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THESES ON THE CUBAN REVOLUTION
(Adopted by the 19th National Convention)

1.

The Cuban revolution began under the leadership of the July 26 Movement, a radical petty-bourgeois political tendency centered around the leadership of Fidel Castro. The initial program of the July 26 Movement was largely bourgeois-democratic, but promised thoroughgoing agrarian reform and industrialization.

It was distinguished by its clear recognition that the Batista dictatorship could be unseated only by revolutionary means, by its insistence on this as a principle in its relations with other groupings, and by its resolution in carrying the struggle against Batista through to the end no matter what the consequences.

2.

In the Sierra Maestra phase of the revolution, the Castro leadership succeeded in mobilizing the guajiros and the agricultural workers the decisive sector of the Cuban working class, to overthrow the Batista dictatorship. The outlook of the young revolutionary leaders became modified by these social forces. The city workers, under a trade-union leadership imposed on them by the Batista dictatorship, were unable to bring their power to bear in the early stages, but with the victory they rallied in their overwhelming majority behind the revolutionary leadership.

3.

The July 26 Movement came to power in January 1959 in a popular political revolution that at first appeared to be limited to democratic aims.

4.

The revolutionary leaders enacted such immediate reforms as an increase in wages and reduction of rents, electric rates, and food costs. They set up a coalition government, granting such important posts as the presidency to the bourgeois-democratic elements.

5.

The American monopolists and their agents were hostile to the July 26 Movement from the beginning, although they also sought to use flattery on its leaders. With the institution of sweeping agrarian reform measures, the Castro leadership met with a belligerent response from American big business and the bipartisan Democrats and Republicans. Wall Street counted on the bourgeois-democratic elements in the coalition government as points of support for its counter-revolutionary objectives. Increasing strains appeared between the two sides in this government as Washington stepped up the pressure.

6.

The conflict between American imperialism and the Castro forces precipitated a political crisis in Havana. This was resolved by a decided turn to the left, signaled, among other things, by the expulsion from the government of such figures as Urrutia and Pazos; and the coalition came to an end in the fall of 1959.

7.

The interacting process between American imperialism and the Cuban revolution swiftly deepened after the end of the coalition government. The measures undertaken by the Castro regime in the interests of the Cuban people met with ever more unbridled attacks from Wall Street, its political agents, propagandists and counter-revolutionary agents. The blows of these counter-revolutionary forces, in turn, compelled the Castro government to resort to increasingly radical measures.

8.

These included the establishment of a monopoly of foreign trade, the nationalization of the latifundia, and, in August-October, 1960, the virtual expropriation of the American and Cuban capitalist holdings; that is, the key sectors of Cuban industry.

These steps necessitated economic planning. This started in the fall of 1959, developed concomitantly with the nationalization of industry and is now firmly established.

All these measures were taken with the examples of the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, Yugoslavia and China available for study. Thus, in the final analysis, the overturn in property relations in Cuba is an echo of the October 1917 Revolution in Russia.

9.

When the capitalist holdings in the key sectors of Cuban economy were taken over by the government, Cuba entered the transitional phase of a workers state, although one lacking as yet the forms of democratic proletarian rule.

10.

The Castro government had already smashed part of the old state structure in coming to power, liquidating the old army and police force in order to assure Batista's defeat. But the failure of the Castro leadership to proclaim socialist aims showed that the subjective factor in the revolution remained unclear and along with it the possible course of the revolution.

In the two years since then the state structure has undergone a cleansing out of hold-overs whose basic loyalty was to the former capitalist power. Upon nationalization of the key sectors of industry, the new state structure became so committed to a planned economy that only civil war can now restore capitalist property relations. A civil war could not succeed without a counter-revolutionary invasion far bloodier than that engineered by Washington in Guatemala in 1954.

11.

