



# **Draft Regroupment Pamphlet**

I.S. CONVENTION DOCUMENT  
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NOTE: What follows is a draft for a pamphlet on unity on the Left. This pamphlet will be issued if the Convention adopts the proposed perspective on regroupment. The resolution on regroupment is based on the politics set forward in this draft pamphlet. Since this will be a pamphlet, we want comments, criticisms, and suggestions for possible additions, etc., so that it can be as useful as possible as an external publication.

## INTRODUCTION

For the American Left, the 70's have been a bummer. We all entered the decade with high (and retrospectively naive) hopes. After McCarthyism had frozen politics into a cold war mold, the social movements of the 60's--the Black Liberation movement, the women's movement, and the struggle against U.S. imperialism in Viet Nam--had radicalized and changed the lives of millions.

We believed that the new decade offered even greater conquests. White backlash and Nixon's election may have marked the beginning of the end for the social movements, but something else was happening. In May of 1968, ten million workers struck France and nearly brought down the government. The class struggle was no longer something we only read about in Marx, it was alive and coming soon to America.

So we left the 60's and the campuses, and turned our attention to the working class. We believed that capitalism was entering a new period of economic crisis (and we were right). We believed that the corporations would try to turn the clock back on the gains working people, Blacks, Latinos and women had made (and we were right). We believed that the traditional reform leaderships, the trade union bureaucracy and the liberal Democrats would fail to organize a fight back (and we were right). Finally, we believed that this failure would create the opening for revolutionaries to enter the class, lead the struggles against the employers' offensive and build a party in the process (here we were not quite right).

We expected that the 70's would be characterized by the return of a militant working class to the political scene. Instead, we have witnessed a steady rightward drift, with only sporadic resistance. In the process, the entire Left has taken its share of hard knocks, and is now asking itself some tough questions.

The questioning has led to new interest in the possibility of Left unity. This is partly in response to our disappointments, but it also is a reaction to a feeling that maybe things are opening up for us, and that a united Left would improve our chances of success.

There is good reason for a sense of optimism. Conditions are creating a militant layer of worker activists. The miners' strike and the unprecedented support which expressed itself in locally-initiated coalitions, rallies, fund raisers, plant gate collections, union resolutions, etc., revealed a small but real enough grouping of labor activists who see the need to rebuild the trade union movement in the face of the employers' offensive.

The development of this layer, numerically and politically, will provide the base, cadre, and leadership for a mass revolutionary party in the future. Today this development in the working class is having its effect on the existing Left. It is a dynamic around which the healthiest sections of the Left can come together. This pamphlet will try to lay out how and why this unity can be achieved.

The prospects for unity on the Left, like the prospects for building a mass revolutionary party are contingent on the development of the class struggle in America. Identifying the dynamic in the working class which creates a recognized need and therefore the potential for unity is a start. But other questions have to be taken up to make sense of this potential. We have to go back to some fundamental concerns: what kind of party? how can such a party be built? what role would "Left Unity" play in this process? and what, finally, would be the contours of political unity necessary to cohere today's fragmented Left?

#### WHAT KIND OF PARTY?

"The emancipation of the Working Class is the task of the workers themselves."

--Karl Marx

#### Socialism

A Marxist conception of a working class party is based on the tenet that Socialism is the conscious act of the working class. The entire process of socialist transformation--the revolutionary transfer of power from the capitalist class to the working class, the destruction of the capitalist state and its replacement with the institutions of direct workers' democracy, the abolition of social classes and all forms of oppression, the "withering away of the state"--must be carried out through the self-activity of the working class. No social force can substitute itself for this process or attempt to stage manage it. The working class is not a battering ram, it is the conscious agent of its own freedom.

#### The Party

Like traditional bourgeois parties, a workers' party is formed with the recognition that the development of consciousness is uneven. Except in periods of revolutionary crises, in every social class only a minority is "activist": takes responsibility for elaborating and defusing a world view and developing a political program and practice to meet its needs. The working class is no exception. A workers' party is necessarily made up of the activist minority. It is composed of the most committed and conscious elements in the working class.

Here the similarities end. The traditional parties derive their structure and form of activity from their acceptance of a society divided into social classes. The distinctions between rulers and ruled, even if it takes a democratic form, is seen as a permanent, natural social arrangement. The voters elect politicians whose role it is to speak for them, decide for them and even to think for them. These parties all function on the premise that society needs a political elite, a professional group of politicians whose role it is to rule.

