instability in the Fourth International. To tendencies which accommodate to Stalinism (Deutscher, Pablo, etc.) or are willing to grant a substitute to the proletariat and a fixation on the progressiveness of nationalization even without workers' democracy, to looking toward guerrilla movements on the one hand, or progressive middle class elements on the other (Mandel, and the SWP, respectively), as revolutionary; and on the other hand, to those who remain true to the proletarian revolutionary perspective which was the whole meaning of Trotskyism, and who find themselves more and more forced out of official Fourth Internationalist groupings. Among these latter tendencies - Lutte Ouvriere, various oppositions which have issued out of the SWP in this country - we have much in common. Our third camp politics are the logical outcome, the consistent expression of a revolutionary proletarian perspective today.

For us to work with, collaborate with, and even have common organization with such Trotskyists is natural. We are for the formation of a revolutionary party which would group together all proletarian revolutionary tendencies - whose differences are wider than those between the IS and "orthodox" Trotskyism. The cement that would hold together such a party is the active revolutionary role that it plays in the class struggle. A propaganda sect however is held together by its common political assumptions and perspectives. Our own experience with multi-tendenced sects has shown how difficult such a proposition is where there is not common agreement on fundamental questions. Consequently the IS does not see itself as a regroupment grounds for the fractured Trotskyist movement, nor does it see itself as attempting to draw to itself all those "orthodox" Trotskyists who are dissatisfied with the many existing Trotskyist sects, and to build up a multi-tendenced group of different Trotskyist currents. We wish to maintain the third camp character of the IS as the basis for IS membership. Where and when there exist Trotskyist tendencies which although disagreeing with our third camp views theoretically, we judge to have substantial agreement with them in practice, acting upon revolutionary democratic socialist conclusions; sharing a common commitment to revolutionary socialism from below, emphasizing revolutionary opposition to Stalinism rather than its "progressive" character (that is, from our point of view, having an inconsistent theory, but placing the emphasis on what we consider to be the third

camp potential in the contradictions of Trotskyist theory) we are open to common organization when there is substantial agreement upon perspectives for the American revolution, and shared agreement on the functioning of revolutionaries in the American working class.

Our predecessor the WP-ISL had during most of its life "orthodox" tendencies (Abernites, Goldmanites, Vernites, etc.) without in any way experiencing any difficulties in mutual organization and action because of commonly held conceptions on revolution and workers' democracy, and American questions, which overrode political differences. In no way did this detract from the third camp character of the WP-ISL. Similarly, we are for admission to the IS of those Trotskyist currents whose politics we believe do not detract from our third camp character, and whose common assumptions on revolutionary proletarian practices outweigh in life and practice different theoretical views.

"Orthodox Trotskyist" tendencies should recognize that the I.S. attributes the degeneration of the various major 4th International tendencies after the 2nd World War in major part to objective conditions. But it also stresses the theoretical errors and loopholes in the "degenerated workers' state" analysis of Stalinism. The idea that a progressive working class society could exist without controlling the state and property had no disastrous consequences prior to the 2nd World War but with the imperialist expansion of Stalinism, the theory, previously typified by its anti-Stalinism, now opened the way for all sorts of substitutionist mistakes, e.g. Pabloism--the progressive nature of the bureaucracy as a force for revolutionary change, albeit "crude"; Guerilla-ism--the substitution of Stalinist and/or Stalinizing elites and class embryos resting on a peasant or even "urban" base as a socialist revolutionary instrumentality rather than the proletariat; centrism, class collaborationism, capitulation to bourgeois nationalism, party substitutionism a la Healy and the SWP in a different way, etc.

II

In our struggle to build a cadre organization leading to a revolutionary party we recognize that we will have to mount campaigns to win other tendencies to our politics and organization. The campaigns may result in either the recruitment of whole organizations or more likely the picking up of sections and individual cadres.

At this point in time such activity is a necessary although secondary priority in our work.

We have no blueprint for the future. We expect the essence of our politics to be the political essence of the future revolutionary party. The main road might very well be direct accretion to the IS; it might also involve regroupments, mergers, entries and the like. We will meet the future demands with loyalty to our political ideas and organization but without a narrow group chauvinism.

Without being sectarian we must however recognize that our own history teaches us that broad multi-tendencied groups without any solid common prospectives on immediate tasks will be overwhelmed by their differences and rendered impotent.

Given the level of the present class struggle and the divergent paths of the various socialist groups we foresee no immediate regroupment on a large scale or scope. However the gradual change in periods and the shakedown of social movements has produced vibrations in a number of tendencies which have already provided us with valuable cadres...and may provide us with more in the future. We have made attempts to recruit industrialized and/or pro-working class collectives evolving out of the demise of the New Left. We are just beginning investigatory probes at Maoist, semi-Maoist and post-Maoist groups with as yet no follow through commitment. Each of these efforts demands a political statement from us.

This motion confines itself to the question of splits from the SWP, the YSA, and their milieu. At this juncture the SWP is in a state of creeping disarray with small fractures to the left. The middle class tendencies upon which the SWP bases its line are now inevitably seeking to effectuate their moderated demands within the Democratic Party. Even after the elections the limitations of middle-class-led movements seem to be such in this period as to render a heavy upswing susceptible to SWP control improbable.

There is no evidence of even an empiric shift to the working class on the SWP's part but rather a deepening advocacy of the "New Radicalization" line. A possible split in the United Secretariat-Fourth International is looming. The majority has lurched to a new ostensibly working class oriented position (one far from free of its won New Radicalization-Third World Guerilla centered stance of the past.) The SWP and its allies are almost openly in conflict with the majority...counter factions in the British IMG and separate tendencies in Argentina. The tendency under such circumstances toward reification of one's position has already been demonstrated here...as the SWP hardens even more firmly in its infatuation with the middle class.

More importantly as a "middle level" explanation of the deepening inability of the SWP to make the turn is the question of its fundamental Party sectarianism and substitutionism. The SWP always tinged with a Zinovievist bureaucratic tendency emerged from the devastation of the 50's a hollow shell compared to its past strength. After exfoliating several tendencies all that remained was the post-Cannon bureaucracy and its supporters. The bureaucracy had a crass assumption that its program was a "finished" one; no more serious theoretical investigation was necessary. All that was needed was the crisis--and above all the fleshing out and building of the Party. (Take half cup dry preserved theory, add heaping reinforced tablespoon of party, pour in boiling crisis...instant revolution!)

As social movements flowered the SWP increasingly aimed at controlling them and maintaining them at a minimal radical bourgeois level. While thus clutching various fronts, the SWP was able to syphon off recruits thru the YSA into its ranks. The fact that the huge majority of these recruits reflected the radical bourgeois milieus they came from almost without change...was a source of little worry. In fact their consciousness at that level was reinforced by their Party work which became simply maintaining the bourgeois political character of the arenas. The party press, electoral campaigns, effective educational work more and more simply repeated the democratic demands pursued in the arenas.

to real analysis -
"Orthodox Trotskyists"

-5-

NAC

Some problem with analyzing SWP -
to analysis of S. Democratic
Thrust -

The Party bureaucracy followed this course with equanimity, conscious of its unchallenged control internally. What matter the consciousness of the cadre as long as the bureaucracy controlled. Embalmed in the leadership was the finished program and the working class orientation...the cadre at a later point could be instructed and maneuvered into a 'correct' tool. However, of course, the outlook of the leadership was not suspended from a hook hanging from the sky. The nature of that period, the SWP's vantage point on it, the consciousness of its new cadre, the logic of its line all combined to vitiate the once heralded 'proletarian' character of the bureaucracy.

The effect of maintaining the bourgeois consciousness of the fronts which played a leading role especially in the anti-war movement...was to help dam up any tendency to mass movement leftward. This was no small factor in building reservoirs of strength for McCarthy and McGovern to drain back into the Democratic cesspool. This effect of the SWP's opportunistic course goes unnoticed in its offices because the overriding consideration is not mass consciousness but a sectarian, substitutionist and elitist view of the Party.

✓ Cannon as party builder -

For Marxists the party is built in direct and open relationship to its political line of developing consciousness amongst the masses. Its work in the movements is openly connected to its working class revolutionary position. The act of building mass awareness of what is wrong and how to change it is the same act as building the party. The party and the direction of its public political line are the same.

