

I.S. NATIONAL REPORT

FOR MEMBERS ONLY

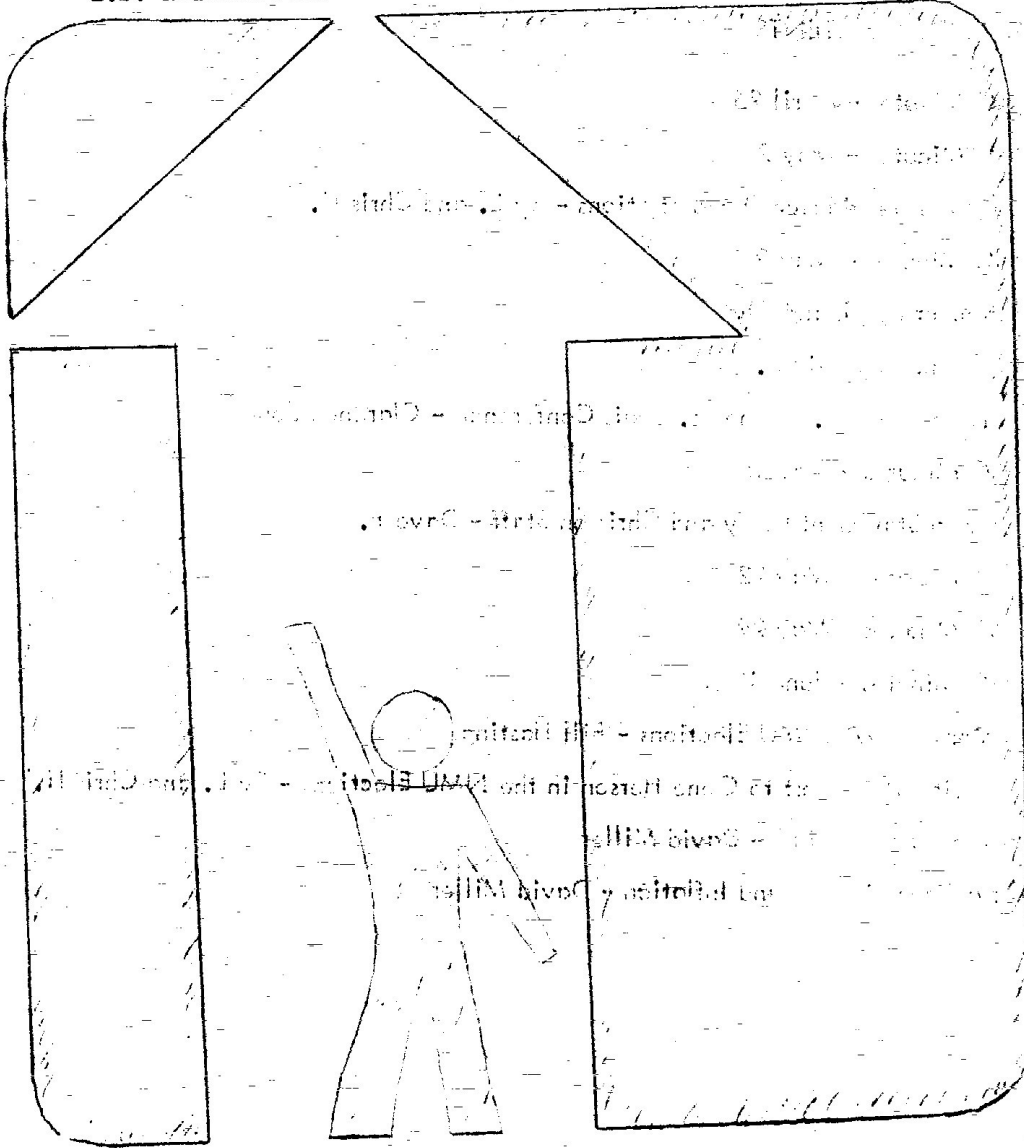


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April 26, 1973

PRESENT: All (SL, CH, JT, DF, MS, BH)

O. STATEMENT BY REVOLUTIONARY TENDENCY. The comrades representing the RT on the NAC will be Sy L. and Chris H.

1. NATIONAL SECRETARIES' REPORT. Beginning with this report, the National Secretaries will give weekly written reports on the overall situation and activities of the organization to be sent out with each key list mailing. The substance of these reports will be presented to the NAC meeting for that week.

Bill H. will return from NY in about two weeks and will take up his responsibilities as industrial director at that time.

During the few days since the conclusion of the NC most of our time has been devoted to getting on top of the over-all situation, developing a general idea for organizing NAC meetings, and keeping up with a couple of emergency situations that have arisen. Of the latter the most immediate is the series of physical attacks launched on other left groups by the National Caucus of Labor Committees (NCLC), which is covered in a point on the NAC agenda below. Subsequent NATSEC reports will outline the activities of the branches; at this point we cannot give a complete or adequate report. We have been consulted by the NY branch regarding their leaflet to be distributed at the Workers Action Movement (WAM) conference this coming weekend. Most important, we have begun to carry out the NAC mandate on the basis of which the NAC was elected, i.e. preparation for the Convention and pre-Convention discussion (see point below).

2. FINANCIAL REPORT. Report by Jim W. The financial problems facing the N.O. immediately are severe, although different opinions were expressed on the nature and extent of the problem and of fund-raising possibilities. Communications will be sent to all branches and O.C.'s stressing the imperative necessity of regular and prompt payment of dues, bills, etc.

3. OFFICE STAFF. In the context of the financial situation, a preliminary discussion was held on the rearrangement of staff responsibilities and the elimination of certain positions. A final discussion was TABLED to next week pending a clarification of the financial picture and a report from the Revolutionary Tendency on its attitude toward the NATSEC's preliminary proposal on allocation of staff positions.

4. ST. LOUIS CONFERENCE. The question of speakers for the St. Louis IS educational conference was discussed, in light of the feeling by some of the RT comrades that the speeches they had prepared might not be acceptable to the IS as the line of the organization. A final list of speakers was arrived at by general agreement, including Steve K. to speak on the capitalist crisis and the rank and file revolt; Lynn J. to speak on the women's liberation panel; Clarence Jones to speak on Black Liberation as scheduled; and Kevin B. to speak on Tasks and Perspectives for Socialists. (NOTE: Other commitments make it impossible for either Joel G. or Dave F. to attend the conference this weekend).

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5. LABOR COMMITTEE GANGSTERISM. The NCLC has launched a coordinated series of armed physical assaults on other left groups - first the Communist Party, then on other left groups which defend the CP. The attacks are no joke, despite their hysterical character; some dozens of individuals have required hospitalization after being attacked with clubs, lead pipes, etc. by NCLCers and their supporters. The NY IS, in consultation with the National Secretaries, has issued a preliminary political statement which is being sent to all branches for their use. The statement stresses the relationship of gangsterism in the movement to the traditions and politics of Stalinism, and the continuing threat this represents today. It is essential that we dissociate ourselves sharply from the NCLC's attempt to wrap its behavior in the mantle of Trotsky's struggle against Stalin, while making it clear that if the issue in this case were in fact a defense against Stalinist violence we would support and defend it.

The following MOTION was PASSED, ALL FOR:

(1) The political statement of the IS will be printed in the next issue of WP along with a background article discussing the politics of the NCLC and the threat posed to the entire left, and the anti-Stalinist left in particular, by its behavior.

(2) Additionally, a second statement will be drawn up indicating our willingness to engage in any mutual defense campaign of left groups, including the CP, against these attacks.

(3) ALL BRANCHES ARE INSTRUCTED TO TAKE APPROPRIATE PRECAUTIONS. THE NCLC HAS CLEARLY STATED ITS INTENTION TO BROADEN ITS GANGSTER CAMPAIGN TO ALL GROUPS WHICH DEFEND THE C.P. THE NCLC, WHICH IS A GROUP IN THE PROCESS OF DISINTEGRATION AND UNDOUBTEDLY THOROUGHLY RIDDLED WITH AGENTS, IS ARMED AND DANGEROUS. ALL BRANCHES MUST SAFEGUARD OFFICES AND BE PREPARED TO DEAL WITH PHYSICAL ASSAULTS ON PUBLIC MEETINGS, ETC.

6. WORKERS POWER. MOTION (DF): That WP begin summer schedule (monthly publication) at this time, which means deleting a couple of biweekly issues. The editorial board will consist of: Chris H., Bill H., Kay S., Paul B., Jim W., Kit L., Dave F. Dave F. will continue as editor with assistance from Kit as needed (i.e. DF maintains political editorial responsibility).

MOTIVATION: There is at this time no comrade available to replace Dave F. as WP editor, while at the same time other demands on the staff would make continued biweekly publication through June very difficult and not possible without sacrifices in other functioning. My view is that monthly publication will enable us to maintain the political quality of the paper, which is the major priority, between now and the Convention. No changes are suggested in the editorial policy or general function of the newspaper in the organization's work. MOTION PASSED 5-0-2 (SL, CH abstain).

MOTIVATION FOR ABSTENTIONS ON WORKERS' POWER MOTION. In discussion, the undersigned disagreed with the new leadership's recommendation to cut back WP to monthly publication. In our view such cutbacks are not forced by inability to continue biweekly publication and will hamper the effectiveness of the paper. The political quality of a socialist publication is not abstract; retreat from biweekly to monthly publication forces a distance from the events and an abstractness in commentary which undermine quality even though formal correctness may be maintained. The coming months will bring many developments, from the contract round to budget cuts, etc., which demand biweekly publication. The reversion to monthly publication for July-August is itself unfortunate, although regularly called for by our publications schedule; to extend this to monthly publication for May-August (and perhaps September) is unwarranted. Political positions prepared for the coming convention, by the new leadership or others, can only be evaluated if the leadership's positions are tested fully, in the press as elsewhere.

Despite this political opposition to the proposal, we abstained on the vote in order to make no attempt to obstruct the new leadership.

Sy L.

Chris H.

7. THEORETICAL JOURNAL. A full report will be given by Bruce L. next week.

8. WOMEN'S COMMISSION. Report by Shelly L.

MOTION (DF): The women's commission should meet to discuss fully the question of its functioning between now and the Convention, what it could accomplish, its current composition and functionary, etc. It is a priority to produce the women's bulletin of documents produced before the NC on women's liberation questions. A final determination on the possibility of maintaining a functionary will depend on the clarification of the financial situation.
PASSED 7-0.

9. CONVENTION AGENDA. The convention is to be held Labor Day weekend, as already decided.

A proposal on agenda was present by JG and DF:

- (i) Tasks and Perspectives
- (ii) The Third Camp and the Principles of the IS
- (iii) Women's Oppression (theoretical discussion)
- (iv) Black Liberation
- (v) Labor Perspectives
- (vi) Organizational and Constitutional (standard)

Deadlines proposed for documents are June 30, with July 31 for counter-documents and amendments. ALL FOR.

10. MALCOLM X PAMPHLET. The NAC is granted a two-week extension for raising any objections to the draft pamphlet which is being edited by Chris H.

11. DEBATE WITH SPARTACIST LEAGUE. To take place in Chicago in May as currently scheduled. Arrangements to be made by NATSECS. SL having previously been slated for a "leadership to leadership" debate with Robertson, the question is who should be slated in his place.

NAC MINUTES - MAY 2, 1973

PRESENT: JG, JT, MS, DF, SL, CH. ABSENT: BH.

1. NATIONAL SECRETARIES' REPORT. By DF.
2. THEORETICAL JOURNAL. Summary of report by Bruce L.:

The journal has received a good deal of material toward initial issues. The following articles have been received, some requiring further work:

Brian M., "The NEP in Perspective"
David S., "The Meaning of Hegemony"
Morgan S., Article on Maoism
Wayne P., "Education: Reform or Revolution"
Chris H., "The Cold War and Its Historians"
Bruce L., "The Jacksonian Period: Birthpangs of American Industrial Capitalism."

Other articles and reviews reliably promised and in progress include discussions of Trotsky and the Spanish revolution (Bruce L.), a discussion article on program and party (Ron T.), reviews of Fox pamphlet, James Hoffa biography, Harrington's Socialism, Radical Political Economy by Sherman (?), Eric Wolff's The Human Condition in Latin America; Bruce L., "The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism," and Jack G., "The Capitalist Crisis and Human Needs." Also Margaret B., "Blacks and the American Communist Party." Special projects under consideration include new translations of significant Comintern documents, and a symposium on strategies for black liberation from prominent black radical figures.

On format, a magazine-size format has been decided on, with relatively sober layout, restrained use of internal graphics, etc.

The initial intention to bring the first issue out in June was modified due partly to delays and partly to the poor timing of a June issue; initial publication is presently scheduled for September.

(NOTE: The list of articles above signifies only articles received or in preparation. Requests not responded to, or favorably responded to but with no follow-up, are not indicated. The listing also does not signify acceptance of any given article for publication.)

MOTION (DF): Based on Bruce L.'s report, we favor continuation of preparations for TJ at this time. Our assessment is that a considerable amount of groundwork remains to be laid, particularly on the central questions of (i) the American working class, and (ii) Stalinism. It is essential that the TJ contain fundamental statements and articles on these questions. A subcommittee (composition to be determined) should be established to work with Bruce L. in these preparations.

AMENDMENT (SL): That the National Secretaries recommend an editorial subcommittee.

MOTION to TABLE (JG). PASSED 4-2 (CH, SL). Amendment automatically tabled.

COMMENT (CH). I agree with the substantive recommendation in Dave's motion but disagree with his assessment of the lacks. The question of blacks is a much more serious lack than Stalinism (on which we have in hand a piece on Maoism and one on the cold war which contains a summary statement of fundamental

viewpoint) at this time. Dave seems to be riding a hobby horse.

3. MAY 5 DEMONSTRATIONS ON PRICES. Motion by SL and CH; amendments by various (see ATTACHMENTS). Voting was as follows:

Joe F. amendment FAILS 1(MS)-3(SL, CH, JG)-2(JT, DF)
 Joel G. amendment PASSES 3(JG, JT, DF)-2(SL, CH)-1(MS)
 Dave's 1st amendment FAILS 2(JT, DF)-2(SL, CH)-2(JG, MS)
 Dave's 2nd amendment FAILS 1 (DF) - 2 (SL, CH) - 3 (MS, JG, JT)
 Section 3c of original PASSES 3(SL, CH, MS)-1(JT)-2(JG, DF)
 Section 3d of original FAILS 2(SL, CH)-2(DF, JT)-2(JG, MS)
 Section 3e of original FAILS 2(SL, CH)-4

Other sections of document as amended: 4-2(SL, CH), PASSES.

