

# INTERNAL INFORMATION BULLETIN

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**SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY**

14 Charles Lane, New York, N.Y. 10014

*Greetings printed in the Appendix, where not previously written and submitted for publication, have been transcribed from the official tape recordings of the convention, and have been edited by the National Office for grammatical usage and consistency. The comrades have not had the opportunity to see the edited version of their remarks. Greetings received in languages other than English have been translated and edited for grammatical usage.*

# MINUTES OF THE 28th NATIONAL CONVENTION OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

Ohio, August 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 1976  
CONVENED, SUNDAY, AUGUST 8, at 9:20 AM

Convened by Jack Barnes.

*Proposal from Presiding Committee:* That James Harris chair the first session.

*Moved.*

*Carried.*

*Betsy Stone* welcomed the delegates and guests.

Greetings were read from Hugo Blanco:

Dear American comrades,

I hope your convention will be successful and that you will continue to set an example of how to persevere in building the revolutionary party.

*Proposal:* To make Hugo Blanco honorary chairperson of the convention.

*Moved.*

*Carried by acclamation.*

*Moment of Silence* in tribute to the memory of Comrade Herman Kirsch.

## I. ORGANIZATION OF CONVENTION

*Proposal by Betsy Stone for Presiding Committee:* To adopt the following motions:

*Motion:* That the following rules govern convention procedure:

1. In cases of procedural disputes, discussion shall be limited to two speakers, one for and one against, and that each speaker be limited to two minutes.

2. A speaker may have the floor only once in a given discussion until all those who wish the floor have had the opportunity to speak.

3. Discussion from the floor shall be limited to eight minutes per speaker.

4. All voting, except for election of National Committee and Control Commission, will be done by voice vote, unless a division of the house is called for; then the vote will be taken by a show of delegates' cards. Election of National Committee and Control Commission shall take place by secret ballot.

5. Only delegates shall have voice and vote. Fraternal delegates shall have voice and consultative vote.

6. Alternate delegates have voice and vote only when acting to replace a regularly elected delegate.

7. In all other cases, Roberts Rules of Order shall apply.

*Moved.*

*Carried.*

*Motion:* To adopt the following agenda:

1. Political Resolution Report
2. Desegregation Struggle Balance Sheet
3. The Crisis of American Capitalism and the Struggle for Chicano Liberation
4. The Emerging Puerto Rican Struggle in the United States and Its Perspectives
5. Tasks and Perspectives Report
6. Youth Report
7. World Movement Report
8. Key Issues of the Portuguese, Italian, and Mexican Elections
9. Stalinism and the Political Revolution in China
10. Election of National Committee and Control Commission

*Moved.*

*Carried.*

*Motion:* That the following time allotments be given to reporters.

1. Political Resolution: 1 $\frac{1}{4}$  hours plus  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour summary
2. Desegregation Struggle Balance Sheet: 1 hour plus  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour summary
3. Chicano Liberation: 1 hour plus  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour summary
4. Puerto Rican Struggle: 1 hour plus  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour summary
5. Tasks and Perspectives: 1 $\frac{1}{4}$  hours plus  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour summary
6. Youth: 1 hour plus  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour summary
7. World Movement:  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour plus  $\frac{1}{4}$  hour summary
8. Key Issues of the Portuguese, Italian, and Mexican Elections: 1 hour plus  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour summary
9. Stalinism and the Political Revolution in China: 1 hour plus  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour summary

*Moved.*

*Carried.*

*Proposal:* That time be allotted so the following workshops can take place as part of the Educational and Activists Conference.

1. Party Participation in the Struggle Against Racism
2. Role of Women's Liberation in the Socialist Revolution
3. The Party Suit Against Government Harassment
4. 1976 SWP Presidential Election Campaign
5. Fall Circulation Campaign for the *Militant*
6. How to Win New Members to the SWP
7. Defense Activity for Latin American Political Prisoners
8. Writing Articles and Taking Pictures for the *Militant*
9. Blacks in the Unions
10. Teachers: AFT and NEA
11. Equal Rights Amendment Support Activity

12. Steelworkers
13. Printing Trades
14. Building Trades
15. Defense of Iranian Political Prisoners
16. Mine Workers
17. Communication Workers
18. Party Participation in the Chicano Movement
19. Speakers Bureau Perspectives
20. Hospital Workers
21. Auto Workers
22. Party Finances
23. Pathfinder Literature Distribution Perspectives in the New Branches
24. Public Employees
25. Teamsters
26. Panel Discussion on Producing Politically Attractive, Regular Forums
27. Electrical Workers
28. Coalition of Labor Union Women
29. Election Campaign Finances and Laws
30. Party Participation in the Puerto Rican Movement
31. Basic Bookstore Techniques
32. Soviet and Eastern Europe Defense Activities
33. Defending the Arab Revolution
34. Party Education Plans
35. Party Participation in the Struggle for Black Women's Liberation
36. NAACP
37. Fund Raising in the Antiracist Movement
38. Filipinos, Japanese-Americans, and Chinese-Americans
39. High School Activities
40. Panel Discussion by Chicano Activists
41. 1976 Election Campaign Candidates Workshop
42. Election Campaign Media
43. YSA Finances
44. Election Campaign Traveling Campaign Teams
45. International Women's Liberation
46. Youth Support to the 1976 Election Campaign
47. Three Talks on the Canadian Political Situation
48. Other talks and classes by guests from other groups in the world Trotskyist movement
49. Lawyers and Law Students

*Moved.*

*Carried.*

*Proposal:* To approve the convention schedule. (See appendix.)

*Moved.*

*Carried.*

*Proposal:* That the following serve as convention secretaries: Vangie Eidsvik, Bitsy Myers, Bob Roberts, and Reba Williams

*Moved.*

*Carried.*

*Proposal:* That a committee of Rich Feigenberg, John Hawkins, Carmen Maymi, Joan Quinn, and Mike Zárate be designated to head convention security.

*Moved.*

*Carried.*

*Proposal:* That a report on guidelines for security at the

convention be given at this time.

*Moved.*

*Carried.*

Reporter: John Hawkins

*Motion:* To approve the report.

*Carried.*

*Proposal:* To elect a Credentials Committee consisting of five delegates.

*Moved.*

*Carried.*

Nominations: Sally Frumkin, Dan Rosenshine, Bob Rowand, Bill Peterson, Keith Jones

*Motion:* To close nominations.

*Carried.*

*Motion:* To elect the five nominees.

*Carried.*

*Proposal:* To elect a Constitution Committee consisting of three delegates.

*Moved.*

*Carried.*

Nominations: Dave Wulp, Vivian Sahner, Jim Little

*Motion:* To close nominations.

*Carried.*

*Motion:* To elect the three nominees.

*Carried.*

*Proposal:* To elect a Nominating Commission consisting of 26 members composed as follows:

- 3 New York Local
- 2 Northern California (Berkeley Branch, Oakland Branch, San Francisco Local, San Jose Local)
- 2 Southern California (Los Angeles Local, San Diego Branch)
- 2 Texas (Dallas Branch, Houston Local, San Antonio Branch)
- 1 Atlanta Local
- 1 Baltimore Branch
- 1 Boston Local
- 1 Chicago Local
- 1 Cleveland Local
- 1 Denver Branch
- 1 Detroit Local
- 1 Milwaukee Branch
- 1 Minnesota (Minneapolis Branch, St. Paul Branch)
- 1 New Orleans Branch
- 1 Newark Branch
- 1 Philadelphia Local
- 1 Pittsburgh Branch
- 1 Portland Branch
- 1 Seattle Local
- 1 St. Louis Branch
- 1 Washington D.C./Virginia (Washington DC Area Local, Richmond)

*Moved.*

*Carried.*

The following were subsequently elected to the Nominating Commission:

New York Local	Marcia Gallo, David Frankel, Pat Wright
Northern California	Yipper Fitzgerald, Val Libby
Southern California	Andrea Lubrano, Holbrook Mahn
Texas	Dan Fein, Sara Johnston
Atlanta	James Harris
Baltimore	Richard Hill
Boston	Mac Warren
Chicago	Bruce Scheff
Cleveland	Chris Rayson
Denver	Ruth Getts
Detroit	B.R. Washington
Milwaukee	Delfine Welch
Minnesota	August Nimt
New Orleans	Craig Gannon
Newark	Helen Schiff
Philadelphia	Tony Austin
Pittsburgh	Ruth Robinette
Portland	Stacey Seigle
Seattle	Louise Armstrong
St. Louis	Barbara Bowman
Washington DC/Virginia	James Gotesky

*Motion:* To seat as fraternal delegates the following: (1) National Committee members, (2) Control Commission members, (3) heads of national departments, (4) members of the YSA National Executive Committee, (5) one delegate each selected by branches organized in new cities after May 10, and branch organizing committees.  
*Moved.*

*Carried.*

*Proposal:* That the convention be open to party members, provisional members, Young Socialist Alliance members, and invited guests.  
*Moved.*

*Carried.*

*Proposal:* That the official convention tape recording be directed by Barbara West.  
*Moved.*

*Carried.*

*Proposal:* That the official convention photographers be Susan Ellis, Mary Jo Hendrickson, Lou Howort, Walter Lippmann, and Henry Snipper.  
*Moved.*

*Carried.*

## II. POLITICAL RESOLUTION REPORT

Reporter: Jack Barnes

Discussion: Fran Collet (3-minute extension)

*Recess for lunch 11:57 AM—Reconvened at 1:50 PM*

Further Discussion: Dick Roberts, Stu Singer, Jeff Mackler (one-minute extension), Roger Rudenstein, Lynn Henderson (one-minute extension), Al Duncan (one-minute extension), Robin Maisel (30-second extension), Nancy Fields,

Tim Wohlforth, Terry Hardy (30-second extension), Tony Dutrow, Ray Markey (one-minute extension), Sylvia Weinstein, Lee Smith, Suzanne Haig, Roland Sheppard, Bruce Marcus (30-second extension), Vivian Sahner, Jean Tussey, Jon Hillson, Joel Aber, B.R. Washington (one-minute extension)

*Summary Political Resolution Report:* Jack Barnes

*Motion:* To approve the general line of the Political Resolution and Report.

*delegates and seated alternates*

for: 127

against: 0

abstentions: 0

not voting: 0

**Motion Carried.**

*consultative vote of fraternal delegates*

for: unanimous

against: 0

abstentions: 0

not voting: 0

*Proposal from Presiding Committee:* To take a 10-minute break.

*Moved.*

*Carried.*

*Reconvened: 4:54*

*Proposal from Presiding Committee:* That Melissa Singler chair the next session.

*Moved.*

*Carried.*

## III. DESEGREGATION STRUGGLE BALANCE SHEET REPORT

Reporter: Malik Miah

*Recess for dinner and Expansion Fund Report: 6:00 PM*

*RECONVENED, MON., AUGUST 9, 1976, AT 9:12 AM*

Discussion on Desegregation Struggle Balance Sheet Report: Don Gurewitz, George Breitman, Dennis Carman (3-minute extension), Jon Hillson (3-minute extension), Keith Jones, Bob Rowand (one-minute extension)

*Proposal from Presiding Committee:* To limit speakers time to 7 minutes.