As we have indicated the "private" line of the SWP has predictably atrophied and its working class orientation mutated. Therefore in the near future we expect no real turn to the working class--barring of course a sudden upswing of large proportions in the class struggle. A rhetorical shift--eg. "black, women's anti-war, student etc. movements are really working class in and of themselves" etc. is possible and more efforts towards coupling labor leaders into SWP front operations is likely; but no more than this.

However, there is a contradictory tendency at work. While the working class fundamentals have degenerated and atrophied they have not been obliterated...the SWP is still a centrist tendency capable of wide vacillations. The bureaucracy claims Trotsky and its past proletarian heritage as the sources of its legitimacy and tradition. This factor coupled to its party sectarianism prevented the logic of its political position from being achieved...that is, entry into the Democratic Party.

This has two consequences. One...in the long run as class conflict grows--if the SWP survives-- it will reenter the labor movement. It will probably do so with its petty bourgeois methodology intact...and it will orient toward the left bureaucratic currents it already has some ties to. This could be accomplished provided that these currents need such an ideological cover at that time...Two...the contradiction between the line and the heritage should produce a continuing series of fractures both to the left and the right, in the shorter run...providing that we are correct in estimating no revivification of old style movements and the slow, for now, character of the unrolling workers struggle. SWP successes if repeated again would of course dampen schism.

Therefore we project the continuation of our intermittent approaches to comrades in the process of splitting from the SWP varying in intensity depending on the situation. We shall continue where necessary to try to draw the SWP or SWPers into united actions, united fronts, debates, etc. Such actions shall be determined by the needs of the class struggle in the first place and the advantage that winning as large a force as the SWP to good positions would mean. Obviously we are doubtful about accomplishing this. Secondly by our aim of recruiting from that tendency. In no serious way will we permit such tactical maneuvering to prevent us from giving our full analysis of their political degeneration and a clear statement of our politics. And obviously these actions will not transcend in scale, their secondary priority value for us.

The NAC has already commissioned historical analyses of Trotskyism by Comrades Geier and Landy to serve as the basis for our continued approach. We will use appropriate vehicles: leaflets, a pamphlet, articles in Workers Power, as needed.

Given our internationalist outlook we will keep a weather eye on developments in the U. S. to gauge the direction of the various tendencies, who, by the standards of this point in time constitute significant left forces in a number of countries.

The tendencies coming out of the SWP have been and will be varied in nature. Some will be going right, some will leave politics, some will, reactively, go into the most isolative and sectarian direction; some will be bent on entering the living working class movement as revolutionaries. This is why the brunt of our appeal has been and will be our serious industrialization efforts and union orientation. We will deal not only with industrialization but also advance our specific political orientation in the factories and unions. We will also stress how we can politically effect black, women's anti-war lines within and by the class on a socialist basis.

We will attempt to counterpose our overall politics to those of the SWP. We will attempt to recruit them to our full position. We will in no way hide behind the minority of comrades in the IS who hold a position on the "Russian Question" closer to the SWP's. This in no way precludes attempts by "Orthodox Trotskyists" in the IS to reach these same people.

However, it must be emphasized that the recruitment of tendencies which have been in opposition to the IS is the responsibility of the leadership. This means that the majority must have communication with the person or persons and should attempt actively to recruit them to our third camp world view, which we see as the most consistent expression of revolutionary socialist politics. In recruiting other tendencies the NAC or a democratic representative of the entire organization will direct and control all negotiations with other tendencies.

When we propose united projects in what we regard as major arenas, counter actions may not be preferred, however.

Thirdly, in terms of the organization as a whole, once such a proposal as we have been following is passed by an IS national body, every official local body of the organization is expected to support the venture where possible, within our priorities and resources.

Fourthly, the NAC is the leadership body of the IS responsible to the NC and the Convention and membership in general. It can make all decisions consonant with that fact. Its actions will be reported to the membership through existing channels and to the NC and convention regularly.

Fifthly, The SWP and its spinoffs are not an arena for us.

III

In the past we have recruited individuals, even grouplets, with real differences: eg, Castroite illusions, etc. The present recruitment is significantly different since the groupings concerned here tend to be more "sophisticated" and possessing a more consistent outlook theoretically elaborated over time. The possibility of alteration of our "third camp" viewpoint is proportionally greater therefore. The NAC advances its line, however, in full confidence that the essential outlook of the IS on the class nature of Stalinism is correct and provable. Failures in the education of our cadre on such questions will be remedied or we will fail to meet the needs of the class struggle.

Despite our differences we welcome the former SWP comrades who have joined and those who may join in the future. Welcome to an organization where you can enjoy the rights of full discussion and comradely attention to your views. Welcome to a joint, fruitful and unified struggle to build the revolutionary movement in the U.S. and the world!

NAC MOTIONS ON VIETNAM "PEACE SETTLEMENT"

1. That the IS initiate public meetings, as large as possible, to discuss the peace settlement as soon as it is announced, either alone or in conjunction with other groups.

2. That our major emphasis be on denouncing America's imperialist role and the imperialist nature of the peace settlement. We welcome a cessation of the hostilities, but oppose the political basis of this cessation. The US had nothing to negotiate for and we still demand the unconditional withdrawal of US troops. We also denounce Russia and Chinese imperialism for their pressuring the Vietnamese to accept this sell-out.

3. That we also denounce McGovern and the Democratic Party for supporting this settlement. McGovern reveals his principles are imperialist. His only difference with Nixon was tactical - he considered the Vietnam war a defeat and was willing to take worse terms for US capitalism.

4. This settlement represents a relative victory for US imperialism - i.e., it grants the US the continued right to intervene in Vietnam, if now only through its puppets. We oppose the settlement and the imperialist commission and coalition government that seem likely to result from it.

5. The settlement is not a military sell-out by the NLF. No one can demand that they fight on to the last man and woman when they had been completely abandoned, by the peace movement in this country which collapsed into the Democratic Party due to misleadership, and by Russia and China. However, the settlement and the NLF's public response to it does represent a political sell-out of the struggle for self-determination, as indeed their original seven-point program did. Rather than denouncing the settlement as being forced on them by US imperialism (in the manner of the Bolsheviks at Brest-Litovsk) they are praising the settlement. It is not clear at all that this is just a smart maneuver, given their history of sell-outs in the past, and represents political dishonesty to the masses they claim to represent.

6. Any coalition between Stalinism and capitalism is inherently unstable and the situation in Vietnam must go one way or the other. A resumption of hostilities is quite possible in the future as long as the just aspirations of the Vietnamese people are denied. However, a truce in the fighting, no matter for how long, does open up the possibility of the emergence of a socialist vanguard - that is, the relative breathing space that the settlement opens up raises the question of arming the workers and peasants to continue the struggle for self-determination, to defend their rights, organizations and land, and poses the possibility of a movement against the PRG and for a workers' and peasants' government. We regard the possibility as slight in the immediate period, but it is what we point to. For what is at issue now is the question of the internal regime - and we give no support to capitalism or Stalinism on that question.

7. The following is our tentative program for the Vietnamese situation:

1. No imperialist deals - no imperialist commissions.
2. Complete, immediate, and unconditional withdrawal of US troops disarm the ARVN.

3. For military support of the NLF insofar as it defends the Vietnamese people from imperialist forces.
4. Immediate release of all war and political prisoners.
5. For the immediate expulsion of the US puppets from the coalition government or authority.
6. For full democratic rights of the Vietnamese people.
7. Workers' control of production - land to the peasants.
8. Arm the workers and peasants - for workers' and peasants' defense guards to defend their organizations and their land.
9. No political support to the coalition government or the PRG - for a workers' and peasants' government.

FURTHER MOTIONS ON VIETNAM "PEACE SETTLEMENT"

(NOTE: The motions which follow were offered as additions to the NAC motions. A straw poll indicated support for the Chris H. motions, which constitute the tentative line of the IS. Final disposition will take place at a subsequent meeting. Point 1 of the following is supported by SL; points 2 and 3 are not.)

Motions by Chris H.