STATEMENTS

We have rejected all the amendments because the circumstances of the discussion make it difficult to consider them. Parts of some seem good, others bad, but serious consideration would mean amending amendments, etc. In the future, better-prepared discussions would necessitate counterdocuments rather than altering a basically different view by piecemeal amending. This, unfortunately, has also been the procedure previously, e.g. on the Vietnam question. It is the responsibility of various points of view and in particular of the NAC majority to propose political line on questions of the day. Sy L., Chris H.

Comment on Dave F.'s Substitution for Section 3d (on Blacks). I do not disagree with Dave's statement on Workers' Power coverage. However, the substitution of a WP line for a line on blacks in our May 5 intervention (leaflets, speeches, etc.), apparently on the motivation that black participation will be "minimal or miniscule," reflects in a particularly crass fashion the Brian M. view that a propagandistic "call" cannot be meaningful unless directed immediately to an audience capable of carrying out the call. In the circumstances this approach results in posing to the inflation demonstrations false propaganda, i.e. that workers can "force the unions" to act and to undertake "labor IPA" (Dave F.'s substitute for 2 and 3c, which failed) without blacks playing a leading role. And, this approach results in propaganda that is opportunistic in that it leaves the NAC's "guidance" for May 5 intervention saying nothing at all about blacks. (Similarly, Dave F.'s substitute for our sections 2 and 3c omits the formulations in these sections on community (i.e. black) groups, union wives and other housewives, and a Congress of Labor and the Oppressed.)

Chris H.

4. ST. LOUIS CONFERENCE. A report was made on an incident at the April 28-29 educational conference (by Don C.). A motion to TABLE was made and FAILED 1(MS)-2(DF, JT)-3. A statement by Sy L. was read. One round of discussion was held, with further discussion and possible further statements to follow.

STATEMENT ON INCIDENT AT ST. LOUIS CONFERENCE

Sy L.

At the public educational conference held by us in St. Louis the weekend of April 28-29, a session was held on Black Liberation. The presentation was made by Don C. and was an exposition of the majority document on Black Liberation adopted at the last convention. During the discussion period, members

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of Workers Unity, a "New Left Maoist" group, raised criticisms of the IS position centering on the demand posed by them that white workers must give up their "white skin privileges" and accusing the IS of subordinating the struggle for equality for Blacks in order to further the class struggle.

This led to an unfortunate public fight over internal differences with one group of IS'ers lining up with an opposing group. A member of the Transformation Caucus expressed agreement with comments made by the Workers Unity group - without indicating any differences - and criticized Don's position. Another member of the Transformation Caucus declared himself a minority in the IS - technically his right - but then proceeded to slander the majority by implication by stating that his position was not to subordinate the struggles of Blacks to class-wide struggles, that he does not denigrate the struggles of Blacks, etc. He failed to fairly and clearly explain the nature of his differences with the majority and totally ignored his differences with Workers Unity. This constitutes the second occasion in recent weeks at which the TC has brought out the internal differences of the organization at a public meeting; the previous one being the incident at the Peter Binns forum in Detroit.

Throughout the St. Louis conference, the two members of the Revolutionary Tendency who were present refrained from raising differences with the TC, which filled most of the speaking posts. The responsibility for what happened in St. Louis lies with the TC. Their behavior there was inexcusable. At the same time, the new leadership bloc must take responsibility for ensuring that such public fights do not occur.

What happened in St. Louis is what the RT expected to happen, given the state of the organization, and shows that we were correct in the view that it would have been a mistake for the other RT speakers originally scheduled to appear in St. Louis as planned previously. The ambiguous, poorly-defined character of the new NAC majority bloc gives rise to confusion as to what kind of public behavior is good sense, in terms of preventing serious damage to the whole organization.

Therefore the Revolutionary Tendency requests that the NAC clarify what constitutes normal and proper functioning in public arenas during this difficult period.

STATEMENT DF

Much as I would like to refrain from responding to Sy's statement, it is impermissible to do so. Sy's statement is quite clearly intended to inflame a factional atmosphere on the basis of organizational rather than political questions. There is nothing more useless than putting a statement in the minutes which purports to show that Sy's tendency was a model of responsibility while another tendency was "inexcusable" in its behavior, that Sy in his far-sighted wisdom foresaw this because of the supposedly "ambiguous, poorly-defined" character of the leadership, etc.; and then innocently ask for a "clarification" of appropriate functioning at public IS forums. It indicates that Sy is interested in clarifying little or nothing, but rather in intensifying factional hostility.

It is my impression, based on reports from the conference, that the behavior of TC comrades was inappropriate. This impression is based on what are conflicting and confusing reports in which the political issues are quite unclear. If, as is reported, the debate between IS members at the conference was over whether the IS majority is for subordinating the struggles of black people,

then we have degenerated politically a long way.

So far as I am concerned, "what constitutes normal and proper functioning in public arenas during this difficult period" is exactly the same as proper functioning at any time. When an IS speaker is under attack from an opponent tendency, it is appropriate for comrades to defend the politics of the organization, if necessary from their own point of view and with their own ideas. Disagreement with views expressed by the speaker should be expressed in this context, not to express solidarity with political opponents. It is particularly the responsibility of more experienced comrades to behave in this fashion.

I am hopeful that the organizational and factional manner of discussing these questions which appears in the third and fourth paragraphs of Sy's statement does not represent the views of the RT comrades generally.

FURTHER COMMENT Sy L., Chris H.

What a fair and evenhanded statement! According to DF, Sy is the factionalist here. Why? Because after an official speaker of the IS was publicly attacked at a forum by other comrades who solidarized with an opponent tendency, Sy objected internally. Further DF denounces Sy as a factionalist for requesting clarification. According to DF, all is clear. Only it isn't precisely clear because, you see, what happened down there ~~wasn't~~ a bit like DF's formally correct description of proper functioning. So anyone who points this out must be a hopeless factionalist, while DF of course is above such dirty business. The new National Secretary admits judiciously that the incident appears to be "inappropriate" but, in a manner we expect to see more of in the future, concentrates his fire on those who object to it and avoids the responsibility of the leadership to guide the organization's functioning.

5. STAFF AND FINANCES. Report from SL for RT tabled until next meeting pending meeting between SL and JG which has not yet taken place. In the meantime all staff positions not directly affected by the change in political leadership are to remain on salary.
6. NATIONAL COMMITTEE MEETING SPECIAL ASSESSMENT. National Secretaries propose a special assessment, in addition to regular dues, of \$7.00 per head to cover costs of the April NC meeting. ALL FOR.
7. WOMEN'S COMMISSION. The Women's Commission not having met to discuss its possible future functioning, this item was TABLED.
8. CONVENTION AGENDA. By previous arrangement, SL and JG were to have met to discuss convention agenda and RT response to the proposal by JG/FD (see previous minutes). This meeting has not taken place. SL indicated RT response to agenda, stressing RT desire to see content of joint leadership document on "Third Camp" indicated in outline for possible response, since verbal description indicated a wide variety of topics under this heading. Discussion of agenda TABLED pending SL/JG meeting.
9. WATERGATE SCANDAL. Presentation by CH based on discussion at Editorial Board and one round of discussion to clarify treatment of Watergate in Workers' Power.

MOTION ON FOOD PRICE DEMONSTRATIONS Sy L., Chris H.

1. Demonstrations on food prices have been organized for major cities for May 5, with the support of AFL-CIO leaders and under the impetus of a new coalition including the SWP and other groups. The IS should participate in these demonstrations. The major form of intervention must necessarily be propagandistic, but we should note the possibility of significant follow-up action in terms of local coalitions in at least some areas. Branches should assess the possibilities and report to the National Office, and should be prepared if there are favorable opportunities to assign comrades to work in or with such groups. Where possible, we favor organizing committees to protest food prices through local actions, e.g., protests at supermarkets. In such cases we raise our own program in our propaganda, stressing in particular that any solution to the price problem must come through more basic economic means including nationalization of the food industry.

2. The overall orientation of our intervention is that the struggle over food prices as well as other issues raised by the May 5 demonstrations - wage freeze, budget cuts, etc. - must be made a struggle through the trade unions, with community and other groups orienting strategically to the trade unions by raising demands on the trade unions in the course of their own actions. We expose the role of the trade union bureaucracy and call for a real struggle around prices, wages, jobs, and social services, which must mean a struggle around the content of our program.

3. In our intervention in the May 5 demonstrations we stress the following points (i.e., this is an outline of points to be covered in leaflets):

- a. Inflation and prices the result of developing capitalist crisis, stagnation of economy, etc. - not an accident or temporary phenomenon.
- b. Expose role of union bureaucrats. Their support of these protests is a substitute for a real fight, not only on prices, but even more, a substitute for a real fight around contracts, i.e., leading their members in fighting the inflation crisis. Sellouts in steel and rubber as examples. Also stress that the role of liberals is to use discontent over prices including demonstrations to rebuild support for wage controls.
- c. Struggle must take the form of a struggle in the unions. Unions should initiate committees against rising prices to serve watchdog role and organize protests. Union wives and other housewives must be drawn in. Call for a Congress of Labor and the Oppressed to plan fight against rising prices, wage controls, unemployment by all means including a general strike to smash wage controls.
- d. Worst impact of crisis in all forms is on blacks and other oppressed. Blacks take the lead in the class struggle. Black workers spearhead struggle in unions and draw the black community into the struggle.
- e. Only a revolutionary program can really address the crisis. The need for a revolutionary party to carry struggle through. The core of a program to solve the crisis is:
 - (i) Smash wage controls
 - (ii) Jobs and a Decent Income for All - 30 for 40 - Wage increases and full COL protection
 - (iii) Rebuild social services - Tax the corporations and the banks
 - (iv) Control prices by nationalizing food processing, distribution and transportation industries under workers' control. Nation-

- alize banks and basic industry under workers' control.
 (v) For a Labor Party to Fight for a Workers' Government.

4. The impact which the May 5 demonstrations will have, their size, etc., is hard to predict. However, what is beginning is an inchoate movement which will grow as inflation continues. For this reason it is important to begin and continue our participation in activities around prices according to the opportunities that present themselves.

AMENDMENTS

By Joe F.

(FAILED)

Substitute for section 3e (Program):

We propose the following as an agitational program for an anti-inflation struggle:

- (1) Price controls, not wage controls; roll back prices to March 1972.
- (2) Full cost-of-living protection for all wages and social welfare programs.
- (3) Restore social service cuts; tax corporate profits.
- (4) End agribusiness subsidies.

We propose the following as central strategic steps for the anti-inflation movement:

- (1) Make the labor movement lead the anti-inflation struggle.
- (2) Independent labor political action towards a labor party.
- (3) National demonstrations, one-day national work stoppage against inflation.

We raise propagandistically as ideas rising from this struggle:

- (1) Reconversion of arms economy.
- (2) Nationalize agribusiness if it won't provide food at controlled prices.

By JG

(PASSED)

Add to motion:

- (1) Branches should support the May 5 demonstrations.
- (2) We should concentrate on a propaganda role - placing high prices in the context of the economic crisis and the attempt of capitalism to solve it at the expense of workers - of which the inflation is one weapon - and of putting forward a strategy to fight the capitalist-government offensive.
- (3) Such a strategy should concentrate on linking the fight against inflation toward trade union action (e.g. wage increases without price increases) and for labor independent political action.

By DF

(FAILED)

Substitute for sections 2 and 3c:

Our propaganda to the May 5 demonstrations and the ongoing anti-inflation movement stresses that soaring prices are part of the over-all attack on the working class. For this reason we assert that workers must force their unions to take up the inflation issue as a political question. Thus labor IPA, an attack on the labor bureaucracy and the DP are central to our propaganda.

By DF

(FAILED)

Substitute for 3d (NOTE: it was stated by the author that this amendment, unlike the section it replaces, is not an outline point for leaflets, but does represent the author's substantive viewpoint):

Our expectation is that, given the impasse of the black movement and the general failure of the recent anti-budget demonstrations, that the extent of black and oppressed minority participation will be minimal or miniscule. Our coverage of this movement in WP should speak to this question, emphasizing that the rebuilding of the black movement on a working class basis is central to a progressive resolution of this or any other central political question in American society.

NOTE: Sections 3d and 3e of the main motion were voted on separately and defeated. Hence the amended motion consists of the original motion minus these sections, with the addition of the JG amendment.

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O. NATIONAL SECRETARIES' REPORT. (i) Labor Committee "Mop-Up Campaign" against CP and other left groups continues. The latest development occurred in Detroit, where two dozen NCLC goons armed with pipes, chains, etc. broke into an SWP educational forum. One of our comrades was present as part of the defense guard, which drove the NCLC off. Several of the invaders were injured and some hospitalized.

ii) The tour by Brian and Rose from NY has been completed in successful fashion. The comrades spoke to branch meetings and/or forums in Chicago, LA, the Bay Area, and Seattle. Brian spoke on the productivity drive and the 1973-74 bargaining round, Rose on women workers.

iii) The Seattle IS held a successful educational conference - one of the best attended we have sponsored. Some 100 people attended, including 14 from Portland and a number of worker contacts. We have not yet gotten a detailed report but have heard that some contacts declared for membership following the conference.

iv) An important international development: our two comrades in Australia report that they have effectively formed an IS group within the Socialist Workers Action Group. Both the IS group and SWAG itself are small but have potential for real growth. The comrades have requested that some one from the IS-US be assigned to help them out. We view the formation of this group as a real step forward and will actively assist the comrades in their political work in building it.

v) A new rank and file group has been initiated in one of the auto plants in Detroit and has published the first issue of a shop newsletter.

1. STAFF MOTION by JG and DF PASSED 5-0 (SL, CH not voting).
Motion reads as follows:

MOTION ON STAFF (JG,DF)

The N.O. staff will consist of: JG, DF, PB, BH, DC, JM (part time), KL and LL, and KS.