*Moved.*

*Carried.*

Further Discussion: Eli Green, Andrew Pulley, Maceo Dixon, Robb Wright, Cecil Lampkin (1½-minute extension), Terie Balias, Tom Moriarty, Joel Aber, Tim Wohlforth, Ken Milin (30-second extension), Al Duncan, Ed Berger

*Summary Desegregation Struggle Balance Sheet:* Malik Miah

*Motion:* To approve the general line of the report.

*delegates and seated alternates*  
for: 127  
against: 0  
abstentions: 0  
not voting: 0  
**Motion Carried.**

*consultative vote of fraternal delegates*  
for: unanimous  
against: 0  
abstentions: 0  
not voting: 0

*Recess for lunch and Educational and Activists Conference presentation and workshops: 12:15 PM*

*Educational and Activists Conference presentation: ROLE OF WOMEN'S LIBERATION IN THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION. Speaker: Mary-Alice Waters*

*Reconvened: 8:15 PM*

#### **IV. CHICANO LIBERATION REPORT**

Reporter: Olga Rodríguez

Discussion: Pedro Vásquez, Miguel Pendás, Margaret Mora (one-minute extension)

*Recessed: 10:00 PM*

*RECONVENED TUES., AUGUST 10, 1976, AT 9:17 AM*

Further Discussion: Mariana Hernández, Naomi Vega (2-minute extension), Geoff Mirelowitz, Antonio DeLeon, Mark Schneider

*Proposal from Presiding Committee: To limit speakers time to 5 minutes.*  
*Moved.*

*Carried.*

Further Discussion: Joan Buchanan, Raul González (one-minute extension), Dave Jerome, Rich Stuart, Dave Prince, Harry Ring, Jeff Mackler, Arturo Ramírez

*Summary Chicano Liberation Report: Rodríguez*

*Motion: To approve the general line of the report and the draft resolution.*

*delegates and seated alternates*  
for: 127  
against: 0  
abstentions: 0  
not voting: 0  
**Motion Carried.**

*consultative vote of fraternal delegates*  
for: unanimous  
against: 0  
abstentions: 0  
not voting: 0

*Proposal from Presiding Committee: That Eli Green chair*

the next session.  
*Moved.*

*Carried.*

#### **V. THE EMERGING PUERTO RICAN STRUGGLE IN THE UNITED STATES AND ITS PERSPECTIVES**

Reporter: Catarino Garza

*Recess for lunch 12:08 PM—Reconvened at 2:00 PM*

Discussion: Nelson González

*Proposal from Presiding Committee: That the comrades from the Internationalist Workers League of Puerto Rico be invited to speak on this point.*

*Moved.*

*Carried.*

Further Discussion: Armando Cruz, Jim Little

*Proposal from Presiding Committee: To limit speakers time to 6 minutes.*

*Moved.*

*Carried.*

Further Discussion: Peter Buch, Pat Wright, Mirta Vidal, Ken Miliner, Roland Sheppard, Andrea Lubrano, Naomi Vega, Richie Ariza, Jack Lieberman, Cappy Kidd

*Recess for Educational and Activists Conference workshops, panels, and fractions and dinner 3:40 PM—Reconvened at 8:15 PM*

*Summary Puerto Rican Struggle Report: Catarino Garza*

*Motion: To approve the general line of the report and the draft resolution.*

*delegates and seated alternates*  
for: 127  
against: 0  
abstentions: 0  
not voting: 0  
**Motion Carried.**

*consultative vote of fraternal delegates*  
for: unanimous  
against: 0  
abstentions: 0  
not voting: 0

*Proposal by Tony Thomas for Presiding Committee: To send a telegram to imprisoned Puerto Rican Socialist Party member Lureida Torres. (See appendix.)*  
*Moved.*

*Carried.*

#### **VI. SPECIAL REPORT ON SOLIDARITY AGAINST REPRESSION IN ARGENTINA**

*Proposal by Ed Shaw for Presiding Committee: To present*

the special point on solidarity against repression in Argentina.

*Moved.*

*Carried.*

Greetings from the Central Committee of the PST of Argentina read by Ed Shaw. (See appendix.)

Greetings from observer from PST of Argentina read by Ed Shaw. (See appendix.)

Greetings from observer from Manifiesto Obrero of Argentina read by Ed Shaw. (See appendix.)

Greetings from observer from Organización Política Obrera of Argentina read by Ed Shaw. (See appendix.)

SPECIAL REPORT by Judy White. (See appendix.)

*Proposal from Presiding Committee:* That Naomi Vega chair the next session.

*Moved.*

*Carried.*

*Proposal from Presiding Committee:* That the schedule be changed so that the Tasks and Perspectives Report be given tonight and the discussion begin tomorrow morning.

*Moved.*

*Carried.*

## VII. TASKS AND PERSPECTIVES REPORT

Reporter: Larry Seigle

*Recess: 10:18 PM*

*RECONVENED WED., AUGUST 11, 1976, AT 9:15 AM*

*Proposal by Waters for Presiding Committee:* That speakers be limited to 5 minutes on this point and that there be no extensions of this time limit.

*Moved.*

*Carried.*

Discussion: John Votava, Andy Rose, Tim Wohlforth, Lynn Henderson, Syd Stapleton, Dianne Feeley, Nancy Fields, Andrew Pulley, Andrea Morell, Rachel Fruit, Robin Maisel, Mark Zola, Neil Berns, Pearl Chertov, Paul Montauk, Lou Cobet, Ralph Schwartz, Ruth Getts, Joel Aber, Mark Ugolini

*Proposal by Waters for Presiding Committee:* The Presiding Committee recommends acceptance of the proposal of Comrade Alan Jones, one of the United Secretariat representatives, to revise the schedule in order to place the World Movement Report point at the end of the agenda.

*Moved.*

*Carried.*

*Proposal by Waters for Presiding Committee:* That the report on "Stalinism and the Political Revolution in China" be withdrawn from the convention agenda and time be allotted so this topic can be covered as part of the

Educational and Activists Conference.

*Moved.*

*Carried.*

*Proposal from Presiding Committee:* That the convention now hear greetings from the observers from the international currents of the world Trotskyist movement present at the convention, Lutte Ouvrière and the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International.

*Moved.*

*Carried.*

Greetings from Lutte Ouvrière presented by Comrade Jacques. (See appendix.)

Greetings from the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International presented by Comrade François. (See appendix.)

*Recess for lunch 12:00—Reconvened at 1:43 PM*

Further Discussion on Tasks and Perspectives Report: Al Budka, Mariana Hernández, Maceo Dixon, Joel Britton, Katherine Sojourner, Joan Buchanan, Dave Wulp, Nat Weinstein, Fred Feldman, Cindy Jaquith

Summary Tasks and Perspectives Report: Larry Seigle

*Proposal by Seigle:* For a subscription drive to win 20,000 new readers for the *Militant*.

*Moved.*

*delegates and seated alternates*

for: 127

against: 0

abstentions: 0

not voting: 0

**Motion Carried.**

*consultative vote of fraternal delegates*

for: unanimous

against: 0

abstentions: 0

not voting: 0

*Proposal by Seigle:* For a membership drive to win 300 provisional members between now and December 31.

*Moved.*

*delegates and seated alternates*

for: 127

against: 0

abstentions: 0

not voting: 0

**Motion Carried.**

*consultative vote of fraternal delegates*

for: unanimous

against: 0

abstentions: 0

not voting: 0

*Motion:* To approve the general line of the Tasks and Perspectives Report.

*delegates and seated alternates*  
for: 127  
against: 0  
abstentions: 0  
not voting: 0  
**Motion Carried.**

*consultative vote of fraternal delegates*  
for: unanimous  
against: 0  
abstentions: 0  
not voting: 0

Greetings from the United Secretariat of the Fourth International presented by Comrade Alan Jones. (See appendix.)

*Recess at 3:40 PM—Reconvened at 3:55 PM*

*Proposal from Presiding Committee:* That Arturo Ramírez chair the next session.  
*Moved.*

*Carried.*

### VIII. YOUTH REPORT

Reporter: Nan Bailey

*Proposal from Presiding Committee:* That speaking time be limited to 5 minutes per speaker.  
*Moved.*

*Carried.*

Discussion: Chris Hildebrand, Gale Shangold, Sylvia Weinstein, Dianne Feeley, Betsey Stone, Pearl Chertov, Ed Fruit, Eli Green, Mike Taber, Raul González

*Recess for dinner and Educational and Activists Conference presentation: 6:18 PM*

*Educational and Activists Conference presentation:* THE REVOLUTION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. Speaker: Tony Thomas

**RECONVENED THURS., AUGUST 12, 1976, AT 9:15 AM**

Further Discussion on Youth Report: Bucky Kahn, Trudy Hawkins, Ivan Quinn, Tony Dutrow (one-minute extension)

Summary Youth Report: Nan Bailey

*Motion:* To register fraternal approval of the general line of the report.

*delegates and seated alternates*  
for: 127  
against: 0  
abstentions: 0  
not voting: 0  
**Motion Carried.**

*consultative vote of fraternal delegates*  
for: unanimous  
against: 0  
abstentions: 0  
not voting: 0

*Proposal from Presiding Committee:* That Al Budka chair the next session.  
*Moved.*

*Carried.*

### IX. KEY ISSUES OF THE PORTUGUESE, ITALIAN, AND MEXICAN ELECTIONS

Reporter for the Political Committee of the SWP: Barry Sheppard

Reporter for the Majority of the United Secretariat: Alan Jones

*Recess for lunch 12:15 PM—Reconvened at 1:53 PM*

*Proposal by Horowitz for Presiding Committee:* That a leadership representative from each of the Mexican, Portuguese, and Italian Fourth Internationalist organizations present be given the floor to open the discussion.  
*Moved.*

*Carried.*

*Proposal by Horowitz for Presiding Committee:* That a leadership representative from each of the two international currents of the world Trotskyist movement that are present, Lutte Ouvrière and the OCRFI, be given the floor.  
*Moved.*

*Carried.*

Discussion: Octavio (Liga Comunista Internacionalista [LCI]—Mexico), Mercedes (Liga Socialista-Fracción Bolchevique Leninista [LS-FBL]—Mexico), João (Grupos de Acção Socialista [GAS]—Portugal), Jacques (Lutte Ouvrière), François (Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International)

*Proposal from Presiding Committee:* That the time limit be 5 minutes per speaker for the remainder of the discussion.  
*Moved.*

*Carried.*

Further Discussion: Ed Shaw, Gus Horowitz, John Votava, Les Evans, Dick Roberts, Don Gurewitz, Gerry Foley, Steve Bloom, Roland Sheppard, Mary-Alice Waters, Joe Soares, Nat Weinstein, Cliff Connor, Peter Buch, Robin Maisel

*Proposal from Presiding Committee:* To continue the discussion until 5:15 PM. Then to proceed with the summaries, followed by a point on the party campaign against FBI harassment (15 minutes), which would mean the session could adjourn at 6:15 PM for dinner. That would enable the Educational and Activists Conference panels to start at 8:30 PM.  
*Moved.*

*Carried.*



Further Discussion: Tony Thomas, Fred Feldman, Dianne Feeley, Rick Congress, Fred Murphy, Tom O'Brien, Jon Hillson, Dave Prince

*Summary:* Alan Jones

*Summary:* Barry Sheppard

*Motion:* To adopt the general line of the Political Committee report by Barry Sheppard.