1. The political character of the present situation is one of armed truce. The situation is now entering a period of maneuvering which will be twofold in character: (a) a two-sided maneuvering between the US imperialists and their puppets, and the indigenous Stalinists (NLF, PRG, North Vietnam) as to who shall control Vietnam - this is a continuation of the self-determination struggle and we give support to a victory of the PRG/NLF; (b) a simultaneous struggle by the Stalinists to consolidate political hegemony in Vietnam and power vis-a-vis the working class and peasantry - in this we give no support to the PRG/NLF.
2. As between the indigenous Stalinists and the imperialists, the balance of forces is favorable to the Stalinists in the long run. Imperialism is undermined socially in Vietnam and has no indigenous base of support; South Vietnamese capitalism is a bloated, moribund near-corpse.
3. In the short run, we cannot predict with certainty among possible outcomes, namely (i) the maintenance of a non-Stalinist regime through interference by China, the USSR, and the US - possibly a political standoff among all three; such an outcome would represent a denial of self-determination; (ii) the maintenance of a non-Stalinist regime by the Stalinists themselves; given the independent nature of the North Vietnamese bureaucracy, this is a short-term possibility only, related to tactical considerations (relation of political forces, reparations aid, etc.); (iii) breakdown of coalition regime (inevitable in the long run) and coming to power of Stalinism - this would represent the achievement of self-determination, but on a totalitarian, class basis. We indicate the variant possibilities. We politically oppose all of them. We point out that without the intervention of a revolutionary working class, all alternatives are defeats for the Vietnamese people and all represent a political usurpation against them. We point out that the promise of self-determination in the settlement is fraudulent. "No elections, free or unfree, will settle the fate of Vietnam" - it will be settled by open or

covert warfare between the contending ruling classes, unless the revolutionary working class alternative can be built.

Motion by SL

The coalition government or authority will maintain bourgeois property rights even with the Stalinists in the regime. Over time this is unstable in direction. The Stalinists are the only indigenous real force in the country - therefore we could expect Stalinization over time. However, the inter-imperialist rivalry - Russia, China, America, and possibly Japan in future - will have its impact on the coalition government. This could maintain a stabilization of a shaky variety so that the balance is not shifted and the powers brought into conflict - a buffer regime. They may be unable to maintain the balance because of their rivalries and/or Vietnamese upheavals. The other variant - an organic shift to a Stalinist society through palace coup, salami tactics, etc., is far from excluded but must take into account potential US aid and the possible need for a US face-saver in the event of change. It is not excluded that the Stalinist North Vietnamese and Stalinist cadres of the NLF could be (when and if American forces are withdrawn and ARVN disintegrates politically) policing force for the coalition government and maintenance of the imperialist deal.

POLITICAL LINE ON SCHOOL INTEGRATION CASES AND BUSING¹

CHRIS H.

1. Our basic position flows from the democratic right of any student to attend any school. We distinguish this from a strategy for equality in education: we are for the right to attend any school as a democratic right, but the fight for this right may or may not be part of a strategy for equal education. At various times, the fight for school integration, the fight for community control, or other strategies have been posed as the best means to achieve equal education; whether or not any of these positions was correct, the distinction between the democratic right and the strategy must be grasped. Further, to fail to grasp it leads to confusion. We support the right to attend any school, and therefore the right to integration. However, at various times - for example in the 1950's - should we have supported this right, and fought vigorously beside the blacks struggling for integration, while proposing further or different strategies for equality? The question is an open one, but at least the possibility must be grasped.

At present, we are politically neither for or against integration in education. We support the right of integration so long as this is not to be accomplished specifically through lowering the conditions of some students. (In such a case we must oppose the specific plan, while making clear our overall support for the right of integration.) In specific cases, we may support or oppose an integration scheme because of specific circumstances - for example, ulterior purposes such as undermining the position of a teacher union, etc.

Today we do not propose integration as a strategy for achieving equal education. In some cases (for example where specific school district lines are redrawn, affecting one specific school district) what is involved is not an overall school policy, but a case of integration for specific groups of students. In such a case we support the democratic right of those students to attend whichever school they choose, but do not regard this as speaking at all to the question of a strategy for equal education, and we make this clear. (In many cases, the students so affected will be the children of the black petty-bourgeoisie, povertycrats etc., and while we support their democratic right, their integration offers nothing to the black masses.) In other cases integration is posed as a general policy for a given urban area.

In this case, we neither support or oppose integration, per se. We make clear that it is not at this time a strategy for equal education. We do not support - because we do not see integration of the races per se, or integration between less and more privileged sectors, as a solution to the problems of the most oppressed even in the short run. The problems do not result from physical separation from the white race nor from psychological separation from the "more motivated," but from poorer education in the context of an oppressed status within society as a whole. Integration schemes merely propose to achieve a given ratio of blacks to whites. In the context of declining educational services in general, this is no solution even in the short run - after a short period of time the social and educational problems would reappear in a new context. We do not oppose - because the way is left open for demands for improved services to all to counter the deterioration which can be forecast. But the solution to the educational problems of the most oppressed lies in a combined struggle for better education and against the social oppression which is the context for black oppression in education.

1. Adopted by NAC as basis for amendment.

2. We OPPOSE two-way busing schemes, or other plans which send some students to worse schools than those they now attend. This is an exception to our general support for the right of integration. The basis for this is that in addition to representing no real gain for black students and others to be bused to the "better" schools, two-way busing imposes an immediate penalty on whites and others to be bused to the "worse" schools. In an immediate sense, it makes them pay for the benefits accorded the others. Even if the benefits were real and not illusory, we oppose benefits made for one section of the working class at the direct expense of another, even if the other is more privileged.

3. Our immediate response to white attempts to prevent integration is: defense of the blacks. This means not simply physical defense against attack, but also defense of their right to attend the school. This is based, first, on our support for the right of blacks, or anyone, to attend any school they wish; second, on the concrete necessity of defending this right as a pre-requisite for propagandizing on any long-term strategy to blacks; third, on our method, which is not to counterpose a successful long-term strategy to a mistaken short-term strategy unless the latter involves an attack on other sections of the class. We stand with blacks in their attempt to achieve better conditions and defend them even where we believe the strategy is mistaken, so long as the strategy is not directed against other workers.

4. We state this support in the context of denouncing the integration schemes of today as false strategies involving no real gains for blacks and designed, by their liberal proponents, to grant token gains at the expense of whites and to rivet the attention of the black masses on false goals. The liberal strategy is counterposed to a strategy of mass action, either for those or other ends. We call for black workers' organizations and black community groups to organize mass action around these demands:

Better education - a crash program to build new schools with smaller class size, full facilities, etc. Full support to teacher unionism. Non-racist education - end racist indoctrination and provide studies in black history, etc.

Full employment - jobs for blacks, jobs for all. Equal work, equal pay for blacks in all jobs. 30 hour work week at full 40 hours' pay to end unemployment. End forced-work schemes

Rebuild the cities - low cost housing for all, cheap mass transportation, free health, recreation, and cultural facilities.

Convert the Arms Economy, Tax Corporate and Finance Income to finance social reconstruction. No tax on incomes under \$12,000 a year.

Defend the Black Community - for workers' defense organizations to defend the black community against government, police and racist mob action.

5. Our implementation of this program and for points 1-4 above is in the main propagandistic. The main vehicle for this propaganda is our press; however, in arenas where we may be active, especially in rank and file organizations and rank and file newspapers with black readership/membership, we seek to present in propagandistic form as much of the above position and specific program as may be appropriate. In the AFT, we work to build support for the above point on education in an active sense, i.e., to build support for this demand and to include it in the program of groups in which we may be active.

THESES ON CANARSIE
BY JACK T.

1. Two schools in the Canarsie section of Brooklyn were closed during the week of October 16-21. They were closed by parents of white students demonstrating outside the buildings and sitting in to protest the transfer of 34 black students from an adjacent school district to John Wilson school and the impending transfer of 50 others to the Isaac Bildersee school. There was no question of bussing anybody, and certainly no question of bussing whites to black schools.

2. The whites, in what has become standard practice, insisted that their reasons for taking such militant action had nothing to do with race or racism. The issue, they said, was overcrowding. The New York Times reported:

"The John Wilson enrollment of 1600 is 8% over capacity, according to the Board of Education. Parents barricaded inside the school argued that the influx of seventh graders from Tilden Houses would seriously overcrowd the school's classes for slow learners, where enrollments are kept at a minimum to provide opportunities for greater individual attention from the teachers.

The parents also expressed resentment over John Wilson's lack of special funds for the kind of remedial programs, teachers' aides and paraprofessional classroom workers that are paid for in Brownsville schools through special Federal and state grants."