The functions of the staff in the pre-convention period will be
(a) preparation of the Convention, particularly ensuring that convention documents are gotten out in a prompt and orderly fashion,
(b) maintaining the Workers' Power summer publication schedule in a politically and technically efficient fashion, (c) maintaining the industrial and Black/Latino departments, i.e. continuing the work of coordinating the efforts of the branches to secure footholds and develop perspectives for these crucial areas, (d) maintaining the work of the Women's Commission on the basis of the NC mandate.

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This proposal meets the democratic requirement that all tendencies be represented in positions of political responsibility on the staff. It is our intention to maintain the functioning of as many departments as possible, despite the difficulties presented by the fact that a section of the leadership, representing a minority viewpoint, proposed that it be given the majority by the NC on the basis of a new political line - a development which forced us to form a new leadership to take responsibility for organizing our political work.

Specific motivation is required for the dropping of several posts at this time: (a) it is our view that the preparations for the theoretical journal, unfortunately, cannot be financially or politically sustained at this point. This assessment is based on our view of the immediate priorities facing the organization in the pre-Convention period and on the role that the TJ should fill in the life of the organization. Bruce L.'s report to the NAC, while it indicated considerable promise in the general degree of enthusiasm for the publication of the TJ and the willingness of many comrades to attempt to write for it, showed two glaring weaknesses at this point, i.e., the absence of material on the American working class and the fundamental theoretical ideas of the organization. The contributions either in hand or promised at this point will have, when completed, valuable contributions to ongoing discussions and debates in the revolutionary movement. What is lacking at this time is material that properly sets the context for these discussions. In part this is a political question, of course: we are not for initiating publication of a theoretical journal without having articles which elaborate and defend the I.S. perspectives on labor, Stalinism, and the third camp viewpoint. In part, it is also our feeling that the writing of such articles will not take place before the Convention. It is our view that preparation and publication of a theoretical journal must remain a priority and is to be resumed immediately following the Convention.

(b) Secondly, our view is that the position of pamphlet director cannot be maintained as a staff position at this time. This is both because finances make it difficult to project publication of pamphlets and because the political line of virtually every pamphlet is likely to be a topic of factional controversy. We will attempt to keep up editorial work on pamphlet manuscripts as they become available.

(c) In one case - the Women's Commission and its functionary - we propose a political change in order to enable the commission to carry out the NC mandate and women's liberation perspective. We propose that Kay S. replace Shelley L. as Women's Commission functionary and take responsibility for speaking, elaborating and coordinate the work of the branches in carrying out the women's liberation perspectives. We propose that the political composition of the Commission itself be maintained and that the personnel be Kay S., Shelley L., Dave F.

2. MALCOLM X PAMPHLET. POSTPONED ONE WEEK.

3. ST. LOUIS CONFERENCE DISPUTE. Presentation by JG of reply by Kevin B. to statement by Sy L. (previous minutes); reply by Don C. and discussion. The statement by Kevin B. and the reply by Don C. are attached to these minutes.

4. NORMAL AND PROPER FUNCTIONING. MOTION by DF (presented in response to Sy L. statement on St. Louis):

1. The comrades of the Revolutionary Tendency have requested that the NAC provide guidance as to "what constitutes normal and proper functioning during this difficult period." In our opinion, there is nothing to warrant any change in attitude toward the behavior of comrades in public arenas, either in union work, educational conferences, etc. We reject the charge made by Sy L. that the "ambiguous, poorly defined character" of the NAC "gives rise to confusion as to what kind of public behavior is good sense." This confusion exists, if at all, in the minds of the RT comrades.

Nonetheless, we are willing to re-state the fundamental attitudes of the I.S. toward public functioning and the rights of minorities in that context. While no set of "rules" can define exactly what is "good sense," the approach that the I.S. takes toward public functioning and debate is:

(a) We place no barriers on the exchange of political ideas between members of the I.S. and the working class movement as a whole. So long as the position of the organization as a whole is not misrepresented - either by misstatement or implication - we do not require I.S. members to hide their own views or their differences with specific positions held by the I.S. from the working class. It is assumed, of course, that comrades who publically take issue with a position held by the I.S. will first have raised their point of view inside the I.S. so that it is known to the organization.

(b) To protect the integrity of the organization and to safeguard unity in action, we do not permit comrades to organize or argue against an action line of the organization in a public area where the ability of the I.S. to organize around that line could be impaired.

(c) In public debate among members of the I.S., we differentiate between the free exchange of political ideas - which we defend unconditionally - and the use of public arenas for organized factional warfare, which of course is not permitted. Comrades may identify themselves as members of an organized minority group within the I.S. if they choose to do so; there is no obligation to do this and in general we do not advocate it. Comrades speaking as members of organized minorities may present the views of their group on political questions in debate, making it clear where they do and do not represent the views of the I.S. generally; it is not permitted, however, to make derogatory characterizations (e.g. "opportunist, reformist, sectarian, centrist, Pabloite-from-above or -below:, etc.) of the

politics of other tendencies, or the I.S. as a whole. (In other words, I am intitled to say "I am an advocate of forming a black political party, and I believe that the I.S. position on this question is mistaken"; I am not entitled to say "The Revolutionary Tendency (or Transformation Caucus) is a group of sectarians (centrists)," etc. (d) Essentially, we regard the rights of individuals and minorities to argue for their point of view in public debate as a safeguard of internal democracy, i.e. to ensure that there can be no suspicion that the political views of anyone are being suppressed inside the organization. Continual public debate among I.S. members on fundamental political questions is not something we regard as normal or desirable; nonetheless it is infinitely preferable to the Zinovievist/SWP conception which holds that the political ideas of a minority must never be expressed outside the organization - a conception which rapidly leads to their being witch-hunted and suppressed internally as well.

MOTION TABLED to further to further discussion to be held among JG, DF and a representative of the Revolutionary Tendency. (This followed a statement by Sy that the motion did not speak to the difficulties of the present situation, and general agreement to hold further discussions on how to address this).

5. Report by Don C. on Martin Sostre Defense Committee.

MOTION (DF): To accept DC's report and to recommend that our comrade in NY take the position offered on the Martin Sostre National Defense Committee. We request a full report from NY prisoners' fraction as the basis for fuller perspectives discussion. ALL FOR.

6. CHICAGO C.P. ANTI-REPRESSION CONFERENCE. MOTION (Don C.):

1. The building of a real anti-repression organization would be a progressive step forward. Hand-in-hand with the employers' offensive against workers' rights and gains, their government has created a new atmosphere of repression. With the aim of demoralizing and stamping out the last remnants of militancy, this new repression is focused primarily on Blacks and other minorities. Moreover, this new repression takes the character of a divide-and-conquer racist tool that hampers the development of a unified rank-and-file response to the employers' offensive by violently containing the vanguard elements (blacks, etc.) and fostering racial hostilities. In short, the tightening of state controls ("executive privilege," striciter penal codes, etc.) and the callous repression against minorities tied to a capitalist crisis that promises new acts of resistance, all spell trouble for the working class as a whole.

2. The question remains though can the C.P. build an effective anti-repression organization. (On this score, we recognize that the C.P.'s "left", "pro-working-class", "anti-D.P." turn is in effect

manifest in this Chicago conference and the proposed organization.) Rightfully taking up every act of repression, from Wounded Knee to the case of Vietnam Vets, from the Black Prisoners Movement to Labor's case they have failed to interwind these cases by pointing out the nature of the capitalist state, the organized expression of capitalist interest, and that repression in all its forms is a facet of this. This failure is the basis of this. This failure is the basis of their apparent attempt to keep one foot in the DP and one foot on their shallow "left" turn, (a turn that means only deeper entry into the left-liberal stream). Even though the CP has "broken with the DP" their conference is jam full of reformist politicals (Abernathy, Chavez, etc.) and DP maveriks (such as Metcalf). Quite clearly this fact coupled with anti-Nixon rhetoric leaves the door open for a "right turn" back into the DP.

3. The defeat of repression requires revolutionary minded measures. An effective fight against repression cannot be waged under the tutelage of capitalist supporters of any kind. The reformist character of the conference can offer only legal lobbying, a bureaucratic organization, a few court victories, electoral victories for the DP and disoriented recruits for the CP. But the safety and security of Black and working class as well as social political progress requires an aggressive offensive against the capitalists and the dispelling of all reformist illusions about the capitalist state. The ultimate objective must be the disarming of the ruling class. The immediate objective must be the socialist education of the workers and the breaking of the working class from the capitalist parties, illusions and ideology. If the CP and reformists manage to draw any mass attendance at all from the Black Community we are confident there will be a potential audience for our orientation.

4. Our role in the conference should be a propagandistic intervention along the following lines:

(a) With budget-cuts and inflation devastating the oppressed communities, repression becomes the other arm in this devastation. This fight against repression must take up the fight against budget-cuts, inflation, as well as other aspects of the economic offensive.

- Blacks take the lead in the anti-repression defense; the defense of Black rights requires an offensive against the entire capitalist system. Therefore, Blacks must join the vanguard in mobilizing and politicizing the rest of the class.

- Break with the reformists -- opposition to reformist strategies of community control of the repressive state apparatus.

- For Black self-defense - for Black workers' organization to take the lead in mobilizing the community and to bring the fight to the unions.

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(b) break with the bourgeoisie, its government, its parties, and politics.

- opposition to the reformists, CP and the liberals.

- turn towards the unions - for Workers' Defense Guards -

For a Labor Party based on a program to meet the crisis, a transitional program and for a Workers' Government - Labor to the forefront of every defense case against repression.

(c) For internationalism - opposition to repression against foreign students.

- opposition to repression abroad, East and West.

(d) For a national democratic anti-repression organization, independent of the capitalist parties and supports.

- for national defense committee for the rank-and-file movement. The ability of the labor "leaders" to control, isolate and eliminate militants is central to capitalist repression. Without this handiwork of labor officialdom the capitalist economic offensive would be impossible to maintain.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Chicago branch should seek to actively intervene in the conference. Fight for presentation time, prepare a political exposure leaflet of the C.P. and prepare a resolution, based on the above program, for the conference.

AMENDMENT (DF): Substitute for Pts. 3 & 4 of Don C.'s motion the following:

Our intervention at the Chicago anti-repression conference should emphasize the call for a national working class anti-repression organization, to defend political prisoners, to fight police terror against Black and Third World Communities, to defend rank and file movements, and to fight anti-labor measures by the state. In this strategic context we raise a program along the lines of:

I. Anti-repression demands - free all political prisoners, end police terror, abolish all STRESS-type squads, for armed self-defense of Black and other oppressed people's communities, fight the racism which causes repression to fall hardest on black people.

Working Class Independent Political Action - IPA to fight the political apparatus of repression to build a labor party, break from the capitalist parties which defend the repressive capitalist system, abolish all restrictions on right to strike and other workers' rights, fight the budget cuts which serve the same repressive functions.

Our approach is not to raise the program as an end in-itself, but to pose programmatic ideas as a strategy for a working class anti-repression struggle. We advocate that the anti-repression movement adopt a program for which working class militants can fight in their unions and which they can use to expose the union bureaucracy - its unwillingness to fight and its ties to liberalism.

Propagandistically, we emphasize (1) exposure of the roots of

of repression in capitalist society, (ii) the role of the liberals in maintaining and carrying out the policies of repression, (iii) the necessity of internationalism - to oppose U.S. imperialism which supports repressive dictatorships, and to defend political prisoners East and West.

AMENDMENT BY DF PASSED 5-2 (SL, CH)
MOTION AS AMENDED PASSED 5-0-2 (CH, SL abstain).

7. REPORT BY DON C. on budget-cut pamphlet and West Coast tour.
REPORT ACCEPTED, ALL FOR.

8. FUTURE POLITICAL DISCUSSIONS. Bill H., having arrived and taken up his position as industrial director, will begin preparing motions and discussions on labor questions, beginning with the NMU election and the 1973-74 contract bargaining round. The NY exec will be asked to assign someone to prepare a report and perspective on the new Maoist party which is in process of formation.

9. ADJOURNED.

STATEMENT BY SL AND CH

The new NAC majority bloc has decided to drive members of the RT out of as many positions of political responsibility as it can. Sy Landy and Ron T. are now without posts. Chris H. has been removed as pamphlet director - WP writer. Shelley L. is no longer to head up the women's commission. Bruce L. is no longer editor of the theoretical journal - indeed, work on the T.J. is to be "suspended." The only RTers who remain on the N.O. staff are two N.O. clerical workers and one of them also a part-time W.P. writer. Don C. remains as Black-Brown Coordinator only because Geier and Finkel cannot replace him. They have, however, already placed a question-mark over Don's post and are already talking about drawing money out of the Black-Brown fund for other unrelated purposes. It is as clean a sweep as Geier-Finkel could engineer.

After last summer's convention, Joel Geier was offered the post of T.J. editor despite the defeat of the T.C. He rejected that post and took the position of educational director instead. Today, the new NAC majority flatly refuses to make a similar offer to Sy Landy.

In previous weeks, these "iron broom" tactics were excused with references to a fictitious financial crisis. Not only did RTers suffer as a result - we were told - but so did everybody. After all, a part-time WP writer from the TC (Kay S) was also being removed.

Now that the RT has exposed the phony character of the "financial crisis," Finkel-Geier have responded as follows. They have re-hired Kay S. - now on a full-time basis - as new women's coordinator (replacing Shelley L.) Everyone in the RT remains on the outside. The T.J. is being ditched now not under the cover of last week's camouflage ('finances') but on the grounds that no progress can be made on the T.J. so long as the internal debate is under way in the I.S.! This despite the fact that the NAC received a report on the T.J. last week clearly demonstrating that real progress was under way, progress which Finkel for one, acknowledged (see NAC minutes of May 2) as sufficient for continuation with work on the T.J.

NOTE: It should be emphasized that there is absolutely no question that sufficient funds are available to proceed with Theoretical Journal work and salary - and indeed DF's reply to our above statement quietly drops this particular piece of justification for the staff changes.

CH

STATEMENT BY JOEL G. (PREFACE TO KEVIN B. STATEMENT)

Whatever difficulties existed at the St. Louis Conference are now being highly exaggerated for factional purposes. The fault for those that occurred lies not with members of the TC, but with the caucuses of the RT. We ourselves would not have raised them.

We are for attempting to clarify the political questions in dispute, and to avoid as much as possible having serious questions lost in endless squabbles on organizational questions. We believe that the RT's raising these squabbles only lowers the level of the debate. We are, however, going to defend ourselves from all the charges and rumors now making the rounds.