The Cuban government has not yet instituted democratic proletarian forms of power such as workers, soldiers, and peasants councils. However, as it has moved in a socialist direction it has likewise proved itself to be democratic in tendency. It did not hesitate to arm the people and set up a popular militia. It has guaranteed freedom of expression to all groupings that support the revolution. In this respect it stands in welcome contrast to the other noncapitalist states, which have been tainted with Stalinism.

12.

If the Cuban revolution were permitted to develop freely, its democratic tendency would undoubtedly lead to the early creation of proletarian democratic forms adapted to Cuba's own needs. One of the strongest reasons for vigorously supporting the revolution, therefore, is to give the maximum possibility for this tendency to operate.

At the same time, revolutionary socialists advocate forms of this general character for Cuba because they would greatly strengthen the political defense of the revolution, help safeguard against possible retrogression, and, by setting a new world example, speed revolutionary developments inside the imperialist countries and in the colonial areas they still dominate.

The appearance of democratic forms of proletarian rule in Cuba would also have enormous repercussions in the Soviet bloc, aiding the revolutionary-socialist tendency in those countries which seeks the revival of Leninist democracy.

13.

In search of allies in its defense of the revolution, the Cuban government turned to the Soviet bloc. It met with a favorable response from both Moscow and Peking. The material aid which it received may well prove decisive in its defense against the American-supported counter-revolution.

The overturn in property relations makes it feasible in principle for Cuba to tie its economy in with that of the Soviet bloc, including Yugoslavia, thus strengthening the planned economies in Europe and Asia, as well as gaining life-saving support from them.

This does not conflict with the fact that it is in the interests of the Cuban as well as the American people to resume the trade with the United States which was cut off by Eisenhower.

14.

The Cuban revolution constitutes the opening of the socialist revolution in Latin America. The Castro government has won tremendous support throughout the entire area below the Rio Grande and in turn has inspired millions of oppressed people with the desire to emulate the Cuban revolutionary success. The Cuban question has become the key question dividing all tendencies in Latin America.

15.

The Stalinists were bypassed by the July 26 Movement. This is a fact of world-wide significance, for it shatters the delusion that revolutionary victories can be won only through the Communist parties. In turn, the success of the July 26 Movement adds to the ferment visible in many Communist parties in the past few years, giving fresh weight to the tendencies seeking to break through the crust of Stalinist bureaucratism.

16.

The Cuban Communist party is not exempt from this ferment. The American capitalist propagandists have built a fantastic bogeyman about a "take over" in Cuba by the Communist party. They leave completely out of account the effect of the revolution and its development on the thinking of the Cuban Communist party, above all its ranks.

The fact is that the Cuban Communist party supports the revolution. If a rift were to occur between Cuba and the Soviet Union, it can be taken for certain that the loyalties of a decisive section of the Communist party, if not the party as a whole, would remain with the Cuban revolution. The experience in Yugoslavia speaks eloquently for such an outcome.

With free access to the views of all radical currents, as is the case in Havana today, the Cuban Communist party can be expected to undergo considerable transformation, no matter what the ups and downs of the diplomatic relations may be.

17.

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.

18.

Whatever one may think of the Castro government and the new property relations in Cuba, it is our duty to defend this small country from the attack of the giant American corporations, their

government and their counter-revolutionary agents. The Cubans have a right to decide their own form of government and property relations free from pressure.

It is especially in the interest of the American trade-union movement to defend Cuba, for the monopolists now seeking a counter-revolutionary overturn there are the same ones that have long sought to cripple and smash the union movement in the United States.

The general slogans that should be advanced are "Hands Off Cuba!" "End the Blockade!" "Help the Cuban People!"

19.

Despite the colossal power of American imperialism and its counter-revolutionary ruthlessness, plus the grave dangers and sacrifices these signify for the Cuban people, the perspectives for the defense of the revolution are most promising. It occurs in the general context of colonial uprisings beyond the capacity of the imperialist powers to contain and it derives strength from this vast upheaval. The Cuban revolution occurs, in addition, in the context of the rising world power of the Soviet countries, whose interests coincide with the defense of Cuba. Finally, the workers and peasants of the small island appear as the vanguard of the Latin American revolution and therefore enjoy mass support on a continental scale.

