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CONTENTS

Page

PLENUM DISCUSSION OF CUBAN QUESTION

Part II -- Discussion from Floor

1.	B. Deck	1
2.	D. Stevens	5
3.	F. Halsted	7
4.	D. Lopez	9
5.	T. Kerry	11
6.	B. Farmer	13
7.	R. Kirk	15
8.	H. Ring	17
9.	M. Stein	20
10.	S. Mage	23
11.	C. Fine	26
12.	Murry Weiss	28
13.	D. Roberts	29
14.	J. Robertson	31
15.	C. DeBruce	35
16.	A. Phillips	36

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CUBAN QUESTION: Plenum Discussion -- From the Floor (Jan.14,1961).

B. Deck:

(Granted extended time to present a special viewpoint.)

It's difficult to make a proposal for an alteration in an otherwise excellent document -- the Draft Theses proposed by the Political Committee -- in the context of a wholesale attack on that document. I would like to make my position very clear. I believe that the Theses of the Political Committee should be adopted by the Plenum with a modifying statement which I will introduce at the end of my remarks.

I think they are fundamentally correct in the estimation of the Cuban revolution as being in the opening stages of the socialist revolution; they are correct in the estimation that a workers state has been established in Cuba; they use the correct categories in describing the various transitional stages that the revolution has gone through thus far; and I believe they are correct in the estimate of the July 26 Movement.

And these are very big agreements -- more important than the difference I have with the resolution -- and therefore I think it should be supported. Especially in the context of the wholesale attack which has been made on the resolution itself.

The correction which I would make would be on the time sequences of the specific stages of development. I believe it was possible as early as October 1959 to characterize the Cuban state as a workers state and to characterize it on the basis of the objective development of the revolution and the institutions which it had thus far produced.

Now Joe has taken the question of consciousness somewhat out of this problem of characterizing the state, and I think properly so. Because even though we characterize the Cuban state as a workers state this does not say that we have confidence in the evolution of the Castro tendency. We are not giving a blank check to the leadership of the Cuban revolution, but rather we make our estimate upon the solid, objective accomplishments of the revolution and we have abstracted the question of how the Cuban leadership looks upon what they have done thus far. And I think that's correct.

I believe that there was sufficient objective evidence of the earlier transformation of the Cuban state than is dated by the resolution. Although no specific date is given, the essence of it is contained in the 10th Thesis, i.e., "When the capitalist holdings in the key sectors of Cuban economy were taken over by the government." I took that to mean the last wave of nationalizations, the August to October period of nationalizations in Cuba. (We might even have a difference on what were the key sectors of the Cuban economy. Some truly important nationalizations took place before the August-October period.)

I believe that in October 1959 a workers state was established and this can be verified both by the forms of rule that were estab-

lished at that time and the political history of Cuba up to that time.

The state is not all of society, but is rather a special repressive force which serves the interests of one or another class in relation to the other classes in society. The Marxists have boiled it down to a very simple phrase -- bodies of armed men, a special repressive force. And Marxism discovered in life the special new form of working-class rule which was required by the working class in the transitional period between capitalism and socialism. While the class struggle continues the working class needs a very simple thing: the armed people themselves, the armed working class.

And by dating the qualitative transformation in October of 1959, not 1960, we bring to the fore (and I believe it will have important programmatic ramifications) the important development of the armed people themselves in the formation of the armed militias, which began in October of 1959.

We had a problem in analyzing the class character of the state which issued out of the Chinese revolution and the class character of the states which were so warped and deformed by Stalinism in Eastern Europe, because we could not deduce objectively the connection between the new apparatuses which were developing and the working class until this apparatus turned on capitalist property relations and completely expropriated the bourgeoisie. We required that in those cases. It was necessary to do so, because there was not any other sufficient, objective evidence to indicate the class character of these states, until this act was accomplished and we could say definitively that this apparatus rests, at least historically, upon the working class, if not directly and politically. I don't believe that that caution was necessary in Cuba, because we do have the objective evidence to connect the new apparatus, including its leadership, which developed in the latter part of 1959 directly with the working class.

At this point, I would like to take up some of the remarks of Tim because I think they fit into the point I am attempting to prove.

Joe said we had agreement on our political tasks. I think it was more a hope than the reality. . . . Because whereas we all subscribe to the imperative need of building a revolutionary Marxist party in Cuba, there as elsewhere, apparently, we have very different concepts of how that party will be built. We have the proposal of Tim, for example, that the party should be built by saying to the Cuban workers, "Break with Castro, build your own party." Now it's fortunate that you said it here and not down there. Of course, this is not decisive proof. The Cuban working class could be wrong on this question; they might have very bad illusions about Castro. But let it be understood, if we are going to work out our tactics and approach to this revolution, that proposal will be interpreted, rightly or wrongly, by the Cuban working class as a counterrevolutionary proposal. We better understand that before we make that proposal.

As I say, that's not decisive. The Cuban working class could be wrong on that question. But I think we can deduce the class character of the Castro leadership, not merely by the attitude of the Cuban working class today towards it, but by its own history. It is absolutely false to talk about the Castro leadership as a special class, as a petty-bourgeois class. The petty bourgeoisie was atomized by the Cuban revolution, it broke in all directions. And individuals identified themselves with the basic classes in society: the working class and the capitalist class. And the Castro leaders today are the valid, authoritative leadership of the Cuban working class. That's what determines their fundamental class character, not their individual origins as members of the old petty bourgeoisie in Cuba.

They won the leadership of the working class in Cuba through a series of stages. They were declassed elements that entered the countryside and they became the authoritative leaders of the rural workers because they adopted the program of the rural workers and pushed it forward. For land reform. And let's be clear about land reform. It's true, when you look at it from one aspect, that's a democratic reform. But if you could not get land reform in Russia, backward, feudal Russia, without a political break with the bourgeoisie, how could you get land reform in Cuba, which had capitalist agriculture, without a political break with the bourgeoisie?

And whether the Castro forces understood that or not when they began the fight is beside the point. The fact of the matter is when the decision was posed for them, as it was in life, with the bourgeoisie against the land reform, or against the bourgeoisie for the land reform, they chose the land reform. They broke with the bourgeoisie demonstratively during the cabinet crisis which culminated with the resignation of Urrutia in July 1959.

And they went to the masses with that break. They said, "This is what the break is about: These people do not want the land reform." Land reform meant the expropriation not of feudal property but of the biggest and most important capitalist property in Cuba. And that's when Castro made the dramatic gesture of resigning from the government over this question. And he went to the masses and explained his resignation. And the masses said, "No, you, not them." Castro came back into the government and Urrutia resigned.

That was the workers and farmers government. It was the authoritative leadership of the mass revolutionary movement which took over the formal hegemony of the government and had before it the task of establishing a new apparatus based on the revolutionary movement which was anticapitalist to the core.

We had the first political break of the Castro group beginning in 1953 when they decided not only were they breaking with Batista but they were breaking with the other opposition movements to Batista -- the bourgeois-liberal opposition to Batista. And as you study the history of that civil war, you see time and time again, Castro keeping them at arms' length -- unless, of course, they

wanted to come to the mountains and fight with him -- keeping at arms' length all the tendencies of bourgeois liberalism which had one or another reason for being in opposition.

But there was a terrible backsliding when they came into Havana. It was a terrible mistake and it could have been fatal. Fortunately, it wasn't. They turned the formal power, at least the top post, over to the bourgeois-liberal sympathizers of the revolution who wanted nothing more than to see Batista out of there, "and now we will divide in a new way, not quite so grotesquely as before," but nevertheless maintain fundamentally the situation as before in terms of class relations.

But the class character of the Castro leadership, I think, was finally decided when they made the decisive step of breaking with those bourgeois liberals who had the support of American imperialism, who had the support of the counterrevolution inside Cuba. Then they indicated that they were not a petty-bourgeois movement (which is an anomaly in a revolution because the petty-bourgeois movements fracture and move to the fundamental classes). They associated themselves directly with the mass, turning to the mass while making the break with the liberal bourgeoisie. And then by October they established the fundamental base of the state by arming the masses as the special repressive force.

Now this may not be taken as good coin from a theoretical point of view -- it's an offhand observation as one walks through Havana. If you want to see the dictatorship of the proletariat in Cuba, just walk the streets of Havana. It walks the streets of Havana and carries a small Czechoslovakian grease gun. And it's proud and it knows that it rules. This is the militia. You spoke about the army. You don't see the army in Cuba today, Tim. The "petty-bourgeois" army. You don't see it. Go out to a co-operative and you'll see 25 or 30 of them building homes. Or you will see an individual army man who is giving training to the militia. That's the army in Cuba.

But the physical force, the power, in Cuba, is the armed masses themselves, the militia. They don't have any doubt about it and the bourgeoisie doesn't have any doubt about it. They still cringe in their Miramar homes. The militia goes "Hup, two, three," up and down in their sections. They cringe, because right in the center of Miramar is a militia headquarters, and they put workers playgrounds right in the center of their district. They, the bourgeoisie, know where the dictatorship is. They know they don't even have a political party in Cuba, let alone political rule. They know that all of the institutions that are being developed are hostile to them: First and foremost the INRA (it began as an agricultural planning board, very quickly got its roots right down into the mass movement and now it's connected all the way from the top officialdom down to the local committees in the co-operatives).

Now this is a situation which is objective, regardless of the program and the views and the intentions of the leadership at any one stage. And even those views have not remained the same in the

last two years. Tim, you're quite wrong. You read "History Will Absolve Me," and then read the UN speech and you'll see that a little bit of progress has taken place in their theoretical conception of their own tasks and what the perspectives are.

There can be a backsliding without a counterrevolution? You have to look at those people with the guns in their hands. Take a good look at them. Because there will be no backsliding in a capitalist direction without taking those guns away from them and that will not be done so easily. I pity any land force that tries to land in that country, small as it is, because you have an armed people, who know that they rule in their country. They have dignity. They feel the existence of the dictatorship of the revolutionary workers and peasants. They feel it in their bones and they understand the importance of their arms in relation to that dictatorship and those arms will not be taken away so simply. Take those arms away, in other words, break the workers state, and the only real physical power in Cuba today is the armed people -- to break that up is counterrevolution.