STATEMENT BY KEVIN BRADLEY

Comrade Clarence Jones made a presentation on Marxist strategy for black liberation. He adhered closely to the majority position of the last convention, except that he indicated our main role in the fight for black liberation was the raising of the socialist program.

A member of Workers Unity asked him about Sparrow's Point. He asked Jones if blacks' obtaining an equal share of jobs meant an increase in white unemployment, would Jones be for it. He said nothing about "white skin privilege."

Kevin Bradley spoke saying the following. I'm a member of the IS, which is a democratic organization. I hold a minority viewpoint on black liberation. Clarence said that socialists advance the conditions of the working class as a whole which includes blacks. This is correct but it isn't sufficient because not all blacks are workers. All blacks are oppressed by racism. Further, white workers participate in that oppression. It is not simply a question of the capitalists. For example white workers have gone out on strike to deny blacks upgrades. I am for a workers government making racist acts a crime. In general we say that the working class has no one beneath it whom it oppresses. However white workers do take part in oppression of blacks. I'm for that being a crime. When a white dominated union excludes blacks from a job I'm for that being a crime, under a workers' government and under capitalism. Black workers face a dual oppression, as blacks and as workers. We should never urge blacks to subordinate their special demands because such demands will antagonize white workers. It is not blacks who divide the working class by fighting aggressively for their demands, but white workers. Of course we urge black workers to raise class wide demands. But we do not make our support for their struggles conditional on their raising them.

"I am for a national black workers organization. I know that Clarence agrees with me on this and much of what I've said. Where I differ is that I'm for a black party. I'm for it being led by black workers, with a working class program, to fight the dual oppression of blacks and the racist, capitalist system. It should urge whites to support it and argue for a Black and Labor Party in this country. "

After K.B. spoke a black member of Workers' Unity mentioned "white skin privilege." He never said anything about white workers giving anything up. K.B. did not get the floor again, but Clarence Jones spoke at least five times in the discussion. He made at least three attacks on the TC in an attempt to indicate that it was not sincere in its support black liberation.

Linda B. had referred to the alliance between the Chicago Teachers and Jesse Jackson and PUSH, and the opportunities and problems that offered. She began by saying that black liberation was only possible with socialism. She went on to Jackson's break previous teachers' strikes and his opportunist positions generally. She pointed out, however, that besides raising a social program we must intervene in the progressive struggles of black people, such as in the teacher's strike, and push them in a working class direction. Comrade Jones' first attack on the TC accused LB and KB of agreeing with Jackson that black liberation could come under capitalism. "I don't believe in all sorts of peternalistic maneuvering and shortcuts to get into the black community." He said he didn't agree with those who argued like Jackson that blacks can win liberation under capitalism. At that point he did not attack the TC by name, but LB had just mentioned Jackson and the implication was clear. Jones further said that the minority of the IS said that "We (the majority) want to subordinate black demands." No one of the TC either said or implied that at the conference.

Jones' second attack publicly accused the TC of accommodating its politics to Workers' Unity. "I'm not mad at Workers' Unity. You're expressing your views. What I am mad at is the so-called minority in the IS that wants to put unity with the Workers' Unity group to win them over."

Jones' third attack said the minority wasn't sincere in its support of black liberation, called its arguments "bullshit" and said "My tendency first raised black liberation in the organization in a serious way. All this other crap from the walls is only a reaction to this attempt."

The next discussion of the conference was on the unions in the form of a panel discussion with Workers Unity. R.T. members and sympathizer CJ, JM, and ED were out of the room for the entire discussion. In that discussion KB attacked head-on the Workers'

Unity discussion of white-skin privilege. He said that he did not believe that blacks could only get equal employment by raising the unemployment of whites, that the workers' share of the pie was not fixed, and that workers should fight for a bigger share. The black members of Workers Unity had the position on unions closest to Sojourner Truth, and KB attacked him strongly but in a friendly way, and during the panel and after perhaps convinced him a bit of our views.

At the conference Clarence Jones of his own accord came up to KB twice and apologized for what he had said publicly about the TC. He said he was disturbed by the NC. He asked us to forget the matter. The second time he asked KB to make his apologies known to all TCers present. If Comrade Jones has changed his mind about his apologies he should say so. He did not ask for nor could he expect any apologies for the behavior of the TC at the conference.

To sum up the charges of Sy's statement: Workers' Unity never raised the idea of white workers' "giving up" their white skin privilege. Workers' Unity did not accuse the IS of subordinating the struggle of blacks to the class struggle. They only mentioned "white skin privilege" after KB and LB had spoken, and KB attacked their views in a later session when no RTers were present, and apparently had no knowledge of what was said. The TC never accused or implied that Clarence Jones or the majority of the IS wanted to subordinate black demands. The TC made clear its agreement with the majority position of the IS on the necessity to raise class-wide demands, the importance of job security at Sparrows' Point and the need of a national black workers' organization.

Note: K.B. would not intimate that Clarence Jones is for subordinating black demands, because he does not believe this. Last fall comrade Ron T. made an amendment to the labor perspectives document, National Report #11. It stated "we urge black and brown workers to reject and repulse efforts on the part of the ruling class through government and private agencies to mobilize them against white workers/around the issue of preferential hiring and in counterposition to the slogan of jobs for all (such as the Philadelphia Plan in the construction industry.) In these cases we urge black and brown workers to place the demand for preferential hiring in a subordinate position behind the call for jobs for all." Divided at // Part 1, 6-0. Part 2, 3-3 (Sy, Chris, Ron for; Joel, Jack Dave against; Mike absent.)

It was Clarence Jones who led the fight in the Chicago branch to repudiate the politics of this motion, which it did 16-2 last November (whether the branch would do so again is another question.)

While K.B. doesn't believe that Clarence Jones is for subordinating black demands, he doesn't think that the RT leadership is for that. Their vote on Ron's motion above was soon followed by a similar motion. When Trautman presented his thesis on Canarsie, #8 read: "But in keeping with our general methodology of never asking oppressed groups to subordinate their special demands we do not make our support conditional upon their acceptance of that position (i.e. "seek to build a movement to launch an offensive for a general quality education" etc, from thesis #7) nor upon anything else" (Bulletin #32, Nov. 5, 1972). The vote is recorded in National Report #14, Nov. 4, 1972: Ron moved to change the word "demands" to "rights." The addition of rights passed 7-0. the deletion of the word "demands" failed 3-3-1 (Ron, Sy, Chris for; Joel, Jack, Mike against; Dave abstain). The second sentence failed 3-3-1. (Same vote as deletion of "demands").

The TC is against the subordination of black demands to the conservative consciousness of white workers, nor is it for making our support of black demands conditional on blacks' raising classwide demands. The Moody-Finkel group agrees with us on this. If Sy, Chris, and Ron agree with that formulation let them say so and we will drop the matter.

The problem in St. Louis was not that the TC implied that the IS majority on blacks (which includes the Finkel-McKenzie group, but doesn't include all of the RT leadership who voted against the Finkel-Coleman amendments) was for subordinating black demands. The TC made no such implication about the IS majority view, or the speaker. The RT would have it this way: if a member of the TC gets up, says he's in a minority on the black question and in the course of his speech he says he's against the subordination of black demands, it is taken by implication as an attack on the organization. The old saying goes "If the shoe fits were it." The shoe must have been pinching to produce such yowls.

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REPLY TO KEVIN B. ON THE ST. LOUIS CONFERENCE

Clarence Jones***

Comrade Kevin B.'s account of the St. Louis conference incident is nothing but a distortion of the truth. It is an account that dwells on trivial logic, in order to twist the facts and clean the hands of the TC comrades present at the conference, who in my opinion played an irresponsible role in the Black Liberation session and, therefore, seriously hampered my ability to present the organization's viewpoint on Black Liberation. The irresponsibility of the TC comrades was manifested in the following ways:

(1) Their failure to clearly differentiate themselves in the discussion in question from the Workers' Unity group, a "New Left"-type group whose fundamental theoretical framework on the Black Question is "white-skin privilege."

(2) Their conscious and systematic attacks on me, the organization's speaker.

(3) Their refusal to deal with political question as they were posed, i.e., "How do socialists defend black rights?" Instead they opted for attacks consisting of implied charges of "you are subordinating black demands to class-wide demands." and "you are not serious about progressive black struggles." This approach of theirs only served to degenerate the level of discussion. Furthermore, it was little different from the WU, whose approach was "either you support black demands uncritically (and you're progressive) or you don't (and you're reactionary)."

(4) Their role in the discussion gave the entire session the character of an "alliance" between WU and an IS minority against the IS majority. This image of an "alliance" had no grounds outside the confusionist and factionalist role of TC comrades.

On this basis the incident was brought to the NAC. The question arose very sharply - how do comrades conduct themselves at public functions? No one disputes the rights of minorities, but the TC comrades exercised more than their rights.

Kevin B. begins his account by stating "Comrade Clarence Jones made a presentation on Marxist strategy for black liberation. He adhered closely to the majority position of the last convention, except that he indicated our main role in the fight for black liberation was the raising of socialist program." The thrust of my presentation was the following:

***The final section of KB's statement, beginning "while KB doesn't believe that Clarence Jones. . .," was turned in to the typist after CJ had left Detroit on a speaking tour. Hence Chris H. has add a comment on this section.

(1) The very nature of black oppression, i.e. an oppressed racial caste integrated to the social structure of American capitalism, provided the theoretical basis for fighting for anworking class perspective within the black movement.

(2) The defense of black rights was central to any socialist intervention, but due to the social basis of black oppression any intervention that didn't weld this defense to a broader working class program aimed at a socialist revolution would only be capitulationist, etc.

(3) The defense of black rights was not a moral question, but a political question that will determine the success or failure of any rank-and-file upsurge.

(4) On the basis of the above three points it was the obligation of socialists, black or white, to fight at every turn for a class-conscious program and struggle within the black movement. In fact, the defense of black rights and the fight for a class-conscious program were tied and not separated into boxes (the WU approach).

(5) The defense of black rights is not based solely on black consciousness, i.e., "we defend black rights because black people think that's important and won't join us if we didn't." The only solid defense of black rights can only be on the basis of recognizing the relationship of the black masses to the class, as a whole, the inseparability of the two and a program geared towards cohering the class - not on a moralistic basis ("I'll defend you, if you defend me"), but on a political basis (our interests are the same, our enemy is the same, our salvation is the same).

(6) Black consciousness does not exist in a vacuum, it's conditioned by the society around it. Socialists must intervene to shape it, not by a pragmatic "worshipping" of it, but fighting to give it the highest development - socialist consciousness.

(7) The unity of the working class must be the unity of the labor movement with the entire ranks of the oppressed layers of the black community. This requires

(i) fighting the reformist hegemony of the black middle class within the community;

(ii) preparing the black working class to take the leadership in black struggles;

(iii) ingraining the obligation to "defend black rights" deep into the rank-and-file movement;

(iv) all the above can only be done meeting social problems with real solutions. Within this context fighting for socialist programs was raised.

This was the framework of my presentation which was within

the bounds of IS politics, but touching on some questions little touched on by the organization (such as the type, nature, and program of the black workers organization we want to build, how to fight white racism, etc.). This was the backdrop to the following discussion.

The bulk of the discussion centered on the question of Sparrows' Point, where the Labor Department made a token decision to upgrade black workers. My position was the following:

- (1) I supported the content of the decision, i.e. abolishing racist departmental seniority units for a plant-wide system.
- (2) The decision was a token gesture to cool-off civil rights critics and resolve a long conflict in that plant.
- (3) I did not support government intervention - because of the untrustworthy nature of the capitalist state - the decision was a political, besides token, maneuver.
- (4) The attitudes towards the decision of black and white workers were mixed, interlaced with question of job security, the organized right-wing in the plant, "black chauvinism," the role of the union. Therefore, the role of socialists was to provide clarity, i.e., expose the government, defend black rights, coupled with a fight for job security (all measures necessary), etc.

The WU's position was either you support the black workers, i.e. support the decision, or you don't. This attitude was based on their admitted theoretical basis of "white skin privilege." I agree with Kevin that they did not stand up and say "I'm a white-skin privileged" every time they spoke. I did not stand up and say "I'm a revolutionary socialist" everytime I spoke. Nonetheless, the politics were clear. Kevin's strange turn-about on this point in his account only minimize the TC's reaction to this discussion. From a different route they joined the WU in attempting to expose what they saw as a callous attitude on the part of the IS towards Black rights. Kevin's defense is that TC comrades neither "said or implied" that the IS majority "want to subordinate black demands." Also, "The TC never accused or implied that Clarence Jones or the majority of the IS wanted to subordinate black demands."

I did not record comrades' words, but simply on the basis of Kevin B's defense it is clear that he publicly accused someone of subordinating black demands. If not the WU, then he must have meant to imply that I did. If someone identifies himself as a political minority and says he is not for subordinating black demands he is implying that those he disagrees with are for subordinating black demands. This would be the clear implication to anyone in

politics. As for the WU, I think I already spelled out their position. The problem is that Kevin B. has yet to spell out where and when he disagreed with them in the actual black discussion. Finally, I do not have a habit of lying, if TC comrades indicated their allegiance to the organization's basic politics (as Kevin claims) their minute utterings were unheard by me.

Kevin's distortions are on who attacked who and how are as shallow as the day is long. I attacked the TC once and only after I was placed in a position where I had no choice but to defend myself. The reference to who's serious about the black question was a minute part of my defense and was only made out of disgust for the demagogic methods of political discussion characteristic of the TC. I did not apologize for the political attack on the TC, - which was pure defense in the face of an attempt to confuse a non-IS group about the nature of my positions - and I never will make such an apology. My statement to Kevin after the session involved only one point - that we stop the conference from further degeneration, by mutually refraining from airing internal differences.

When you read Kevin's account, if things had gone as the account says, no one could have objected. And according to his statement, you would have to believe that I made an unprovoked attack on the TC. If that had been what happened, would I be such a fool as to complain to the NAC? I am not a fool. I know Kevin is in Chicago and can reply to any charges. What I didn't anticipate was that his statement would seek to turn the facts around with showy "quotations" and make my defense of myself against implied slanders look like an unprovoked attack.