Born under the influence of these forces, the Cuban revolution quickly established connections with them. It began influencing them in turn. A highly dynamic revolution, it can, by following the natural lines of its defense through revolutionary policies on the international scene, add qualitatively new force to the colonial revolution, to the defense of the Soviet countries against imperialist attack, and to the struggle for world-wide socialism.

June 23, 1961.

THE APRIL 17 INVASION AND ITS AFTERMATH
(Addenda to "Theses on the Cuban Revolution"
adopted by the 19th National Convention)

I.

In the April 17 invasion, the Kennedy administration attempted to smash the Cuban government the way the Eisenhower administration smashed the Guatemalan government in 1954. The fundamental identity of the Republican and Democratic parties as political machines of Wall Street was glaringly exposed. The plot, begun by Eisenhower, was carried to its consummation by Kennedy. Under guise of "restoring democracy," the bipartisan crew fostered terrorism and civil war in Cuba for more than a year, supplying the counterrevolutionaries with money, explosives and arms in violation of American laws, nonaggression pledges and treaties. The White House, the State Department, the Pentagon and the Central Intelligence Agency were all caught red-handed when they trained, supplied and landed an invasion army in an attempt to set up a counterrevolutionary puppet government on a Cuban beachhead. America's imperialist government stood in full nakedness before the entire world.

II.

The "investigation" of the conspiracy in Washington, carried out by the conspirators themselves, constitutes part of a white-wash of the crime against Cuba, against world peace and against the American people who were never consulted in this plot to convert Cuba into another Korea. By centering on "blunders" that caused a "fiasco," the investigation is also aimed at helping to justify and prepare another invasion involving direct participation of American military forces in Cuba.

III.

In the United States the invasion and its defeat served to bring discredit to the Kennedy administration, particularly among intellectuals who had placed considerable hopes in its providing more "intelligent" leadership than the Eisenhower administration. This disillusionment is reflected in the declarations signed by professors at Harvard, Princeton and elsewhere appealing for non-intervention in Cuban affairs. For the first time, several prominent union officials joined in calling for a hands-off policy. In the radical movement the invasion affected all tendencies, sharpening divisions of opinion over the Cuban revolution. The forces around the Fair Play for Cuba Committee were greatly strengthened as people, especially youth, attracted by the Cuban revolution and stirred to sharp indignation by the effort to crush it, rallied to help in whatever way they could.

IV.

Cuba's victory accelerated the class struggle in Latin America. To the masses, who rallied to Cuba's cause, it provided another example of the value of courage and determination in opposing American imperialism. Among the Latin-American capitalists and

feudalistic oligarchies it brought fresh apprehension of the spread of the Cuban revolution. The net result was further polarization of classes and political forces, while Kennedy's "Alliance for Progress" program for Latin America was revealed as a fraud.

V.

The biggest development was in Cuba itself. The invasion ended in swift military defeat due to the vigilance of the leaders of the Cuban revolution, the solid support they received from the overwhelming majority of the people, the heroism of the Rebel Army and militia, the material aid received from the Soviet countries, and the wide sympathy Cuba enjoys abroad, especially in Latin America. The outcome of the trial by fire was a qualitative change in consciousness. For the first time, the top leadership, as they girded the country for the invasion, proclaimed on April 16 that the Cuban revolution is socialist in character. This recognition is a great new fact in the politics of the Western Hemisphere and the entire world. It provides fresh opportunities for strengthening the defense of the Cuban revolution politically and for utilizing the Cuban example to speed the socialist revolution in other countries.

VI.