*delegates and seated alternates*  
for: 127  
against: 0  
abstentions: 0  
not voting: 0  
**Motion Carried.**

*consultative vote of fraternal delegates*  
for: unanimous  
against: 0  
abstentions: 0  
not voting: 0

*Information report* on new developments in party suit by Syd Stapleton.

*Recess:* 6:29 PM

*FRI., AUGUST 13, 1976, 9:14 AM*

*Educational and Activists Conference presentation:* STALINISM AND THE POLITICAL REVOLUTION IN CHINA. Speaker: Doug Jenness

*Reconvened:* 10:15 AM

*Special Point by Lew Jones for Presiding Committee:* To acknowledge the work of Sue Adley, the convention arrangements chairwoman, and all the other comrades who organized this convention.

*Proposal by Olga Rodríguez for Presiding Committee:* To send telegrams of comradeship and solidarity to the Revolutionary Communist Party of China (see appendix) and Peng Shu-tse and Chen Pi-lan (see appendix).  
*Moved.*

*Carried.*

## X. CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE REPORT

Reporter: Bill Peterson (see appendix)

*Motion:* To approve the Credentials Committee report.

*Carried.*

*Proposal by Betsey Stone for Presiding Committee:* To send a message to Tom Kerry. (See appendix.)  
*Moved.*

*Carried.*

*Proposal by Lew Jones for Presiding Committee:* To send a message to John Staggs and Dan DeWitt. (See appendix.)  
*Moved.*

*Carried.*

## XI. SPECIAL WORLD MOVEMENT POINT

Reporter for the Political Committee of the SWP: Jack Barnes

Reporter for the Majority of the United Secretariat: Alan Jones

*Recess for lunch 12:20 PM—Reconvened at 2:07 PM*

Reporter for the Minority of the United Secretariat: Alan Adair

Discussion: Caroline Lund, David Frankel, George Breitman (3-minute extension), Catarino Garza, Joe Soares

*Proposal from Presiding Committee:* That (1) the discussion be extended to 4:00 PM with summaries until 4:45 PM then break for workshops; (2) the speaking time be limited to 6 minutes.

*Moved.*

*Carried.*

Further Discussion: Gerry Foley, Robin Maisel, Tony Thomas, Lee Smith, Don Gurewitz, Peter Seidman, Dianne Feeley, Geoff Mirelowitz, Joe Hansen (4-minute extension)

*Summary:* Alan Jones

*Summary:* Jack Barnes

*Motion:* To reject the instructions of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International to rescind the invitation to the OCRFI to send an observer to the open sessions of the Twenty-Eighth National Convention of the Socialist Workers Party.

*delegates and seated alternates*  
for: 127  
against: 0  
abstentions: 0  
not voting: 0  
**Motion Carried.**

*consultative vote of fraternal delegates*  
for: unanimous  
against: 0  
abstentions: 0  
not voting: 0

*Motion:* To adopt the general line of the Political Committee report by Jack Barnes.

*delegates and seated alternates*  
for: 127  
against: 0  
abstentions: 0  
not voting: 0

*consultative vote of fraternal delegates*  
for: unanimous  
against: 0  
abstentions: 0  
not voting: 0

Convention recessed at 5:45 PM followed by the singing of the Internationale.

RECONVENED, SAT., AUGUST 14, 1976, AT 8:40 AM

Proposal from Presiding Committee: That Mark Ugolini chair the next session.

Moved.

Carried.

## XII. ELECTION OF NATIONAL COMMITTEE

Present: delegates and seated alternates, fraternal delegates, members of the IEC present as observers.

Report for Nominating Commission (see appendix): Mac Warren

Motion: To amend the Constitution, Article V, Section 3, Paragraph 1 to read: "There shall be 35 regular members, elected by the National Convention."

Carried.

Presentation of Nominating Commission nominees for regular membership on the National Committee, alternate membership on the National Committee, and the Control Commission.

Nominating Commission Nominees for Regular Membership on the National Committee (35)

Jack Barnes  
John Barzman  
Nelson Blackstock  
George Breitman  
Joel Britton  
Peter Camejo  
Pearl Chertov  
Clifton DeBerry  
Maceo Dixon  
Catarino Garza  
Fred Halstead  
John Hawkins  
Gus Horowitz  
Doug Jenness  
Linda Jenness  
Lew Jones  
Frank Lovell  
Caroline Lund

Wendy Lyons  
Malik Miah  
Andrea Morell  
Derrick Morrison  
Andrew Pulley  
Harry Ring  
Olga Rodríguez  
Bev Scott  
Larry Seigle  
Ed Shaw  
Barry Sheppard  
Syd Stapleton  
Betsey Stone  
Tony Thomas  
Mary-Alice Waters  
Nat Weinstein  
Tim Wohlforth

Nominating Commission Nominees for Alternate Membership on the National Committee (27)

- |                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Susan LaMont     | 15. Jeff Mackler    |
| 2. John Benson      | 16. Dick McBride    |
| 3. Judy White       | 17. Baxter Smith    |
| 4. Gerry Foley      | 18. B.R. Washington |
| 5. Les Evans        | 19. Ken Shilman     |
| 6. Cindy Jaquith    | 20. Ray Markey      |
| 7. Dick Roberts     | 21. Mac Warren      |
| 8. Barbara Matson   | 22. Pedro Vásquez   |
| 9. Lynn Henderson   | 23. Ed Heisler      |
| 10. Peter Seidman   | 24. Pat Wright      |
| 11. Sam Manuel      | 25. Omari Musa      |
| 12. Rich Finkel     | 26. James Harris    |
| 13. Willie Mae Reid | 27. Richie Ariza    |
| 14. Peggy Brundy    |                     |

Nominating Commission Nominees for Control Commission

Kipp Dawson  
Wayne Glover  
Helen Scheer  
Larry Stewart

Floor opened for additional nominations for regular membership on the National Committee and for discussion.

Discussion: Peter Buch, Paul Montauk

Motion: To close nominations.

Carried.

Proposal by Barry Sheppard for Presiding Committee: That the talliers be Jean Savage, John Goebel, David Segal, Karen Melville, Julius Snipper, Louis Proyect, Suzanne Weiss, George Johnson, John Durham, Bobbie Bagel, Caryl Loeb, Marilyn Levin, Bob Himmel.

Moved.

Carried.

Proposal from Presiding Committee: That any ballot with more than 35 nominees be voided.

Moved.

Discussion: Dick Roberts, Peter Buch

Carried.

Voting for regular membership on the National Committee.

Proposal from Presiding Committee: That the session proceed with discussion and open the floor for further nominations for alternate membership on the National Committee.

Moved.

Discussion: Les Evans, Jack Barnes, Cappy Kidd, Maceo Dixon

Carried.

Discussion: David Frankel, B.R. Washington, Betsy Whittaker, Mac Warren, Helen Meyers, Marcia Gallo, Robin Maisel, Susan LaMont, Lew Jones, Clifton DeBerry, Paul Montauk

Further nomination: John Studer

Further Discussion: Pat Grogan

Further nomination: Dianne Feeley

Further Discussion: Don Gurewitz, Mac Warren, Roland Sheppard, Lee Smith

Further nomination: Fred Feldman

Further Discussion: John Votava, Craig Gannon, Bev Scott, Robb Wright, Catarino Garza, Helen Schiff, Frank Grinnon, Joe Soares, Mac Warren, Al Duncan

*Proposal from Presiding Committee:* That speakers time be limited to 4 minutes.

*Moved.*

*Carried.*

Further Discussion: Ray Markey, Tony Thomas, Sara Gates, Jim Gotesky, Cindy Jaquith, Ed Berger, Ken Miliner, Stu Singer

*Motion by Stu Singer:* That 29 alternate members of the National Committee be elected and that voting on this be in two steps. The first to select the nominees and the second to decide ranking.

Further Discussion: Jack Barnes, Melissa Singler, Dick Roberts, Peter Buch

*Further nomination:* Marcia Gallo

Further Discussion: Jack Lieberman

*Proposal from Presiding Committee:* That the speakers list be closed.

*Moved.*

*Carried.*

*Motion:* To reopen discussion to hear one speaker against the Singer motion.

*Defeated.*

Vote on Singer motion.

*Defeated.*

Voting for alternate membership on the National Committee.

*Proposal from Presiding Committee:* That we have a single ballot which will be counted twice, first to decide membership and second to decide ranking.

*Moved.*

Discussion: Barry David, Don Gurewitz

*Motion:* To take two separate votes. The first to decide membership and the second to be taken after membership is decided in order to determine ranking.

Further Discussion: Delpfine Welch, Barry Sheppard, Paul Montauk

*Motion:* To vote proposals against each other.

*Carried.*

Vote on Presiding Committee proposal.

*Carried.*

Vote on separate ballots proposal.

*Defeated.*

Results of voting for regular membership on the National Committee:

Jack Barnes	Peter Camejo
John Barzman	Pearl Chertov
Nelson Blackstock	Clifton DeBerry
George Breitman	Maceo Dixon
Joel Britton	Catarino Garza

Fred Halstead  
John Hawkins  
Gus Horowitz  
Doug Jenness  
Linda Jenness  
Lew Jones  
Frank Lovell  
Caroline Lund  
Wendy Lyons  
Malik Miah  
Andrea Morell  
Derrick Morrison  
Andrew Pulley

Harry Ring  
Olga Rodriguez  
Bev Scott  
Larry Seigle  
Ed Shaw  
Barry Sheppard  
Syd Stapleton  
Betsey Stone  
Tony Thomas  
Mary-Alice Waters  
Nat Weinstein  
Tim Wohlforth

*Proposal from Presiding Committee:* To break for lunch and reconvene at 1:45 PM.

*Moved.*

*Motion:* To move directly to Control Commission discussion.

*Defeated.*

Vote on Presiding Committee proposal.

*Carried.*

*Recess at 1:00 PM—Reconvened at 1:55 PM*

### XIII. CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE REPORT

Reporter: Dave Wulp (see appendix)

*Motion:* To approve the report.

*Carried.*

Results of voting for alternate membership on the National Committee:

1. Susan LaMont	15. Jeff Mackler
2. John Benson	16. Baxter Smith
3. Judy White	17. B.R. Washington
4. Gerry Foley	18. Dick McBride
5. Les Evans	19. Ken Shilman
6. Cindy Jaquith	20. Ray Markey
7. Dick Roberts	21. Mac Warren
8. Barbara Matson	22. Pedro Vásquez
9. Lynn Henderson	23. Pat Wright
10. Sam Manuel	24. Ed Heisler
11. Peter Seidman	25. Omari Musa
12. Willie Mae Reid	26. James Harris
13. Rich Finkel	27. Richie Ariza
14. Peggy Brundy	

Floor opened for discussion and further nominations for the Control Commission.

Discussion: Ken Miliner

*Motion:* To close nominations.