Finally, on Joel G.'s statement. It's surprising that the masters of rank demagogy all of a sudden discover the principles of political discussion. The RT does care to carry out discussion on an "organizational squabble." The squabble never would have arose if TC comrades understood what a principled political discussion was!

* * * * *

ADDENDUM

Chris H.

Joel and Kevin in their final addition are so anxious to score one last polemical thrust that they cut their own throats.

For they make it crystal clear that the denial in their statement that the TC "accused or implied that Clarence Jones or the majority of the IS wanted to subordinate black demands. We simply asserted that we were not for subordinating black demands" is completely insincere. The added section makes it crystal clear that the question of subordinating was an implied charge. They repeat the charge here. Moreover when the charge of subordinating

(ADDENDUM continued)

black demands has been floating around the IS for over a year, only an idiot could hear the statement "we (the minority) are not for subordinating black demands" at a conference and not believe that this was a public accusation that someone was for doing so.

Joel and Kevin now state that they believe the charge applies not to the majority or Clarence Jones, but to Sy, Ron, and Chris. So this is who they were publicly slandering! Moreover it's fatuous to deny that this was an attack directly on Clarence Jones in view of his stated adherence to a political tendency led by Sy, Ron, and Chris. Moreover to anyone not in the IS and attending a conference such distinctions don't come across. When the speakers identifying themselves as a minority say they are not for subordinating black demands, the audience understands this as a charge against the majority.

Moreover the charge was and is a slander. The politics of Sy, Ron, and Chris, and of the RT, on this point are quite clear. The disputed sentence in the Labor Document stated that Black demands should be subordinated when the ruling class utilizes them in an attempt to "mobilize black workers against white workers." In this case we wish to urge black workers to call first for jobs for all, raising the demand for preferential hiring "in a subordinate position." Our stated position on this has never varied. In the busing a year ago Ron and I put forward the same position as a general method: we support special demands of Blacks, urging their expansion into a classwide struggle - except that when black demands are raised specifically against the jobs or living standards of white workers or to undercut legitimate union rights (necessary to the interests of black workers as well as white), etc., then we do not give them support, but counterpose our own program of class demands with special demands for blacks in that context. This has been stated over and over and there is no excuse for not knowing it.

Moreover every socialist is for subordinating specific black demands in some circumstances. When the issue was raised subsequently on the NAC, I offered the example of a scheme to recruit blacks for construction projects in the ghetto to undercut the construction unions and at sub-union wages; I said I would not support the demand for black jobs in this context but would call for unionization, etc. Dave F. responded, "But that's a reactionary demand." Precisely. When black demands are used specifically against white workers and to undercut union rights, they constitute reactionary demands in that specific context and socialists do subordinate them, i.e. place them in a framework in which they can be supportable.

Moreover, "gains" achieved through such reactionary demands are not real gains for blacks. The fact that under such circumstances specific demands - but not the struggle for black rights - may be subordinated is why we moved in the Canarsie discussion to replace "demands" by "rights." This also was stated at the time and there is no excuse for not knowing it.

To charge in public, by implication, that persons in the IS (Sy, Ron, and Chris) are "for subordinating black demands," ~~is~~ that they are "for" this in general, is a slander. To raise the question of subordination without making clear that this is only held in the specific context of the use of black demands by the ruling class to undercut union rights, the living standards of other workers, etc., is to fail in the obligation to present fairly and honestly the positions of opponents. That the Transformation Caucus also consistently fails in this obligation internally is well known and needs no further elaboration.

* * * * *

NAC MINUTES

MAY 15, 1973

Present: All except SL

O. NATSEC REPORT. We have not yet gotten a report on the anti-repression conference called by C.P. defense groups in Chicago last weekend (brief report by CH: information we have heard is that I.S. intervention was good, but don't know if we made contacts, etc.) The NY branch is to hold a conference on the struggle in the prisons in June. Comrades from the Bay Area will be sending us material on the farmworkers/teamsters struggle; a four-page WP supplement on this is a possibility.

1. INDUSTRIAL DIRECTOR'S REPORT. Some militants and political activists have been victimized in a key auto plant in New Jersey; the UNC is being contacted on the possibility of defense work.

The NY teachers' fraction requests to be constituted as the national AFT steering committee in order to prepare for the AFT convention. MOTION by Bill H.:

The NY AFT fraction is provisionally constituted as the steering committee for the national AFT fraction, conditional on the NY fraction submitting to the NAC perspectives for functioning at the AFT Convention. PASSED ALL FOR.

2. STAFF. A statement by DF, in response to SL and CH, is being re-submitted for the minutes (in last week's minutes half of it was inadvertently omitted when minutes were typed).

Additional MOTION on staff by DF and JG. (1) To add Sy L. to the N.O. staff with the position of education director.

(2) The NAC will discuss the responsibilities of the position of education director in the pre-Convention period with Sy upon his return to Detroit from the West Coast.

Motivation: The previous motion to the NAC on the staff question put forward our motivation for the composition and functioning of the N.O. staff. That motion assured the democratic representation of all tendencies, including the Revolutionary Tendency, to the democratic right of representation in positions of political responsibility, proportional to the strength of the tendencies inside the organization on specific questions.

At the same time, we stated to the RT verbally and in writing that if they wished to fill different positions than those assigned, we were prepared to discuss this to arrive at a mutually satisfactory arrangement of responsibility.

Several branches have requested that we re-open the discussion of staff for the purpose of putting Sy in a political post. The position of education director has been specifically mentioned.

Our feeling is that our previous motion was more than adequate in ensuring tendency representation on staff. Nonetheless we feel that it is legitimate for comrades to propose that some arrangement be made to ensure that Sy, who is a recognized leader inside the I.S. and the major spokesman for the RT, has a politically

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responsible position in the organization nationally.

In response to these comrades, our view is that the best course is to add Sy to the staff in the proposed capacity. It is our hope that this will help to end the campaign of rumors and charges of "iron broom tactics" that are making the rounds and which have only a debilitating effect on the life of the I.S. While this motion will effectively give the RT over-representation politically and numerically in positions of political leadership on the staff, we hope that it will enable us to clear away organizational charges and open an atmosphere for political debate. PASSED. ALL FOR.

SEPARATE MOTIVATION BY CH:

We welcome the fact that, under the pressure of motions passed by two branches asking that Sy L. be assigned a paid staff position, the NAC leadership bloc has retreated from its original staff proposal. We believe this retreat lends weight to our original contention that the staff cuts were political in nature. We wish to correct the statements made orally on the NAC and elsewhere that the Revolutionary Tendency had refused to discuss alternative staff proposals with the majority bloc; our proposals that (i) there be a firm commitment to maintain the post of Black/Latin Director, (ii) Sy L. be placed on staff as Education Director/Pamphlet Director, (iii) the post of Theoretical Journal Editor be maintained and preparations to publish the journal continued, and (iv) the position of Women's Commission Coordinator be maintained, had been communicated to the leadership of the majority bloc well in advance of their motion on staff presented May 10, which in the circumstances could only be taken as a rejection of our proposals. We wish to reiterate that there is no adequate financial or political motivation for discontinuing the preparations for publishing the theoretical journal at this time. We hope that the NAC's action indicates an abandonment of any intention to treat the RT as "second-class citizens" and that it will be possible to maintain both the external functioning of the IS and an internal atmosphere in which political positions are clarified and resolved.

4. WILDCAT STRIKES. MOTION by Bill H. :

Recently, a relatively small but noticeable increase in rank and file action, notably wildcat strikes, has begun to develop throughout industry. These indicate a trend towards growing restlessness among the workers, a growing combativity and a growing feeling of the need to take on the corporations, the union bureaucracies, and the government. These are not, as a whole, an attempt by the capitalist class to force actions which cannot be defended by the workers in order to isolate and pick off the militants and dissipate pent up anger.

In fact, the firing of militants is taking place, regardless of other actions. That is, many of the wildcats which are developing are precisely to defend militants and prevent their isolation and firings. They are at present defensive actions on the part of the workers. At present the companies are engaging in what they do before every expected conflict, including contract bargainings. They attempt to test the mood of the ranks and the leadership to see what response they get to judge just how far the companies can go in their demands during the contract. The workers response to this indicates much of what the fight will be to both the companies and the workers. Our attitude towards such pre-strike actions is that we support them and try to get the workers to draw the correct lessons from them; namely that they must link up between locals, in districts, nationally, with other unions in the same industry, the need for democratic reforms of their union structure, rank and file national oppositions, etc. In particular, our attitude towards the defense of militants is very important. Whether or not we call for a specific wildcat strike which we feel cannot be won is based on our conception of whether not striking would be more of a defeat for the workers. This is very often the case, where the lack of action indicates to the capitalists that they can continue to fire the militants and demoralizes the workers. We must understand that there are different levels of defeat. We seek that form of struggle which best defends the workers and advances their struggle.

Our attitude towards wildcats in general is also conditioned by the level of the struggle at the time. In general, our attitude is to take the fight to the unions, to fight for the wildcats to become official, for the union leadership to fight and spread the the strikes. But we are not for waiting for that leadership to lead when either the workers can win on their own, or lack of action will produce a bigger defeat. At this moment, in which a lull in the struggle has been evident and just beginning to break partly as a result of the governments actions, wildcats and other unorganized rank and file actions play a more important role. The national oppositional movements that we seek to build in the unions must come out of the struggles of the workers. They will not be built on intellectual arguments alone. These wildcats and other actions, such as the present strike in the rubber industry, can once again

lay the basis for the building of a movement in the unions which does in fact take an active part and lead the struggles of the workers.

We do not counterpose the strategy above, of spreading the struggle through organizing in the unions and fighting for democratic reforms, to the wildcats that are taking place. To do so, or to adopt the notion that our primary role in wildcats is to prevent them from going beyond the bounds the workers are prepared for, or to protect ourselves, is fundamentally conservative. In fact much of our job is making sure that those are the lessons drawn by the workers from these struggles. In fact, at present there are not other forms of struggle taking place (building caucuses, national strikes, etc) which the wildcats are attempting to lead in another, wrong direction. At present they are an important part of the process of building the struggle.

These are, of course, times when the IS advocates not taking particular actions. We never advocate a constant struggle. Knowing when to advance, when to hold back and consolidate and when to retreat is part of demonstrating our ability to lead the class, strategically and tactically, as well as programmatically. At all times our attitude is guided by our goal: preparing the working class to smash capitalism and seize control of the state and production in a conscious act and our preparation as the party needed to lead that seizure of power. There will be times then during any kind of action -- wildcats, official strikes, slowdowns, etc -- in which we advocate retreat. But we do this based on our assessment of how that action can be conducted, the chances of victory, and the alternative forms of defeat. At all times we take an active part in the struggles of our class and do not treat them in an indifferent way.

Our attitude then is that it is necessary to take part and lead defensive struggles of the class. In particular a response to the firing of militants, to harassment, must be forthcoming. Whether the specific tactic of a wildcat is what we organize must be based on our assessment of whether the workers will suffer a worse defeat by not wildcatting. That is a decision that must be based on the degree of support and organization, relative strength of the ranks, bureaucrats, and the companies. It cannot be done by a general attitude towards wildcats, pro or con. At all times we seek to draw the correct lessons from the struggle -- the need to spread actions, organization, and programmatic ideas.

AMENDMENTS (CH): (1) Substitute for Section of Bill H. Motion (paragraph 2, last four sentences, beginning "Whether or not we call for..." and ending "...and advances their struggle.):

We seek that form of struggle which best defends the workers and advances their interests. Whether to call for a specific wildcat strike is a question of the relation of forces. Lack of action may demoralize the workers; on the other hand to call for a wildcat which we feel cannot be won may have the same effect. We press for a winning strategy. This may mean a wildcat strike, but we recognize that poorly prepared and isolated strikes are often defeated with demoralizing results. We urge the workers to prepare their forces and build support, even if this means holding fire today in order to fight more effectively tomorrow. Naturally, we ourselves, while not exposing ourselves needlessly, do our utmost to effectively wage a wildcat which has genuine support, even if we may have argued against striking at the time.

(2) Add to BH MOTION:

We must be able to tell them that they have to learn when to strike and when to resist provocation. We should urge them to pick their opportunities carefully in order to protect themselves as best as possible. Taking all due precautions to protect themselves, our people should seek to broaden and deepen the actions when they do occur in order to minimize the losses and protect the militants. This is not a blanket statement; obviously there will be times when we do not participate. We do not want to expose our own people needlessly. They too must learn to protect themselves.

We must use this opportunity to focus in on the need for a fight within the unions, to fight to elect real militants on the stewards councils and shop committees to build militant organizations on the shop floor, to fight to elect militant leaderships in upcoming local elections. Further, we must begin now to fight for a unified policy for fighting back, for regional meetings and coalitions of locals in one industry. The coalition bargaining of 14 unions representing workers in the electrical industry is one example of this. We must seek to extend this notion to a rank and file level, to fight for regional and national congresses of labor to plan a coordinated fight. We should emphasize that in most cases isolated wildcats in one plant will not be sufficient to buck a well armed and coordinated drive on the part of management. We must not allow them to isolate strikes nor individual militants.

In our propaganda, WP and the rank and file bulletins, and in leaflets, we should seek to place these events and our ideas in the context of the present developing crisis and the ruling class offensive.

MOTIVATION FOR AMENDMENT TO WILDCAT STRIKE MOTION (CH)

My objections to the Bill H. motion are two-fold: (i) the one-sidedness of its analysis of the occurrence of wildcat strikes, that is, it is denied altogether that management may at this time in some cases intentionally be provoking wildcats; (ii) the romanticism and disorienting nature of its position on favoring wildcats. The second aspect represents a greater danger to the IS and it is this which I have chosen to amend.

The thrust of the discussion of "whether to call for a wildcat strike which we feel cannot be won" is a counterposition between striking and doing nothing; the idea that socialists and other militants can consciously decide not to strike and carry out a policy of preparing for battle on better terms is in effect excluded, and the bulk of argument rejected this idea quite firmly. Nothing could be more disorienting, more counter to our task of educating and preparing militants for the battles to be waged, more romantic, or more dangerous for our own members in industry.