The announcement by Fidel Castro at the May Day victory celebration that the 1940 Constitution has been outmoded and that it must be superseded by a socialist constitution begins a most important chapter in the Cuban revolution. The new constitution will codify the basic institutions established by the workers state. To give it maximum socialist content, we advocate that it contain the following two provisions:

(a) That the government be established on the basis of workers and peasants councils, or some comparable democratic type of workers and peasants organizations suited to Cuban conditions.

(b) That in these councils, or comparable organizations, all tendencies supporting the revolution be guaranteed full freedom of expression and association.

VII.

In accordance with these new developments in the Cuban revolution, the best course would be formal organization of a mass revolutionary party, open to the most conscious and active revolutionary fighters, to run the government under the new constitution.

VIII.

The leadership which organized the overturn of capitalist property relations, established the workers state, and which is conducting the defense of Cuba against imperialist attack, will naturally be accepted as the bona fide leadership of such a mass revolutionary party at its formal organization, a responsibility to which they are entitled by their record and performance.

IX.

The Trotskyists in Cuba, now functioning as a propaganda group concerned in advancing the tradition and unbroken continuity of revolutionary-socialist theory and practice, should take their place, we believe, like all other political tendencies supporting the revolution, within the new revolutionary party upon its formation.

June 23, 1961.

POLITICAL REPORT TO THE 19th NATIONAL CONVENTION

By Farrell Dobbs

In keeping with our concepts as revolutionary internationalists, we began our convention deliberations with consideration of the general world situation, the Cuban question which has particular importance to the United States, and the problems of the world movement.

Because of the magnitude of these questions and because of differences of opinion among us concerning them, we have devoted two whole days of the convention to international subjects. This tightened the convention schedule to the point where we've had to compress into a single agenda item both the political and organizational reports. Therefore I trust you will understand that it will be necessary for me to condense my remarks even though more extensive development of some key political questions might be desirable.

Our deliberations of the last two days are appropriate as a preamble to the present report, because in evaluating our national tasks and perspectives, we must be careful to look at the United States in relation to the world. In our work, we must understand and know how to support the anti-imperialist forces abroad in order the better to oppose capitalism here at home. At the same time we must keep firmly in mind that our central task is to build a strong revolutionary party in this country capable of fusing with the workers and their allies in a struggle to transform America from a bastion of world reaction into a vanguard force in the fight to reorganize world society on a socialist basis. To come to grips with that task, we need to evaluate what the national situation has been, what it is now and how it's changing. Only along these general lines can we arrive at a realistic appraisal of what it is necessary and possible for us to do next.

Across the general postwar period capitalist rule in the U.S. has been characterized by a relative social equilibrium. Internal class antagonisms have been largely minimized, and through the instrumentality of political class collaboration the imperialists have been able to command wide support of their counterrevolutionary foreign policy. Prolonged prosperity, reformist illusions, bureaucratic misleadership and witch hunting have combined to blunt the class struggle. These conditions forced all radical tendencies into a long period of isolation from the mass movement. For many years our party has had to fight tooth and nail just to exercise our right to conduct propaganda activities in an effort to replenish our forces by ones and twos as time and circumstance eroded our basic cadre.

Although the social equilibrium has not yet been seriously shaken, the country is now entering a new phase which forecasts coming political convulsions. Setbacks dealt American imperialism abroad are beginning to sharpen social contradictions at home. The threat of nuclear war is producing deep uneasiness and growing fear within the population. Economic downtrends and chronic unemployment, coupled with inflationary pressures on living standards are leading toward intensified class conflicts that will be impelled onto the political arena. The Negro people are moving more decisively toward a show-down fight for their civil rights. Student youth are becoming increasingly restive, thereby giving an omen of powerful working-class actions now slowly generating.

The leftward currents are paralleled to a degree by new rightist trends, both presaging development of class political polarizations which have not yet become clearly defined. So far no single general issue has emerged around which the polarization implicit in sharpening class antagonisms would become accelerated. We are still in a period of transition and it is not yet possible to predict at what stage the turning point will come.