That's why I am so anxious to see us place the definitive turning point in October of 1959, to bring to the fore again what Marxism discovered in the Paris Commune and in the Russian Revolution and has not appeared for the last 40 years since the Russian Revolution (and in my opinion it has appeared on a broader scale than even the Russian Revolution itself), and that's the classical process, the classical process of smashing from top to bottom the bureaucratic, military apparatus of capitalism and replacing it with a new apparatus with its foundation point the armed people itself. This force which is capable not only of maintaining the suppression of the capitalist force -- and that's what it's for, both internally and externally -- but provides the foundation stone for the building of a proletarian democracy that is yet to be constructed in concert with the development of the world revolution.

So I propose to vote for the resolution with the statement that the qualitative transition to the workers state occurred through the formation of the workers militia in October of 1959.

* * *

D. Stevens: (Transcribed from tape; not edited by speaker.)

I support the Draft Theses of the Political Committee. As against this thesis -- which characterizes Cuba as being in the transitional phase of a workers state, lacking as yet the forms of democratic proletarian rule -- the position that Tim put forth characterizes the state in Cuba as a state in transition. Transition -- without any designation of its quality. Transition -- mere change. I think that we'll agree that Tim has in mind as we do that this is a change from capitalism to socialism, the transition I imagine you have in mind. A state in transition.

What is necessary for the transition from capitalism to socialism? New property forms, nationalization, plan, even though the process is greatly chaotic in its first stages. And a con-

sciousness of a goal of socialism. That is the sociological basis for the workers state. That's why we call even the monstrosity of the state under Stalin a workers state, because of these two facets. The social basis and the property form, consciousness of the goal of socialism.

And that's why we support such a state traditionally against imperialism. And if on top of that, the government in such a state rules, not through a secret police and a military caste but through the armed workers, peasants, students, men and women, then we not only defend that state against imperialism but we give friendly support to such a regime, with criticisms in a helpful way. In the Soviet Union, we call for political revolution precisely in order to replace the police state with a state based upon the armed workers. That's what we want to change there. That's why we do not call for a political revolution against Castro because he bases his rule upon the armed workers and peasants.

Tim expresses the position that the transition can go in two directions. One direction is toward the workers state, not from capitalism to socialism but from what you have now in transition to a workers state and the other some sort of Thermidor. And both of these directions without even a political revolution. Peaceful transition in two polar opposite directions. If by Thermidor you mean capitalist restoration, which means the rule of Wall Street and imperialism against Cuba, I can't see how you can possibly imagine that could take place without what the PC Theses calls the need for bloody civil war.

And that's not what Thermidor is anyway. If by Thermidor you mean reaction on the basis of a new social foundation then what is the social foundation of such a Thermidor? Trotsky explained later on when he corrected himself that Thermidor in France meant not a restoration of feudalism but reaction on the basis of new property forms. The bourgeois property forms, capitalist. And the Soviet Union Thermidor took place on the new property forms of a workers state.

What kind of a Thermidor do you envision in Cuba? Thermidor on a capitalist basis? Thermidor on a workers basis? You don't say. And yet illogically a lot of things that you've said, Tim, are empty; they're halting; they're confused. You demand that we stick to certain categories, in the strictest possible way, but you yourself introduce categories which we've never had before, and you don't explain them, you don't fill them with quality, even with any content,

Now one other point I want to take up, that's the question of the need for a party. I think that in the Theses implicitly, together with the need for soviets, is the need for an independent, conscious vanguard party of the workers. And even implicit in it is that this may come, in part at least, from the July 26 Movement. And not just in a simple way. It's already gone through one great split with the petty bourgeoisie defecting to the counterrevolution. It may go through more struggle. Certainly it will be one source, at the very least, of the development of a Marxist party in

Cuba. I think the Theses should become more explicit, just as it does in the need for soviets, the need for a conscious Marxist vanguard party.

I have, in conclusion, three other proposals for editorial changes on the basis of complete agreement fundamentally with the Theses.

1. I think that the Theses should make very explicit that the armed people -- workers, peasants, students -- constitute at the present time the greatest democracy anywhere on this earth second only to the regime that existed under Lenin and Trotsky.

2. That the cry for democracy from the liberal bourgeoisie in this country is the cry for parliamentary democracy, capitalist democracy and that it has become the slogan of the counterrevolution. It's not what we mean by democracy. We mean soviets.

3. That the Theses should make clear that the real basic need for soviets is not only for the reasons it correctly states, but most basically that the economy of a workers state requires the democratic participation of the masses in planning and in the management of production. And that would help a great deal in a practical way to bring planning out of the chaos that you have.

* * *

F. Halsted: (Transcribed from tape; not edited by speaker.)

I would like to have seven hours, but in ten minutes I'll try to raise a couple of points. Tim, at the risk of being called empiricist, I'm going to introduce some statistics into the discussion. I think it is necessary to keep these in mind as we go over the methodological points.

Tim makes a point from the objective situation, not just dealing with the subjective nature of the individual but objective conditions. He says that Castro's social base in Cuba was in his military battle and still is the petty bourgeoisie, the rural petty bourgeoisie, the rural population of Cuba, the guajiro, whom he says is at best a semipeasant and a semiworker and many of them are outright peasants. Now this statistically is simply not true. The statistics are as follows. I take this from Rural Cuba, a book written around 1946, or based at least on the 1946 census in Cuba.

My point is that the working class is larger than the middle class in Cuba. Although it's the 1946 census, we don't have the 1959 figures, the concentration continued over those years, so for our purposes the figures I cite are very conservative for my point. These are not population figures, but heads of families. In other words, it doesn't include the babies and so on.

The total number of farmers, this includes all those who have some particular property relation to the land: 159,000.

Total number of wage workers, including all those who do not have such relation, not even squatters, or renters, or sharecroppers, just straight wage workers: 425,000. That's a ratio of nine wage workers in rural Cuba to three farmers.

Now why is the rural population petty bourgeois? Because it lives in the country? Because it is not surrounded by big buildings? No, loggers are not surrounded by big buildings and live in the country and they are not petty bourgeois. The rural population in backward countries is generally petty bourgeois because it has a petty-bourgeois way of making its living and way of solving its problems. It owns land, or it wants to own land; its demands are democratic demands -- the right to own land, the right to sell its property and so on, the right to get rid of feudal restrictions and things like that.

But the working class, people who work for wages, have different ways to settle their problems. Lenin and Trotsky said that it was improper for the working class to subordinate itself to the peasantry, not because the peasantry itself could mislead the working class but because the peasantry -- being a petty-bourgeois, land-owning or at least land-renting formation -- had either to follow the program of the working class within limits or it would tend to follow the program of the liberal bourgeoisie.

Now that is not the case of the rural agricultural proletariat in Cuba.

A couple of other statistics. The ratio of the rural working class to the rural petty bourgeoisie in Cuba is nine to three, nine wage-workers to three farmers. The ratio of the industrial working class to the total rural population is one to one and a good bit of that rural population, as I say, nine to three, is working class also. Now this does not mean, in and of itself, these factors, these social pressures which will be put on in the leadership -- this does not mean in and of itself that therefore the leadership would be a working-class leadership, rather than a petty-bourgeois leadership. But you can't cite as the objective fact that the reason Castro is a bourgeois-nationalist leader is because his mass base is among the petty bourgeoisie. You have to cite other facts as well.

So what about the question of Castro himself? It is excluded, from all the experience of history, that a petty-bourgeois party or a leadership or a class, at least class formation, should turn out to be a leader of a working class. But it's not excluded, it's extremely rare, but it's not excluded that a petty-bourgeois nationalist revolutionist leader could become a proletarian revolutionist. It's extremely rare, but I can think of three instances of it. Marx, Engels and Lenin. That is not to say that we should count on such things occurring once again in the rest of Latin America or anywhere else; it is not to say in and of itself that Castro is a Marxist but it is to say this: I believe that Castro started out as a petty-bourgeois leader. That he found a base not among the petty bourgeoisie, but partly among the petty bourgeoisie and partly among a rural population which was working class. This

exerted certain pressures upon him. The Permanent Revolution makes the point that the democratic tasks in the modern epoch cannot be solved except through the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Now it's true that Castro started out just to fulfil the democratic tasks. He found that he couldn't do it except through the dictatorship of the proletariat. How do I say that? I say that because Castro says that. He said that in his speech when he spoke about the electrical workers, the problem of the electrical workers. The headline in Revolution that contained that speech was: "Power to the Working Class -- Fidel in Today's Speech."

Is this to say that it's unnecessary to have revolutionary parties elsewhere, or that it's unnecessary for Castro to absorb not only the experience of a Latin American revolution, which he did experience, but also of the entire Marxist movement to go further? No, it doesn't say that is unnecessary. It certainly doesn't say that it's unnecessary to have revolutionary parties as conscious revolutionary leaders as we would possibly get in any other country in Latin America. Certainly it doesn't say that that's unnecessary in America. It doesn't even say that it's unnecessary now in Cuba. It's only to say that Castro is moving in that direction. I don't see how you can possibly deny that.

I have a question to ask Joe. I support obviously the resolution that Joe reported on. But I have this question in the key paragraph. It says: "Cuba entered the transitional stage of a workers state, although one lacking as yet the forms of democratic-proletarian rule."

Well, is there any essence without some kind of form of manifestation? I think that there are certain manifestations of democratic-proletarian rule in Cuba. Perhaps this should be changed, to be really accurate methodologically, to something like "one lacking complete forms, or legal forms," -- there are certain forms of democratic rule, democratic proletarian rule in Cuba, specifically, the right which is not legally recognized, is not formally recognized -- the right to recall leaders of militia units, the right to recall appointed officials of collective farms and so forth.

Now it's true this is not legal but that is a manifestation of democracy and just a methodological point -- is this wording -- are there certain manifestations of democratic-proletarian rule, that have not been codified, nailed down, given completeness? I would like Joe to comment on that.