This arrangement is hardly surprising for a society based on class antagonism. But a party whose aim is the abolition of social classes must operate on a radically different basis.

While accepting the reality that today the uneven development of class consciousness requires a "vanguard" party, this is not accepted as a permanent social fact. Our goal is to lead the working class to power, not to seize power in its name. We are fighting for a workers' government not based on a representative system of professional politicians, but a system of direct democracy where, as Lenin put it, "Every cook can govern." The party is the organization of the most conscious, who see their task as raising the less conscious to its own level of awareness.

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This is a conception of a vanguard whose role it is to transcend the state affairs in which a vanguard as a distinct social group is no longer needed. The need for such a party (or quite possibly parties) will extend well beyond the day the working class takes power. Nonetheless we build the party (like GM builds cars) with a plan for its obsolescence.

### Leadership

This conception shapes the party's methods of leadership. If socialism is the conscious act of the working class, the party must lead so as to raise the level of working class consciousness and self-activity. Short of a revolutionary situation, a party has no choice but to initiate or participate in the struggle for reforms. We approach today's class struggle with what we share with our fellow workers, a desire to alleviate our oppression. In this sense, the party is not the "general," but a "Comrade-in-arms."

Within the context of the struggle for immediate reforms, our aim is to raise the level of working class self-activity. We argue that the workers should advance their interests by any means necessary, irrespective of the government's laws or the employers' profitability. Bearing in mind the relationship of forces, we try to lay out tactics of struggle which rely on and mobilize to the extent possible, the power of the workers themselves.

Along with this, the party seeks everywhere possible to use the existing struggle to raise the level of class consciousness. This means providing a political context, an analysis of what is happening, and why, in the end, we will have to move beyond a defensive struggle against the effects of a unviable society to creating a new social order, fashioned to meet human needs.

### BUILDING THE PARTY

Such a party will be built through the workers' own struggles. A party can only come into being and gain influence as the working class comes to consciousness in the struggle. The class struggle is a laboratory in which workers can test ideas and organizations, become conscious of themselves as a class, develop leadership and gain confidence in their ability not just to organize strikes, but to re-organize society.

This is not a "spontaneous" view of party building. The party will not just emerge out of a correct combination of social ingredients. Rather, this is the context in which a party, if it is going to be a genuine workers' organization, must develop. The other essential ingredient is a cadre of militants who see the task of revolutionary organization as the core of their political practice.

From the point of view of building a party, the most important consequence of the class struggle and the conditions which give rise to it is the formation of a layer of worker militants who are trying to participate and give leadership to today's struggles, and are increasingly open to socialist ideas.

Today in America, the chronic economic crises, the employers' offensive which the corporations have launched in order to recoup their profitability and the inability of the labor bureaucracy and the Liberals to respond to this situation are all conspiring to create such a layer.

These workers see themselves as active unionists who are trying to rebuild the labor movement. The form their activism takes is a movement to reform the unions, to make them more democratic and aggressive in response to the corporations' new anti-labor militancy. This movement has been most visible in the Miners, Steelworkers, and Teamsters Unions. But it exists in others as well.



Today most of the reform activists have a parochial view of their tasks, but it is unlikely that the continuing economic crises and the unfolding attack on the conditions of life and work will permit a narrow perspective for long. The problems the reformers face cannot be resolved within the confines of traditional American liberalism. They will be looking for alternatives.

This layer is now in its infancy. Nonetheless, it is the key to building a socialist party in the working class.

This new layer is at once a challenge and an opportunity for the Left. For the first time in a generation, there is an audience in the working class for socialist ideas. The Left is being confronted with the opportunity of moving from the margins of working class life to becoming a small but highly significant trend within the labor movement.

To meet this challenge, the Left will have to connect with this layer. It will have to prove in practice its ability to make a contribution to today's struggle. It will have to demonstrate enough commitment, persistence, wisdom and humility to gain credibility.

The Left has to understand itself in this process. If we are building toward a party of worker leaders, a simple glance at today's Left would reveal that neither the Left as a whole nor any particular section of it is big enough or rooted enough in working class life and struggle to consider itself a party. Nor can anybody claim that even the "embryo" of a party exists.