*Carried.*

Voting on Control Commission

Results of voting on members of Control Commission:

Kipp Dawson  
Wayne Glover  
Helen Scheer  
Larry Stewart

*CONVENTION ADJOURNED 2:45 PM*

## APPENDIX

### Greetings Received by the 28th National Convention of the Socialist Workers Party

#### Hugo Blanco

Dear American comrades,

I hope your convention will be successful and that you will continue to set an example of how to persevere in building the revolutionary party.

#### Bloque Socialista of Colombia

Esteemed Comrades:

Please accept our fraternal greetings and our hopes that the congress you are celebrating will be most fruitful for your party and our International.

We thank you very much for the invitation sent to our party, but overwhelming obstacles prevent us from being present with a delegation as we would wish.

We await the conclusions of your congress with great interest and with the certainty that they will contribute to the enrichment of the political discussion in our country and to the strengthening of our internationalist ties over and above the tendency positions which today differentiate us.

Fraternally,  
National Executive Committee  
Bloque Socialista

#### Comité de Ligação dos Militantes Revolucionários Portugueses (Para a Reconstrução da IV Internacional) of Portugal

Dear Friends,

We are very thankful for your invitation to your National Party Convention.

We think that the hard and inspiring work of building the Fourth International as the world revolutionary party of the proletariat is the main task of our epoch and nobody can do this except the Trotskyists.

We think that discussion about this problem is more than ever necessary in light of the lessons of the Trotskyists' own past and present.

However, we regret that we cannot be present at your National Party Convention. We are preparing our own Congress that will take place very soon.

We wish that your National Party Convention can bring you a step further in your activity.

Trotskyist salutations

#### Communist League of India

Dear comrades,

We had received your invitation to attend the 28th National Convention of your Party to be held August 7th to 14th.

The deliberations and the discussions around the agenda suggest the burning issues for the world movement represented by F.I. of all of us (who) are either affiliated to

or in sympathy with it. We are sure the deliberations of your convention would eventually prove to be the pace-setter for the national sections of F.I. whose 11th World-Congress pre-congress discussion would be initiated soon.

We in spite of our deep desire to attend your convention in order to benefit most are unfortunately unable to attend it, due to objective and subjective reasons best known to some of you who are in touch with us. We wish you the grand success.

With Red Greetings.

Fraternally yours,  
Magan Desai  
on behalf of the Central Secretariat  
Communist League

#### Fylkingin of Iceland

Congratulations on SWP's national convention which we hope will strengthen revolutionary Marxism in U.S.A.  
Long live the Fourth International.

#### Groupe Marxiste Révolutionnaire of Québec

The Groupe Marxiste Révolutionnaire, sympathizing organization of the Fourth International in Quebec, sends its fraternal greetings to the 1976 convention of the Socialist Workers Party. The conclusions your convention will reach, the orientation it will give the SWP for the next years, are of course of great importance to Trotskyists throughout the world. But they are of vital importance to Trotskyists in North America. The turn decided at your 1975 convention marks a new stage in the recent history of the SWP as the United States enter a period of political, social and economic instability that will shake the foundations of American imperialism. The ability of American Trotskyists to implant themselves in the American working class and to become the major pole of attraction for its radicalizing elements will mark a qualitative leap forward for the development of revolutionary Marxism not only in the US itself but on the North American continent as a whole.

As you probably know, the Quebec working class has been, up to now, the most militant sector of the North American proletariat. Its struggles have often been massive and have periodically taken the most advanced forms. It has on occasion engaged in massive central confrontations with the Quebec state. Quebec is the central political problem confronting the Canadian bourgeoisie. The militancy of the Quebec working class and the uninterrupted rise of nationalism since the 1960s is threatening the very foundations of the Canadian state as it is now constituted. None are more conscious of this than the Canadian bourgeoisie. During the recent political crisis around the question of bilingualism in air communications, Trudeau stated that it constituted the greatest threat

to national unity since the conscription crisis of 1942. During the air strike, involving air traffic controllers and airline pilots, a strike which was essentially the expression of the anti-Quebec, anti-French hysteria whipped up by the most reactionary sectors of the Canadian bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie, a massive wave of English Canadian chauvinism swept over the country. On the English Canadian left, many organizations buckled under the pressure and even went so far as to support the strike. This was the case of the so-called Trotskyist League of Canada, the Canadian co-thinkers of the Spartacist League. Only the Trotskyists of the Revolutionary Marxist Group and of the League for Socialist Action took a clear principled position in defense of the elementary language rights of the Quebecois nation.

The national question in Quebec, as has been evidenced time and again in the last few years, is the central question of the Canadian revolution. It presents the greatest threat to the existing structure of the Canadian state. It has determined the greater militancy and greater political awareness of the Quebec working class in relation to its English Canadian and American counterparts. It is also used by the Canadian bourgeoisie to divide the Quebecois and Canadian working classes by carefully cultivating English Canadian chauvinism. The Trotskyists of the RMG and of the LSA both have a record of principled defense of the right of the Quebecois nation to self-determination. In Quebec itself, the Trotskyists of the Groupe Marxiste Revolutionnaire and of the Ligue Socialiste Ouvriere are both putting forward the demand for an independent socialist Quebec (the GMR using the more specific formula of a "workers republic of Quebec") in contrast to most other organizations of the left.

The Maoists consider that the separation of Quebec would weaken Canada, a country of the "second world" and make it more vulnerable to the pressure of American imperialism and of Soviet "social imperialism." While giving lip service to the right to self-determination of the Quebecois nation, the treacherous policy of the Maoist bureaucracy in the case of Bangla Desh indicates that the Canadian and Quebecois Maoists could eventually come to actively fighting that right if the diplomatic interests of the Chinese bureaucracy demanded it. The Lambertists of the GSTQ do not even have a clear position on the national question. Up to now, they have rejected the demand for independence, a key strategical demand for the Quebec and Canadian revolutions.

In 1972, a split occurred in the Canadian section of the Fourth International. The split revolved precisely around the national question in Quebec. A minority of the LSO believed that the Canadian section had adopted a revisionist line on the national question, a line that adapted in an opportunist way to Quebec nationalism. From this split the Groupe Marxiste Revolutionnaire was born. Relations between the two Trotskyist organizations remained strained for the following years and political collaboration was minimal. But at its 1975 convention, the LSA/LSO adopted a resolution on the national question that drew a critical balance sheet of its previous line. In fact, the line adopted by the LSA/LSO at that convention resembles very closely that of the GMR. This correction of the LSO's line has, we believe, brought the two Trotskyist organizations in Quebec much closer together politically. Despite the importance of some of the remaining differences, we believe that the conditions now exist for greater

political collaboration between the LSO and the GMR. Even more, we believe that the time has come to take every possible step to heal the split and the GMR intends to propose to the comrades of the LSO a series of concrete measures along those lines. The resolution adopted by the IEC on the reunification of Mexican Trotskyists should be used as a model to determine the framework in which the reunification of Quebec Trotskyists should take place.

We do not believe, on the other hand, that any kind of serious rapprochement is possible with the Lambertists of the GSTQ at this stage. The GSTQ has shown no interest in engaging in common activity with all the Trotskyist organizations in Quebec. The international resolution adopted at its last convention clearly stated its intentions: its conception of "rebuilding the Fourth International" is centered around the perspective of an international split. It does not see the "rebuilding" of the FI otherwise than as meaning the expulsion of a whole section of the International. But there are other obstacles to any unification perspective with the GSTQ: its international links with the OCRFI and the deep differences that exist on the question of the nature of the Quebec and Canadian revolutions. The Lambertist current has never understood the importance of the national question as has been evidenced throughout its 25 years of history. These differences not only exist between the GMR and the GSTQ, but also between the GSTQ and the LSO and between the GSTQ and its international cothinkers and the SWP. There is no indication, for example, that the Lambertists have shown a better political grasp of the importance of the national question in the US than they have in Quebec or elsewhere in the world (Algeria, Vietnam, Cuba—which they still maintain is a bourgeois state—etc). A Lambertist orientation for the SWP in the US would quite likely, if not entirely exclude, at least relegate to a very secondary place, work amongst the national minorities and around the woman question. Differences with the Lambertist current are currently too deep and too numerous to envision a process of tripartite discussions between the GSTQ, the GMR and the LSO. The current priority must be the reunification of the Quebec supporters of the Fourth International in one single organization.

The increasing tempo of the class struggle in Quebec makes it urgent for all Quebec Trotskyists to take every measure possible to build a single, stronger organization. Quebec is now the weak link of imperialism in North America. The development of the class struggle in Quebec, combined with the growing difficulties and bleak economic perspectives of imperialism on the North American continent, will tend, as social and political tensions intensify in Canada and in the US, to influence more and more the advanced sectors of the Canadian and American working classes. The existence of national oppression in Quebec creates the basis for a greater identification with the oppressed national minorities in the US (Blacks, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans). The development of the class struggle on the North American continent will increase the links between the various components of the North American proletariat and the various oppressed national minorities. For the Quebec revolution the development of these links is vital. Imperialism will not tolerate the instauration of a workers state on the North American continent. It is not even sure that it would even tolerate the creation of an independent capitalist Quebec. Hence the

crucial necessity from the point of view of the Quebec revolution, of the development of strong revolutionary organizations in Canada and the US. Organizations which develop serious links with their respective working class and capable of waging strong political campaigns against any kind of interference from the part of imperialism in Quebec. Despite political differences, it is evident that the Socialist Workers Party, the organization of American Trotskyists, is the only American organization seriously capable of filling those tasks. This is the first time that the GMR has sent an official delegation to a convention of the SWP. We hope that it will mark the beginning of a new stage of fraternal political collaborations between our organization within the framework of building the Fourth International and the organization of its America co-thinkers.

### **Grupo Marxista Internacionalista of Colombia**

Dear Comrades:

By means of this note we bring fraternal greetings to your party's convention. Due to last-minute problems, one of our comrades was unable to attend. Nevertheless, we wish to express our sincere desire that your deliberations come to a successful conclusion. The example and the experience of the SWP provide invaluable lessons for us. Your advances are also our permanent stimulus.

Otto, for the  
Grupo Marxista Internacionalista  
Colombia

### **Liga Comunista Internacionalista of Mexico**

The Liga Comunista Internacionalista sends warm fraternal greetings to the 1976 National Convention of the SWP.

The progress of your 1976 election campaign of Comrades Peter Camejo and Willie Mae Reid and your increasingly successful campaign against government harassment are followed by us with interest. The progress of the SWP is part of the overall growth of the forces and supporters of the Fourth International on a world scale of which we are also a part.

As you know, the LCI is currently in a process of unification with the Liga Socialista (TM), a process which will be completed at a unification congress next month. The unification will produce an organization, stronger both politically and organizationally—the Mexican section of the Fourth International—the largest Trotskyist group in Mexican history.

We also hope to include the comrades of the Bolshevik-Leninist Faction in the unification process. In the absence of differences of a principled nature, the unification of all Fourth Internationalist forces in Mexico will be a big step forward not only for the Mexican Trotskyist movement, but for the Fourth International as a whole.

Long live the SWP!

Long live the Fourth International!

### **Liga Internacionalista de los Trabajadores of Puerto Rico**

Greetings from the comrades of the LIT were presented during the discussion on Puerto Rican struggles in the U.S. The remarks will be printed in a forthcoming *Internal Information Bulletin* that will include, among other reports from the convention, "The Emerging Puerto Rican Struggle in the United States and Its Perspectives."