* * *

D. Lopez: (Transcribed from tape; not edited by speaker.)

I welcome the opening of this discussion at the plenum here. I get the feeling right away that it's going to be one of the richest discussions that the party has had in a long time. And it's going to help us in the clarification especially of the young people who have come into the party in the last period.

Joe mentioned the article by Che Guevara on the consciousness of the leadership of the revolution. Now I didn't know this was in English and I glanced through it. My own feeling is the translation is all right but I think it's not the best that it could be and for that reason I think Tim would lose some of the tone of the thing. I got that right away from the fact that they'd use a word like explication, instead of explanation, the Spanish word being explication.

But for those comrades who haven't had a chance to look at this let me read to you some of the things that Che Guevara says.

"It would be suitable to say that revolutionary theory as the expression of a social truth surpasses any declaration of it. That is to say, even if the theory is not known, revolution can succeed if historical reality is interpreted correctly and if the forces involved are utilized correctly. It is clear that if the leaders have an adequate theoretical knowledge prior to the action they can avoid trial and error whenever the adopted theory corresponds to the reality. The principal actors of this revolution had no coherent theoretical criteria but it cannot be said that they were ignorant of the various concepts of history, society, economics, revolution which are being discussed in the world today."

Then I think the thing that gives the tone is, "the how and the why of men, who shattered by an army enormously superior in technique and equipment managed first to survive, soon became strong, later became stronger than the enemy in the battle zone, still later moved into new zones of combat and eventually defeated the enemy on the battlefield, even though their troops were still very inferior in number, indeed worthy of study in contemporary world history."

Now it's put the opposite way; it's interpolated differently in translation. But I think this shows you the tone of these people, gives you a feeling of their tone towards theory. It's not that they disdain theory. But they recognize, I think, their weakness in theory and consequently are opening these questions, posing these problems and I think it's an open invitation for the socialist movement throughout the world to join in the discussion on the character of that revolution.

I think Fred touched on the key question for understanding the revolution in Cuba. That is the question of the guajiro. It's not common throughout all of Latin America, but it is common to many of the countries of Latin America and it's very important for us to understand. Because there are other sectors of the working class, not quite on the land, but also involved in extractive industries. Now the miners of Bolivia -- everybody says right away, "He's a miner, he's a worker." But what is he working at? It's in an extractive industry. What are the guajiros working at? In sugar, which was being taken out. The thing that makes the difference is what are the social relations they are engaged in? That is, do they own their own land and then go to work or what?

In Cuba, the guajiros are working for big corporations because you have workers that sell their labor, farm laborers not even yet really arrived at class consciousness because of the way they do

it. For example, in Chile, it's a problem for them. They've got a big petty bourgeoisie on the land. They also have a big rural proletariat. That proletariat works in groups of four, five, six, seven and eight. They never worked in the big combines the way the Cuban workers did and that makes a difference and I think the comrades should understand that. I think it's very important for the discussion on that.

On the point that Bert raised: It's very hard for me to agree. I think it's a very good question to have opened up and I think we'll have to discuss it. It's very hard for me to agree because this is not new in Latin America now. The Cubans didn't innovate this thing of the militia. They took it almost directly from the Bolivians. Remember Che Guevara came up through Bolivia. He was in Bolivia, knew about it, the Cuban leadership did. They knew about this arming of the people and even in Mexico you had a situation, the peasantry had the arms, they had the whole government. But they couldn't do anything with them.

So the only way I can figure it out: To explain this period in Cuba, you could say as Bert said, "Well, all right, that showed the rupture with the petty bourgeois and marks the definite state." I wouldn't say that. To me, it seems more like the preparation for the proletariat taking power. The initial stage was the declaration, the arming of the people in the militias and then the beginning of the cleaning-out.

* * *

T. Kerry: (Transcribed from tape; not edited by speaker.)

I just want to deal with one methodological question, indeed a very important one. I agree with Tim that the discussion involves primarily the question of methodology. And it's a discussion we have had in other forms a number of times before.

The question of form and content -- I can't understand Tim's pooh-pooing the question of facts in such a discussion. It's true that we take as our point of departure certain well-defined forms or norms, based upon past experience, the greatest of which is the classical proletarian revolution that occurred in Russia in October. That has been our norm and will continue to be our norm, I believe, until there has been a proletarian revolution in one of the industrially advanced countries.

But then we have to seek out in the facts, how do these facts fit into our norm? Do they fit in or do they require a reevaluation of our previous norm -- that is, a change, a revision, or an abandonment. At the risk of uttering a cliché, I might point out again that some of the greatest Marxists have insisted that history is green, theory is gray. If your theory does not fit the facts, you cannot push aside the facts, you've got to change your theory. That's the essence of our discussion.

That brings me to the question of the characterization of the state. Now this is a very important question and one for which there is no ready label. Do our previous characterizations, the

degenerated workers state, or the deformed workers state, fit the Cuban situation? I don't think so. I'm convinced that they do not. We discussed this problem and we tried to get around it by a rather awkward formulation. I think the formulation in the Theses is awkward. I forget how it goes -- the "transition workers state" thing. Awkward, but we haven't been able to fix upon a label which would describe this specific historical phenomena.

It's not a degenerated workers state, obviously, because it doesn't fit that norm. It has no parallel with the history of the development of the Soviet Union.

Now Tim, I think, is treading on very thin ice when he emphasizes the question of the political power of the workers in this state. We had this discussion in 1940. There was very little left of the political authority and power of the workers in the Soviet state at the time that we designated it as a degenerated workers state. You say that the essence of the workers state lies in the political institutionalized form of workers democracy. There was very little, very, very, very little in the Stalinist state to justify such a characterization. And the opponents of the concept of workers state seized upon precisely this argument in almost every case. This was the criterion that they established. Their criterion of a workers state was not our criterion, nationalization plus monopoly of foreign trade. To them it was the degree of democracy existing in the state.

Now on the question of the deformed workers states, again we have difficulty, obviously. The Chinese deformed workers state didn't come into being like the Rumanian or the Polish deformed workers states. Nor did the Yugoslav workers state come into existence, into being like the other Eastern European workers states. There are distinct differences. There were genuine mass revolutions both in Yugoslavia and in China which wasn't true certainly in Albania, Bulgaria and some of the other deformed workers states.

Now what characterized the deformation. We didn't apply our label degenerated because they never were healthy workers states to begin with. The deformation consisted in that they were all, one thing they all had in common, they were all led by the Stalinists and the Stalinists imposed from the very beginning their bureaucratic repression of workers democracy on those state formations.

Now on this question of methodology, I differ also with Bert for the same reason. If you say that we should have characterized Cuba as a workers state in 1959 then you have to establish your criterion. Did we miss the fact in 1959 that the criterion we have utilized up to now, that is the nationalization, a decisive criteria, did exist sufficiently in 1959 to warrant the designation workers state. I don't think so. If that was true, then if there is some other criterion that applies to Cuba, then it has got to be established very clearly, because we'll have to change our position on China, on Yugoslavia and on the other so-called deformed workers states. It obviously is not a deformed workers state because I consider it healthy. It doesn't conform to the norm of the October

Revolution, it lacks certainly the institutionalized proletarian democratic forms and the conscious socialist program which would give it that quality that we would designate as a healthy workers state.

To characterize it as deformed would be to identify it with those social formations which in the history and tradition of the movement have gone down under Stalinist control and are completely bureaucratized which is not true in Cuba. Therefore, what is the solution? The solution is to find some other label. Instead of doing that, we use the phrase "the transitional workers state" in Cuba.

Now let me finish on just one point. There's another part of our concept of the deformed workers state that comes into play at this point and that is the question of the political revolution. In all of the deformed workers states and in the Soviet Union, we call for the political revolution, for the restoration of workers democracy.

Now what do you call for in Cuba? You deny that it's a workers state, therefore I assume that you are not calling for a political revolution. You haven't stated clearly what your characterization is but I assume that you're calling for a social revolution in Cuba. We have always made this distinction between social revolution and political revolution; sometimes it's been very difficult to explain but we've always understood it. The difference is essentially that in the political revolution we do not propose to alter the property forms and the property relations; all that is required is the reestablishment of the institutionalized forms of workers democracy to make those healthy workers states.

Now what do you call for in Cuba? A social revolution on the basis of a bourgeois dictatorship or petty-bourgeois dictatorship? What is your criterion? What is your designation? I listened very carefully to what you had to say, Tim. I'm very interested in this problem because we've been grappling with this problem and you evade it. If it's not a workers state of any kind, if it's a bourgeois state, then you must clearly call for a social revolution, but that brings you to another contradiction: Industry has been nationalized, property forms have been changed. What does your social revolution consist of?

Now these are all questions that involve the question of methodology and you've got to grapple with the subject.

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B. Farmer: (Transcribed from tape; not edited by speaker.)

As long as you're asking a question, I'd like to pose another one to Tim. You said, if I heard you right, that it was possible for Cuba to go either to the workers state or back to capitalism without a revolution, without a political revolution. You might as well explain in your discussion, how that is possible.

I, of course, support the Theses of the PC. I think it's proper that we go back and reexamine our discussions on Yugoslavia and China and recheck our criteria on these points in reviewing our analysis of Cuba. Because there too we had parties which weren't -- at least in our estimation -- Bolshevik parties. Neither Yugoslavia or China. Still they had a revolution which developed into what we determine workers states. That's one reason, I think, why we held back on our decision: to recheck and see the evidence. Because the evidence that we were looking for we found in a couple of situations. And I think that we have a different type of evidence in Cuba now. And that even though they were led by parties that weren't revolutionary in program, that the events and the struggle led them step by step through a process that we call permanent revolution to establishing workers states.

Now in our past discussions we came to a conclusion which I think is of tremendous importance here. Trotsky developed his analyses of the defeats in Germany, Hungary, China on the basis that the parties themselves had betrayed the revolution and that capitalism was strong enough to quell them. Our analyses of the period after the Second World War brought up a new point. And that is that capitalism on a world scale was no longer capable to fully crush these revolutions. They took place in spite of the attempts of capitalism to hold them back. And because of their lack of revolutionary leadership, took on deformed forms. And they developed not according to the classic sequence as in Russia but according to their own sequences. They didn't follow the same patterns, they didn't have the party first and the revolution later, didn't have each one of the steps in proper sequence.