A key factor for us in the present situation is the increased tendency among thinking people to generalize their experiences in search of a new program. We must reach out for these people in every possible quarter and help them along through presentation of the socialist answer to the problems of the day. Our experiences in recent times affirm the increased prospects for us to attract more people to socialism, particularly youth who approach national politics with a fresh, militant outlook.

The awakening of broader interest in radical ideas made our 1960 presidential campaign more effective than any previous electoral activity. Our vote was three times the previous high in 1948. More people listened to us with an open mind. There was increased receptivity of our press and literature. We developed a goodly number of new contacts, increasing our recruitment potential. The youth had a comparable experience in their work in support of the Southern sit-ins. Our activity in defense of the Cuban revolution has continued the process. Comrade Kerry's experiences during his recent national tour show that new radical potential is now developing within the union movement.

The changing political scene holds forth new prospects for our revolutionary socialist tendency, although the potential for us still remains quite modest. Our work must still remain primarily propagandistic in character, aimed toward the creation and extension of left-wing nuclei in the mass movement. At the same time we should keep close tabs on the motion of larger forces, intervening where we realistically can, seeking to push developments in a class-struggle direction. But we can't expect to set significant forces into motion on our initiative, nor are we in a position to directly challenge existing leaderships in the mass movement. While trying to take advantage of whatever openings we can find, we must keep a careful sense of proportion, neither lagging behind political reality, nor seeking impatiently or impressionistically to race ahead of it.

The current outbreak of rightist movements -- Youth for Goldwater, John Birch Society, the extremist American Nazis, etc. -- requires close attention and it also poses some tactical questions that need clarification. Implicit in this trend is the ultimate danger of repressive fascist attacks on labor and its allies, against which the labor movement will have to wage a showdown struggle in the streets. But it would be a serious mistake to raise a hue and cry against incipient fascism, as though the ultimate danger were already upon us, and attempt to substitute ourselves for the masses in taking the issue to the streets here and now. National politics still remains class collaborationist in mass character, despite the growing restiveness of labor and its allies. While this class political equilibrium remains operative, fascism can't make significant headway. When the present equilibrium does become upset through a labor breakaway from capitalist politics, it does not necessarily follow that capitalism will resort forthwith to fascist measures. An attempt might be made, as class political antagonisms sharpen, to establish bonapartist rule, perhaps through a military dictatorship

based on the present vast interlocking alliance between the officer corps and the monopoly capitalists. Fascist trends would receive strong new impulses at such a conjuncture, but the ultimate showdown with fascism would still not be at hand. Therefore our propaganda, in addition to explaining the meaning of fascism and educating the masses in the need to be on guard against it, must also analyze the complex interim questions of the power struggles which could be next on the agenda. At the present time, given the class collaborationist character of national politics, the existing rightist formations simply represent vanguard polarizations on the right which play the counterpart of our vanguard role on the left. They can do little more than conduct propaganda, resorting only to isolated, small scale acts of hooliganism which often backfire against them. Since the incipient fascists are not strong enough to carry through antidemocratic actions at present, a call for mobilization against them would give the general impression of an attempt on our part to suppress freedom of speech and assembly for others. We would not only be inviting comparable attacks, both legal and extra-legal, against our own democratic rights, but we would appear to have given them justification. The truth is that we stand for freedom of speech and assembly in principle -- not just for us, but for everybody. Therefore, we do not demand that the rightist movements be denied these freedoms.

Concerning the question of civil liberties, we should keep in mind that our growing reputation as a serious revolutionary tendency with a meaningful program is drawing attention not only from people becoming radicalized. The witch hunters are taking notice as well. We are beginning to draw their fire to a new degree in connection with the Cuban defense movement and there could be other new attacks. More than ever we must be on guard against any undermining of civil liberties for all, if we hope to defend our own democratic rights. To act otherwise would be to repeat the costly mistake of the Stalinists in refusing to recognize the democratic rights of their political opponents.