### **Fracción Trotskysta Leninista de la Liga Obrera Marxista (Por la Reconstrucción de la IV Internacional) of Mexico**

Comrades:

This congress takes place within the framework of an important international political situation, one in which the proletariat has begun its biggest struggles since the Second World War and is directly posing the need to place itself in power. At the same time this situation deepens the crisis of the traditional bourgeois methods of domination, control, and submission, a crisis which is also aggravated by the GENERALIZED INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CRISIS.

The parliamentary crisis in the U.S.A., which at one point led to the fall of Nixon, has not ended but has become sharper. The national strike of transportation workers, the innumerable strikes called by the entire American union movement, etc., clearly show the nature of the international situation we have now entered. This is owing to the role of the North American proletariat and the imperialist economy in the world class struggle.

That is why the congress of one of the most important workers organizations in the United States and of an important Trotskyist organization like the SWP has such great importance and significance at this moment, as a step toward the construction of the revolutionary party the North American proletariat needs in order to come to power.

*We warmly and fraternally greet the SWP congress!!!*

*Forward to the construction of the revolutionary party in the United States!!!*

*Long live the Fourth International proclaimed by L. Trotsky!!!*

### **Manifiesto Obrero of Argentina**

Esteemed Comrades:

As militants building the indispensable tool for the socialist revolution within the bastion of world capitalism, you have an enormous responsibility for the future of humanity.

But in addition to that, the degeneration of Stalinism and the world crisis of revolutionary leadership have placed on your shoulders the heavy and difficult task of maintaining the continuity of the Leninist party and the Fourth International.

The crisis which affects this planet demands more and more from you and we do not doubt that you will be capable of meeting these demands.

People and parties, like steel, are forged at high temperatures. We revolutionary Marxists in Argentina are today going through our test of fire.

For our part, we readily and confidently face this difficult test of history.

The example of this convention and the atmosphere of combativity and Bolshevik comradeship it exudes contribute in great measure to strengthening our certainty of the final triumph of the proletarian revolution.

We Trotskyists who are struggling to construct the Argentine section of the Fourth International salute the 28th convention of the SWP with clenched fists on high and we assure you we will know how to assimilate this example.

*Long live the Socialist Workers Party!*

*Long live the Fourth International!*

*Long live the World Socialist Revolution!*

**Organização Marxista Brasileira**  
**Organização Comunista 1º de Maio**  
**(em unificação)**

**(Pela reconstrução da IVa Internacional)**  
**of Brazil**

Comrades:

Finding it impossible to attend your congress for exclusively financial reasons, we send you our greetings and hopes for success.

We recognize your invitation as indisputable proof of your desire for open discussions among the Trotskyist parties. In this sense, your congress constitutes an important forward step in the struggle for the Fourth International.

**Organización Política Obrera of Argentina**

Compañeros, delegates, and observers at the 28th convention of the Socialist Workers Party:

In the name of the Executive Committee of the Organización Política Obrera, we bring greetings to your convention and we wish you full success in meeting the objectives you have set.

As you know, the worker and anti-imperialist movement in our country is suffering a savage repression. It is a desperate attempt by the bourgeoisie and imperialism—following the failure of Peronism—to drown in blood the inevitable march of the proletariat toward its political independence, toward the construction of its class party.

Thousands of workers, delegates and activists, and youth fill the jails and prisons, and assassinations of worker and student movement activists and militants are counted in the hundreds. Among them are members of Política Obrera and the Union of Youth for Socialism.

We are pleased to see that solidarity with the Argentine people figures among the tasks of your convention.

At the time our compañeros Jorge Fischer and Miguel Angel Bufano, union delegates at the MILUZ factory, were assassinated in December 1974, by a band of the AAA, the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International at our suggestion undertook a campaign against the official and parapolice repression and invited the "United Secretariat" to join in carrying it out. Unfortunately, this joint campaign did not materialize.

Today we again emphasize that we are talking about saving the lives of hundreds of worker and student militants. We should not forget that the repression is directed especially against Trotskyist organizations that support the program of the Fourth International.

From Argentina, our post in the struggle against the military dictatorship, for the independent organization of the workers movement against any kind of collaborationism with the murderous government, for a united front for democratic freedoms and for a workers and farmers government—we wish you full success in your convention and we call on you to take the international initiative against repression in Argentina, against the assassinations and for solidarity with the organizations victimized by repression—and especially those who struggle in defense of the program of the Fourth International.

We value our invitation to attend the 28th convention. We invite you to our next congress, convinced that the opening of a discussion among our ranks—on among other things a balance sheet of the Peronist government and the

military coup—will lead toward clarification and political positions that support the Fourth International and its program.

With Trotskyist greetings,  
Julio Magri  
for the Executive Committee  
of the Organización Política Obrera  
Argentina

**Organización Socialista de los**  
**Trabajadores of Costa Rica**

Comrades:

We most gladly express our warmest solidarity to the Socialist Workers Party and its 28th National Convention.

Scarcely one year ago our organization began a political relationship with the Socialist Workers Party. This year has been the most fertile one in our revolutionary building. There can be no doubt that a great part of our political enrichment is due to the continued revolutionary pedagogy, produced by this relation to the Socialist Workers Party.

This Convention is being held with the impressive background of the growing radicalization in all layers of American society. It will show the Socialist Workers Party's vitality and the correctness of the political turn adopted in last Convention.

We think that the implementation of this line of going toward the masses' struggles will be a step forward in building the mass party of the American revolution.

The class struggle sharpening in a world scope poses more and more in relief our common tasks. The Socialist Workers Party's revolutionary capabilities allow us to expect its decisive contribution to the victory of an ever more revolutionary line on World Party building.

Long live the Socialist Workers Party!

Long live the Fourth International!

Long live the world Socialist Revolution!

**Organization of Communist Internationalists**  
**of Greece**

We did not send written greetings to your convention because we had planned to have an observer from the OCIG present. However, the United States government refused to give our representative a visa. Please give our greetings to the comrades of the SWP. We are sorry that we cannot be with you. (Greetings received via telephone.)

**Partido Revolucionário dos Trabalhadores**  
**of Portugal**

We want to extend our fraternal thanks for your invitation but unhappily it will be financially impossible for us to send a delegation from our party to your convention.

We take this opportunity to send our greetings:

Dear comrades,

We express our fraternal hope that the deliberative sessions of your convention take place in a productive atmosphere and that your discussions and conclusions help strengthen your membership and work.

In Portugal we are fighting to build a revolutionary Marxist leadership that will enable the workers to move forward in their struggles to the taking of power. We are aware of the need to accumulate the entire experience of the world working class, which helps to strengthen



revolutionary parties in each country.

That is why we are determined to build the Fourth International, to build the world party.

Conscious of the responsibilities weighing on us and on you, we hope that your convention will be another step forward in the building of your party.

*Long live the 28th convention of the SWP!*

*Long live the Fourth International!*

Vladimir  
for the leadership of the PRT

### **Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores of Argentina**

Esteemed Comrades,

On behalf of the Central Committee of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores of Argentina, we wish success to the SWP convention in strengthening your party and our Fourth International. Above and beyond the profound differences that currently divide the three existing tendencies in the International, our party continues to recognize the leadership role that the SWP has had in the history of our world movement. For this reason, we can do no less than to join you in celebrating your convention with clenched fists raised and with a thunderous—

Long live the Socialist Workers Party of the United States!

Long live the Fourth International!

N. Moreno  
for the Central Committee  
of the PST (Argentina)

Comrades of the SWP:

I bring you revolutionary greetings from all of my party's comrades. But I also want to bring my own personal greetings to this great convention of the SWP, a party which has been a teacher for international Trotskyism.

We acknowledge it as such because we, the new cadres of the party, have been educated in this tradition.

This is my first internationalist experience, since my previous tasks in the party have been organizing trade-union work in the Buenos Aires area.

This is a very crucial juncture, both for the SWP and for our party, the PST. For the SWP, because it is now confronting with success a critical task in the class struggle—deep penetration into the rising workers movement in the United States. This colossal and sleeping giant is awakening and the imperialist beast knows full well that for them it is the beginning of the end.

On the other hand, Argentina has been engulfed in a dark night of repression, prison, and deaths, suffered by the workers movement, our party, and the Trotskyist movement. This situation has not demoralized the PST nor caused the ranks to abandon it. But we have been hard hit. Hundreds of our comrades have been imprisoned. Among them are great working-class fighters like Comrade Arturo Apaza, who has disappeared, and Comrade José Páez, an outstanding mass leader whose life is in grave danger. Others have been murdered. These are comrades who struggled shoulder to shoulder in our cells

and our ranks, and who many comrades of the SWP leadership knew personally.

In Argentina, the imperialist beast has won a round, but the battle is not over. The Argentine workers movement is experienced and knows how to fight, and we are certain that it will. This is where proletarian internationalism becomes concrete, because through your struggle, you in the SWP, together with the American masses and other comrades around the world, will help to weaken and eventually defeat the imperialists that today oppress, kill, and imprison us.

I want to express how profoundly impressed I am by both your convention and the way I have been received. I am very proud to have been sent here by my party, with much effort on its part. I am learning a great deal about the situation and state of the class struggle in your country, as well as your activity, and I am very glad. In addition, I am seeing and hearing how international and Trotskyist solidarity and fraternity is practiced among comrades who we recognize to be the only international leadership of the Fourth International and who, beyond the political differences we have, understand that we have a common task—the campaign to defend the political prisoners and the lives of all the Argentine Trotskyists and in particular the comrades of the PST.

The defense efforts you have waged and the efforts of USLA that you have supported, which have led to victories in the past, like saving the life of Hugo Blanco, are the highest example of Trotskyist solidarity and revolutionary internationalism. This is what makes Trotskyism that much stronger. This is what will help to save the lives of our comrades. And this is a great example for revolutionaries throughout the world.

Long live the SWP!

Long live the Fourth International!

Long live Revolutionary Internationalism!

Rita,  
PST (Argentina)

### **Revolutionary Communist Party of China**

Dear Comrades,

While the 28th National Convention of the Socialist Workers Party is being held, please accept our warmest fraternal greetings.

The Convention is held in the following situation: the political and economic crises of the whole capitalist world continue to erupt; U.S. capitalism, the once strongest fort of the capitalist world, is also deeply affected by the various crises and is on the way of decline; class struggles are more acute, the political consciousness of the working masses more advanced and their attitudes more radicalized. Such a situation provides favourable conditions for the Socialist Workers Party to develop rapidly as a mass revolutionary party, and meanwhile, it is more urgent for the Socialist Workers Party to provide a correct program and a strong leadership. We are convinced that the Socialist Workers Party, with its Marxist-Leninist-Trotskyist tradition and experience in struggles, will strive with unflagging efforts to fulfil its historical task. We sincerely wish the Convention to make important contributions in this great cause and achieve every success.

Comradely salutes.

The Provisional National Committee  
of the Revolutionary Communist Party of China



## **Revolutionary Marxist Group of Canada**

The Revolutionary Marxist Group, sympathizing organization of the Fourth International in English Canada, sends fraternal greetings to the 1976 Convention of the American co-thinkers of our International, the Socialist Workers Party.