If the claim of being an embryo has much meaning, it implies that an organization exists which has all the essential features of a party: a tested leadership, cadre, and program; a party in miniature, which only needs to grow in a numerical sense. No section of the Left is rooted enough in the class to have passed any "historical" tests. We are, after all, at the beginning of the process. But this is not just a question of size, roots, or even practical experience.

An embryo of a party does not exist because no section of the Left has developed the "base" in political theory. The fundamentals of revolutionary theory, of course, exist. There is a body of Marxist texts and the experience of well over a century of working class struggle. But this is not enough, for, to coin a phrase, there can be no revolutionary theory without a revolutionary practice.

The American Left was forced out of the working class by a combination of McCarthyism and unprecedented economic prosperity. Thirty years of isolation necessarily means that the body of theory which exists today is overly abstract and distorted, warped by a lack of practical application. Political questions have a different meaning in the library than they do in the union hall, and the answers are not always the same either.

The point is not to make an obligatory bow to "the need for theory." It has practical significance. It means that all existing theories are incomplete and provisional. It means that our ideas are going to change as we learn more about being socialists in the working class. The Left will be changed as its roots and experience deepen. Just as the Left will be trying to connect with and change the working class consciousness, the working class is going to reshape the consciousness of the Left.

In particular, the pressure of the class struggle will create a dynamic within the Left. A dynamic away from fragmentation and sectarian posturing, and toward unity. First unity on the level of coalitions, alliances and closer cooperation, but quite possibly, a regroupment, a unification of previously competing organizations. Whether this dynamic will prevail is far from guaranteed. There are more than a fair share of countervailing tendencies. The possibilities will be greater, however,

if we are open to the potential and consciously use it as an element in a political strategy for party building.

#### THE ROLE OF LEFT UNITY IN THE PARTY BUILDING PROCESS

The Left in America is tiny. Today it is being challenged by new opportunities and these challenges will become vaster as the struggle develops. The gap between the size and strength of the Left on the one hand, and what is demanded of it by the movement on the other, will grow. The gap is already there, but it is larger than it need be. Because the American Left is among the most splintered, fragmented and sectarian in any country, it is unnecessarily weaker organizationally than it is numerically. To the extent that the Left is fractured into twenty odd sects, each competing against the other, each justifying its own unique claim as the vanguard, energies, resources, and talent are squandered. Just from the point of view of increasing the impact of the Left in the working class, unity would be desirable.

The sectarian state of the Left is not simply a problem for us. It will create problems for those workers who want to meet the challenge of the employers' offensive, who want to fight, and will look to the Left for direction. They will be disappointed as they come upon group after group who seem to be spending more time squabbling among themselves than organizing the fight back against the bosses. Our sectarianism will impede the struggle, if it goes too far.

Every militant knows that unity and the ability to make alliances is key to success in any struggle. They are going to want to know why the Left is divided up into so many little groups. If they take the Left seriously, they are going to demand that we get ourselves together. We can respond by explaining that it is correct, that the Left is divided, and that our group is the only one worth talking to, or we can support the demand of the workers for unity. -Justifying the divisions on the Left will become increasingly hard as the level of struggle grows and the urgency of addressing the immediate needs of the struggle intensify.

This is not only a question of more being at stake. The struggle is going to test the political line of each group. Positions will be tested, sorted out, and incorrect ideas discarded. Sadly, this tendency will not be universal. Every group or element of the Left will not respond positively to the tasks ahead. There will also be a tendency by some to cling all the more tightly to the past, to old ideas and sectarian methods. These groups are going to find it impossible to connect with the consciousness and concerns of working people as it exists, not as they would want it. They will be pushed aside as irrelevant.

On the other hand, those sections of the Left which are capable of learning from their experience are going to find that their practice is less unique than they may have thought. The tendency for different groups' practice to resemble others will grow as we keep addressing ourselves to the same, ever-pressing realities. The "differences" are going to seem less and less relevant.

The process of converging practices will have a theoretical reflection. Outside the context of a movement, every question can appear to be as important as any other. But as the movement grows and we become more immersed in it, the struggle itself will determine which questions are primary and which are secondary. As the Left grapples with the demands of the struggle, new questions will rise and redefine the political landscape. The old labels aren't going to be much of a guide or have much meaning. In sum, the class struggle will create the need for working unity, and working unity will create the possibility for organizational unity.