It is the job of socialists to press for winning strategies, and therefore a duty to indicate quite clearly when a strike would be a mistake. The idea, presented in the Bill H. motion and in motivating statements, that not to strike is demoralizing whereas strikes increase morale even if not successful is a romantic illusion. Strikes which fail are often as demoralizing or more demoralizing than not striking; militants are fired, lose contact with the industry, etc., and the ranks in general may learn the lesson of their apparent "impotence" in this way as well as in others. Moreover in motivating statements the third alternative - conscious preparation for battle - is belittled as "conservative" in what is really a confession of fear that the ranks cannot be so prepared. The statement made in motivation by DF that the basis for rank and file organization "could not be built without them" (wildcat strikes) is an indication of this as well as a foolish misconception. At one auto plant in Detroit, where a losing wildcat did not fully sap morale, the prior existence of a rank and file group able to call for continued struggle was an important factor. To call for a wildcat which we feel can be won is of course a tactical decision. To "call for a wildcat strike which we feel cannot be won" is in general correct only when other alternatives are fully excluded, and not always then. It is difficult to motivate such a call honestly, e.g., "I don't believe we can win, but to struggle and lose will improve your fighting morale."

Bill H's motion indicates at the end, pro forma, that we must know when to advance and when to retreat, etc. However, the conception in the motion is that of generally fighting even when losing is assumed. Are our industrial cadre really to take this seriously? It is correct that consciousness develops through struggle, but the conception of consciousness put forward in the motion is not that of socialist politics but that of The Charge of the Light Brigade.

CH amendments 1 and 2 FAILED (CH for) 1-5

AMENDMENT TO BH MOTION (JT): Sometimes even a defeated wildcat strike effort can boost morale and steel workers for a longer term struggle, and give them some indication of potential rank and file power, whereas no action will teach them only the lesson of their own impotence. FAILED 1-1-4 (JT for, CH against).

BH MOTION PASSED 5-1 (CH against).

5. MALCOLM X PAMPHLET. Discussion of draft by William Jackson, edited by CH.

MOTION (CH): To accept pamphlet, with minor textual revisions to follow. FAILED 1-5 (CH for).

MOTION (DF): The pamphlet on Malcolm X should be re-submitted to the author for rewriting. A subcommittee of the NAC consisting of DF and BH, as supporters of the position on black liberation adopted by the convention, is assigned to correspond with WJ on the substance of the revisions.

MOTIVATION: The pamphlet "Malcolm X, a Marxist Appraisal," while potentially a valuable contribution to the political and ideological intervention of the I.S. in the Black Liberation movement, is not politically acceptable in its present version. This is particularly true of the analytical thrust of the editorial work which has been done on the manuscript, which in essence argues (in counterposition to theories of black nationalism) that black people are simply a super-exploited section of the working class. This point of view - which is not expressed in each and every formulation, but is clearly the content of the overall analysis - is not that adopted by the 1972 convention, although many of the comrades who supported the position passed may have changed their point of view. The political dangers of the approach that regards blacks as simply a super-exploited caste within the working class are as great as those flowing from a pro-nationalist analysis. In particular, such an approach leads to a fundamentally conservative attitude toward black struggles where these break out - as they have and will in many cases - outside the framework of the organized labor movement. The current draft of the pamphlet also leaves itself open to this misrepresentation by failing to discuss the relation of Malcolm X's ideas to (and their influence upon) the struggles of the Black Liberation Movement since that time - the ghetto rebellions, the Panthers, DRUM, etc. - many of which were of potentially revolutionary significance although they were often community-based rather than based on working class organizations, as well as being ideologically confused, etc.

MOTION PASSED 5-1 (CH against).

NOTE BY CH: The political motivation above, by DF, which was not available in writing at the NAC meeting, is a thoroughgoing and complete misrepresentation of the politics of the Malcolm X pamphlet. The latter, therefore, require a political defense, since there is no practical way to make the manuscript itself available for the scrutiny of the membership. This political defense will be completed for the next mailing.

6. ADJOURNED.

REPLY TO STATEMENT BY SY AND CHRIS ON STAFF
Dave F.

Chris and Sy's statement virtually refutes itself. The charge that Joel and myself have "decided to drive RT members out of as many positions of political responsibility as it can" is fraudulent on its face, as can be seen both by what we have done and by what we have not done. It is demoralizing and a needless burden on the office staff to fill the NAC minutes endlessly with this kind of stuff. Nevertheless, we will reply to this and to every other slander raised against us. We will do this, not only because written statements are put in the NAC minutes impugning our integrity and our intention to carry out a full political discussion, but because similar gossip, rumors, and innuendo are now being spread throughout the organization.

Let's be clear. We stated that there was a financial crisis. This was the case, and remains so despite the abatement of the situation somewhat in the last few weeks. The number of comrades now on staff is the maximum that can be supported without resorting to deficit financing, a course we regard as irresponsible and disastrous. The financial crisis is no joke, as the membership will discover when it comes time to finance the Convention and the N.O. has no reserves on hand whatsoever to help pay for it. This, however, is secondary. We stated when we took leadership that there is an abnormal situation inside the I.S. - one which can only be resolved by a discussion of fundamental issues. These issues, for us, include the necessity of establishing a fundamental attitude toward the history of our organization as a political tendency and toward the third camp world view, and of organizing a convention debate which can accomplish this. These are not abstract historical issues, as the Revolutionary Tendency comrades are perfectly well aware - they are the questions which have produced a frenzy of debate over each and every aspect of our labor work, the Black movement, women's liberation, and the nature of revolutionary politics in general. Our approach to the work of the N.O. and the staff flows from this.

We are accused of "iron broom tactics." What does this mean? In real life, comrades, it means that the staff has been reorganized in such a way that the Revolutionary Tendency is represented, numerically and politically, on the staff and in positions of responsibility in proportion to its strength inside the organization, as measured by the votes received by its documents on specific questions. We defend this without the slightest apology. In no other organization that we know are opposition tendencies or factions assigned political responsibilities on a democratic proportional basis. The hysterical charges raised by the RT leadership ignore the fact that the previous staff overrepresented the RT - as was natural, given that the RT itself emerged from the previous Majority in the organization. The change in the politics of these comrades dictated the change in leadership voted by the NC and the staff changes carried out by the NAC.

When the Revolutionary Tendency asked for a majority from the NC, it was made perfectly clear that it intended to make major staff changes in order to carry out its line. No one would have challenged the legitimacy of this. The RT, which is a political minority, has no right to a majority of politically responsible posts - which would be the result of maintaining the status quo, as the RT stated to us it was "willing" to do.

It is not easy to effectuate major staff changes and continue the work of the organization in the middle of the year, just before the Convention. This, however, is what was forced upon us by the sudden change in labor perspectives, women's liberation, and other questions - including the entire attitude toward the nature of the I.S. - which gave rise to the RT. To state that "we are willing to remain at our posts," after having precipitated a political crisis in the organization, is not our conception of responsible leadership within the I.S.

The charges raised concerning the theoretical journal are refuted by any examination of the facts. If we felt that the work of preparing the TJ could be fruitfully continued, and if we felt that the obstacle to this was Bruce's politics or his handling of the job, we would not have hesitated to replace him! On the contrary, the real obstacle is the situation inside the IS which in our view means that the likelihood of getting material on labor perspectives and the basic theoretical views of the IS, which it is the primary function of the TJ to elaborate and defend, is miniscule.

We are told that Don C. remains as Black-Brown coordinator, "because Geier and Finkel cannot replace him." This is not only a slander against us, it is an insult as well. Don C. remains as Black-Brown coordinator because of his qualifications, his skills, and because of the fact that of all the political departments, the Black-Brown department is the one which the RT has the greatest political legitimacy to fill, based on their essential (if "algebraic" at times) agreement with the Black Liberation Convention document from 1972. Let's make no mistake: no one is irreplaceable - Don, Joel, myself, or anyone. We would be a sad excuse for a "cadre" organization, or even a group trying to become a cadre organization, if we had that kind of conception.

The one political replacement made, other than those already voted by the NC, is the replacement of Shelley by Kay as women's commission functionary. The political motivation for this should be clear enough - i.e. the perspectives document passed by the NC and the amendments that were defeated. We do not feel that the position of education director can be fruitfully filled at this time, because we feel that the questions on which the IS needs an education program are precisely the topics of factional controversy

at this point. No one has suggested that this assessment is incorrect - the only motivation given is to create an extra staff

Finally, we have stated to the RT that, if they believe that they should have different political positions than those assigned to them - i.e. they want to fill some positions rather than others - we are willing to discuss this and arrive at a mutually satisfactory arrangement. What we will not tolerate or submit to is the vicious rumor-mongering and factionally motivated charges with which the RT leadership has decided to fill the NAC minutes. We will not allow them to go unanswered; nor should the membership allow them to be spread around the organization without being answered.

NAC MINUTES May 22, 1973

Present: All except SL.

O. NATSEC REPORT. News from around the country: As previously reported, the Seattle educational conference was a success. Six comrades have been recruited as a result. Plans are going ahead for the Prisoner Education and Defense Conference for June 9 in N.Y. A number of important and well-known speakers from the prison movement, as well as I.S. members, will be featured on the panels.

In Detroit, local UAW elections produced results of some importance, UNC co-chairman Jordan Sims won the Presidency of Local 961 (Eldon Ave.) He was fired a few years ago from the plant for involvement in walkouts over safety and harassment. Several members of the United Justice Action Slate won their elections at Local 7; most of the UJAC candidates got 1/3 or so of the votes cast. UNC candidates at Mack (Local 212) did poorly on the whole.

A sectarian note of interests: the Class Struggle League has fused with the Vanguard Newsletter group to form a new organization, which retains the name Class Struggle League. The article in CLASS STRUGGLE reporting on the fusion conference mentioned several of the questions discussed. One point of interest was the attitude taken toward building union caucuses. While the CSL formerly insisted that caucuses be built on a full program of nine transitional demands, the VNL comrades convinced them that this was a sectarian and abstentionist position. Accordingly, the fused organization now recognizes the necessity of building caucuses on only one or two demands, so long as revolutionaries fight within them for the full transitional program, the necessity of a confrontation with capitalism and for a revolutionary party. The meaning of this would appear to be that they are for building opportunist caucuses, in order to fight to turn them into sectarian ones.

1. MLL APPLICATION FROM WASH., D.C. Referred to NATSECs for further correspondence, especially with respect to political differences mentioned in letter of application but not clearly spelled out.

2. CONVENTION.

- (i) Convention call: a draft will be ready next week.
- (ii) Place. MOTION (DF): We propose that convention be held in Detroit. Request Detroit exec discuss implementation (i.e. finding comrades responsible for housing and so forth). ALL FOR.
- (iii) Agenda. MOTION (DF): The convention agenda will consist of
 - (a) Tasks and Perspectives; (b) Labor Perspectives; (c) Black Liberation; (d) the Third Camp; (e) Organizational.

AMENDMENTS (CH): (i) Restore women's liberation theoretical discussion.
(ii) Combine Labor with Tasks and Perspectives.
(iii) Drop the Third Camp discussion.
(iv) Add International Perspectives.
CH amendments i-iv all FAILED 1-5.

NAC MINUTES May 29, 1973

Present: All except SL

0. INDUSTRIAL AND NATSEC REPORTS. Rubber strike continues; the OCAI strike against Shell has been settled, with the union defeated on its key demands. Bay Area comrades to be asked for full report on its key demands. Bay Area comrades to be asked for full report on their strike support work.

LF to make tour to West Coast branches, to speak on the political situation externally and in the I.S.

MOTION (LF): Half the expenses for the tour to be paid from N.O. funds (as opposed to the standard procedure of full N.O. funding for national office tours).

MOTIVATION: The difficult and precarious financial state of the N.O. makes it essential to economize as much as possible in order to ensure our ability to function through the summer. Accordingly, since the tour is partly to present the political standpoint of the leadership of the I.S. (i.e. an official capacity) and partly to put forward the viewpoint of my own tendency, I don't want to request a full N.O. subsidy.

MOTION PASSED 4-1-1 (JT against, CH abstain).

1. WATERGATE. Presentation by JG and discussion (both presentation and discussion were preliminary, but attempted to go beyond earlier WP article and editorial. Discussion focussed on the degree to which the breaking of the Watergate scandal into a full-fledged govt. crisis represents a fight within the ruling class and political establishment over the consequences of the tendency toward Bonapartism implied by some of Nixon's actions).

2. NMU ELECTIONS AND UFW DISCUSSIONS TABLED FOR PREPARATION OF AMENDMENTS.

4. ALJOURNAL.

NAC MINUTES May 29, 1973

Present: All except SL

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2. NMU ELECTIONS AND UFW DISCUSSIONS TABLED FOR PREPARATION OF AMENDMENTS.

4. ALJOURNEL.

May 22, 1973

3. NATIONAL MARITIME UNION (NMU) ELECTION.

Presentation by Bill H. Preliminary discussion.

MOTION (DF): A full discussion of the BH document, with revisions and amendments, to be held next week. For the purpose of guidance for WP and to establish the general line of the organization, we adopt the basic line of the BH document with respect to (i) highly critical support of the Morrissey campaign; (ii) the character of the Herson campaign (i.e. as a socialist educational campaign rather than a serious opposition to the Curran bureaucracy).

PASSED 5-0-1 (Ch abstain)

4. LOS ANGELES. Proposals on LA back debt (This includes nine months back dues).

MOTION (JT): Demand full payment. FAILED 1-4-1 (JT for, CH abstain)

MOTION (BH): Demand full payment; NATSECS to negotiate arrangements for payment schedule and how much is to be paid by convention.

FAILED 2-2-2 (BH, JT for; DF, JG against)

MOTION (JG): Demand full payment for April NC assessment and April-August 1973 dues; demand payment of 50¢ on the dollar of back dues. Payment to be made by convention. PASSED 3-0-3 (JG, DF, MS for).

MOTION (DF): The constitutional requirement for payment of dues within three months (or suitable arrangement for payment of dues in default) as a condition for seating convention delegates will be in force at this convention. PASSED 5-0-1 (CH abstain)

5. UFW/IBT. Preliminary discussion (CH absent for this point).

MOTION (DF): (i) we accept the proposal from the Bay Area and from the WP editorial board for a special four-page centerfold feature on the struggle to save the farm workers union.

(ii) The general line of the Mike P./Ken P. motion is accepted as the political basis for initial activity and the WP coverage. A full discussion of the document to be held next week.