For us, the discussions of your Convention have a particular importance. This is because of the close relationship between the political and economic situations in the U.S. and Canada, and also because of the similarity of some of the political questions which confront revolutionary Marxists throughout North America. Above all, we can point to the vital importance of the oppression of nations and national minorities in Canada and the U.S. and to the vanguard role in the class struggle which, for example, has been played by Quebecois and Black workers.

As a result of these factors, the work of Trotskyists throughout North America must, in the final analysis, be placed in the framework of the interrelationship of the class struggles in the U.S., Quebec, and Canada. This work, and this perspective, can be summed up in our historic task of struggling against all forms of imperialist chauvinism for the principle of proletarian internationalism, including the perspective of the Federated Socialist States of North America.

In the past, the RMG and its members have disagreed with you on many questions. Many of these disagreements continue today. This is not the occasion to address our differences. However, there is one question which we feel obliged to raise, one which is related to the position of the SWP on the regroupment of Trotskyist forces. We cannot help observing that your positions on this question could have been positively demonstrated to the entire International had the SWP chosen to apply this position to all those expelled members of the Internationalist Tendency who acknowledged the revolutionary character of the SWP and stated their desire to be reintegrated. Unfortunately, the recommendations of the International Executive Committee have not been followed. Many comrades who are loyal to the Fourth International remain outside the SWP.

But despite this and other differences, we remain convinced that only discussion among Fourth Internationalists in North America, only in the framework of the World Party of Socialist Revolution, can the central strategic questions facing us be resolved. The Convention of the Socialist Workers Party has contributed to the development of this discussion.

Long Live the Socialist Workers Party!

Long Live the Fourth International!

## **Revolutionary Marxist League of Switzerland**

Dear Comrades,

The Revolutionary Marxist League, Swiss section of the Fourth International, greets the Socialist Workers Party and all of your comrades and wish you much success and fruitful work at your 28th Congress. Unfortunately, no one from our organization can take part. But this does not mean that we are any the less interested in your activity. On the contrary, your work has inspired a great respect and interest on our part. You alone have accepted the challenge of history to demonstrate that even in the most powerful imperialist country, the USA, the working class

is a part of the international proletariat and can advance on the road to socialist revolution. Your commitment to this goal and the seriousness with which you have undertaken the work of building the Socialist Workers Party, the nucleus of the proletarian revolutionary party, along with the successes that you have had, especially in the last several years, are an encouragement to us here in a country like Switzerland, where, in spite of the attacks of the bourgeoisie, the working class remains lethargic. They inspire us to continue working to defend the interests of the proletariat and to build the revolutionary party.

In recent years our organization has been able to take some modest steps forward on this road. We are the only force that has waged a determined and uncompromising struggle to overcome the split in the working class between foreign and Swiss workers (as you may know, one-third of the Swiss workers are immigrants deprived of all the elementary political rights). So our organization embraces not only those who speak the three main languages of Switzerland but also a nucleus of Spanish immigrant workers. For us, the consistent internationalism we learned from Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Trotsky, and which we learned above all in the Fourth International, is the No. 1 condition for survival in Switzerland. Today our commitment to internationalism has already won us a certain importance among advanced workers.

Likewise, in the trade-union movement, where for forty years the leadership has collaborated with the bosses to ban strikes, we have been able to play an important role in developing a class-struggle tendency. In a united front with two other organizations, the RML forced a referendum for a forty-hour week, and this campaign succeeded in initiating a broad discussion in the workers movement and in getting whole sections of the trade unions and branches of the SP to fall in together behind this proposal. In December 1976 there will be a vote on this question, and this will give our organization a chance to take part in a national debate within the working class.

In Switzerland this spring, we have seen our first strikes, although these are still totally isolated developments. This has given us a chance to get into the front line of the class struggle and test our line in practice.

In the women's movement as well there have been indications that the position that our organization took at its 3rd Congress, placing great stress on work in this area, was a correct one.

While the workers movement in Switzerland remains weak, we are nonetheless helping through our work among the apprentices to assure that the youth will be able to learn from the mistakes of history and play its role in strengthening and recomposing the trade-union movement and working-class political action.

The participation of the RML in the national elections in 1975 has established us as a small but serious political pole of attraction in the national life of Switzerland.

Comrades, the situation in Europe is developing very rapidly; the tasks of the proletariat in the historical sense are expanding at a tremendous rate. Building the revolutionary international is becoming the key question of history in the most immediate sense. For you as for us, this has a very special meaning; it means sharing in the experience of the international proletariat and bringing this experience to the proletariat in Switzerland and in the USA so that they can learn how better to defend their immediate interests and play their part in the worldwide

struggle against imperialist capitalism. The Stalinists must not be allowed to lead the world working class once again, through their policy of capitulation, into the morass of nationalism and class collaborationism.

Comrades, we have given you a general idea of our work. We can offer a fuller picture only through the newspapers that we publish twice a month in four languages (*Rosso* in Italian, *La Breche* in French, *Bresche* in German, *Rojo* in Spanish). We hope that you won't think we are any less internationalist because we could not attend your Congress and will excuse us for not being there (even though we wrote our greetings in German).

We know that the Socialist Workers Party and all of you comrades are working hard and responsibly to achieve the liberation of the American working class. We are convinced that in the United States the future of the world revolution is in safe hands.

Your tradition, your courage, and your successes, your internationalist solidarity, were of vital importance for the Cuban and the Vietnamese revolutions. They are a guarantee for the future of the working-class movement in the USA, and the Fourth International is a guarantee for the struggle for socialism.

Long live the Socialist Workers Party!

Long live the Fourth International!

Long live the unity of the working class in the USA and in Switzerland, the unity of Black and white workers, of immigrant and native workers, the unity of women and men!

Long live international solidarity!

And, once again, the best successes in your work.

Karl Bergmann  
for the Political Bureau of the RML  
(Swiss section of the Fourth International)

P.S.: We would like to wish you special success in your court case against the imperialist U.S. government and very special success to our internationalist comrade Peter Camejo in the presidential campaign, and of course to the whole party and American working class.

### **Socialist Workers Party of Australia**

Greetings to the 28th National Convention of the Socialist Workers Party of the United States. No other party conventions are looked at with more interest by revolutionaries around the world because no other party has such a major task in bringing to an end the rule of capitalist barbarism. So it is extremely encouraging for those interested in the survival and enrichment of humanity to be able to note and celebrate the growth of your party and its strengthening relative to the various tendencies who have misled and betrayed the struggle for socialism for so long.

We in Australia have been applying the same basic program and party-building strategy as you do to the political situation here. While the relationship of forces on the left is not so favorable as your situation in the United States, nevertheless we have been able to make some advances this year which we would like to draw to the attention of your convention.

At the end of last year and in the first few months of this year, we ran the first Trotskyist candidates in Federal and State elections ever in Australia. These campaigns had significant success in spreading our ideas and strengthen-

ing our movement. In one State electorate we were able to deal a blow to the Stalinists, who also ran candidates. Our 3.5% of the vote in this electorate was greater than the votes of either the Communist Party of Australia and the more rabidly pro-Moscow Socialist Party.

In the process of participating in the elections and relating to the political upsurge of the last eight months (which culminated in a one-day general strike on July 12), we were able to establish our newspaper *Direct Action* on a weekly basis. This has allowed us to intervene far more effectively in the political situation by actually doubling the circulation of our press.

Our first election campaign and the plans to produce our weekly led us to take another decision at the time of our national conference in January. We decided to change our name from the Socialist Workers *League* to the Socialist Workers *Party*. We'd like to conclude by affirming also that:

"Our party is your party . . . Join the SWP!"

### **SPARK of the United States**

The comrades of SPARK send our revolutionary greetings to the comrades of the Socialist Workers Party in your 28th National Convention.

We are pleased to be observers, and we send our best wishes for success in overcoming the problems which confront us today.

We think this convention is important because, in it, the SWP, in effect, addresses itself to two serious problems which confront the Trotskyist movement: the first is the question of the relationship between the revolutionary movement and the working class in this country; the second is the question of the relationships within the Trotskyist movement both nationally and internationally.

We are pleased that the SWP has made the decision to direct more of its efforts toward the working class.

Ever since the time when the Communist Party turned its back on the working class, there has been no big revolutionary party with real roots in the working class. The end result has been that for nearly 2 full generations, revolutionary ideas were absent from the working class; the results of that were a break in the militant traditions of the working class, the growth of intense demoralization as the working class saw no alternatives to its present situation, and the growth of racism in the ranks of the working class. Revolutionary ideas have never automatically evolved from the day-to-day struggles of the class; neither did they during the period of the 50's and the 60's, the low point of revolutionary influence and implantation in the working class.

During those years, the years of repression and reaction, the revolutionary movement for all practical purposes was not present in the working class. If it had been, of course, the chances are likely that the revolutionaries would not have made big gains in the working class. But, if it had been, the revolutionary movement today would have had a certain—if small—implantation and influence in the working class; the revolutionary movement would have been in a better position to move forward today as the working class begins to stir. And certainly—at least in a small way, in some sections of the working class—the demoralization would not be quite so bad, nor the racism quite so pervasive—if the revolutionaries had regularly, for the past 30 years, raised the revolutionary alternative to the class.

We think a large mistake was made in the past.

And that is why we are encouraged to see that today the comrades of the SWP are addressing themselves to the problem of the relations between the revolutionary organization and the working class. It is a good sign that this year's convention continues to consider the turn taken last year. We hope that the turn will be broadened, so that all comrades of the SWP, either as factory militants or outside militants, will eventually direct the major share of their activity to the working class milieu.

The second important question which this convention has addressed is the problem of the relationships within the Trotskyist movement—more accurately, we could say the lack of comradely relations within that movement. We think you have made an important step in inviting other groups and other tendencies to your convention.

The situation of the Trotskyist movement currently is a situation of division and mutual distrust. The theoretical acquisitions of our heritage are often lost in the maze of the sectarian pretensions. The already weak forces of revolutionary Marxism are further weakened.

The solution of this problem is not to continue on in the same roads which have taken us to where we are today.

There is another road—and that is the road of common work, mutual aid and discussion carried on in a comradely way. Through this approach we can begin to break down the sectarian barriers which divide us.

Certainly we in SPARK feel that we will be part of the development toward building a revolutionary party of the

working class—a Trotskyist party. But we have no illusions and we make no pretenses that we will carry out this activity alone. We think that the Trotskyist movement—as weak, and as divided, and as mistaken in its political positions as big sections of it often are—must form the starting point for the formation of a revolutionary party of the working class, both on the national and the international level.

That isn't to say that within the Trotskyist movement we should hide our political disagreements with each other. Just the contrary. The differences exist, and they are very deep in some cases, particularly on the question of how we approach activity in the working class.

But if we try to function toward each other in a comradely way, we each have the possibility to win over the other tendencies to our political ideas and to our conception of building a party—if we are correct. And if we are wrong we have the possibility to check our own ideas.

Therefore, we think it is a healthy sign that our comrades in the Socialist Workers Party have invited groups from other tendencies to the 28th National Convention. Certainly, we believe that much more than this is necessary, that continuing contacts on all levels, national and international, must be established. But this convention is a positive step.