I think Cuba again shows us that when there is not a developed revolutionary leadership there is a different sequence of events. And what we have to do especially in these circumstances is examine these events and draw our conclusions from them. Because they have their own logic and our job is to understand that logic. And if you start using a schematic approach to things, as I think Tim has, you end up by trying to deny the facts and you're up against a contradiction of that type.

Now to me what is of even greater importance -- something that we have to examine carefully in our whole study of events -- is the role of imperialism. I think everybody who analyzes Cuba agrees to this one fact: that but for the constant pressure of imperialism on Cuba it wouldn't have developed as it did. That's of tremendous importance. If Washington had established a compromise, say, with Castro, it is very possible that the revolution would have been halted at some stage. But it didn't. It kept the pressure on at all times, it kept driving them. And because of that we have to begin analyzing why did imperialism do that? Because as we go back, we see that the same thing happened in the development in China.

Now it can be posed two ways: Are the diplomats in Washington stupid? Are they incapable to do the job that they are appointed to do? Or are they forced in that direction by necessity? And if they're forced that way by necessity, then we have to reanalyze,

take another look at the decline of capitalism. How far has it declined that it can't allow one little concession? Imperialism is forced, because of the whole pressure of the colonial revolution and so on, to try to hold back completely every single movement that charges forward. And in doing so it only serves to speed up that process.

Now to me this means that actually the decline of imperialism has been speeded up to the point that it's incapable of stemming any of these large movements that are in process of developing. We're in for a period, if that is true -- I think we have to analyze it and examine it and check it -- if that is true it means that we are in for a period of more chaotic development in this next decade than I think anybody ever anticipated.

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R. Kirk: (Transcribed from tape; not edited by speaker.)

I also want to touch on a couple of methodological and procedural aspects of the question within the framework of the report of the Political Committee Theses. I have been convinced by the discussion that it is correct. It is not that I have a sufficient background of knowledge to come to this conclusion on my own on the Cuban situation but the comrades have spoken well and have convinced me that the Political Committee position is correct.

I want to note parenthetically to begin with that Comrade Hansen opens a discussion on the Cuban revolution, a great event in our hemisphere and on our doorstep -- he opens a discussion with a thesis -- a Theses. And I see nothing wrong in this procedure, even though perhaps a violation of tradition, but I think it's quite all right to begin a discussion with a Theses.

He begins it also with a considerable explanation of why the Political Committee was forced to adopt a serious theoretical attitude towards the Cuban revolution, was forced to undertake a theoretical examination of Cuba because of the pressure of circumstances. And it appeared to me to be almost an apology for inflicting such a discussion and such an approach upon this party that has so many practical problems to resolve, to indulge ourselves in the luxury of a theoretical discussion. I daresay he did not mean it that way but that is how it struck me, that's the way it sounded. There was a trace of an apology which reflects one of the shortcomings of the Political Committee in my opinion -- their attitude toward theory, not in their ability. I think Comrade Hansen and the other comrades have done an excellent job in beginning this discussion and laying before us a Theses.

Of course, the pressure of work is strong, the pressure of finances must be unbearable upon the comrades in the center. And this in part accounts, I believe, for this attitude which expresses itself in an apology for indulging in a theoretical discussion. And for this reason I'm concerned almost above all else at this plenum with the financial question and trying to find a more reasonable and rational way of living for the comrades at the cen-

ter, where we can say to Joe: "No, you shall not put out the paper this week. Sit down and think, and put in writing the products of your thought and rebuild the magazine and let us reattain the preeminent position the Trotskyist movement once had as the theoretical center of all socialist thought. A position in which we are in default at the present time."

Aside from the physical limitations, however, of the financial-personnel situation in the National Office, there is a thread of this empiricism winding through the approach that the Political Committee has to theoretical questions in general -- partly a revolt against the windbags of previous years; the necessity of getting things done and building a party that can get things done; revulsion against the intellectualism of the petty-bourgeois opposition and the endless mouthings of the crackpots that once infested our movement.

But nevertheless, whatever its cause, there is such an empirical tendency expressing itself in this apology to the plenum for having adopted a theoretical approach to the Cuban revolution.

Now I believe that the Political Committee intervened in the Cuban question in a brilliant manner, as they have intervened in other actions which have come within their orbit, and some which have not, in the past; and have laid the foundation for our developing a real relation to this revolution. I cannot help but note that it caught us by surprise and that we were insensitive to it in the beginning. And I cannot help but believe that we are basically delinquent in our international responsibilities in relation to Latin America. And I think this is one of the things that is revealed in this discussion because I look upon building the party in Latin America as an elementary duty of the American party. An elementary one, which is just next door to establishing a full national party in the United States.

It is clearly our responsibility, not the responsibility of co-thinkers in Europe. It is our responsibility.

And I think that the experience of the Cuban revolution must surely stimulate us to undertake this responsibility. In past years in discussing this responsibility, I noted a conservative attitude on the part of a number of comrades toward our sticking our nose into Latin American affairs in other than a formal manner; but I believe that the Cuban revolution lays the basis for overcoming such a conservatism. And I think it is a first-class responsibility of the leadership of the American party.

I think part of our conservatism in relation to Latin America stems from certain shortcomings which I have noted in the past in our relation to the Negro question in the United States. I don't believe that any American socialist can develop a true and genuine relation to the colonial revolution in Africa or in Latin America without a profound attachment to and understanding of the Negro question in the United States which is one of the keys to our understanding of the colonial revolution. I think this is reflected in the limitations of our resolution on the colonial question,

The Rise of the Colonial Bourgeoisie, and certainly since the events in Africa and the Cuban revolution that resolution will have to be rewritten, I believe, and another look taken at the colonial revolution.

In regard to the Negro question, it is my intention to begin over again, so to speak, in this discussion and present my views to the National Committee for your consideration; which I will do in writing as soon as it is reasonably possible.

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H. Ring: (Transcribed from tape; not edited by speaker.)

I support the general line of the Political Committee resolution. I would like to discuss here just one aspect of it, though. Comrade Tim made the charge that the line of the Militant and the line of this resolution is a Pabloite line, in the sense of taking the Pabloite approach and trying to convert the Fidelistas to Trotskyism.

Well, first there's a point of fact that Pablo is applying his Pabloite line virtually everywhere in the world except in Cuba where you would think it would be a natural for him to tell his little group there that it should go into the 26th of July Movement and bury itself. Instead, curiously enough, in Cuba they call for the establishment, and have actually established, what they call an independent political party with its own press and so on.

Now I am, however, for what Tim called a "Pabloite line" in Cuba. The only difference between my feeling on the matter and that of the Pabloites is that I don't propose that we give away anything programmatically to the Fidelistas. That in adapting ourselves to them, so to speak, in orienting ourselves towards them, we do so with the very firm purpose of winning them over to our program, rather than liquidating our program, as has been the case with Pablo in relationship to Stalinism or other tendencies.

Now why do I say this? I want to go back a little bit. When the regroupment process developed in this country, I was a very enthusiastic supporter of the party's policy and I was enthusiastic for two reasons. Number one, I saw an immediate opportunity for the party to make some gains after a long period of terrible isolation where we had nobody to talk to. But I was concerned that we get into this regroupment process for an even more important reason: I had come to realize that over the long period of isolation our movement had suffered, that many comrades in the party had developed consciously or unconsciously, an extremely mechanical dogmatic and sterile conception of how our Trotskyist movement was going to emerge here and elsewhere as the mass movement that would establish workers power: That is, that we would recruit one at a time, as we're doing now, and then at a certain point, there would be a change in the historic juncture and great masses would come to recognize that we had been right all along, that we would have to get a wider doorway downstairs so they could all come pouring in.

I think that's the essence of how many comrades viewed the building of a mass party. And I felt that it was dead wrong and not only wrong but extremely dangerous and stood in the way of building a mass revolutionary party in this country and elsewhere. To my mind, one of the key problems for Marxist politicians is to be able to follow closely every revolutionary tendency that develops among the population and to have the political capacity to reach out to any tendency that is coming to any degree in our direction and to attempt to bring it further toward our program.

That requires principles, political intransigence and at the same time the most extreme flexibility and the ability to work in the most practical political fashion. To me that's the test of a revolutionary Marxist. And to me that's involved far more than it was in the regroupment process in the Cuban thing. For one thing, the quality of the people we were trying to influence here, I think everyone will agree, is on a somewhat superior level to that of the people we are trying to influence in the regroupment process.

Now this point about taking facts and labeling them, hanging a label on them. To my mind, the facts are the crux of the problem. I can't conceive of any serious political discussion that does not begin with the facts at hand. Now the difference between a Marxist and a pragmatist, as I understand it, is that a Marxist takes all of the facts not simply those that hit him on the nose, but the facts that went before, the facts that exist now, and the facts that are going to develop. But we've got to take the facts as they are.

Now I'd like to say a little bit about some of the facts that I saw in Cuba. I can appreciate the sentiment expressed by Tom L. from a financial viewpoint, about all of the comrades going to Cuba. But I say there's another side to this problem. I think the comrades can learn a great deal from going to Cuba. I know I did and I tell you frankly, I intend to go again the first chance that I get, and learn some more.

Now the first thing that I learned down there, and everyone else I think was that this is a real, honest-to-God revolution, with no ifs, ands or buts about it. It's a revolution that hits you in the eye, both in the leadership of the movement and in terms of the rank and file. This is the big, intoxicating fact that inspires everyone that comes back so that the comrades get a little bit annoyed with them, and want to know, "What is this? Have we got a gang of Fidelistas around here?"

Even where their revolutionary consciousness is far from completion, it is still a revolutionary consciousness, no matter how limited. I talked with a young leader of the Cuban revolution, who explained to me that they were not Communists, they were humanists. Well, you know we have a sort of reaction when someone says "humanist." Then she began to explain to me what humanism is, or at least what they think it is. And how to them it means -- and I'm boiling it down here, instead of the lengthy lecture that she gave us -- human rights come first before property rights. Either the human beings of Cuba come first or anyone who stands in the way of these rights goes to the wall.