These issues are clearly important ones, but they are ones that are only raised under these circumstances. They serve as a smokescreen to hide what is clearly the real issue behind the opposition to blacks: racist exclusion of blacks. Anytime students are transferred from one school district to another, without corresponding students being transferred out or new funds being added, it can be argued that standards will deteriorate. Had the racist whites in Little Rock been more sophisticated they too could with equal legitimacy have claimed the issue was 'quality education'.

3. There appears to be no question as to where the blacks stand: for them it has become a matter of principle. Black students sat outside the school all day long in busses "the white parents refusing to let them in the school and their own determined parents refusing to let them go home." (New York Times) Black parents, supported by parents of blacks who already attend John Wilson school, rejected an offer to go to Bildersee school. Polarization between blacks and whites grew. Both black and white parents received additional support from other blacks and whites in the community.

4. Our assessment of the situation is that it is pitting whites against blacks under circumstances which tend to increase racial animosities, break down the possibility of unified class struggle, and open both up to a crippling attack.

5. The only alternative open to blacks is to attend more crowded schools with worse facilities and to obtain what is generally a worse education. (The much greater overcrowding of the black schools was the original reason for the transfers.) The implications of this alternative are the same as those in point 4. above. That is, a racially divided and hostile working class, only this time with blacks institutionally subordinated to whites. That is not an acceptable

alternative to the blacks, nor is it acceptable to us. Under these circumstances, appeals to blacks to join whites in a class movement of benefit to both would ring very hollow.

6. We therefore support the right of the blacks to attend the schools of their choice. Since the Canarsie schools appear to be their choice, we defend their right to attend these schools specifically. We further state that they are correct to wish to do so and we in fact would urge them to do so in order to end the situation described in point 5. above.

7. We also direct propoganda to the whites. We state that they are allowing them to be used; that their exploiters, the capitalists, attempt to pit black and white workers against one another; that in a situation such as this in which there is a ruling class anti-working-class offensive taking place, these skirmishes only soften both up for the kill; that they should seek to build a movement to launch an offensive for genuine quality education at the expense of the corporations and the rich; to fight for smaller classes, special facilities for slow learners and other remedial programs, and the other issues which they themselves raised, and to fight for broader working class interests; that in order to launch and carry out such a struggle, they need a united movement of both black and white workers; that in order to build such a movement they must have the support of blacks; that this support is only obtainable on the basis of black equality; and that therefore from their own point of view (that of the white workers) they must support the black demands.

8. We call upon and urge the blacks to join us in the above-described approach to whites: to attempt to initiate a broader struggle and to call upon and encourage whites to join them in that struggle, and to make the arguments we ourselves make in point 7. above. But, in keeping with our general methodology of never asking oppressed groups to subordinate their special demands, we do not make our support for their struggle conditional upon their acceptance of that position, nor upon anything else.

9. The latest occurrence in this matter is a ruling by Chancellor Harvey Scribner of the New York City school system. Scribner, bowing to the pressure of the racist whites, reversed the order and prohibited the black students from entering John Wilson School. Police were brought in to squelch efforts by black parents, insisting their children be allowed in the school, to get them in. This step represents a dramatic, serious and dangerous reversal of the trend toward integration of schools that began in 1954. An official act taken to reverse that trend and prohibiting blacks who were actively seeking entrance into the white schools from gaining it, if allowed to stand, will mean a defeat for blacks. In the climate of racial hostility, which is developing it is not likely to be the last. We condemn the new ruling and demand that John Wilson and other schools be opened to black access.

(This statement adopted by NAC with the exception of the final sentence in paragraph 6 and the final sentence in paragraph 8.)

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE THEORIES OF STATE CAPITALISM

by Levin Bradley

Charles Leinenweber's document on "The Theory of State Capitalism," Bulletin 28 argues that the Law of Value applies to Stalinist societies. This is one theory of state capitalism; others include Cliff and Mattick. A critique of Leinenweber's theory can help us understand what is wrong with the theories of state capitalism and why the Stalinist societies are bureaucratic collectivist.

Leinenweber says p. 6 "where labor is exploited and where there is accumulation, the law of value operates." He talks about the relationships of workers to each other in a society where the law of value holds p. 5: ". . . workers work in relationship to each other. They work in relationship to each other, and Marxist theory so far as it is a social theory, expresses the fact that workers work in relationship to each other. That's why it's got to be general labor, that's why it's got to be abstract labor. You don't look at the law of value operating in one commodity produced by one worker. It's got to be social." This understanding of the law of value is fundamentally mistaken.

Under feudalism, for example, labor is exploited and accumulation occurs, yet the law of value doesn't hold. Leinenweber's discussion of workers acting in relationship to each other is too general--that relationship must be mediated through exchange for the law of value to hold. On a feudal manor, various serfs who are bound to the land, toil and make their living. They pay a considerable proportion of their grain to their lord as the customary rent, have to mill their grain at the lord's mill and have to work as forced labor on the corvée. The relationship between producers and consumers in the manor economy, and between manors, is not one regulated by the law of value. There is no commodity production in the Marxist sense in such an economy, that is, the goods produced are not bought and sold. Labor is exploited, that is, the worker does not get the full product of his labor; it is expropriated by the lord. The expropriated part is surplus product, there is exploitation, but no value and no surplus value. There are use values but no exchange values and no commodities. Yet there is accumulation. At times the manor economy stagnates, but at other times it grows. When ever the means of production and the employment of labor increases there is accumulation. Of course the system is not driven by accumulation, but accumulation occurs. So feudalism is a system where exploitation and accumulation occur, but where there is no commodity production, no exchange value and the law of value doesn't hold.

Capitalism is the first social system in the world where commodity production dominates, where the law of value regulates society, where the society is driven by the push for accumulation. Let us examine further the nature of commodity production in a capitalist society. If I make myself a table lamp with my do-it-yourself equipment which I use in my home this is not commodity production. The lamp may be identical to a lamp produced by a capitalist enterprise which I can buy in a store, but as long as I don't sell it, it is not a commodity. (If I should sell it, its price will be determined by the socially necessary labor time it takes to produce lamps in the society. If it takes me five hours to produce a lamp, but takes the average capitalist lamp factory twenty minutes the price I can get for my lamp will vary accordingly.)

In a tractor factory workers interact. They "relate" to one another. But their relationships to each other are determined by the production of use values, the various parts and eventually the completed tractor. Although the capitalists keep a careful accounting of the production of each worker, the relationships between the workers is not determined by the exchange of commodities, but by their functions in the actual production process.

Consider now the schools run by a capitalist state, or the diplomatic corps. School buildings and embassies are built, contractors and construction workers are paid money. Once in operation janitors, teachers and diplomats are paid wages or salaries. Yet what is the product: the education of students or diplomacy. Education is "free," that is, the pupil does not have to pay a fee to go to school, yet we all know this is paid

for through taxes. Now the working population pays for and uses other services, for example, the neighborhood bowling alley. The difference is that the worker has to pay directly for each use of the bowling alley--a commodity in the form of an intangible good or service--while the schools are operated through the medium of the state as a whole.

Leinenweber says that capitalism is not production for profit but for accumulation. (p. 1) Here he confuses profit with capitalist consumption. Surplus value is the value of the total product produced in the society above the necessary value consumed by the working class. It takes the form of profit, interest, and rent. Profit is the excess of revenues from sales over the operating expenses of an actual capitalist enterprise. Through the price mechanism, supply and demand, monopoly, etc. a given capitalist enterprise may get more or less of a share of the total surplus value in proportion to its invested capital. The individual enterprise does not get a return in proportion to its invested capital, but according to its fortunes on the market, yet the rate of return is roughly proportionate to the invested capital due to the tendency for an averaging of the rate of profit between industries of high and low profitability.

As an example take the case of normal corporate capitalist commodity production. If an auto company is producing several lines of cars, each must be profitable. If an Edsel is produced, for example, it is quickly phased out. Every plant and product line must operate at a profit (revenues exceeding expenses) and even a sufficiently high rate of profit or it will be closed down.

The way profit regulates the accumulation of capital is as follows: If a certain line of production is profitable capital flows into that area, accumulation takes place. If a line is unprofitable or not profitable enough no accumulation will take place, despite the needs of the society. Thus there is a great need for low cost housing, but due to mortgage rates, costs of production, etc., private capitalism cannot fill the need at the necessary low cost profitably, so such investment is left to the government if it occurs at all.