For these reasons, we gladly take part in your convention and send you our warmest greetings.

August 1976

### **Messages Sent by the 28th National Convention of the Socialist Workers Party**

#### **To Lureida Torres**

The 28th National Convention of the Socialist Workers Party at Oberlin, Ohio, sends you its warmest greetings. We are sorry that you could not attend the July 4 demonstration in Philadelphia for a bicentennial without colonies. We know how much you desired to be there.

The use of imprisonment to punish fighters for freedom is just one of the weapons of Yankee imperialism. We know that you are aware of it and we salute your courage and determination to fight for Puerto Rico's independence. We look forward to joining with you on the field of battle and we pledge our efforts to obtain your earliest release.

#### **To the Revolutionary Communist Party of China Chinese Section of the Fourth International**

The 28th National Convention of the Socialist Workers Party has heard a report on the great Tien An Men demonstration, harbinger of the coming political revolution in China. This convention also celebrates the publication of a new, expanded volume of Trotsky's writings on China, with an introduction by Peng Shu-tse. We are encouraged by your recent success in building the Chinese section. The new upsurge of the masses in China creates new opportunities for building the Chinese Trotskyist movement. We send you our warmest greetings and pledge our solidarity with you in meeting your great task.

#### **To Peng Shu-tse and Chen Pi-lan**

The 28th National Convention of the Socialist Workers Party sends you our warmest fraternal greetings. The convention has heard a report on the great Tien An Men demonstration, a harbinger of the coming political revolution in China, which will vindicate your life work and confirm the correctness of the political fight you have been committed to for six decades.

#### **To Tom Kerry**

The over 1,600 delegates and guests at the 28th Socialist Workers Party Convention send revolutionary greetings on the occasion of your 75th birthday.

We salute your contribution of many years to the building of the revolutionary movement.

As we complete our deliberations at this convention, we are looking ahead to accelerating growth for our party, further expansion into new cities, and deepening involvement in the struggle of the working class.

We emerge from this convention determined, enthusiastic, and more confident than ever in the capacity of our party—the party you have done so much to build—to meet the tests that lie ahead.

## To John Staggs

The 28th National Convention of the SWP sends its warmest greetings and best wishes for a speedy recovery. The printshop will play a central role in the massive fall socialist propaganda offensive that we have decided upon. We look forward to your quick return to the printshop production team.

## To Dan DeWitt

The 28th National Convention of the SWP sends its warmest greetings and best wishes for a speedy recovery. The printshop will play a central role in the massive fall socialist propaganda offensive that we have decided upon. We look forward to your quick return to the printshop production team.

## Greetings From the United Secretariat of the Fourth International

by Alan Jones

At the last SWP convention, I was able to greet on behalf of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International both a turning point in the world struggle of the working class and a turning point for the Fourth International. That turning point came to its culmination in the entry of the troops of the NLF into Saigon and the victory of the Vietnamese revolution.

We were able to see in the campaign—which was a real part of bringing about that victory—the Fourth International, perhaps for the first time in its history, able to intervene, if as yet only in a small way, as a real force in world politics. We were part of the victory of that revolution.

Now we see one year later, clearly the next phase in the world revolution. We began to see this in the discussion which took place at the last convention of the Socialist Workers Party and within the Fourth International over the development of the revolution in Portugal. We were able to see clearly some of the new features of the world revolution, the continuation of the colonial revolution, most dramatically now in southern Africa, the movements of opposition and movements towards a political revolution in the deformed and degenerated workers states, which we've seen confirmed yet again in the dramatic developments in Poland.

But we were able to see something which was new, new after twenty years; that is, that the socialist revolution had begun to arrive once again within the imperialist countries, that what had occurred in May 1968 in France and also in 1969 in Italy was not a temporary hitch inside capitalism. You know the bourgeoisie's explanation: These wild, excitable Latins, of course they get carried away, everything will return to normal. But it hasn't returned to normal.

We see both the development of the revolution in Portugal and the development now on an even higher scale of the revolutionary struggle in Spain.

I would like to address myself in bringing these greetings to three decisive tasks, three decisive problems we have to grapple with in this new period.

The first is to grasp clearly the new features of the world revolution today, in particular within the imperialist countries, compared to those of the last great wave of working-class struggle of the 1930s, and to a lesser extent after the Second World War.

Secondly, to analyze where the Fourth International

stands today in the building of the mass revolutionary parties which are necessary to ensure the victory of that revolution.

Thirdly, I would like to address myself to certain problems as we see them from outside the United States, the way in which from outside the imperialist monster we are able to see the interconnections between the revolutionary process in the world and in particular in Europe and the development of your struggle in the United States.

Firstly, as to the differences which we see now compared to the revolutionary struggle before the Second World War and to some extent the immediate period afterwards.

The most important is, of course, the worldwide development of this revolution. This is something which I think comrades have to absorb. I think this is one lesson the Fourth International has absorbed. That is, even in comparison to the great revolutionary wave after the First World War, which took place primarily only in the imperialist countries and some of the most oppressed colonial countries, this is a revolutionary process which has taken the two-thirds of humanity which served merely as an instrument for capitalist domination and brought them as a force into world politics. That has transformed the revolutionary situation for us inside the imperialist countries.

The victory in Vietnam was not merely the victory of the colonial revolution. It was brought about not merely because of the tremendous struggle of thirty years of one colonial people but because of the economic inability of imperialism to win this struggle, because of its military inability to win this struggle, because for the first time it saw a threat to its own rule within its bastions, of continuing its international exploitation. That is continuing. And it is continuing in a certain way which is even more directly connected, and we see together the sections of development of the world revolution more closely drawn together perhaps than at any point in history.

We need only look at the developments since that victory in Vietnam. Temporarily, U.S. imperialism militarily found itself held back by the fear of the people it oppressed and exploited inside its own borders. That will not last forever. U.S. imperialism will once again try to embark on adventures. At the moment, it is scared. It was not able to carry through what it wanted in Angola. It was not able to carry out in Angola the repeat of what it did in Vietnam.

Because of the defeat which the United States and the racist regime of South Africa suffered in Angola, we see today a new upsurge of the Black masses of southern Africa, with the developments of guerrilla war, with the great struggles of the Black masses in Soweto.

That fact, which came from the temporary weakness of U.S. imperialism, will have its own reflection once again within the imperialist countries.

The struggle of the Black masses in southern Africa is a new weight added to the struggle of the Black people of the United States, of the immigrant workers in Europe. It makes the bourgeoisie more cautious about pursuing its filthy, racist policies.

The second thing that we see, which is a big difference compared to 1936 or 1945, is a change in the pattern of struggle. We have not yet arrived at a point where the economic crisis of imperialism has reached a point it did in the 1930s—this pulverizing economic crisis, which threw millions and millions of people out of work, which cut the productive capacity of the capitalist world by a third—not yet have we reached that point.

But already we see something which had not developed on the same scale in the 1930s. This is a tremendous *social* crisis of imperialism, the bringing into struggle of layers which previously the bourgeoisie rested its rule upon or which it thought it could kick around without any response.

I think we can look at this in relation just to two events, two types of struggle with which I am well acquainted from my own country. Firstly, as Comrade Mary-Alice Waters talked of, is the development of the struggle for women's liberation. In all countries in Europe, for decades, the bourgeoisie conceived of the women of the working class as fodder for exploitation, and all women as electoral fodder to vote for their capitalist parties. They expected to divide the working class from its allies and to divide the working class internally.

Now, this previous fodder has begun to struggle, and they're confused. They don't know what to do about this situation. Again from my own country, we can see this. For ten years they have told the women of Britain that they would pass laws which would solve their problems. They would get equal pay, because they passed an act of Parliament that said they would have equal pay. They would get the right to abortion, because they would pass an act of Parliament that said they would. Discrimination in jobs would be prevented, because they passed a law.

And they even promised us the date. They promised in 1975 there would be equal pay for women, there would be an end to sex discrimination, there would be the maintenance of the right of abortion. They are unable to deliver any of those things.

Instead, showing the contempt they have for the women of society and for the whole working class, they said, "What do we have in 1975? We have the first woman leader of the Conservative Party."

It shows the contempt which they have for people, that they can't give equal pay, they can't give the right to abortion, they can't give the right to liberation of women, and they think now that the women of society will be satisfied with Margaret Thatcher.

Secondly, we have in Europe today an export, if you like, the most filthy export of U.S. imperialism—the virus of racism. Something which you have known for many decades, for the whole history of the United States, we see

developing clearly in Europe. In my own country in the last two months we've had three Asian workers murdered by racist gangs. We have seen gangs of white lumpens, organized by fascists, attacking Blacks on the streets. We have seen, in the south of France, Algerian and African workers attacked by fascists openly supported by the mayor of some of the towns in southern France.

Yet, once again, the ruling class, as in the United States—because we learn the positive things in the United States as well as the bad ones—find, as we have seen in Britain, a tremendous development of Black youth fighting back, the real organization of Black self-defense, a real fight-back. Now when these white lumpens and these same fascists enter the Black areas of London to attack people, they get a fight. They get banged on the head. They don't like it. The government retreats. It thought that it could just use the backwardness the rulers foster in some sections of the white working class against people who would be intimidated and scared by the immigration laws and by their racist campaigns, but it has not worked.

The social base on which the bourgeoisie bases itself in every country of the world today is much weaker than it was. This produces terrible things. Every time we see this positive aspect we must see the way the bourgeoisie attempts to deal with this. We see in the world today the denial of democratic rights, the use of barbarism of the Middle Ages, of torture, on a world scale never previously seen.

It is not an accident. Unable anymore to mobilize confused, petty-bourgeois masses, people who were misled into believing that their interests lay with the ruling class, unable to organize big, fascist gangs in many countries, the bourgeoisie tries to use its own state apparatus to smash, to terrify, all those who attempt to resist it. What a disgusting thing. What a symbol of the decay of the bourgeoisie. One of the first things they did in their greatest bourgeois revolution, that is, the French revolution, was to abolish at one stroke the use of torture as an instrument of the judicial system. Today they reintroduce it in every country in the world. That is the sign, as Trotsky put it, of the curve of capitalist development.

We see also the fear of the ruling class. These terrible things they do express their own fear. Here again, we may examine how the bourgeoisie has degenerated, how it will fight no longer even for those things which it gained. Its great progressive achievements it today overturns.

Just one little thing which strikes me personally: While I was coming to New York and enjoying the customary hospitality of the U.S. immigration authorities, I thought to myself that I should really be slightly flattered here, because in the nineteenth century Marx could come to my country and write. Lenin could come to Britain. Engels lived in Britain. In every country the bourgeoisie allowed people to move from one country to another. Now they're scared of Ernest Mandel, Alan Jones, Tariq Ali. They have more fear of us than we have confidence in ourselves. That shows their fear.

I would also like to extend special greetings from the many comrades in the Fourth International in Europe who would like to be here but are prevented by the government of your country. And I'm sure that you will change that and they will be at future conventions of the SWP.