This is only a possibility. We have already seen a situation where unity was necessary, but not achieved and the working class suffered accordingly. The revolutionary Left in Portugal had the opportunity of creating a party out of the vast radicalization in the working class following the downfall of fascism. In the period between April 24, 1974 and November 25, 1975, hundreds of thousands of workers moved to the left of the Communist Party. They were impatient with the CP's temporizing and compromising attitude with the middle class. They were disgusted by its bureaucratic methods. They wanted more than a democratic republic, they wanted socialism.

These workers were confronted with a revolutionary Left which was split up into nearly a dozen small sects, none of which was qualitatively bigger or more well rooted in the working class. At times it took an expert in Marxist politics to be able to make sense of the political differences.

When the most important revolutionary groups united in common campaigns, they were able to mobilize hundreds of thousands. During the fall of 1975 the F.U.R. (Revolutionary United Front) led mass demonstrations and resistance to the Sixth Provisional Government. These same forces came together in the spring of 1976 and ran Otelo De Carvalho for President of the Republic. Otelo received a million votes, 17% of those cast.

The success of the revolutionary Left in these united efforts proves the potential for a mass party. But unity in action did not lead to a united Revolutionary organization. These radicalized workers refused to actually join one of many small groups. The Left was incapable of overcoming its fragmentation, and no party was built.

Working class struggle does not simply equal unity of the Left. There are more than enough barriers. What the new period in class struggle does, however, is create a dynamic. Nor is Left unity a cure-all for all that ails us. If the Left today united, it would still be a very small factor in American politics.

The point is this: sectarianism will hinder the development of a mass revolutionary party; unity will enhance it.

#### THE POLITICAL BASIS FOR A UNITED LEFT

The differences which divide the Left are not simply the product of isolation from the working class, the low level of struggle in the recent past, bad habits acquired in the New Left, or the lack of a realistic assessment of who we are in relation to the giant tasks which face us. The differences are real, and they will not evaporate in the heat of the class struggle. At times dialogue on the Left will take on very sharp forms, and lines will have to be drawn. An ecumenicalism which pretends that all political disagreements can be papered over would lead to a series of false starts which would only discredit the idea of unity.

Beyond this warning, we must also admit to having no blueprint. We have pointed to a need and the dynamic in the working class which offers a means of meeting it. We can only offer some very provisional guidelines which would serve as a minimum framework for unity:

1. Explicit commitment to revolution
2. Explicit commitment to socialism
3. Explicit commitment to the rule of the working class--everywhere
4. Explicit commitment to the struggle against national oppression, racism, and sexism
5. Rejection of participation in the capitalist parties
6. Conception of rebuilding a class struggle labor movement
7. Organizational forms which include a dedicated membership, democratic process, and unity in action.

These guidelines are hardly comprehensive. They are only the barest bones of Marxist principles. Any future organization will have much more developed positions within this framework. These guidelines also describe a multi-tendency organization with majority and minority positions on what the specifics of these points mean. These guidelines imply an organization which defines itself not in terms of any specific Left tradition, but is held together by a common approach to the problems of revolutionary struggle in America. Finally, these guidelines are not timeless, If either the international or domestic situation changed drastically, so would these guidelines. This kind of organization based on this conception of unity can work in a period when the class struggle is opening up.



The left of the '70's is the historic product of the New Left radical movements of the '60's among students, Blacks, women and anti-war activists. Despite the great battles and accomplishments of those movements, they left us politically unprepared to handle the difficulties of the '70's. Moreover the left of the '70's has never overcome its problems of origins in the break-up of those movements. The lessons that it learned from that collapse was a sectarianism in politics, organization, and models to follow--a sectarianism which is now the impediment to any future growth of the left.

The organizational looseness, political amorphousness on program and strategy, and do-your-own-thing mentality of the left of the '60's was unable to withstand setback, reaction and repression. It led the survivors of the movement to quite correctly look for greater political cohesiveness and stronger organizational forms. Rejecting the anti-communist hysteria of America, it led to the progressive conclusion of reviving the idea of a revolutionary party. But in rejecting the looseness of the movement, many went to rejecting the movement itself, substituting for it the conception of a tightly knit, politically homogenous, but isolated group as the road to a party. With it came a phony vanguardism. More than 20 Maoist and Trotskyist sects each organized around the perfect program, the fount of all wisdom, the bouillion cube which someday would be dissolved by masses flocking to its banner to create the party. Until then, you fight off all competitors in a great ideological battle for hegemony, and wind up viewing all other revolutionaries as potential dangers "for the mind of the masses" or your turf, and not as allies in advancing the movement forward.