Let me call to your attention an article Trotsky wrote on this subject in December 1939 in the Socialist Appeal under the title, "Why I Consented to Appear Before The Dies Committee." I don't have the time to give you the background but it's worth your while to go back and do a little research on the circumstance surrounding the question of Trotsky possibly testifying before the Dies Committee, intending to use the occasion for propaganda purposes.

The questions of Stalinist dictatorship, of democratic rights under capitalism and the policy of revolutionists on civil liberties in a capitalist country like ours came up in this discussion. Trotsky wrote in the article cited, "Being an irreconcilable opponent not only of fascism but also of the present-day Comintern, I am at the same time decidedly against the suppression of either of them." He pointed out that the suppression of fascists by the capitalist government always proves fictitious. He also took note of the fact that to defend the rights of the Stalinists could help to refurbish the Comintern. "However," he said, "the question is not exhausted by this consideration. Under the conditions of the bourgeois regime, all suppression of political rights and freedom, no matter whom they are directed against in the beginning, in the end inevitably bear down upon the working class, particularly its most advanced elements. That is a law of history."

In the article Trotsky was speaking of a specific stage, the one we're in now, where we're struggling under adverse conditions against a repressive ruling class in a capitalist country. He pointed out that when the struggle intensifies into a class showdown a new factor arises, the rules of civil war, which are something else again. But concerning a situation such as ours, he stated unambiguously ". . . the working class in the capitalist countries, threatened with their own enslavement must stand in defense of freedom for all political tendencies including their own irreconcilable enemies."

Under circumstances where the foregoing policy will be maintained, we may at times find it useful propagandistically to organize counter-demonstrations against incipient fascists. In any situation where they resort to rightist hooliganism we will take the initiative in organizing defense guards to oppose them. But our central task at this stage concerning the rightist formations is to explain the true nature of fascism in our propaganda, seeking to educate and alert the masses against it. In doing so we must keep a sense of proportion as to the immediate nature of the fascist issue, being careful to direct major attention to the primary questions of the day.

Our work in defense of the Cuban revolution, both through our direct efforts and in collaboration with others, provides a major political opportunity for us. The Cuban revolution lays bare the whole imperialist foreign policy; it enriches the class-struggle content of our propaganda against war, our advocacy of independent labor political action, our support to the civil-rights struggle and other issues.

From the outset we have taken a flexible tactical approach to the movement which arose in defense of the Cuban revolution, watching always to keep closely attuned to the given stage of its development. In this report we deal only with the general aspects of the subject, leaving specific tactical questions for discussion in a panel meeting of those playing active roles in this field. Speaking here of the broad lines of development of the movement, we take particular note of its origins and the recent changes in its general character.

The movement arose through the initiative of Cuban partisans who, with some help from radicals, won support among liberals, an occasional secondary union official and others, including a few with prominent names. In the opening stages the movement confined itself mainly to low-key propaganda efforts -- an occasional paid ad, press blurbs, modest meetings, etc. One of the most effective activities was the campaign to get Americans to visit Cuba and see for themselves. The response was particularly good among college students and Negro people. Most of those who made the trip came back impressed with what they had seen and aware that the imperialists had lied to them. A number returned as outright partisans of the Cuban revolution.

This gradual development prepared the way for the movement to take a qualitative leap forward when the invasion began on April 17. Liberal-tinged appeals to abstract democracy became transformed into impressive demonstrations reflecting partisan solidarity with the embattled Cuban revolutionists. New rebel forces, particularly among the youth, were drawn into the movement and it began to shift toward a more directly pro-Cuban, pro-socialist outlook. This trend produced criticisms among the liberals who want to reverse the process and get back to the old "Why don't you do

right?" appeals to the State Department. Thus the movement finds itself caught in a new shakedown process in which it is impelled to bring its structure and policies into line with its changing composition. Since we wish to work in objective collaboration with all defenders of the Cuban revolution, we shall cooperate in the collective attempt to work out adjustments commensurate with the changing situation. These adjustments, we believe, must take fully into account the new forces and trends in the movement, as reflected in increased potential for propaganda actions involving the ranks and in the pro-socialist outlook of many people within the movement. It would be wrong, in our view, to subordinate these dynamic factors to the prejudices of liberals who want to turn the clock back to pre-invasion times.