Now consider subsidized industries, such as the airlines. They receive subsidies in the form of air mail and government built airport facilities. Yet they can go bankrupt, and if a big enough producer is involved the state may have to come in to prop them up.

There is a world of difference between state economic functions and those of capitalist, profit making enterprises. Even General Motors, a corporation bigger than the economies of most of the countries in the world, is dependent on a market and consumer purchases for its sales. It has to realize its profits through the sale of its commodities. But the state has something that neither General Motors, AT&T, nor any other corporation has, the power of taxation. By fiat, backed by laws and ultimately by jails and the power of confiscation, it can get revenues. It does not depend upon the selling of commodities on the market for its income. The diplomatic service and the courts are in part economic functions. Their victims do not purchase their services as commodities; they are financed out of the general exchequer.

Some countries, such as France, run state capitalist enterprises, such as Renault. Instead of the stocks and bonds being owned by private capitalists they are owned by the state. The enterprise is run by the old board or a similar board, and along essentially the same lines. Its commodities are sold on the market in competition with private capitalist firms for a profit. Occasionally they may have a bad year, and make up the loss from their own funds.

There is obviously a qualitative difference between running a car company for profit and operating a public service such as schools or hospitals. The difference is between commodity production and that of services provided out of the general exchequer. If a city run bus company becomes "free" it is not really free, but it simply means that travellers can ride for free, while the service is maintained out of general government revenues which all tax payers support.

In advance capitalist society there is an increasing encroachment of statification and governmental bureaucratic control. Sections of private capitalist commodity producing sections of the economy are increasingly taken over by the state. Further, the state

increasingly carries out production for its own use. When I make something for my own use it is not a commodity, has no exchange value, but has a use value. When the government operates its own arsenals to produce weapons for its own use which aren't sold on the market the same applies.

Consider the case of the statification of a once profitable enterprise, such as city bus lines. This case will illustrate the nature of competitive production, the law of value, and the limits of the capitalist system. At one time bus lines, street cars, and subways were private enterprises run for profit. They competed against alternate modes of transportation in the city, e.g. horse carts, bicycles, foot traffic, etc. Over the years with the development of alternate forms of transportation the value relationship changed. Auto cars and truck services became more important in the cities.

Now in connection with each use value of bus transportation there is a socially determined exchange value. The case is simple enough that it can be thoroughly examined. Bus companies' costs are made up of the cost of buses, the wages of drivers and mechanics, the cost of fuel and the maintenance of bus barns. There are a few bus manufacturers in the country who compete against each other, but there are certain basic parts and concomitant expenses that have to go into each bus, such as a diesel engine, seats, etc. The wages for drivers and mechanics are determined by the local labor market. It is possible to figure out the exact amount of labor time that goes into each passenger-mile, e.g. how much time the bus driver works to bring one passenger a mile, how much labor time goes into producing one bus and then how much goes into one passenger-mile as determined by the life of a bus. Similarly we can calculate how much labor time is expended for one passenger mile of taxi travel or personal auto travel. Now labor time is not directly transferred into prices, because the labor time of a bus driver may be paid more than that of a taxi driver, while a mechanic will be paid still more. Further, the fact that there are only six bus producers enables them to get together to extract a monopoly price for their product, where bicycle manufacturers may be very competitive, with foreign imports based on cheap labor underselling the domestic production, etc. The effect is that there are differential prices for each mode of transportation. These prices are constantly changing due to new inventions, changes in productivity, and in the relationship of prices to labor time.

Over the years privately owned bus transportation could not compete effectively against alternate modes of transportation. There were just certain minimal costs for operating a bus service beyond which a company couldn't go without operating at a loss. This price reflects the cost of the various commodity inputs to the production of a given use value--one bus ride. It became definitely cheaper for a consumer to travel from one place to another by another means of transportation, e.g. owning a car, taking a taxi, hitchhiking, etc. Bus companies throughout the country began to lose money. For many years various progressives had been calling for the municipalization of buses as an essential public service. But what forced the capitalist class to carry out such a drastic move against private property is that bus services are essential to a capitalist labor market. The cost of buying a car is just too high for some workers that they won't be able to get to work without a bus service. It is worth it to the capitalists to get their workers to work even if it means violating capitalist norms with a state run enterprise.

Now if the State wants to maintain the bus service it faces the exact same economic problems as its capitalist predecessors. If it charges enough to cover the actual production costs, even without a profit, its service will be priced so high that people will use other means of transportation. So the State will operate the buses at a loss, subsidizing it out of the general exchequer. When the bus company is operated year after year at a loss it is obvious that it is not performing like any other capitalist enterprise. Capitalist accounting scruples constantly lead politicians to raise bus rates in order to try to make a profit, but in so doing they only drive away riders and revenues fall. Like the capitalist enterprise before them they find there is no way to operate it at a profit; it is kept alive out of the funds of the general treasury.

The difference between state enterprises run at a loss and subsidized private enterprises is that the latter still depend on their ability to realize a profit on the market. They may be dragged along for years by subsidies, but when the underlying value relationships change in relation to other competing industries, eventually a full state takeover must come. This is what happened to Rolls Royce in England. The Penn Central, recently bailed out of bankruptcy, is still operating at a loss. If this continues it will almost certainly have to be nationalized, since the entire Eastern United States depends on it. And as long as it is not making a profit, or even a high enough profit, private investors will not bail it out. This is why all but one commuter railroad in the US is no government operated, and that one was recently bought by its employees and also faces being driven out of business by a competing public bus service.

The law of value means that commodities exchange on the market, that they have both use value and exchange value. Also the law of value regulated the whole system. It determines the rate of profit, the nature of investments and the fluctuations of the system. Leinenweber himself supplies the evidence that this does not occur in the Stalinist countries, and unwittingly outlines the economic nature of bureaucratic collectivist societies.

Leinenweber says, "the commodity market is eliminated" p. 6 under Stalinist societies. Further, "the state regulates the whole system, and collectively accumulates for the whole thing. All of this. It decides the allocation of accumulation; it decides the rate of accumulation for everything." p. 8. Further, ". . . there is no longer fetishism of the commodity, but there is instead fetishism of the plan. That is, the social relationships at the point of production are manifested instead of in the inter-relationships of commodities, those social relationships are manifested in the fulfillment of the plan." p. 6.

Bureaucratic collectivism is a social system where the bureaucratic ruling class controls the economy. It does not obey the laws of capitalism, there is no commodity production for profit, there is no commodity market, no commodities, and no exchange value. The law of value does not regulate the rate of profit, nor where accumulation occurs, that is where labor and machines are to be allocated. The society is regulated by bureaucratic planning. Prices bear a completely irrational relationship to labor times, and there are no (exchange) values produced in the society.

If we take Leinenweber's example of steel, we can see how he ignores the whole question of profit. Leinenweber gives the example of private capitalist steel production where a piece of steel sells for \$100, of which \$70 covers material costs, \$20 wages and \$10 surplus value which is used for accumulation. In the "state capitalist" case an equivalent piece of steel sells for \$100. \$70 is material costs, +\$30 wages of which \$15 are taken in taxes and used for accumulation.

What Leinenweber ignores is that Stalinist steel does not steel at its production costs, but considerably below it, for example, for \$60. In order to stimulate heavy industry and accumulation steel is sold at a considerable loss in order to make it cheap, while steel and other capital goods industries are maintained with heavy subsidies. Prices bear no relationship to production costs or labor time, but instead are bureaucratically determined. The steel mill does not have to find new markets to obtain a profit, for there is no market. Steel is allocated here and there according to the political needs of the bureaucracy and how it wants to see economic development take place.

What has been said above can be applied to what Tony Cliff says in his book Russia: A Marxist Analysis. Cliff argues that the law of value does not hold internally in Russia. "Hence if one examines the relations within the Russian economy, one is bound to conclude that the source of the law of value, as the motor and regulator of production, is not to be found in it. In essence, the laws prevailing in the relations between the enterprises and between the labourers and the employer-state would be no different

if Russia were one big factory managed directly from one centre, and if all the labourers received the goods they consumed directly in kind." (p. 159) Cliff therefore looks to the relationship of Russia with the rest of the world to find the operation of the law of value. "Because international competition takes mainly a military form, the law of value expresses itself in its opposite, viz. a striving after use values." "Value is the expression of competition between independent producers; Russia's competition with the rest of the world is expressed by the elevation of use values into an end, serving the ultimate end of victory in the competition. Use values, while being an end, still remain a means." And further, "Use values have become the aim of capitalist productio."p.16

Cliff's "the law of value expresses itself in its opposite, viz a striving after use values" negates the law of value itself. Capitalism means commodity production for profit. The commodity has a dual character, that of a use value, and of an exchange value. This is what the first volume of Capital is all about.