Well, that was different from any other humanist discussion that I have heard. And I think that it's the kind of a humanism that we can find some minimum basis for discussing. And I found in the rank and file of the Cuban people a political consciousness of the highest order. Not in theoretical terms, but in terms of general understanding of their revolution, of a general understanding of the role of imperialism, a political level that left me marveling. Each time I would make the same mistake. I would talk to a highly political person and finally I would say, "What were your politics before the revolution?" Because they sounded like old-time political. In each case they would sort of laugh at you and say, "Before the revolution, I wouldn't have anything to do with politics. It was all crooked."

In a year and a half, this leadership has developed a highly conscious rank and file throughout that entire island. To my mind, that's the significant fact about the character of the Cuban revolution.

Now the facts -- let me indicate the reverse. Let me take a moment. Where you don't consider the facts but start out with a theoretical conception that is not related to the facts.

Comrade Shane has an article in the current Young Socialist. The big danger, according to Comrade Shane's article, is not the threat of counterrevolutionary invasion and attempt to overthrow the regime there, destroy the revolution; the big danger is that Khrushchev and Kennedy are going to get together and make a deal and Khrushchev is going to put the screws on Castro. In exchange for U.S. lifting the trade embargo, Castro is going to repeal the land program and he's going to give the factories back to the original owners, that is, the American imperialists.

Well, to my mind such a prognosis is so totally unrelated to the reality of the Cuban situation, the international situation, that it leads me to believe that not only is there a basic flaw in the theoretical conception that motivates the article, but simple ignorance of the facts of the situation. I don't know what test the Cuban revolutionaries will face tomorrow but I do know the test that they are facing today and six million people are awaiting an invasion by the most powerful nation on earth. Have they shown the slightest kind of vacillation to yield, to concede, to capitulate? They stepped up the revolutionary tempo.

Professor Samuel Shapiro writes in the current issue of Fair Play that when he was there the last time, they said, "We will win," with a little note of uneasiness in their voice and rightly so. Now he says their mood is "Let them come!" That kind of a mood of defiance can only spring from a revolutionary anticapitalist people and a revolutionary anticapitalist society in this period.

And I think these kinds of facts lead to the conclusion included in the resolution.

M. Stein: (Transcribed from tape; not edited by speaker.)

The question of method has been discussed here by some comrades in reply to Tim. I would like to add a word to it.

Now Tim tells us in essence that Joe has preferred to discuss the facts of the Cuban revolution and to him it conjures up the ghost of Shachtman, who also likes to discuss facts, as against a discussion of the social content.

Now there's one point, of course, on which Tim is completely wrong and which crashes his whole argument to the ground and that is this: that Shachtman likes to talk of facts in order to obliterate the social content, in order to obscure the class nature; while Joe has discussed facts in order to deduce from them the social content and the class nature. Evidently these are methods that are direct opposites. If anything, I think you should examine your own method which is an idealistic method which flows from the totality of individuals as against the profound social changes that have taken place.

So I think you have to really examine your own method of approach to the Cuban revolution because it's a faulty method. And is bound to lead to false conclusions.

Facts are to us of paramount importance because that is how we determine the social nature of events. For without facts your theories don't mean anything. What is theory? Theory is the generalization of facts. Theory is the generalization of social processes. You cannot examine social processes without examining facts. And the facts, as far as Cuba is concerned, bear out that the old state has been smashed; that industry has been nationalized, the decisive sectors; that state planning has been introduced; that there is a monopoly of foreign trade; and according to our criteria for social change, we are duty-bound to say that there has been a social overturn in Cuba. That we are confronted at least as far as the social system is concerned with a workers state.

Now as we discuss the facts, I think that fact Number One in the Cuban revolution -- if you want to know how was all this possible -- fact Number One is the existing world reality. Without it you could have had no Cuban revolution. The facts of the life and death struggle between two social systems, that dominates the whole of life throughout the world. Could you for a moment envisage a Cuban revolution prior to, say, the 1917 Russian Revolution?

Despite the courage and bravery of Castro and his group, a handful of men in the mountains, could you, in spite of the weakness of the bourgeoisie and Batista and all of that, could you envisage that? And even if Castro was armed with the revolutionary program, would he have succeeded? It's unthinkable. Just to pose the question answers it. It would be impossible.

Let's go one step further. Could you envisage the Cuban revolution prior to World War II? That is, after the Russian Revolution. During the thirties. Absolutely unthinkable. I think a few

detachments of marines would have set the house in order then for American imperialism, despite the whole consciousness that the Fidelistas might have had at that time. We have seen the example of Spain and what happened to the Spanish Civil War. That was in 1936, wasn't it?

So there's a new world reality that we are dealing with today. And that world reality is the 1917 Revolution plus the war and what resulted from it. Namely, the revolutions in Yugoslavia, in China, in the Eastern European countries; the growth in power of the Soviet Union -- it's no longer an isolated workers state fighting for its life; it's a powerful state, the second greatest power in the world. And by the force of circumstance -- not the least of which is the Chinese revolution -- the Soviet Union is compelled today, instead of playing a counterrevolutionary role -- it's compelled, out of self-defense of interest, say what you may, to place itself on the side of revolution.

This is the new element in the world situation today without which you cannot begin to understand what went on.

Now to become sidetracked to a discussion which places primary weight on the question of the leadership in Cuba, on the question of its petty-bourgeois nature and its origin, its empiricism, you're battering down open doors here, because we all accept that.

But I think we should add a little more than that, namely, that you're dealing with a group of young people, very young, as far as leaders in the world today go, and I don't mean only young compared to Adenauer. Men in their early thirties.

Now you have to do something about it -- I'll go a little bit over my time. (Five-minute extension voted.)

They're all in their early thirties.

Point Number Two: They are very brave men, selfless men, fighters. They've proved themselves in that respect. They are sincere. They started out with a sincere desire to rid their country of Batistaism and American imperialism. That's a big undertaking.

In the given conjuncture of world circumstances, and being empiricists, they adapt themselves. And there's very little room for adaptation. Either you are on the side of American imperialism or you accept the aid of the Soviet Union and the Soviet-bloc countries.

So what you have is a most peculiar phenomenon for us. We spend the best part of our lives polemicizing against people who talked like revolutionists and acted like reformists. We have spent our life on it. I think we should welcome a change. Very rarely do you find in life -- and that is only true of the revolutionary party -- where the deed and the word correspond. And we've always insisted on judging by the deed, not by the word. Isn't that a fact?

I think we should judge the Cuban revolution by this. I don't want to minimize the word -- it's important. But it's secondary to the deed. If we were to try to make a chart of the course of the Cuban revolution, I think we would see a steadily ascending line. It should go this way -- from right to left, a steadily ascending line and it is still in the process of transition and I should say this applies as well to the question of workers democracy.

We are not yet prepared to say this is a finished process. We want to believe, and the possibilities are all there, that the organs of workers power are going to be to our liking. I don't know. I would say now that it is a fallacy to say that there are no organs of workers power. Impossible. Nobody can convince me of that; nobody that knows anything about life can possibly claim that. There are some organs of power: the militia, there are factory committees of sorts, unions -- they may not be entirely according to Hoyle, to the programmatic norm, but they are there. They are there. They are there, and they are functioning and the state has to rest upon them.

As a matter of fact, it was reported in the Militant that Castro came down to ask the workers unions to intervene in the struggle of the leadership. This would indicate to me that it's vital to the revolution as to how the workers live, how they act and what kind of organization they have. Nobody can rule, it's not a dictatorship of one man, even the dictatorship of one man has to take into consideration the existing organs of power.

Now the question of the conscious factor of course comes up. What happens to the concept of the party? We had this discussion some five and one half years ago in connection with China. And I think that we have arrived at conclusions that are satisfactory to the party, by and large, in its entirety. I think we can perhaps enrich this discussion at this time.

But on the whole, I think one can generalize something as follows: That in colonial countries, that have suffered capitalist or imperialist exploitation, the tasks of the national revolution, if, and here's what's important, you see -- if they're undertaken by an initially bourgeois force, or a petty-bourgeois force, if they are undertaken by forces that actually will pursue this revolution, it must inevitably merge with the socialist revolution.

And we have seen that. We have seen it in China, we've seen that in Cuba. And in countries where we have not seen it as yet, namely, Bolivia, Indo-China, and so on and so forth, these countries are in a state of continuous crisis. That not only the task of liberating these countries from imperialism as was the task in Cuba, but the task of industrializing these countries cannot be resolved on the road of capitalism. It's in this sense that we have the guarantees of the Cuban revolution. They cannot industrialize Cuba except on the socialist road. And if these young people who made this revolution through expropriating the American monopolies are sincerely desirous of diversifying the industry of this country, which I am sure they are, there is only one road open to them. They are compelled to take that road.

And that's what's going to determine their consciousness and has been determining it all along. There is no future for any of them on the capitalist road. So that the question of consciousness is moulded in the struggle and in the course of the revolution.

But in the imperialist countries, it is an entirely different story. You cannot overthrow American imperialism by Castro's methods. If someone had asked us a couple of years ago when he was fighting in the hills, what chance did Castro have, we'd say he was an adventurer. At least I would say it. He had no chance at all. A handful of men going into the hills with a few rifles and they're going to overthrow a regime that's backed by American imperialism -- we wouldn't have believed it. But can you do it in the United States? That's the question.

History has given us a very vivid example of France and Algeria. The French Communist party came out of the war as the most powerful party. Power in its hands, practically. What was lacking? The consciousness, the struggle for power and all they had to do was to embark on the road to power. That was it.

In Algeria, without this mass party that the CP had in France in a metropolitan country, they've been carrying on for six years now an armed struggle against a foreign power. And there isn't the consciousness of power except the bourgeois-nationalist element, that's all you have there. And if this struggle will continue, will be pursued, I wouldn't exclude the possibility of Algeria developing along socialist lines because the weight, the pull is in either one or another direction.