6. ADJOURNED.

MINUTES OF THE NATIONAL ACTION COMMITTEE OF THE I.S. June 13, 1973

Present: All

0. NAITSEC REPORT. NY Prisoners Conference was not very successful; total attendance was about 70-80, somewhat less than expected. Comrades from East Bay report that IS intervention at the California Federation of Teachers Convention was successful and that prospects for statewide opposition group are good as a result. The tour by DF to the West Coast covered L... and the East Bay. In L... branch discussions were held on (i) the Third Camp, (ii) Building the leadership. Both debates were organized along lines of the points of view expressed in current documents.

1. INDUSTRIAL DIRECTORS REPORT. A significant number of wildcat strikes have occurred in various auto plants, not only in Detroit but also Lordstown and New Jersey. The main issue involved is heat. BH will be assigned to draw up a perspective on the specifics of our orientation toward this development.

2. ALL APPLICATIONS from Ellensburg ACCEPTED, ALL FOR. Ellensburg is now constituted as an organizing committee.

3. TOURS. Report by JG on tour by two leading British I.S. comrades who will be in the U.S. for about 4-5 weeks this summer. They will be available to speak to branches on various aspects of the ISCB, its work and the present workers' movement in Britain, as well as working class history. JG will coordinate arrangements for this tour.

4. EDUCATION DEPT. Report by Sy L. Reading lists on important questions of I.S. history are in preparation. Tapes of NY introductory class series are being solicited from NY.

5. NMU Election. Reports in the newspaper are that Wall (Curran's candidate) was the winner by a 2-1 margin (not clear whether this meant 2/3 of total vote or whether he beat closest rival by 2-1). Discussion of motions by BH and CH/SL. (Texts of motions attached.) BHMotion PASSED 5-2 (CH, SL against).

6. LABOR COMMITTEE. NCLC campaign against other left groups, including physical violence against SWP members, continues and may be escalating. A fuller report and statement will be forthcoming as soon as more information becomes available to us.

MOTION ON 1973 NMU ELECTION

Bill Hastings

1. The National Maritime Union is currently holding its election (terms are for 5 years). Shortly before the election (the months of April and May) Joseph Curran, the NMU's first and only president, stepped down and retired with severance pay and pension amounting to \$1,000,000. His stepping down opened the door for Shannon Wall, NMU Secretary-Treasurer to become the acting president and hence the "incumbent" in this election. Their record is very clear -- after being trained by the CP, he launced the drive to throw out the Stalinists and then the Trotskyists in the NMU in the 1940's, then Curran allowed major changes in the shipping industry. Figures published in "The Call" (see below) indicate that while in 1963 NMU-represented deep-sea jobs numbered over 26,000 by 1973 that figure had declined almost three quarters to 7,000 jobs. This loss in jobs has been largely due to two factors -- that American-owned ships are sailing under foreign flags and that the other maritime unions (SIU and SUP) are now bargaining with companies formerly represented by the NMU.

Additionally, the Curran-Wall administration has allowed wide wage differentials to exist between the NMU and the west coast seamen's contracts. This and other conditions take place in the context of one of the most blatantly bureaucratic, collaborationist and gangster unions around. Some of Curran's tactics are well enough known -- beatings of oppositionists, the 8 year contract signed in 1961, the use of the union patrolmen as goons for Curran, the raising of the necessary sea-time needed to vote just prior to important elections, the playing off of shore-side workers and the seamen (for more on this see articles in New Politics or Autocracy and Insurgency in Organized Labor on the NMU) -- all of them and others are used quite freely against any and all opponents.

2. The main oppositionist in this election is James Morrissey. Morrissey's history goes way back. He was a minor official in the Curran administration during the '40's -- the height of the anti-red fight -- although he never mentions this in his material. He became an oppositionist in the 60's and ran against Wall for secretary-treasurer in 1966 and 1969. In the latter he received 54% of the vote in NY (the largest NMU port) and over a third nationally. He ran with several pretty opportunist characters. He began putting out The Call for NMU Democracy and fought over some questions. He was badly beaten physically by some of Curran's goons which in part resulted in little organization taking place. Curran has attempted to deny him shipping jobs since and Morrissey has remained a liberal oppositionist since. His present program as given in The Call dated March 25, 1973, is as follows:

-- Force the government to tax the runaway fleets to make it unprofitable for American shipowners to use flags of convenience.

and use this tax money to insure pensions for eligible seamen. Work with all unions affected by unfair competition from exploitation of cheap foreign labor.

-- Secure West Coast manning scales, wages, work rules and fringe benefits. This would return our 20 year no age pension.

-- Let membership decide, by secret ballot vote, whether they want to spread out the limited work among all seamen by: a maximum of seven months on a ship or two crews per ship with guaranteed annual wage.

-- Agreements to be ratified by secret ballot vote after full disclosure of contract terms in Pilot or Pilot Supplement.

-- All government ships under union contract to provide the same pay, overtime, vacation, and fringe benefits as the privately owned fleets.

-- Panamanians working in the Panama Canal Zone to get American wages, vacation, pensions and fringe benefits that USA workers get. Anything less is discrimination.

-- Referendums, the consent of the membership, on all important issues.

-- Elect all NMU officials for two year terms. If they don't produce, throw them out.

-- Slash National Officers' salaries. Official salaries to be voted on by the membership.

-- Pilot to be the voice of the membership, open to all views.

-- Convention to be held 3 months prior to contract expiration.

-- Dignity for seamen: negotiate turnaround time; shore gangs to take over all work in home port; one man to a foc'sle.

-- Enforce the contract, settle shipboard beefs promptly, eliminate unjust firings and backdoor shipping.

-- Eliminate the officers' raiding of NMU treasury; abolish \$1,000,000 Curran pension-severance pay. Let the membership vote on the uses of our moneys.

-- Investigate the misuse of NMU pension funds in the two \$15,000,000 Joseph Curran Buildings in New York alone. Invest pension funds for the profit of pensioners at the highest guaranteed return.

Morrisey has called for joint actions by the various seamen's unions to secure some of these.

3. Several years ago some people left The Call, denouncing Morrisey as an opportunist, and began putting out the Beacon and organized the Militant-Solidarity Caucus. This caucus, which is uncritically supported by Workers' Vanguard and the Spartacist League, was formed on a "principled program." They are currently running Gene Herson, an NMU member since 1964, for president. They are not running any other candidates on their slate because -- I am told -- they wanted to make sure that everyone on their slate really agreed with their program and because the NMU constitution now requires 5 years membership to run for NMU office. (This information and some of the rest about the MSC comes from two discussions between Herson and me. I cannot vouch for the validity of the facts, only the accurate presentation of what Herson had to say.) Their campaign

literature says to just vote for Herson leaving all other positions blank and if he wins they will hold a special convention to change the constitution and then the MSC will put up a full slate in the new elections after the convention. The highlights of the MSC's lengthy program is the following, some points are reproduced in full:

- Fight for jobs -- thirty hour week, two crews per ship.
- Decent pay and benefits -- two year contract, cost of living in pay and pension.
- For a real union hiring hall.
- End divisions within the Union -- end group system, anti-red clause.
- For membership control of the union. End bureaucratic privileges -- conventions and elections to alternate year by year, officer salaries to be that of highest paid working seamen, open Pilot to all views.
- Autonomous union for shoreside workers -- shoreside workers to have right to decide if they want to be affiliated with NMU.
- Fight government control and interference -- Unable to smash workers' militancy on their own business relies increasingly on the government to do their dirty work. No cooperation with government boards and agencies, strike against wage controls, NMU off the government-shipper-controlled National Maritime Council. Repeal all anti-labor laws. Oppose Morrissey who uses the courts against the Union.
- Defend the left and workers movement: (Including Black Panthers, Angela Davis and Ruchell Magee, Juan Farinas) against government attacks which represent the first step in smashing labor organizations and union militancy. Armed workers' defense against strikebreakers and fascist goons.
- For labor solidarity: Oppose racial and sexual oppression in our union and society as a whole. Mobilize labor with strikes against the wars of big conglomerates abroad against working people, like Vietnam or Dominican Republic. Support struggles against anti-labor dictatorships as in Panama, Greece and South Africa. Active backing for unions in other industries on strike and under company-government attack.
- Unity of Maritime workers.
- Organize internationally. Fight runaway shipping.
- Nationalization of shipping without compensation under seamen's control: the government has always built, operated and repaired the ships for companies, while providing profits, with subsidies which come from our taxes. No more profiteering at public expense. Open the companies' books to elected committees of working seamen! Let's examine the shippers' trade secrets and see just how broke they are. Expropriate the companies and have the government own the ships outright! No compensation, otherwise the companies would continue to collect profits from public funds. Seamen would retain full trade union rights, including right to strike; seamen's control of shipping through revitalized ships' committees and seamen's management committees, calling in specialists (accountants, economists, etc.) only as advisors. These seamen's committees would link up with other committees of maritime labor to run the entire industry.

-- For a workers party: the union bureaucrats rely on the "friends of labor" in the capitalist parties, Democrats and Republican, who consistently sell out our interests, No support to the capitalist parties. We need our own party -- a workers' party based on the trade unions to fight for a workers' government. Only in a society run by labor will seamen find a lasting solution to their problems.

4. These are not the only ones running. One Andy Dinko is also running. Not much is known about him. Herson believes and I think a decent case can be made for the point of view that Dinko is just a Curran lackey running to split the opposition votes. Both Dinko and Reed (who I have heard is running and is not running) are doing so on the most minimal basis of opposing Curran (that is, Wall) because he is corrupt, stole money for his pension, etc. Neither of them appears from the outside to go beyond this or to represent anything in the union.

5. What cannot be determined from the outside in the NMU is the attitude of the ranks towards Morrissey, Herson, et al. That is, while getting on the ballot requires 100 signatures (and therefore all candidates undoubtedly got more) whether any of them have the active support of a sizeable section of the militants is not clear at all. Because of this we feel that a firm position on the NMU elections is impossible for us at this time. However, it is possible to develop certain attitudes towards the elections.

6. There being no question about Wall or Dinko, what does come up is where we stand in relation to Morrissey and Herson. Our attitude towards Morrissey is that this victory would be a step forward for the ranks even though we believe that his program is insufficient in scope nor entirely correct as far as it goes as a program for a genuine left-wing rank and file movement in the NMU. We therefore urge NMU members to vote for Morrissey.

Our attitude toward Morrissey's program is that the central question facing seamen right now is twofold: one is the situation in the union and the second is on the job, primarily the question of the number of jobs. Towards the first, Morrissey addresses himself to this with several of the janor questions focused on. But the key one of developing a structure in the NMU capable of meaning real rank and file control and not just another bureaucracy with a nicer attitude is not clearly addressed. Without knowing the specifics, some type of council of the patrolmen or delegates which has the authority to control the union is needed. Towards the second question, Morrissey has less going for him. In particular the question of jobs is not adequately dealt with by saying taxing the companies who are shipping under flags of convenience. An answer to this problem, the MSC's program is better. Unfortunately, their attitude which enforces their isolation from the real struggle prevents their ideas from being taken seriously by the ranks. Morrissey's answer to the problem of jobs, while better than Curran's (protectionism) it is hardly distinguishable over the long run. We therefore consider Morrissey's victory a step forward in that it can provide for an opening up of the union and the putting forward by all tendencies

in the union of a program and strategy to fight the attack on the workers. It is not and will not be an answer to the problems confronting seamen in and of itself.

Furthermore, our position regarding Morrissey's campaign is that the militants in the MMU must organize around this election, seeing it as a means of initiating a real rank and file movement and putting that demand to Morrissey; that is, that he must build a genuine rank and file movement and an organization in the union in order to carry out that program. In the course of the struggle we put forward our demands and the construction of a real organization by Morrissey would open up the whole internal situation. We make it clear from the beginning that without the militants organizing and calling on Morrissey to build such a group, Morrissey will capitulate; with such activity, the process will just be delayed. But this is a tactic to use in the process of building a real rank and file movement. We do not believe however that there is any candidate at this time who represents any real movement among the seamen. A Morrissey victory opens the way for MMU militants to wage a real fight. In criticizing Morrissey we point to the nature of his fight -- his ousting of radicals from his caucus, his reliance on (as opposed to his use of) the courts and NLRB instead of building the real movement necessary in the face of Curran gangsterism. Additionally, Morrissey's ties to the Democratic Party (through Rauh) which he sees as the way to implement his program leads our attitude to be highly critical support.

7. From this flows our attitude towards Herson. We believe that his program, while fuller than Morrissey's, misses the point. The MSC and its program not only jump over the consciousness of the workers, they are incapable of playing a role in the movements that so develop. That program is an intellectual approach to the situation by putting forward a program, much of which is correct, which has as yet no basis in the actual struggles of the seamen. This is not because the demands are radical or political in nature, but because they no connection to the present struggles and hence the seamen do not see how to fight for them if they agreed with them. The fact that the MSC is incapable of or unwilling to run more than one person indicates a lack of support for the MSC. It also means that the MSC will not be taken seriously by the rank and file. It is the usual approach supported by the Spartacist League -- irrelevant to the actual struggle and too sectarian to be able to intervene in it. Finally, Herson says (although I could not swear that it is true) that the election can be won by a plurality. That being the case, we are not for Wall winning the election by the dividing up of the opposition votes. We and the union militants cannot be indifferent to the outcome of this election. We are not for socialist electoral educational campaigns in the unions now or at any time. Socialist propaganda plays an important role and at times a crucial role in our industrial work. But in running for office that sort of campaign is irrelevant -- in fact it has

leads away from the direction that we believe is necessary for the struggle to progress. This is the major problem with the campaign of the MSC. We urge that caucus to disband their campaign in this election, to support Morrisey critically, and to continue to fight around their program.

((Please note: I have not gone into my disagreements with the MSC program with which I have several.))

FOR CRITICAL SUPPORT TO GENE HERSON IN THE NMU ELECTIONS
Motion by Sy L. and Chris E

1. In the recently concluded election campaign in the National Maritime Union, there were four candidates campaigning in opposition to the Curran machine Flunky, Shannon Wall. These men were Clarence Reed, Andy Dinko, James Orriseey, and Gene Herson. From what we can tell, not one of these candidates represents an organized rank and file movement of any mass character; Dinko and Reed are individual rank and filers running against corruption, while Morrissey and Herson each represent distinct political currents in the labor movement.