Finally a few quotes from Paul Mattick's chapter "State-Capitalism and the Mixed Economy," from his book Marx and Keynes will show that although Mattick considers the Stalinist economies to be state-capitalist, he, like Leinenweber, indicates all the ways in which there is no commodity production for profit, and the bureaucracy replaces the functions of the law of value under private capitalism.

Mattick discusses the production and control of the social surplus. "Money wages are paid to the workers, whose function it is to create a value greater than that represented by their wages. This surplus is allocated in accordance with the decisions of governments." (pp. 289) Further, "The surplus-product no longer requires market competition in order to be realized as profit; it derives its specific material character, and its distribution, from conscious decisions on the part of the state's planning agencies. That these decisions are co-determined by international economic and political competition and by the requirements of accumulation does not alter the fact that the lack of an internal capital market demands a centrally-determined direct system of decision-making with regard to the allocation of the total social labor and the distribution of the total social product." p. 290

Mattick sees behind "the use of capitalistic incentives in state-capitalist economy. They do not affect the control of investments by government, nor its control of total social production and its division in accordance with a general plan. Wherever the outcome of these 'innovations' does not suit the general plan, a government veto can change the situation either by decree or through a change in pricing policies. The limited 'free market' can at any time be suspended by the real power relations which stand behind the pseudo-market relations." (p. 291)

Earlier in his book when Mattick explains Marx's view of capitalism he correctly points out that when Marx "speaks of the 'self-expansion of capital, of 'accumulation for the sake of accumulation," he speaks of the compulsive and never-resting drive for exchange-value." p. 97.

Virtually all previous societies had accumulation, which is another word for expanded reproduction. Only capitalism made accumulation the driving force of the society. Because Stalinism also practices accumulation for accumulation's sake does not make it capitalist. Theoretically there could be a state capitalist society. It would be a commodity producing society where production was regulated by profits and the law of value. The bureaucratic ruling class came into power on the ruins of capitalist society when the working class was defeated or quiescent. In strengthening its own class power it attempts to rapidly industrialize its country, subordinating consumption to production. It's control of the nationalized economy enabled it to suppress commodity production and use the state plan to destroy the price mechanism and the tyranny of the market. The basic defining characteristics of a bureaucratic collectivist society is the relations of social classes to production. The working class works for wages, where the bureaucracy controls the economy and state and makes all the basic economic decisions. The bureaucratic class arose in opposition to the private capitalist class which it expropriates and these two classes are mortal enemies. The

capitalist makes his living through the private ownership of the means of production, the bureaucrat through his place in the collective bureaucratic hierarchy.

The question of this paper is what economic laws the bureaucratic collectivist economy obeys. We have seen how instead of the law of value regulating production, the rate of profit and investment, in Stalinist societies all this is done by the bureaucracy through its political control of the economy.

This does not mean that bureaucratic collectivism as a social system cannot develop in a state capitalist direction. Capitalism itself has gone through tremendous changes, from a time of basically handicraft industry to the permanent arms economy and the invading bureaucratic negation of the law of value of today.

In Yugoslavia, for example, production is increasingly regulated by profitability. Instead of the League of Communists (CP) determining investments according to political priorities, the central banks invest according to the profitability of individual firms. These firms not only practice self financing, but they can trade with foreign countries individually even to the detriment of domestic firms which need their products if they can get a better price abroad. The society is increasingly oriented towards consumers goods rather than capital goods production. In the political sphere the right to strike is essentially recognized, with the government compiling official strike statistics. The League of Communists still has a totalitarian stronghold over the country and remains a bureaucratic ruling class.

Similar developments are occurring in Hungary and in lesser forms in other Eastern European countries. This presents no problems for the theory of bureaucratic collectivism, which is a generic characterization of the social relations of production in Stalinist societies. While the general economic characteristic of bureaucratic collectivist societies is the destruction of the market, commodity production, exchange value and the law of value as the regulator of society, while the bureaucratic plan instead regulates the society, this need not always be so. We must always be alive for the changes occurring beneath the surface and within the general framework of a given class society. The general situation for bureaucratic collectivist societies is to have a bureaucratic, not a state capitalist economy. If the economy should become more and more state capitalist--commodity production for profit--this would not signify a social revolution, for the same bureaucratic collectivist class would hold power. It would mean a change in the dynamic and regulation of the economy.

State capitalism then is not an impossibility; it may be developing in some states. But it is not the norm of Stalinist societies as we have known them up to this time. Those theoreticians who call Russia state capitalist have to argue that capitalism is not commodity production for profit but something else. They either make the meaning of the law of value so broad that it can apply to any class society which has economic growth--Leinenweber, "where labor is exploited and where there is accumulation, the law of value operates"--or add that it means accumulation for accumulation's sake, or like Cliff they turn the law of value into its non-sensical opposite, the production of use values. Only the theory of bureaucratic collectivism, by explaining not only the bureaucratic ruling class in its social relations to the working class and private capitalist class, but also by explaining the bureaucratic economy in contradistinction to the profit producing commodity society, can elucidate the development of bureaucratic collectivist society in a state capitalist direction, should that occur.

AN OPEN LETTER TO SY LANDY

Preface

Apologies are in order, both for the length of the following document and its physical appearance -- bad print, etc. The proper materials were impossible to obtain to produce a good stencil. The length is accounted for in that the document is really two documents: the first is a critique of our elections policy and, more important, the methodology it reflects; the second, a discussion of "SWP Regroupment," the most crucial question now before the organization.

Those who are not interested in the first question are urged to read the discussion of the second, which starts midway through page four. It is my personal opinion that the two questions are inseparable. Both flow from Landy's opportunist response to the problems we face and the sectarianism that inevitably accompanies that. Both are marked by a seeming inability on Landy's part (again a hallmark of sectarianism-opportunism) to approach any question or any political or social phenomena transitionally, that is dialectically. In part, I suspect, this reflects an opinion of Landy's, conscious or unconscious, that we cannot recruit from or have any influence within the working class in the present period. This is perhaps a correct belief on his part, but one to which his response is erroneous or wholly inadequate.

None of the above is meant as a polemic, nor is any part of the following document. It is not my wish to start a contest of rhetoric, but to commence a political discussion. Nor are the suggestions regarding the recruitment of "workers state" adherents meant to reflect upon or impugn the loyalty of any who have previously joined us, and proven, to the best of my knowledge, excellent comrades.

Wayne C.

Wayne C. 1-1-1-1

An Open Letter to Sy Landy

Dear Comrade:

I regret that I must use the "Open Letter" as a form of communication. Customarily, it is used only when addressing political opponents, with the object of creating propaganda. That, of course, is not my intent here. But I feel that the issues are of considerable importance for the organization and should be discussed openly before the membership. Experience has shown that communications with the N.O. on political questions meet with no response, unless, perhaps, the particular correspondents are members of the majority or minority factions.

It should come as no surprise to you that there is some dissatisfaction with recent developments in the organization. There are two focal points of the uneasiness many of us feel. First is the position of the new NAC regarding the elections; second, the position put forward by yourself on "Orientation Toward SWP Regroupment," published in National Report # 12, September 25, 1972.

No one knows better than yourself, that there has been no discussion of our attitude on the 1972 Presidential elections within the organization. Indeed, there was but one document concerning the question prior to the National Convention, the document co-authored by yourself arguing for "critical support" to the candidates of the SWP.

There was no answering argument from anyone in subsequent issues of the Bulletin, to this day. That was not the result of any accident, nor, of course, of massive agreement. No one of my acquaintance took the document seriously. On my part, I had expected that the question of political action would be discussed at some point during the Convention.

The branch of which I am a member did not take your document seriously either. The document represented a fundamental break with our political traditions. In 1948 the Workers Party urged a protest vote for any of the socialist candidates. Then and thereafter, they did not endorse the candidature of the SWP.