If Algeria should succeed in liberating itself -- which it can, it will; there is no other course open -- if it needs support for industrialization, for its defense, so to speak, it will have to turn to the Soviet bloc countries, and it will have to do it in one way only.

But that doesn't negate the problem of the party, of building the party and I can only say, to conclude quickly, that what Joe said on this question is absolutely correct, and by the way, I say his entire report was to my mind exemplary.

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S. Mage: (Transcribed from tape; not edited by speaker.)

The first thing I would like to say, since my article in the Young Socialist was mentioned, is that Harry talked a lot about facts but he apparently didn't get the facts straight as to what I had said, since he seemed to think that I had expected Castro to repeal the land reform act, and you can reread that article, he'll see that not only is it an impossibility in Cuba but there's no hint of it. However, that's just an introduction.

Incidentally, I'm sorry Harry left because something of what Morris said also goes along with that. That apparently there was

something horrible, that appeared to him really horrible, that I suggested -- what? That Khrushchev and Kennedy would make a deal to sell out the Cuban revolution. And that that represents the imposition of theory on the facts of Cuba, the facts that we face in America. Of course it does. And what's that theory? Nothing else but orthodox Trotskyism. The idea that this is not a danger, you cannot expect the Soviet Union to, under the leadership of the Kremlin gangsters, to make this kind of sellout deal, that also represents a theory -- the theory that we saw with Pablo and with Cochran. The theory that betrayal is no longer possible. The world reality is such that these counterrevolutionists can no longer betray. And this unfortunately is not the case and well, we can have a long discussion of that.

But to go into what I want to say in a short time: First, on all the points that were raised on methodology. It's impossible to even begin to go into them except for this: that you cannot ever talk about any facts without being involved up to your ears in theory. The moment you talk about facts you are, of course, making a theoretical statement. And they are making a statement which assumes large numbers of theories, about the nature of the world, the nature of facts, the relationship of facts, all these things. To pose the problem as Joe did in his presentation, that we've treated things politically long enough and now it's time to pose them theoretically, does in fact misstate what has been happening. Because of course we have been, the press has been discussing Cuba theoretically. And the only question is will this theory be made explicit?

Of course the British who are very sensitive to matters of theory saw this instantly. And it is very noteworthy that one of the things they found most disturbing about the conciliatory attitude that's been developing towards Pabloism was -- I quote from this document you all have: "Your presentation of developments in Cuba which recalls Frank's characterization of that country as a workers state," -- the same theoretical approach that they see in practice in very blunt form in the Pabloite analysis.

Now to go over several of the points that have been raised. First, I think Dick's comments on Bert's presentation -- whose main point was that the existence of the militias, the main body of armed men in the country is justification of the theory that the country is a workers state -- should be considered seriously. Because that was the case in Bolivia. And to this day, of course, they haven't succeeded in disarming the militia. They rebuilt, gradually, the shattered bourgeois state apparatus, so that they have the balance of power today. They have not denationalized the tin industry, which was the decisive conquest in the Bolivian revolution, or so it seemed at the time.

Of course, they agreed to pay Mr. Patino a rather vast sum of compensation and the prices at which they are selling the tin are a lot less than they were under private ownership so the American capitalists who use the tin are reaping a large profit, which previously went into the pockets of Mr. Patino who is getting his out of the taxes from the Bolivian workers and peasants.

So it's not as simple as property forms. It's not as simple as the existence of a militia and as has been said by many speakers, the decisive thing is the revolutionary leadership. Property forms and a workers militia, workers militia and nationalized property are perfectly adequate and sufficient if you have political power in the hands of a leadership representing and responsible to the workers.

Now the fatal error of the Bolivian Trotskyists, they didn't understand this. They thought these things were enough in themselves and therefore it was all right to go along uncritically with the leadership of a petty-bourgeois party. Instead of advocating the revolutionary slogan "all power to the central councils of the workers unions, the central council of the workers militia," they said, "we support the existing government," and what you see in Bolivia today is what they got for their pains.

Now this took a long time and it wasn't so obvious immediately, at least not to the Bolivians. A very fine revolution. But somehow it vanished under their hands and the same thing could happen in Cuba if Cuba faced the same problems that Bolivia did. What are the problems? What are the courses to a degeneration of a revolution like that? The isolation of the country in an economic atmosphere dominated by the United States, by the enormous weight of American imperialism.

This is one of the facts that the comrades seem to have simply tossed out the window -- that Cuba exists in the Western Hemisphere and in the sphere of influence of the U.S. and that if today Cuba can exist as a viable economic entity, it's only because of the help from the Soviet Union. But you have to be conscious every moment that this help is a very contingent thing and it will be stopped the moment that it suits the Kremlin to stop it, that is at the moment that Wall Street is willing to pay enough of a price to get the Kremlin to stop it and at the same time -- and this is an extremely important thing -- can provide some sort of political cover to justify it. Because the Kremlin is not any more a free agent than the U.S. imperialists are. Somewhat the same problems keep the U.S. from invading Cuba today or in the last year.

However, a Cuban leadership that would go along with this, that would yield to a threat that would never have to be made public, that would accept reintegration in the Western economic community, so to speak -- this kind of Cuban leadership would initiate a process -- this is the danger that faces the Cuban revolution and I think is decisive to our discussion. This kind of leadership can initiate a process that would lead to the attrition of the revolution as in Bolivia. In Bolivia every armed counterrevolution has been crushed by the workers militias, in fact, by the government forces -- and there have been quite a few attempts -- but nevertheless after each stage of nationalization plus workers militia, the Bolivians went back to capitalism. It wouldn't have taken any armed overthrow of the Bolivian government for the workers to have simply declared themselves the government.

Now I'm not suggesting anything at all about what are the tactical slogans, the tactical approaches to be used by the Cuban Trotskyists. I don't know. After I've been there, I still won't know. I'm sure I'll know a great deal more than I do now, but after all, it's up to them, and the only thing, the big thing that I want to get across to them if I have a chance, is the need to fight Pabloism in its essence, which they may be doing.

Pablo's not trying hard enough to stop them, or may be trying to stop them. Who knows? But its essence, of course, is abandonment of the independent role of the Marxist vanguard and the theoretical abandonment of the leadership role of the Marxist vanguard.

Well, I'll stop. I'd like to take two more hours. . .

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C. Fine: (Transcribed from tape; not edited by speaker.)

I'm rather impressed by everything that I've read by the Cuban leadership. In those articles that are translated you get the gist of their thinking and their development. I would recommend highly the articles that have been quoted here in some part from Studies on the Left, which gives excerpts of a number of speeches and writings by Che Guevara.

I'm impressed by the article, not so much by what he says in relationship to the ideology of the Cuban revolution, the evolution of the thinking of the leadership there, but in his admission of their limit and a real probe as to where they have to go from here.

I don't know any other leadership in a revolution in recent years that have sat down to make that kind of probe and admit very openly their limits in understanding of the revolution.

He begins by saying that the bourgeoisie may label them as communists, but they're not going to go down as imbeciles. They're going to learn something from the experience and give a good fight in the process. And he explains that they do not consider themselves, and he doesn't write or speak as, masters of the revolution, that is ideological masters. They did not begin with a thought-out plan, at least a plan that led to the point where they are now, but rather that they learned in the process of the revolution.

And rather than a contempt for theory, he shows a developing understanding of the need at the present period that they should develop a theoretical concept of the revolution, what it means and where they must go from here.

Now to my knowledge, we have never made it a condition that when a Bolshevik party, a truly Bolshevik party takes power, that at that point they must nationalize industry, make all the changes toward a workers state and establishment of a socialist regime. We have said that was a tactical question -- a matter of timing. The

fact that there was a Bolshevik leadership was sufficient to characterize the Russian Revolution and the Soviet Union as a workers state immediately after the revolution because we knew the goals and the aims of the revolutionary leadership.

And on the other hand, in the absence of that, we never made it a condition that you must have a revolutionary party as necessary to characterize a country as a workers state, after they've had nationalization of industry, after they've begun planning and after they've developed monopoly of foreign trade.

These have been the standard criteria for designating a number of countries as workers states. And I think all those conditions are met in the Cuban revolution as it exists today and I believe that the turning point took place with the nationalization of the American and Cuban industry, what there was of the Cuban industry there.

I think now that the question of the party, revolutionary party in Cuba becomes the important question. Can they develop a real concept of revolutionary theory and a revolutionary party, with an international outlook, because that is the decisive question for them if they're going to be able to survive in the coming period.

Now we've been presented here with documents by Tim, Shane and Robertson written in August. I listened carefully to the report here to see if there was any additions or changes that he would make since that rather dated article was presented here. I didn't hear any in the discussion period or in the initial report by Tim. And I hope in the summary that he will take up that point. Because your original article was written in reply to two previous articles, one by Bert and the original article, written I think by Joe Hansen. So there have been a number of changes since August. And where do you fit in, what changes would you make since your August article? There has been the nationalization of basic industry since that time. There has been the fact of a number of speeches in clarification of the ideas of the Cuban leadership: Castro's speech at the United Nations; Castro's speech at the electrical workers; a number of statements by Che Guevara as he's traveled around the world. These are new things since August.

There's been the question that Bohemia gave support to the SWP campaign. I wish the comrades would see that issue. I don't know of another single time that that has ever happened, where we've gotten that kind of support. And in the same issue, they devote a special feature to the Russian Revolution, with a big play on Trotsky's role in the revolution.

Now these are significant facts, since August. And I would like to know in your summary, what changes you would make, if any, in your document of August in view of these changes.

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Murry Weiss: (Transcribed from tape; not edited by speaker.)

Since the question of the role of the party has arisen in the discussion of the Theses here, I think it should be underscored that from beginning to end the whole aim of the Theses is to introduce into the Cuban revolution precisely the question of the party.

The concept of the party is an integral part of the whole continuity and structure of Marxism. A revolutionary party is a living necessity, seen in one case after another -- not just in a single sector of the colonial revolution or in advanced industrial countries, but as a living entity tying together all sectors as it represents the interests of the socialist revolution and in the case of the Soviet bloc the political revolution.