2. James Morrissey, former office-holder in the Curran machine of the 40's, is a long time oppositionist, having run against in 1966 and in the re-run election in 1969. Although never fighting around much more than a program of union democracy, Morrissey did manage to attract a following and develop a significant impact in the late 60's. Much of this was the result of his newsletter, The Call (which was largely produced by Burt Hall, radical lawyer who has worked with and defended rank and file union reform groups, and by Phyllis Jacobson, form ISL'er) and by his undeniable courage in facing the goon-squad tactics of Curran. After reaching a peak around 1969, Morrissey's impact largely dissipated until today when he has no real active following to speak of, although his name may still have a symbolic significance. According to last reports, Burt Hall is no longer working with him, having been replaced by the group around H.W. Benson (former Trade Union Secretary of the ISL) and the Union Democracy Review. It was Benson who brought Joseph Rauh into Morrissey's campaign and it was Rauh who arranged for Arnold Miller's endorsement of Morrissey.

Lacking any organized rank and file support, Morrissey's campaign has been based almost exclusively upon court suits, specifically attempts to use the Landrum-Griffin Act (a piece of anti-labor legislation) to give him one-half of the space of the NMU newspaper The Pilot (which has been tightly controlled by Curran for years, completely excluding opposition viewpoints, etc.) and to disfranchise the shore workers (factory workers, canal workers, service attendants, and other non-seamen organized by the NMU in recent years) who, Morrissey claims represent one-half the membership of the NMU and constitute voting cattle for Curran. Morrissey's program does not even begin to address the real needs of the union ranks. Instead of a fight for decent wages, more jobs, better working conditions, he proposes a fight for West Coast wages, manning scales and work rules, which are nothing to brag about and not likely to get anyone very excited. Instead of a serious campaign for a real international union of seamen to improve the wages and conditions of seamen the world over, and particularly foreign working US-owned shippings flying foreign flags, Morrissey proposes a protectionist tax on runaway shipping, a proposal not much different than Curran's protectionist "remedies."

Instead of a fight to end the subsidization of fleetowners' profits and for the nationalization of the industry without compensation under seamen's control, Morrissey can only propose lobbying for some favors. Instead of a fight against state intervention, we get an active attempt to make Landrum-Griffin "work for" the workers.

Today, Morrissey does not represent an organized rank and file movement that can hold him responsible for his promises and his actions. At best, he leads a clique that represents the liberal bureaucratic current around Benson, Rauh et al. Given the sickness of the maritime industry and the resulting difficulties of wringing serious concessions from the companies, it is doubtful that Morrissey, without backing from an organized rank and file, prepared to fight both the companies and the capitalist state, and lacking the desire to organize such a movement, would be able to carry through on any of his promises even if he wanted to. Further there is no real evidence that the most advanced elements among the ranks regarded a Morrissey victory as a critical victory for them.

3. Gene Herson is running as the candidate of the Militant-Solidarity Caucus, a grouping that is supported by and represents the politics of the Spartacist League. Despite what we can assume (knowing the SL) to be a sectarian and abstentionist functioning, Herson is the only candidate whose program comes anywhere near addressing the problems and needs of the Maritime workers, he calls for the nationalization of shipping under seamen's control, for real international solidarity, for a real international seamen's union to raise wages and conditions of foreign seamen, for a four-watch system and alternating crews on each ship to increase jobs, for opposition to racist and sexist discrimination, for an end to the "Group System" which sets low seniority workers against high seniority workers, for an end to government interference in the labor movement, for a workers' party to fight for a workers' government. If the IS had supporters within the NMU, we would be urging them to put forward a program very similar to Herson's.

Herson, as we know, does not represent a rank and file movement of any significance. He represents, as noted above, the politics of the Spartacist League. Without knowing the specifics of his work in the NMU, we can assume it to be of a kind with the other trade union work of the SL; despite a formal acceptance of Trotskyism, the SL represents a sectarian and rigid approach. This is generally reflected in a failure to aggressively put forward democratic demands, an unwillingness to make short term tactical alliances with other rank and file forces, a failure to seize openings for agitational intervention and a tactical inflexibility in general. The SL, as we have noted elsewhere, is a centrist grouping which seeks to delineate one-sided tactical proscriptions to prevent the outpouring of its opportunism. Its claims to revolutionary leadership in general and the mantle of Trotskyism in particular are mere posturings.

Critical support for Herson equally involves out intent to expose him before whatever ranks are listening to him (after all these are the only ones who would be listening to us either). His program, on paper, is formally correct. His method, a part of his program that is not on paper, is a travesty of Trotskyism. His victory, were that possible, would open up vast opportunities for the class struggle, his promises having raised the aspirations of the rank and file to tremendous levels. Biven his method, his training, etc., it is highly doubtful that he could organize and lead the kind of struggle within the labor movement and against the companies and the state that would be necessary to achieve his promises. Under these circumstances what would be exposed would be his (and the SL's) pretensions to revolutionary leadership. Consequently, our call for a revolutionary, as opposed to reformist or centrist, leadership based on our program, a class normally coupled with Leninist critical support, is especially necessary in this particular case.

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STATEMENT by David Miller

at the April 20-22, 1973 meeting of the I.S. National Committee, in Detroit

(submitted as a statement to the N.Y. I.S. minutes)

Comrades,

Events at this NC meeting have made it abundantly clear that the I.S. is moving toward a split. This judgment is not based on corridor gossip, but represents the simple logic of the tone and content of the differences revealed at this NC meeting. It would be ostrichlike to ignore the very real danger.

The split, if consummated, will be an act of undiluted sectarianism, even if, as is likely, it is pressed by one wing of the I.S. in the name of "anti-sectarianism".

There is no crisis in the outside world the different responses to which would compel a split. There is no crisis within the working class which mandates such a course.

Even the differences on MFD do not call for such a response. The coal mines are a situation in which we have no members; most of us agree on the actual program to be followed; and no one has, at least so far, charged that any one among us is capitulating to the labor bureaucracy or to social democracy.

Nor is there any danger of capitulation to Stalinism -- unless such danger is invented for factional purposes.

Even on the woman question there are. In fact, few practical differences -- perhaps because there is so disgracefully little practice in this arena. Looked at with the vantage point of the past 2 years, the general movement of the I.S. has been in the correct direction.

Nor have differences on other concrete questions been so striking as one might expect from all the heat. Regarding work in IBT and AFT, there have been tertiary differences, generally resolved. The CWA report revealed more problems than differences. The crucial and concrete question of critical support to Dempsey was not challenged. Even in the UAW, are the differences so vast as to require a split?

The sources of tension in the organization are well known and not new: an unsolid majority on the NAC; the absence of a clear national line, and more, the inability of the NAC to mobilize the organization around any central course of shared action; the factional atmosphere. These problems have been with us for many years, but all were agreed that at the last convention, the emergence of a majority around principled documents constituted for the first time a definable majority in the organization, and marked a serious step toward consolidation of the organization.

All, among the majority, were agreed, too, on the need to forge a more solid majority which would be able, in turn, to influence and even win over the TC minority.

To these ends, a month ago, several of us urged a policy on Sy and Ron which would deepen the bases for political collaboration among the groups which constituted the majority bloc at the last convention. We proposed that the key to socialist interventionism lay within the concept of the transitional program -- concretely how, when, to raise transitional demands. Consequently this question should constitute the axis, the dividing line for the principled consolidation of a true majority in the organization. We saw Ron's document as a correct step in line with this strategy (though with some reservations).

Implicit in the direction which such a discussion would take us was increasing emphasis on propaganda as opposed to agitation; more attention to revolutionary elements in the working class; a greater direct presence for the I.S. in the unions; possibly even experimenting with factory bulletins and the like in local situations where they might be useful.

It was our view that such changes in thrust, in conjunction with greater clarity in the application of the transitional program would consolidate an increased majority around itself, and would be consistent with, would strengthen the basic strategy of rebuilding rank and file caucuses, the anchor of I.S. intervention in the working class for all I.S. tendencies.

It was in fact my understanding that this course was being followed. I was wrong.

The evolution of Sy's and Ron's views toward traditional Trotskyism (not to be identified with the Russian question) are part of the evolution of the I.S. as a whole over the past 2 years, though naturally, in a very uneven manner, and with an empirical method. This has occurred on a series of fronts, from the abandoning of the "struggle group" conception; to our views on the woman and black questions; to the changed view on the NLF, on the need for an International, and for a cadre organization. On each of these there has been resistance, but also marked forward movement. I heartily endorsed and encouraged this development. It is my view that if this struggle for the transitional program within the I.S. continues, it will win out fully -- if it is conducted with patience and with confidence in the effect of the developing class struggle.

Instead, the Revolutionary Tendency suddenly proposed a sweeping restructuring of the course of the I.S. In the process they gravely overshot the mark, and began a movement which, if not checked, threatens to become a self-isolating distortion of Trotskyism. This is their right, of course. But it is not their right to make this drastic turn from the convention documents, nor, without consulting the membership in convention, to demand, or expect, to be given the leadership of the organization. Indeed, we were faced with a provocative ultimatum, a near-Gaullist coup d'etat, demanding such a majority before the majority of the organization had had an opportunity to judge.

In doing so, Sy and Ron unleashed forces, forces waiting in the wings for just such an opportunity as Sy's tactics afforded them -- forces fearful of the drift toward traditional Trotskyism, anxious to be separated from it.

For Sy and Ron are not alone responsible for the split climate among us. One need only recall the first act of the minority following its defeat at the last convention in constituting itself in reality a faction, and its hostile disruptive behavior. This empiricist tendency, which has, to this day, not produced a single document on any basic issue confronting the organization, would clearly welcome the departure of the Revolutionary Tendency. The impermissible, insulting charges of Stalinism flung at the RT (in the form of questions) would be proof enough were there not much more besides.

And, of course, the failure of responsible leaders of the I.S. to intervene to prevent the corrosive factionalism has, in fact, contributed to its growth.

As a result, the question of split is on the hidden agenda of this meeting. To deny it, or refuse to face it, will only make it more inevitable. Indeed, the assertion that a split is inevitable is one of the forms which advocacy of split takes among us.

But the threat of a split rests with double severity upon Sy. As part of his re-evaluation of Shachtman, Sy has long announced that Shachtman was wrong to have split in 1940, and right to have advocated reunification in 1947. Further, Sy is a supporter of the "regroupment" thesis, but his present course will make such a tactic impossible except with sectarian split-offs, who have many of the faults of the SWP and few of its past virtues.

Thirdly, Sy is the advocate of a turn to the revolutionary layer of workers. Does he suppose that this policy will be facilitated by a course which leads to further fragmentation of the revolutionary left, by a policy which makes the in-gathering of a critical mass of membership even more difficult?

The responsibility for preventing a split lies with every leader of the I.S. Those forces and leaders who objectively push a split must be grabbed by the scruff of the neck and kept in place by their rank and file. A major responsibility lies with Comrade Mackenzie and others of all tendencies, to whom I offer my cooperation in any actions which will prevent a split, despite the political differences we have.

We appeal to the leadership and shall appeal to the ranks: to close ranks against the insane dead-end factionalism -- a course we propose to pursue and which must be pursued without muting political differences.

David Miller, New York

P.S. On the vote for the new NAC: Since my vote on the motion constituting the

new NAC has been misconstrued, let me add that I voted against the motion by the Revolutionary Tendency to give it a majority on the NAC, since that would be an endorsement of their policy without a convention -- a course to be condoned only in the gravest emergency. I abstained on the winning motion because it was motivated not as an interim, caretaker slate, but as a slate with a particular political basis -- the defense of the "traditions of the I.S." -- which manifested itself in practice at the NC session, by some, in a frenzy of slander at the Revolutionary Tendency as opening the door to Stalinism.

FOR A CAMPAIGN AROUND INFLATION

((The following proposal was submitted to the MAC by David Miller. It unfortunately arrived the day after the MAC meeting, and will be discussed next week.))

The crisis of inflation in the US today provides the IS with an opportunity for intervention, both of a propagandistic and agitational character, and not limited to the pages of WP or our and other caucuses.

The campaign should aim at involving the entire organization, not just its unionists.

It must be seen as one step in the direction of forming a genuinely national, not sectional, organization bound by common actions as well as theory.

For a start, the campaign should focus on two demands:

(1) A national escalator clause, quarterly adjusted, linking all wages, pensions, social security payments, to a COL index which includes rents and taxes.

(2) A rollback of all prices including taxes, linked to the decline in real wages.

LABOR ACTION ON INFLATION -- Because Congress and the politicians have not and will not fight inflation -- around the above two demands, would be the main theme of our organizing and propaganda efforts.

CLASS-WIDE DEFENSE -- labor action on a class-wide basis, as representative and defender of the interests of all who work, the unemployed, the elderly in order to apply the COL to these groups as well. This would be our second theme.

To implement such a campaign, every branch and trade union group must be directed to raise a campaign for action on these themes. The methods and emphasis will clearly vary from place to place, and will vary with whether it is done from the inside or the outside, etc. Thus in Westchester Co., NY, we went directly to the labor council and in cooperation with a large C.I.U. local got the council to call for a metropolitan conference of labor on inflation -- a resolution we are pursuing.

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION: (I have no doubt that comrades in the field and the MAC can structure a better campaign than the one barely hinted here, and I urge them to do so.)

1. Call on local unions to adopt this platform and urge in upon other locals and union bodies, aiming, at the proper time, at a Congress of Labor to consider action against inflation.

2. In plant petitions by caucuses, ad-hoc committees, etc., on these demands, calling for local union meetings for purpose of endorsing them, etc.
3. Plant-gate meetings by outside groups, committees, etc.
4. Out-of-plant distributions where there is no link to the inside, in the name of IS, or of an ad-hoc committee of labor against inflation, etc.
5. Demand unions and others to organize mass rallies, -- say, at City Hall, demanding not only our proposals above, but that city government roll-back prices under its control such as transportation, rents (in some cases), taxes, etc.
6. Street corner meetings in heavy working class areas (see #4).
7. Propaganda needed for committees of consumers and unions to supervise the compilation of COL indices -- even compile their own -- with union resources opened to such committees.

As such a campaign develops, independent class political action becomes increasingly implied, and raises the possibility that in some local situations at least, passing from propaganda to agitation and action.

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