Moreover, your document was regarded as of relatively minor importance by the delegates to the Convention. Were that not the case, any discussion of it would not have been tabled to the National Committee or by that body to the NAC.

The document itself, left much to be desired -- in the way of argument, factual information, historical accuracy, and comradely integrity. It contained not one theoretical argument, not one attempt to evaluate the period or its possibilities, not one accurate statement regarding the Peace and Freedom effort of 1967-8. It was, in short, an amalgam of distortions, half-truths, and sectarian falsehood -- "centrist," "petty-bourgeois," "class duty," for example. However, this is not the place to engage in a refutation or analysis of your document, or your ignorance of the PFP, at least so far as its organization in California is concerned.

In substance, as the document candidly admitted (in passing), the real reason for the position was that we could possibly recruit from the SWP. Needless to say, such recruitment would be all the easier if we were to adopt the position that the USSR is a degenerated workers state, or that the Russian Question was no longer axial to our definition of socialism, or the social force that can bring it into being, the working class.

The NAC resolution regarding voting and political support -- it amounts to support, no matter in what form it is disguised -- is most unfortunate. It reflects the most inveterate sectarianism on the one hand, and the most unprincipled opportunism on the other. All this, leaving aside for the moment the high-handed and undemocratic fashion in which it was arrived at. (The inclusion of the SLP is a cover).

It is true that the Tasks & Perspectives document adopted at the Convention, after amendment, did not discuss the question of the Presidential elections. It did not discuss political developments in the U.S. in any coherent manner at all, and for that reason several delegates felt bound to vote against its adoption, stating so in the minutes of the Convention. But the absence of any statement regarding the elections in that document did not give the NAC carte blanche to do with it as they wished, and certainly not without commencing a discussion within the organization, or at least without a full discussion on the N.C.

Now the paper has come out with an editorial endorsing the SWP or SLP. As the only concrete campaign being waged is that of the SWP, this amounts to effective endorsement of their campaign. We may as well have been clear about that. The editorial attacked Mc Govern, Nixon, Wallace, then endorsed the SWP, albeit critically (in this case "critically" is a pseudonym for sectarian). There was not one mention of the Spock campaign. The NAC knows Spock is running. Either they are afraid to mention Spock for fear their readers may vote for him, contrary to the injunctions of the Workers Power editorial, or they are unwilling or unable to attack the campaign or to justify their failure to support it. I suspect the latter -- it would be just too sectarian, even for them, to confess to it in public.

Just a word here on Marxian method of characterizing political parties, a full discussion of which we reserve for a later issue.

As comrade Castle stated in an article that should appear in Workers Power before this document is published, political parties are expressions of social forces and social movements. When new political movements or parties come into being, they are generally led by intellectuals who are rejecting or breaking with the programs and policies of established political movements. Thus, they are

transitional phenomena. Unless they sink class roots they will be merely transitory phenomena, collapsing into the void, or ultimately turning toward other established movements.

In America today, there is no politically labor movement. Hence no established working class movement acting for itself which would then be capable, without more, of attracting the leftward moving formations. But there are the signs of a potential awakening of the working class on the one hand, and the fact that the attack on its standard of living, its conditions of work, its form of organization will continue regardless of any change in the administration in Washington.

What is needed is independent political action of the working class. A prerequisite for such a political movement coming into existence is the recognition, first of the possibility, then of the necessity for such action. In other words, a fundamental restructuring and ordering of the political and electoral processes in the minds of the American working class. For such a movement to be progressive in our view, given the divisions within the class, it is necessary not only that it reflect heightened class-consciousness and thus facilitate the class struggle, but that it advance the interest of workers as a class, that is, hasten the advent of socialism or socialist consciousness. Hence, it must be both anti-racist and anti-imperialist. Against the first, because it divides the class; against the second because, regardless of short range benefit to the class, it perpetuates its servitude to the capitalist system, as well as perpetuating imperialist slaughter and oppression abroad, and further reinforcing the racist attitudes that divide the class.

The appearance of such leftward moving forces as the PFP or the Spock campaign should be welcomed and supported, not castigated and avoided. Not only are they transitional phenomena, but socialists should have a transitional approach toward them, as we have toward the consciousness of the working class. They can be a useful tool in demonstrating the possibility of independent political action and the necessity for it, as well as providing the context for raising anti-racist and anti-imperialist demands in a political way within the working class. Hence, socialists should work with such movements, build them, and link their growth and development to the growth of a politically conscious working class, just as revolutionary socialists worked with the RDR (Revolutionary Democratic Regroupment) in 1946-8 in France or the PSU when it split with the SFIO in France over the Algerian war.

At the level of struggle and political development of the working class today, such dialectical interaction cannot be anything but progressive for both groups. In other words, leftward moving intellectuals or political formations can prove a catalyst to the awakening of political class consciousness among the American working class, even as the activity of socialists in such groupings can give them a

proletarian perspective and channel their development toward the working class. Given the realities of the present period, the same methodology, dialectics, demands support of the Spock campaign.

Against this Landy offers us a static view of the world, which sees individuals permanently bound by their class origins at birth, and rigid categories of political phenomena — capitalist and proletarian parties, nothing else. Within such a scheme there is no possibility of movement, change, or political evolution. Such is the methodology of vulgar Marxists and empiricists, who take the world as they find it and retreat into sterile sectarianism on the one hand, and gross opportunism on the other.

Now that the election campaign is over or nearly over, the questions raised here regarding methodology have less immediacy than when the bulk of this document was written. But the methodology of Landy (that of Kant, not Marx) is still important -- because it must be rejected.

At all events, none of this should obscure what is perhaps the most crucial point -- that the decision of political endorsement was one that should not have been taken without a thorough discussion by the membership, or explicit consultation with the N.C.

But by far the most disturbing event is the appearance of Landy's document on "Orientation Toward SWP Regroupment." Such a perspective posits fundamental changes in the organization, possibilities the document itself acknowledges. It goes without saying that a policy of such importance for the future of the organization cannot be adopted without the most thorough-going discussion by the membership.

As you may recall, there was a document pertaining to "Regroupment" at the Convention. That document discussed regroupment with ex-Maoist collectives, etc., who had gone into the working class and were being disillusioned with the nature of Chinese society by recent events. (Presumably, thus, it did not rule out the possibility of examining our possibilities of recruiting from PL or having some influence upon its members, a perspective that may well have greater possibilities of reward in the long run, than the Landy perspective). It was not a mandate toward Trotskyist regroupment of any sort. It was passed by the NAC, to which it had been referred, by a vote of 6-0! (See National Report # 11, September 8, 1972, Pg. 6 of Convention Referrals, Pt. V). This is a very different perspective than that proposed by Landy now, although he voted with the rest of the NAC to accept the Geier document.

The Geier document was the only discussion article on the regroupment question submitted to the Convention, hence it was the sole conception of regroupment that had been exposed to the delegates or the membership who subsequently elected Landy to office.

Had either of these two crucial topics, regroupment or election policy, been debated at the Convention, then the NAC would have had a mandate to act upon them. As they were not debated there, the mandate is lacking.

The I.S. is a new organization, most of whose members are new to politics. There was a hiatus of more than a decade in the tradition from which most of our politics flow. Now, the organization and the bulk of its members have not had years of socialist education, of training in theory, or experience in political action within or without the organization. Above all, the theoretical level of the organization is weak. The newer members are not in any position to withstand the attacks of other sects on the history, theory or tradition of our movement. This is not meant to fault them in any way. All it means is that it takes years to build cadre, and the rapidity of our growth in the last four years has precluded us from developing them into hardened cadre in the way that they must be. The point is that this makes all the more dangerous the admission of various groups of "orthodox Trotskyists" into the organization. Generally, the organizations from which they come have given them a hard and firm background in theory and politics, above all on the Russian question. They are hardened cadre. The I.S. is not yet sufficiently hardened enough to absorb them successfully. That is the crucial danger.

Sy places great emphasis on the fact that the Workers Party was in favor of re-merging with the SWP during the period 1945-7, because, no third world war being apparant, the Russian question had receded into the background. Disregarding the excesses of his formulation, there are other questions to consider. That was, of course, before the advent of the "deformed workers' state" theory, and the substitutionism that entails, which is now the baggage of every orthodox Trotskyist grouping.