Through our defense of the Cuban revolution we can expect to win some individuals away from other radical tendencies, but in the main we must look for our contacts and recruits among people, especially young people, who are being drawn toward radicalism around the Cuban issue. With their aid we will be in a better position to create left-wing nuclei in the sectors of the mass movement from which they come. They will help us take advantage of opportunities for political work in the unions, the civil-rights movement, on the campus; and we must constantly be on the alert to step in and take advantage of such opportunities wherever and whenever they arise.

Generally speaking, response to international issues requires a relatively higher level of political consciousness than in the case of more immediate national issues. The Cuban question has been somewhat exceptional, due in part to the nearness of Cuba and to the brazen intervention by Yankee imperialism. During the Japanese struggle against the U.S. military pact on the other hand, American students who later reacted to Cuba were not very responsive despite the dramatic role of the Japanese students. Changing student consciousness in this country has tended to assume its own particular forms of spontaneity. The protest against the Chessman execution offers one example, the San Francisco demonstration against HUAC another. A more recent case is the spontaneous support to the pacifist-sponsored protest against a New York civil defense drill. The New York turnout did not signify a ground swell toward pacifism but rather an increasing desire to demonstrate against war. Our task is to reach these antiwar militants and help them move toward class-struggle opposition to war.

Negro students and their white allies are producing new forms of action in the civil-rights struggle, while young Negro workers look for a way to do battle through the NALC. Young unemployed workers are generating a new militancy which becomes telegraphed into the unions. Desire for mass action is on the rise throughout the student, civil-rights and union movements. Each new experience brings further recognition that on every serious issue, no matter how the struggle begins, it soon passes onto the political arena. As a consequence there is growing dissatisfaction with Democratic party politics and an increase in potential for a labor-party development.

These trends lend new significance to our electoral activity, as has most recently been demonstrated through party candidacies in Los Angeles, Minneapolis, Michigan and New Jersey. Entry of a party ticket in the New York City elections will help further, locally and nationally, to dramatize political issues and reach new people with our program. While running party tickets where realistic, we should also be alert for openings to help promote independent labor and independent Negro candidacies in opposition to both

the Democrats and Republicans.

New political lessons are implicit in the current civil-rights upsurges extending from the sit-ins to the Freedom Riders. Negro students are bypassing conservative leaders to promote direct action. They tend to push into a secondary position appeals to the capitalist government for civil-rights concessions. They are defying judges, cops and white-supremacist gangs, although not yet on the basis of self-defense. Their militancy is arousing new support among white youth. Together these young people are learning the futility of reliance on capitalist politicians. Experience is preparing them for an independent political alliance with labor.

Negro nationalists introduce a complicating factor into the civil-rights movement. Their separatist course and black chauvinism contradicts the movement's general orientation toward integration, but they nevertheless make headway because their militancy stands in marked contrast to the conservatism of the entrenched Negro leadership. Assertion of militant initiative among students fighting for integration begins to cut through the contradiction, but the leadership crisis can be resolved only through intervention of the Negro workers to set the movement onto the class-struggle road to equality.

The rise of the Negro American Labor Council represents a new, halting step toward assertion of worker leadership in the civil-rights struggle. At its founding conference in Detroit the NALC advanced two key demands: equal rights on the job and democratic rights in the unions. Then a bureaucratic constitution was imposed on the organization in flagrant contradiction with its stated aims. The Randolph leadership took this step to forestall mass actions and to facilitate collaboration with the conservative NAACP and AFL-CIO officialdoms. Politically the NALC aims are subordinated to the labor alliance with the Democratic party. Under these conditions the NALC has accomplished little as a national organization, although its potential is great. Such progress as the organization has made has been realized primarily through local initiatives. It follows that at the present time our efforts in support of the NALC should be directed chiefly to local work. In this activity our Negro comrades should stand to the fore. Other comrades should assume a more modest attitude as helpers.