I really heard many things here that I would support, things which I agree with. It is tempting to deal with some of these rich questions, but I want to select one point which I think is really fundamental raised by Dick, the point about the armed masses. It was raised by Shane, too.

It is correct to say that the armed masses alone don't constitute a workers state. The masses take up arms repeatedly -- in Latin America, elsewhere; it could be in San Francisco during a general strike, or in Belgium. They may take up arms, they may become masters temporarily. But that's not enough; it doesn't create a workers state. It didn't in Bolivia. They had a militia there; they really were masters, but the capitalist state wasn't shattered. The counterrevolutionaries who hadn't been routed remained armed; more important the old army, the whole structure, legal structure and the bourgeois democracy, all remained.

So when you say that factor is not enough, you are right. But in Cuba there is more. You have not only the existence of the armed masses -- and to my knowledge the leadership despite its petty-bourgeois origin, is arming the people more and more -- but through this whole process they shattered the capitalist state and all its imperialist agencies. They shattered it from the top to the bottom, including the court system and the institutions of education. The old army was destroyed, not a vestige remains. A new army was created. This seemed a little too much like the old. So they not only took away the uniform, or rather the insignia and the salute, but they even reduced the army to make it a more popular armed force.

But that in itself isn't enough. Such measures alone don't destroy the old state. According to Marx, it's necessary to make a social revolution. And sure enough, that's what they did. And not just in one corner of the country, and not just a reform, destroying old feudal remnants, but a great revolution directed against capitalism. So there's a sweeping revolutionary process going on there.

Now that's something to think about. I say without being very polemical, the comrades should pause and think about these enormous facts. This is the last place -- this plenum -- to say

we should not pay attention to facts. These are so overwhelming they can't be dismissed.

As I see it, how can we explain that without a revolutionary party it could happen in a place like Cuba? The same question faced us in Yugoslavia, not to speak of China. How did it happen? Has our norm become useless? It becomes clear to us that in the very process of creating revolutions, in the great world process, the party is being built. How? Just ask yourself this question: What would have happened in Cuba before the Second World War, or in the postwar period? The Stalinist monolith, the Kremlin, would have grabbed the first radicalized mass forces and destroyed that revolution as they did in Spain. They weren't there in this situation when the powerful impulse of the revolution took place and that became decisive. You've got to have consciousness to win a revolution. But even that which is not fully developed to start with is enough to make part of a revolution.

The Trotskyist concept of a political revolution is being borne out in one aspect in the process of destroying Stalinism. The signposts are the Twentieth Congress, Hungary, Poland, the Chinese revolution. Stalinism can no longer, even with all its great power, completely disorient these immature developments and these weak parties. On the contrary, it is losing its power over them. And there's the great, profound change that's taking place in the world.

If we are caught in the trap of the idealistic form of thinking -- which begins a discussion, not with the mighty facts as Marx always began with but with riddles -- we can never reach a solution. We have to begin the other way around, with the facts.

I think that is what is done in the Theses, and that this is the road to clarity. We are not dealing with a finished process but with a major change which opens a new process. And we will bring this process into the context of China and Yugoslavia, into one world context, one historical context, and through it advance the whole world Trotskyist movement.

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D. Roberts: (Transcribed from tape; not edited by speaker.)

Comrades, I was not here to hear the reports, but we do have written material embodying the line and the main arguments of the sides and therefore I feel free to take the floor in the discussion -- all the more so since from what I can gather there were no changes. The oral presentations conformed with the written documents.

I want to address myself to only two related questions which have already been dealt with by other speakers but which I think are very necessary to reemphasize. As dichotomy has been discussed here from point of view of method, facts as against theory. Well, when Shane comes along and tells us that they're really one, united -- theory is facts, facts are theory, which is true, they

both are identical -- they are also opposites, there is also a unity about opposites, they're interrelated.

I bring up this general methodological consideration because it's the kind of a perplexing consideration which, as other speakers have already pointed out, all of us, or nearly all of us, in the party, went through in the assessment of the Yugoslavian developments, the Chinese developments and some other developments of the postwar reality; and when you're in this kind of a vicious circle -- opposites that are identical, they're also united and interrelated -- some place along the line, you've got to find, where do you start? What end of the stick do you grab?

What we found in the past discussions, and I will just simply tell you this for the sake of perhaps helping this discussion, is that you have to start with the facts and with the reality. And not raise theoretical considerations in such a way as to interdict the recognition of reality. That doesn't mean you throw out the theoretical consideration; if you did that you'd be empiricists, revisionists, but on the way to revisionism in any case.

But at the start you say, "No, we will not use the theoretical considerations to interdict the recognition of reality but start with the facts." And then when we work back to theory and arrive at certain conclusions about the reality, we ask ourselves, how does this effect the body of our theory as it has developed to today? And then we go on from there.

I think -- and that is all I will say on this question -- that you will have to admit that neither after the Yugoslav revolution, nor after the Chinese revolution did we throw out the conception of the permanent revolution, nor did we throw out the conception of the need for a revolutionary party, in fact its indispensability in the revolutionary process.

As I say, I won't go through all the arguments or the reasoning, I'll just present that as part of the evidence and I think it is worthwhile to recheck why that is in the arguments that were developed in the previous discussions.

Now a related point. Related because it too enters into party history. We went through the Cochranite discussion and with that the Pabloite discussion; and quite naturally, the fact that the Cochranites and the Pabloites had already staked out the position that China was a workers state operated on many of us as a sort of an obstacle to going ahead ourselves on that question. We had even delayed our own recognition or our own statements on that question for perhaps a year or two, because we were actually involved in this political battle with the Pabloites and we didn't want to give them an inch.

But you see, sooner or later -- and it's a very elementary point really -- if you do that you put yourself in dependence on the very opponent you wish to fight. For if every time that Pablo says something or Frank says something, or recognizes something, we have to not recognize it, and say nay when he says yes, we are

dependent upon him. And if there's one thing we concluded from the fight against the Pabloites it was this -- and that was our declaration of independence against Pabloism -- that before we get desperate enough to use Pablo's brains, we will use our own. On any question that comes along.

That simply means that we will investigate for ourselves. And if it so happens that some of the conclusions we reach coincide with Pablo's, so be it. We'll have to draw, perhaps, some further political conclusions from that. We will find that although we agree on this point or that, the recognition of reality and the facts, we really don't agree on what conclusions to derive from that.

But in any case -- and that's what struck me about the British letter, since Shane brought it up -- is he asking us to put ourselves, not in the position of fighting Pablo but in the position of ideological dependence upon Pablo. You can do that simply by saying "yes" every time he says something; but you do it just as much if you say "no" every time he says "yes."

No, we just proceed on our own basis. That's what Joe did, and the other comrades that have been working on the Cuban question -- primarily Joe, above all Joe, on the question of the theoretical work -- simply going to the material, checking all the information available and arriving at some conclusion about it. And if Pierre Frank also arrives at the same conclusion about it, I'd say, "Well, it's too bad but I'm not going to throw out all of Joe's work just for that."

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J. Robertson:

I was asked to speak loudly by the comrades back there, a standing grievance apparently.

In the brief time available I want to take up just three points. First, I don't think this discussion is going to be a quickie one. It obviously raises considerations that are proportionate in their importance internationally to the Cuban revolution itself. In addition, the Trotskyist movement has not tended to go through a similar set of conclusions everywhere. It certainly is clear that the majority of the Political Committee inclines in one direction. I infer, as I suppose others do, that the National Committee of the Socialist Labour League tends off in the other direction. We haven't heard from many co-thinkers: the Socialist Educational League in Canada, Comrade Yamanishi, the RCL and the French, Chinese and Latin American comrades. So much for the International Committee, and it's just at a time, I understand, when it's preliminary to an international discussion around a new international resolution of the movement.

Likewise, in Pablo's International Secretariat group, they've taken time off in their discussion on Tito's thirteen-year "march to Leninism" they've analyzed at length and Pierre Frank has come

forward in Verite des Travailleurs with "Cuba, A New Workers State."

In the press of the Latin American POR's, at least until December, in the material that has been available to me, the Pabloite comrades there clearly have a contradictory estimate and perspective to Frank's. Life is not simple there, either.

I do not think that this is a matter that is immediate or easy in its resolution in all likelihood. But fortunately unlike a lot of, kind of quarrels that the movement could wander into, the revolution itself will be subjecting at each point the various interpretations to the test of events in a continuous and I think very fruitful fashion and that's good. So much for Point 1.

Now on theory. O.K. The proposition in the PC draft is that a petty-bourgeois peasant movement in seizing power and through the revolutionary exigencies of an antiimperialist struggle, this leadership becomes transformed into a workers and peasants government within the framework of a workers state, and that is therefore thrust upon us in this resolution.

For Marxists, the function of theory, and I better define that word in view of the quarrel, to me means the tested and self-consistent set of generalizations, is to anticipate polarizations and struggles and to be able to be oriented and to be guided in action in those circumstances. Certainly, certain aspects of the permanent revolutionary theory of the nature and dynamics of Stalinism have been dragging behind events in the postwar period. That has been why so many sections or tendencies that have wanted to revise or withdraw from the Marxist movement have gone to the weak spot, if you will, and blown it up in a certain way.

Now the road to rectification is not two things. First, to simply render the older formulations more abstract, that is, to put them up on a shelf and tend to deny their immediate applicability while giving a "general" support to them, or second, to make designations, terminological or otherwise in specific situations, and then tie these in as best you possibly can with your more traditional body of theory.

Now I'm afraid that Comrade Hansen does the former, abstracting in the question of building the revolutionary party, and he does the latter with the "workers and peasants government" and "workers state." In the one case making more abstract when it is the question of the revolutionary party, in the other arriving at these labels and hoping that they're going to dovetail with what has gone before.

So Cuba is and is going to be a very rich source, however, for the rearming of theoretical insight. This won't be achieved by rushing in with formulas and words which, if adhered to, is the "permanent revolution" unfolding in the absence of a revolutionary working-class party and without the direction of the conscious organized working class.