But there is more to it than that. In my opinion, it is questionable whether that period of negotiation could possibly be made analogous to the present. For one thing, the Workers Party hoped and believed that it was possible to change the course of the Fourth International, that the events of the post-war period would force them to re-evaluate their politics. On the contrary, the degeneration of the Fourth International proceeded more rapidly and further along the road towards Stalinism.

Today the be-all and end-all of orthodox Trotskyism is just those substitutionist theories. It is the one thing those organizations inculcate into their membership. We are in no position to court them, certainly not at this period, with our present level of theoretical and educational development.

To be sure, we still adhere to the formulation of the Workers Party, that we believe in an "all-inclusive revolutionary party." But substitutionists are not our version, generally speaking, of proletarian revolutionists.

Of course, where a particular individual or group of individuals who adhere to the workers state theory seek membership, the question should be evaluated with reference to the particular persons involved. Goldman in 46, for example, was a workers statist, but not a defencist of any sort

(see Albert Goldman in New International, September, 1947, and also the positions of those in the Fourth International toward whom the WP was clearly orienting, and for whose victory they clearly hoped, Logan, etc.)

Additionally, there had been little, if any, communication between the WP and the various sections of the Fourth International during the war; some member parties did not know of the organizational existence of the WP, had never seen its publications, and were unaware of the theories it had worked out except through distortions of and attacks on them in the official Fourth International publications. (See James Fenwick, "Report on the Belgian & French Sections" Bulletin of the Workers Party, Vol. I, # 4, 2/14/46).

In that post-war period, when various sections of the F.I. were emerging from illegal and underground existences in Europe, with much of their leadership and cadre decimated, there seemed reason to believe that the fundamental questions of 1940 could and would be reconsidered. The new realities of Europe and the extension of Stalinism into other countries seemed to demand such a re-evaluation. (Additionally there were other questions it seemed would be discussed -- the applicability of the Transitional Program in war-decimated Europe, which, contrary to George Novack's recent assertions they found fully applicable, and the national question, but these were marginal to the major question of defence for the USSR). Significant as well, was the appearance of defeatist positions within the the F.I., as well as some groupings in the French section who had developed state-capitalist and bureaucratic collectivist theories, and virtually the entire Greek section. (See "Richard" Report on French Party Convention, and Internal History of the Greek Movement, Bulletin of the Workers Party, Vol. I, # 20, 10/23/46. The same issue contains a defense of the Workers Party by members of the Irish section against the attacks of both Healy and Haston, "In Defence of 'Revisionism' " R. Armstrong and M. Merrigan.) (Another note. Daniel Guerin, author of Fascism & Big Business and a leading figure of the French section had become a defeatist, held a state capitalist position, and regarded Russia as an imperialist state. His position, along with those of other defeatists is summarized, as an afterthought, in the SWP's International Information Bulletin, March, 1947).

The operative fact is that that reconsideration never occurred. The victory of the apparatchiks in the F.I. was firmly established. Instead of reconsidering the questions of the past, they produced a series of absurd theories -- the East European states were fascist states, capitalist states, state capitalist states. When the Stalinist bureaucracy formalized its control through coups d'etat, they became "deformed workers states" -- without any consultation much less participation of the working class (with the partial exception of Yugoslavia).

Substitutionism became the dogma of "orthodox Trotskyism." It led to support to the North in the Korean War (forcing Natalia's break with the FI), and capitulation to petty-bourgeois movements in Algeria, and elsewhere. It represents the abandonment of the working-class as the source of revolutionary change. (From thence you can accommodate to Stalinism, as did the SWP, or to capitalism, as did Shacht-

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man at the end of the fifties). Such an abandonment is made all the easier when you believe a "workers state" can exist without working class democracy.

Socialists look to the working class not only because the working class has the physical power to overthrow capitalism, but because only it can build a democratic society. What has all this to do with the workers state theory? Absolutely nothing, and that is the problem.

In great part, the explanation for Sy's position, and and the ready acceptance it appears to have had from a part of the leadership in Detroit and elsewhere (the policy was commenced under the previous administration), is to be found not in the archives of the Workers Party, but in the present isolation of the I.S. from the working class movement. (The isolation is a function of the political level of the working class in particular and of American society in general -- as much, if not more so, than any inability to generate sufficient industrialization). Sy feels -- and correctly -- that the I.S. must grow. In the face of the opportunities that have opened and will open before us, no one can dispute the necessity.

The question is how to grow? Sy grasps the first opportunity at hand, the recruitment of dissident elements from the SWP. (In other words, he reaches for already convinced socialists who do not have his politics, rather than workers or others who are moving towards radicalization and are in search of politics which we could give them. In other words, Sy does not have any transitional concept of recruiting people to socialist politics. Perhaps Sy does not think it possible to recruit workers in this period, I cannot say. Certainly, his focus is in the wrong direction if he does.)

This policy of SWP regroupment inaugurates a process of growth not on the basis of political agreement and clarity, but rather on the basis of muting and ignoring elementary political differences. The effect is to build an organization that does not agree on elementary political questions. The result is an unstable organization, just as artificial elements are unstable, for both are based upon artificial assumptions and, hence, artificial unity. You cannot create a stable organization on the basis of agreement on marginal questions.

Sy's view of growth is the viewpoint of desperation. (This is a bit gentle; it can also be called opportunism). Grow or perish. Political organisms, like others, can ingest numerous objects. Some are beneficial and the organism grows, others have no effect, some are indigestible, retarding growth at best, perhaps worse. Sy's formula cannot accomplish the first in any significant way; it may accomplish the third.

What is central to the ideology of every socialist organization are the concepts that inform its world view. That is what defines its political role and facilitates its ability to act. It is the theory and the action consequent upon

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it that determine the success or failure of a political organization, insofar as personalities on the one hand, and historical circumstances, on the other, allow.

Central to our political theory is the concept of third camp socialism -- revolutionary democratic socialism. Abandonment of that perspective, as we said above, leads in one of two directions: toward accommodation to Stalinism or accommodation to capitalism. The SWP took the first road; Shachtman ultimately took the second. In either case, the abandonment of the concept of an independent movement of the working class against both exploitative social systems was the root of the departure from the socialist camp.

We say that the working class, and the working class only, can build socialism. That is the third camp. Tying the working class, in whatever country, to the defense of one of the two extant social systems is self-defeating for the class and us, and a heinous betrayal of socialism.

In summary, we are third camp revolutionary socialists, because that is the only form of revolutionary socialism. We accept no substitutes for working class revolutions, anywhere. Hence, we reject not merely any compromise with capitalism or Stalinism, but any and all forms of substitutionism.

Defencism on the Russian question (hence of Stalinism in general) is but another form of substitutionism. We reject it in any and all forms.

It follows, that we have no quarrel with adherants of the workers state theory who are not defencists and who are revolutionary opponents of Stalinist imperialism, which they recognize as such but reject as reactionary in a world where socialism is a possibility, and the self-determination of nations a pre-requisite for it. (Rather, recognition of that right). They are welcome and, if they exist as they once did, should be courted. They are not substitutionist in the determinative sense.

On rare occasions and under the most exceptional circumstances, we may choose to admit adherants of the workers state theory who are defencist if (as appears to have been the case with Felix Morrow and his group which joined the Workers Party in 1946) they meet the following considerations:

- a) They regard the Russian question as wholly irrelevant;
- b) They do not believe in the slander that the third camp position (analysis of Stalinism as a class system not to be defended) is "centrist," "capitulation to petty-bourgeois public opinion," "un-Marxist," etc.
- c) They therefore regard the I.S. as their organization, not an arena.

If anything these guidelines for the admission of defencists are not overly stringent. They should be considered only after the most thorough investigation and the most patient period of joint work. The fact remains, that such persons essentially are applying at the wrong organization. Con-

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siderable evidence to the contrary should be demanded before their admission.

Hence, the general rule the organization should follow in recruitment is that rejection of defencism both of the Russian state and Stalinist imperialism are determinative. Another way of formulating that policy would be to say that we would not admit to membership anyone by whose discipline we would not want to be bound. That excludes defencists or workers statist, subject to rare exception.

Fraternally yours,

Wayne C.

write Diana - about spending party Christmas with them

write Mark - ask for detailed letter on N.C.

write Janet - send song lyrics

write Ellen -

write to Pam - change situation - + New Left

say why a really new Left -

on New Left - anti-work class elitism/substitutions
certainly not re - not RA