Don't get any mistaken notion that whites are about to move in and take the leadership of the Negro struggle. For all these long, long, long, LONG years the Negro people have been subjected to white supremacist domination and they're not about to look for some white messiah to solve their problems. They expect to lead their fight, but they will welcome help from whites able to keep a sense of proportion in relations with them. Even when a white militant wishes to offer the most constructive criticism it is necessary always to think in terms of the mood, the collective state of consciousness of the body you're working with. When a white person comes into the Negro movement to make criticisms, he or she is most vulnerable to the suspicion that the criticism serves to divide the movement rather than to help it struggle more effectively. A Negro comrade, on the other hand, is in a better position to criticize both wrong policies and misleaders. It doesn't follow that a white comrade has to stand mute in a Negro organization, but it is vital to keep a careful sense of proportion. This is a subject in itself which we don't have time to develop today.

During a discussion in the Negro panel some comrades expressed the feeling that we should have had the civil-rights question on the agenda

at the convention. It is unfortunate that because of many pressing matters this was not possible, but that does not mean that we take this question lightly. That is clear from the motion already adopted by the convention to open a post-convention discussion of the Negro struggle.

There are significant new trends in the civil-rights movement which require careful analysis. We need to think out ways and means of overcoming existing lags in linking ourselves more effectively with this movement, seeking to help in the struggle and in the process winning Negro militants to our party. We must discuss these matters thoroughly and I want to assure the comrades that the party leadership will do its best to see that the discussion gets under way in a purposeful manner.

Such a discussion will also be an aid to our work within the union movement because of the important role played there by militant Negro workers. For example, the demands raised by the NALC for industrial democracy and union democracy touch issues vital to the workers as a whole. Negro workers can thus help to spark militant trends among white workers and fuse with them in forging left-wing forces in the unions. The tempo of such developments will of course be determined by overall objective conditions.

Concerning economic trends, unemployment and union policy, these questions will be taken up specifically in a separate report and discussion. We note here only a few general characteristics of the situation. The present state of the economy is one of stagnation and decline. Chronic unemployment has become the No. 1 union problem. Pressures on organized labor are further intensified by a capitalist drive to reduce labor costs through speedup and automation and to hold the line on wages and hours. Although a resulting ferment in labor's ranks is on the rise, the degree of radicalization is not sufficient to warrant a basic change in our union policy. Our task in the unions remains primarily propagandistic, centered on the shorter work week, the struggle of the unemployed, independence of the unions, workers democracy and advocacy of the labor party. Questions of specific tactics in our union work will be dealt with in the report on the subject. It is only necessary to note here that we must orient toward increased attention to the unemployed and union movements.

As the 1959 convention decided in assessing the regroupment experience, the new radical forces must come mainly from the mass movement. We can't expect to make any big gains from the Stalinist and social-democratic tendencies. In both cases the policies to which their surviving cadres cling have no revolutionary relationship to changing reality. The social democrats have moved so far to the right that events like the Cuban revolution cause only a minor flurry in their ranks. The Communist party persists in a class collaborationist policy of peaceful coexistence with imperialism and a popular front approach to the Democratic party. As demonstrated in respect to defense of the Cuban revolution, the CP line runs counter to the impulses toward radicalization developing within the American mass movement. While we may chip off a few individuals here and there from these opponent tendencies, our attention to them should fall generally within the framework of opponents work. In our main activity we look primarily toward young workers and student youth freshly awakening to radical ideas. Our program puts us in the best position to attract these potential revolutionists wherever we can reach them. Through them we will gain our main reinforcements in the struggle against opponent tendencies for leadership in the coming general upsurge.