Or a rearming which sees the road to working-class power and the triumph of socialism through the success of a coalition government with the middle class, or coming in from the countryside based on the peasantry. These are only a couple of the many things that seem to me to demand answers rather than just to be leaped right over.

Finally, I think that in the way of a very important question that now has a chance to be definitively resolved, the whole Russian question in its modern garb argued over Yugoslavia, China, Indo-China; that Cuba, a development argued entirely without the internal presence of the Communist party will answer a lot of questions. I remember the Marcy material on China and the rest, that here in very living history are going to be some very definitive answers as it is unfolding to questions that have been agitating, very properly, for a decade.

Now the main point: the revolutionary party. Just one note, first. Comrade Tom Kerry raised the question, "O.K. Is there going to be a political or social revolution, Tim?" If we're unfortunate, and by "we" I mean the revolutionary movement, internationally and at large, and a stable structure in isolation in Cuba develops, then given the shattering of the old state apparatus, we will find out very clearly, and that's where the transitional designation is appropriate, whether or not what Cuba will reveal itself to be is the most left wing of a whole series of petty-bourgeois nationalist regimes around the world, in Africa, Asia; or that have shattered sufficiently the framework of capitalism, something like Yugoslavia, essentially a deformed workers state.

Let us not have to come to this pass -- that is, of defeat and of isolation and of stagnation so that one gets a Thermidorean reaction and it is necessary to a question of political or social revolution. If one wants to make an amendment to our traditional outlook, it is that the civil war that waged in Cuba smashing, shattering root and branch of the state structure makes possible now through the political organization of the masses very easy and non-violent transitions at this given juncture.

Revolutions are very fevered periods, with steep, sharp and very rapid swings. To bring down terminological apparatus and definitions appropriate to stable and conscious organisms and states doesn't merely obscure what's happening, but it makes it possible to affirm that a given period of a revolution is the revolution itself, is the essence of the revolution. I'm afraid that's what the Draft Theses do.

Because there is something new here and the comrades simply look around for the old categories to drop them in. And that is a militant Jacobinism, in the period of the massive Soviet bloc and the ICBM. Of course there are some new phenomena and that is why it is important to go a bit slow, but at the same time, we need to use the time of going a little bit slowly to arm our theoretical insight over the questions that are raised.

That's one duty. The other duty is this: It's what I'd call a Leninist revolutionary sufficiency over Cuba at each point in time and struggle. And by that I mean this. The old Bolshevik party before 1917 had what ultimately proved to be a wrong line. But at each point up to February 1917 it was such a line that taken together with a militant revolutionary party maintained itself in the vanguard position of practical struggle. I refer of course to the "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry." And this did keep the vanguard in revolutionary struggle.

Now the essence here is to have such a line, above all, such a party, such an organism of struggle that is seeking in the advocacy to build such a thing that one has then the opportunity to draw and to rectify from events.

I'm afraid that the Theses don't help in this process, that they hinder it. Because the revolutionary struggle is not alone agitation in the United States to defend the Cuban revolution here in the mother country. But most fundamental in the fullest sense is the issue of building a revolutionary party. Comrade Hansen's presentation here today dwelt heavily on the necessity of the revolutionary party.

Good. However, it must be noted that something new is broached by him in this context. That is that the need for building revolutionary parties in all countries was limited, it was circumscribed, that the need for the party was taken at a more abstract level, internationally, with a number of exemptions or exceptions admitted nationally. Now the historic axis of the orthodox Trotskyist movement has rested upon the effort to build particular parties everywhere. And I urge that the comrades proceed very carefully before amending or shifting this axis.

Secondly, in the International Socialist Review that's just out, I had a chance to read it last evening, there in the article, "The Theory of the Cuban Revolution," a very full presentation is made on the workers state and the workers and peasants government but the whole question of revolutionary party, working-class party, is slid over. Except in the last paragraph, where it seems pretty implicitly clear that the 26th of July Movement, needing only a theoretical armament, is the revolutionary party.

Now in order to maintain a movement on the sharp edge of conscious struggle, life is not easy. The Communist party has avoided this by simply saying, "Ah, it's a bourgeois-democratic revolution," therefore limited since such struggle as they engage in is in trying to cool it off. For Sweezy, he says, "Ah, it's already socialism, you don't have to struggle anymore." Both of these are a way of flinching.

Now the revolutionary party, the question of building it, is a practical test as against all varieties of any kind of an automaticism in history or any substitution of objective mechanisms operating independently of human consciousness which as embodied practically means a proletarian party as the organizational embodiment of that. And that I think is in a practical sense the most

essential thing that can emerge from this discussion. The question, very seriously, not in an abstract way, of facilitating and activating the building of the revolutionary Marxist party in Latin America.

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C. DeBruce: (Transcribed from tape; not edited by speaker.)

I would like to raise some points for consideration on the part of the supporters of the minority document. First I would like to state that I support the PC draft.

I'm a little concerned from the point of view of the implications involved in the minority document, since I'm raising the question of how we on the basis of the same facts, the same methods, draw opposite conclusions. According to the point of view presented by the PC draft, the Cuban people overthrew capitalism, established new property forms and established the nationalization of the industries, established a workers state -- although they have not yet completely established workers democracy. Also, on the basis of this, with an armed people, the only way to restore capitalism would be through a blood bath of the Cuban people.

Now the comrades of the minority state that the Cuban revolution is in transition. Now as a term it's one thing, but in transition to what, which way is it going? In this sense, it raises a question. In Tim's presentation he said that it could revert back to capitalism without crushing the Cuban people. Now to me this raises a serious question. That is the characterization of the revolution itself and the nature of the state.

It happens to be a historic fact that the working class throughout the world have adopted the vehicle and the leadership which it may need at a given stage. You may disagree with it, you may not like it, you can recognize its limitations -- still, they accomplish a given task.

Now we say that theory is a guide to action. It's very true. Comrades who hold this position of attacking the Castro regime -- and I think one comrade mentioned earlier they could not do it within Cuba -- will have to take a step further, from the point of view that if we did attack the Castro regime, how would we make the differentiation between ourselves, the Social Democracy, the State Department? This is a serious consideration, comrades, in the sense of applying this theory. You see, once we discuss it we're going to have to apply it. So for that reason it's very important the conclusions we draw, because we're going to act according to our conclusions.

Now it seems to me -- although we say we're in general agreement and I make this statement in the sense of what I have said earlier -- that because of the change in objective conditions and the change in relationship of world forces, the basic question is the role of the vanguard party at this time. For that reason it is

important how we assess these developments, the conclusions that we draw in the sense of how we conduct ourselves from the point of view of defending the Cuban revolution. Not only here in the United States but as part of an international revolutionary movement in the sense of broadening out to defend it throughout the world, but particularly from the point of view of Latin America.

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A. Phillips: (Transcribed from tape; not edited by speaker.)

There are two points I want to make. The most important one has been touched on. The Political Committee resolution, as I believe was stated correctly by Murry Weiss, is drafted within the framework of the understanding of the general necessity for the establishment of revolutionary Marxist parties everywhere and in the framework of the necessity of establishing an international Marxist movement.

The Theses indicate the party's position on this question only in implicit form and this is stated as follows: "The Cuban revolution has had a stimulating effect on the radical movement in many countries. It can play a powerful role in reviving hope and confidence in the socialist goal, in demonstrating that Stalinism is not inevitable and thus helping to pave the way for construction of mass revolutionary socialist parties. In the United States it has already opened up new opportunities for revolutionary socialists as is evident in many areas, particularly the campus, Spanish-speaking minority groups and the Negro people." (Number 18.)

Now the point that has to be made here is that this is one of the most important questions for which an answer is required. Now Joe speaks of the political necessity that thrusts upon us the responsibility to answer certain key theoretical questions. Well, I think, aside from the way in which Joe put it, that that is correct. Joe put it in terms of the necessity to answer certain theoretical questions which are raised by various spokesmen throughout the world of various tendencies. Obviously this is also within the framework that political necessity consists, not only of direct query or of the fact that an opponent has made a statement and you have to answer him, but the defense of the revolution itself demands certain theoretical answers. And one of those theoretical answers is precisely the question of the independent Marxist revolutionary party. That's one of the questions.

Joe, in my opinion, has dealt with that question very well in his report. And that question has to be answered without the shadow of a doubt because there are many people, comrades, throughout the world who have asked precisely that question. I'm sure that's one of the main things on Comrade Burns' mind, especially in the light of his struggle with Pablo.

Now I am not supposing that our comrades here in the United States deduce tactics from the Cuban revolution. Not at all. I am simply indicating that we should reiterate a concept which we have held, which has been questioned from some quarters, and which,

in my opinion, deserves a legitimate answer. It is not a question of our integrity being questioned here. But we do have a political position on the question.

It is our view, and Joe has stated it very adequately, that we do need a revolutionary party in Cuba as well as throughout the rest of the world and that there are international developments which make creation of this party very, very possible. He said not only do the revolutions such as Cuba occur because imperialism is rotten-ripe, but that very rotten-ripeness makes it very possible for the creation of the revolutionary party which will make the further development of these revolutions even more possible. And a healthy development of these revolutions even more possible. I think that should be stated explicitly.

Next point I wanted to make is in relation to what I consider to be the fundamental question that is raised by the minority. And that is the question of the property relations in Cuba, because by raising questions as to whether Cuba is one kind of a state or another kind of a state, you also raise the question of the criteria by which you determine such things; and neither are the criteria for determining what kind of a state Cuba is given by the minority, nor are our criteria answered. We have criteria. Our criteria I think were properly given by Tom Kerry and I want to know: Do the social relations, the property relations in Cuba that we speak of in relation to a workers state, exist in Cuba? Not some phoney version of it. We don't think it's a phoney version. Not some phoney version of it and an exceptional case in Bolivia.

Now we don't think that a portion of the economy has been nationalized and that the permissibility of a deal with imperialism through the back door is available as easy in Cuba as it was in Bolivia. The question here is the basic transformation of property forms. Now that will answer for me a perplexing question. And that is the question posed by Tim when he says that the revolution can move in two directions without a political revolution.

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