Despite posturing and pretence the left has failed to create a real vanguard organization. The task of building a revolutionary party would be reduced to a simple chore if all that was required was a group proclaiming itself the party. But a real vanguard only exists when it can play an actual leadership role in the class struggle based on its numbers, roots, and the political support it receives from workers and the oppressed.

Three Maoist groups--the Revolutionary Union, October League, and Communist League--attempt to declare themselves parties in isolation from the movement and without any working class support. Unable to cooperate even with other Maoists, their sectarian method extended over into their trade union work, where they could not cooperate with broader forces who did not recognize the leadership of their "party." All three became prisoners of their own illusions. All three have declined. In the process, many activists were lost, and they discredited the idea of a revolutionary party to many militants. This experience should be enough to convince us that it is time to stop acting out left fantasies. Today no left organization can make the claim to working class support and leadership that is required for a party. Even a united left would have a long struggle before it to become an actual vanguard.

This is the politics of posture, rightly repellent to workers and activists concerned with dealing with the realities of struggle and consciousness. And now it has led to a dead end as new movements start to develop among workers and the oppressed. They find dozens of competing groups who often view other socialists as enemies, and provide no real solutions. But the need for a real vanguard, a united revolutionary organization, an integral part of the movement, sharing its concerns and goals, sympathetic to its difficulties and confusions, to the level of consciousness it has today as well as to its revolutionary potential, able to shape its development by giving a lead on current struggles -- that need is just as great as ever. It can only be compromised and ridiculed in the ideas of activists, and give rise to new anti-organizational ideas similar to the '60's, if the left does not unite into a realistic political and organizational form.

The left of the '60's also drew from failure in America a fascination with foreign "models." For some it took ludicrous forms. Like the Weather Undergrounds attempt to imitate guerilla fighters who "surrounded the cities from the countryside." More generally it took the form of the left modelling itself after the Chinese Communist Party. However wrong, some of this was for progressive reasons. Under the impact of the Cultural Revolution, many leftists came to believe that China was overcoming the bureaucratism of Russia and creating some basis for popular, direct democracy. They also felt that China's foreign policy was revolutionary and anti-imperialist.

Subsequent events have shown how wrong these perceptions were. The liquidation of the Cultural Revolution, the arrest of the "Gang of Four", the return to great social privileges for offi-

are not tolerated by a bureaucratic state society. Chinese support for General Pinochet in Chile, the Shah of Iran, NATO, and Western imperialism as a counter to Russian imperialism, its opposition to the MPLA and other genuine national liberation movements, have blown sky-high the claim that China's reactionary foreign policy is somehow revolutionary.

Some sections of the left followed these claims down to the wire, making every somersault with the change in Chinese line and embracing every reactionary China smiled on. They have suffered the same unfortunate fate that the old CP did with not being a revolutionary American Party, but acting as foreign agent for a power with an indefensible political line. The result has been just as tragic. The collapse of Maoism, which was the dominant trend in the left in the early '70's, and with it the loss of thousands of revolutionaries who were burnt and are today political basket cases. For the movement to go forward it has to break with this methodology, not just try to tone it down under the guise of anti-dogmatism, while still desperately trying to salvage remnants of what has led to dead end.

The disintegration of Maoism and its stepchild, sectarianism, is today leading to a revival of social democracy and reformism. The conditions for the rise of social democracy are the crisis of liberalism, its inability to provide political solutions for the economic crisis, the declining conditions of life, the on-going attacks on the oppressed and workers, the rise of a New Right. But something else, the inability of the revolutionary left to unite and act as a politically cohesive alternative. Into this vacuum social democracy has stepped. Whether it's of the out-worn DSOC variety with its will-o-the-wisp utopia of changing the Democratic Party into a socialist party by snuggling up to and acting as front men for the union bureaucracy, or the retreats of In These Times who have been enlightened by Eurocommunist moves to social democracy to decide that the mainstream of socialism is in the Democratic Party, or the half-way houses of local organizers attracted to groups like Tom Hayden's Centers for Economic Democracy. All of them share a reliance on the Democratic Party and an attempt to combine a "respectable socialism" with liberalism, that is, to create a socialism that is nothing but a reformed version of traditional American liberalism. They are returning to the very thing that the experiences of the social movements of the '60's led the left away from, the recognition that American capitalism with its racism, imperialism, could not be reformed away by liberalism, or radicals who tried to pass themselves off as liberals.

The two currents, Maoism and sectarianism, social democracy and reformism, are still the dominant ones on the left, organized around the two large independent left papers, the Guardian and In These Times. They are the poles of attraction that a lot of the left follows, often choosing between the two on a "lesser evil" basis.

Since the economic crisis, the depression of 1974-5, and the first stirring of a new layer of union militants, there has been a tendency within the left to orient to the working class and trade union struggles, even on the part of leftists who had previously ignored the industrial working class. This is true even of liberal organizations like NOW, which are forming alliances with the unions. Within the left it has led individuals and organizations to become active in the unions, and to collaborate with the new union militants. The New American Movement has become active in white collar trade unionism. The Socialist Workers Party has shifted from a campus orientation to activity in the most important industrial unions. The Trend, the non-dogmatic Maoist local groups, have developed a realistic trade union policy and cooperate with others in building a non-sectarian rank and file movement. This development, of the last year or two, some of it from unexpected sources, is indicative of what we can expect from the whole left in the future.

There is developing a third current on the left, that can be the basis of left re-groupment and have the dynamic of initiative the way the radical left did in the '60's. That current is predominantly of independent leftists, movement activists, who have learned the lessons of the '60's but are repelled by the sectarianism of the '70's. They are people who are active in the labor movement and the movements of the oppressed. Many are white collar trade unionists, in unions where significant numbers of radicals exist, but who without the benefit of organization are forced to function as individuals. Others are active in industrial unions, and feel the rise of the new layer of working class militants, but lack the weight and organization to play an important role in their unions. Still others are active in the newly-reviving movements of the oppressed. And some have helped keep alive the local organizing, anti-imperialist, and environmental groups when the mass movements of the left collapsed.



It is this current, with a working class, revolutionary, and democratic outlook which has to be regrouped into an organization capable of merging with the layer of union activists who are the future of the socialist movements of the '80's. Even before regroupment, the collaboration and alliance of this trend in the unions and movements of the oppressed around realistic programs would help develop these movements in a progressive direction and open to the militants in them the possibility of a socialist alternative.

Within the left a new sentiment for unity is growing stronger. Partially this arises from the failure of the left in the '70's, the revulsion with sectarianism, and the rise of the New Right. Some of it comes from the pressure of the class struggle. On the one hand there is the ironic difficulty of preaching unity to workers in struggle when the left itself is so fragmented. On the other, there is the growing recognition that on many questions of trade unionism, the rank and file movement, affirmative action, racism, etc., there is a similar approach among radicals who reject the sectarianism of the left, as well as the rise of social democratic reformism. Some of this was apparent in the cooperation and political agreement which marked the cooperation of radicals, independents and some groups, in support for the miners' strike. With this agreement it was possible for the left to have a broader impact on the rank and file. It showed the possible potential that the left might have in the labor movement if it acted as a cohesive force. In the minds of many it raised the question, why not left unity?

The need is still there--not a continuation of the sterility of the left of the '70's, nor a retreat back to the respectable reformism which existed prior to the New Left, but a way forward into the '80's, the creation of a revolutionary party based on the real dynamics of American class struggle and the movements of the oppressed, able to unite workers, as well as a real internationalism, one that supports national liberation and anti-imperialism, and links up with the emerging working class movement internationally.

#### THE ROLE OF THE I.S.

The International Socialists are committed to building unity on the Left. Our commitment comes not from abstract principle, but our own experiences in the past decade. We have participated in the struggles and disappointments of the 1970's. We have had our successes and some setbacks. We have learned, and we have seen that there are others who can learn with us.

We to create a dialogue on the Left on the question of unity and on all the issues which face us. We have our positions and we intend to be as convincing as we can. In any unified organization, we would want to be as influential as possible. Any political tendency which claimed otherwise would either be lying or unserious.

We do not see "unity" as a ripoff operation on other Left groups. Such a perspective would only isolate us and destroy our chances of playing a constructive, leading role on the Left.

Unity is not a get-rich-quick scheme. It is a long term perspective. Despite the difficulties we know we will encounter, we are optimistic--about ourselves, the Left, and the socialist future of humanity.