The third development we see today in addition to this social crisis is the beginning of the great maneuvers of the workers parties, in particular in Europe. These gentlemen

we have much experience with. They will scream for soviets when they suit them. They will kill workers when it suits them. They will do anything which will defend the interests of the class they serve, that is, the ruling class.

Today, they begin to engage in their great maneuvers. First, after 1968, they tried to beat down the new rise of the working class with repression. They claimed that the Trotskyists were fascists, that the ultraleftists were leading to rightist maneuvers. They now are forced to maneuver in front of the working class. We see these maneuvers with the Union of the Left in France, with the movement towards the "historic compromise" in Italy, with the maneuvers of the Communist Party and the Socialist Party in Portugal, with what we know we will see tomorrow in Spain. During the next days we will discuss the new political tasks which we have to undertake to confront this. This is the third crucial development.

If we look at these processes from the point of view of the development of our international, I think we greatly underestimate the tremendous changes which these developments I've outlined—the social developments of the crisis of capitalist society, of the world revolution, and of the political crisis of the reformists and the centrists—what a transformation this is beginning to bring about in our own ranks.

Many comrades know of the new organizations which have joined the Fourth International since the Ninth and since the Tenth World Congress. That we have for the first time Trotskyists in Finland, in Sweden, in Portugal, in Puerto Rico. We've recruited the first real former Maoists of the Cultural Revolution in Hong Kong to the Fourth International. Many comrades are aware of this.

But there are some striking transformations which we fail to notice. We were discussing the preparations for the next World Congress at the last meeting of the United Secretariat and a very striking fact emerged. At the next World Congress of the Fourth International, almost without doubt, the development of the organizations of the Fourth International in Latin America and in Spain will mean that for the first time in the history of our international the majority of the comrades of the Fourth International will have Spanish as their national language. This development means that the English-speaking, Anglo-Saxons of the imperialist-dominated world are now going to be in a minority in at least one international organization in that world, and we're very proud of that.

If we look at these developments not merely in Latin America but in Spain, I think I must express here how wonderful this is for the Fourth International, particularly in Europe. In no country, except for the Soviet Union, have Trotskyists been more brutally suppressed, murdered, and killed than in Spain. The degeneration of the Spanish Stalinists was so deep that when, at the end of the civil war, the Trotskyists had to leave Spain or went into the underground, they lynched nearly 300 yards from the French border one of Trotsky's secretaries. That is the degeneration they went to.

Now, we see for the first time since 1936 Trotskyist leaders, Ernest Mandel, Peter Camejo, able to speak to thousands of people in that country. We see, for example in the last meeting of the workers commissions in the Basque country, a situation whereby the Communist Party was forced to spend a large part of this meeting arguing against the Trotskyists having representation on the

Basque coordinating committee of the workers commissions because we refused to sign their popular-front agreement. They spent two days arguing this, and finally we got 35 percent of the vote. The Stalinists won, but they showed their weakness. Now we are going to be able to make gains in developments of this type.

Already we see in Spain, with the tremendous struggles of the Spanish workers, more important, in many ways more advanced political developments than in Portugal. If I may make a comment, I think perhaps the *Militant* sometimes underreports, underestimates, the scope of the developments. Before the massacre of Vitoria, you have to understand that here was one of the closest developments towards the real self-organization of the working class. This town was completely taken over by the workers. They barricaded the roads leading in and out. They controlled entry. They elected workers representatives. Trotskyists were elected to the central strike committee of this town.

We now see these developments in the demonstrations for amnesty for political prisoners in Spain. A million or a million and a half participated in the last wave. These demonstrations are bigger than the demonstrations of 1936 in Spain. They're not yet armed. They don't yet have guns. That will come. But the scope of this movement is already bigger.

Today without doubt if we have a unification of the Trotskyist forces in Spain, we will have the largest section of the Fourth International in any country.

I think we should have a pledge at this Socialist Workers Party convention and in every section of the Fourth International. At the Ninth World Congress the largest section of the Fourth International was in France. At the Tenth, it was in Argentina. At the Eleventh, it must be in Spain.

However, we also see in the tremendous political turmoil in this country the problems which confront us. Not merely the Stalinists, not merely the Social Democrats, not merely the still undefeated, not finally vanquished, fascists, but the development of many centrist organizations, of a tremendous turmoil. Again, the figures illustrate this.

There are, for example, three organizations in Spain claiming to be Maoists or centrists with over 10,000 members. This is the type of political obstacle in addition to the Stalinists and Social Democrats that our comrades will have to overcome.

But we also see, under the impact of our forces, developments of many organizations of many currents towards the Fourth International. I can mention only some in the last period. Some people who left the Fourth International wrongly with Pablo in Holland rejoined the Fourth International. We have won groups from revolutionary nationalism, such as ETA-VI in Spain [Basque Nation and Freedom-VI], from Castroism, such as the GRS [Socialist Revolution Group] in the Antilles.

Wonderful things have happened that help us understand the development of Trotskyist ideas. I will just outline two for the comrades.

Rohan Wijeweera, who is the leader of the JVP [People's Liberation Front] in Ceylon, and who was defended by our Comrade Bala Tampoe at his trial, sent a letter we will publish. It is one of the most moving letters that I've ever seen and explains how he had been sentenced to life imprisonment with hard labor for his struggle. But, he said, there is always a positive side to everything, and it



gave him time to study. And there was only one thing that he found worth studying. He studied the works of Trotsky, *Intercontinental Press*, and the writings of the Fourth International. But, he said, the real thing which was wonderful is that the other prisoners in the jail—because he was slightly privileged, he could get the books—copied out these documents by hand and passed them from prisoner to prisoner to read.

In the Soviet Union also an amazing thing came into our possession—a hand-written copy of Trotsky's *My Life* that some person in the Soviet Union after all this repression copied. Just think of the labor of writing out that book by hand and passing it to people to read. That is the measure of the extent of Trotskyist ideas today.

We see moving towards us many more political currents in this period. Even to deal with something just for a moment which is distasteful—the filth which Healy pours out today concerning our comrades of the Socialist Workers Party, filth which makes us in Europe and in the Fourth International sick to see such things. What a disgusting thing, that today, after everything which the Stalinists did to the Trotskyists, we should see their same methods by people who claim to be part of the Trotskyist movement. Why do they do that? Because they are scared of the success, of the reunification, and the development of the Fourth International. This is the big thing. Everyone outside the Fourth International who failed to join that reunification has suffered splits. Today we are the central pole of Trotskyism in the world.

If I may say something to the comrades from Lutte Ouvrière, and to the comrades from the OCRFI who are here. Please do not misunderstand the position of the United Secretariat. We stand unequivocally for the right of all Trotskyists, whether they agree with the IMT, whether they agree with the LTF, whether they agree with themselves, to be within the Fourth International. There is only one thing: We insist on the maintenance of the organizational framework of the Fourth International. We want all the Trotskyists in the world, but we want them in a democratic-centralist Fourth International. That is the only point we make.

I would like to turn finally, to conclude my greetings, to certain problems of the relationship of the United States to world politics.

We see today how in every country in the world, as I outlined, the direct intervention of U.S. imperialism or even the absence of that direct intervention affects the course of the class struggle. You have your revelations in the United States which you brought about, we have some of our own revelations in Europe. We find, for example, that the CIA finances—of course, everyone knew this, it's just that it can be proved for the first time—finances parties in Europe like the Christian Democrats in Italy.

We found out something you should publicize—that the CIA has an official desk and telephone number in the British Ministry of Defense. They regard it as a branch office, I guess.

We know that as the revolutionary movement develops in Europe, the United States cannot stand aside. It will be forced to intervene. We rely, just as the Vietnamese revolutionaries did, on the American working class and on the Socialist Workers Party to defend us against that intervention. And we also see more clearly how the revolutionary process throughout the world and in Europe is bound together.

It is very important for us to understand the nature of this connection. The revolutionary struggle in any country is, of course, national in form. The tactics which have to be pursued to carry out that revolution must be decided in that country. But that struggle is not really national in content. When the Russian workers created the first workers state in the world, it was the Russian working class which conquered power. It was the Russian Bolsheviks which led them to victory. But it was the working class of the entire world which saved that revolution.

Even the power of the Russian working class could not have defeated the imperialist intervention by itself. It took the struggle of the German, of the French, of the British, of the United States, of the Japanese, working classes to save that workers state.

With the United States, we see a different interrelation. We see, as Trotsky said, that the fight of humanity will be decided on American soil. But that struggle will not be simply a struggle between the American working class and the oppressed nationalities of the United States against the American ruling class.

That struggle will be a struggle between the working class of the entire world and the oppressed of the entire world against the most powerful ruling class which has existed in history. That is the only way in which that revolution can be successful.

We are bound together in the following sense: For us to make developments in all the countries in the world, you have to carry on the struggle in the heartland of U.S. imperialism.

But it is our struggle, the victories which will be gained outside the United States, which will be, so to speak, the shoulders on which you can stand to attack your own ruling class.

We also know something else. You cannot fail even once.

We—the comrades here—I speak for all the international comrades—can make a victory in a country such as Spain as we hope to, or another country in Europe, or a colonial country, and that will not decide the fate of humanity. We can have a defeat in a country, and that will not finally settle the fate of humanity. If you fail, that will settle it. We only have to see something which for me summarized the situation of U.S. imperialism and its contradictions more clearly than anything. We had to celebrate the fact that we lost a war 200 years ago—one of the good wars to lose—with many TV programs on the United States. And one which struck me was called "The Arsenal." And you saw, I believe under the Colorado desert, the perfect expression of the law of uneven and combined development. These people here with their fingers on the button, to press, to destroy, the entire human race. And what were they like? They had a gun, each one, to shoot the other one if he went mad—the insanity of this system—and they started each session by a prayer, sitting down in front of these buttons and saying their prayer.

Here we have the perfect explanation of this society. The most advanced technology in the world and grotesque medieval mumbo jumbo. It is that medieval barbarism—as I say, the regurgitation of the filth which the bourgeoisie itself once destroyed—that you have to defeat in the United States.

And when I look at the Socialist Workers Party, the struggles in the antiwar movement, in Boston, the wonderful film which I hope you'll send us of the struggle to get on the ballot in California, we have confidence that

the Socialist Workers Party won't fail, that once will be enough in the United States.

Finally, I would like to turn my attention to a debate we will have in the next two days. There are many differences which divide the world Trotskyist movement and divide the Fourth International. These lead many times to a great deal of heat, hopefully to some light as well, but certainly to a great deal of heat. People get carried away. But I found a lovely quotation from Lenin which I hope can guide us in the discussion in the next two days. I used it at the IMG [International Marxist Group] conference and I think I can use it here. It's from his own discussion of a conference which unlike the present one ended in a split. But the political line is a good one. It's a comment he makes on the Second Congress of the RSDLP in Russia, the famous split congress:

"I cannot help recalling a conversation I happened to have at the Congress with one of the Center delegates," Lenin says. "He said, 'How oppressive the atmosphere is at our Congress.' He complained, 'This bitter fighting, this agitation one against the other, this biting controversy, this uncomradely attitude.' 'What a splendid thing our Congress is,' I replied. 'A free and open struggle. Opinions have been stated. Hands have been raised. A decision has been taken. A stage has been passed. Forward, that's the stuff for me. That's life.' The comrade of the Center stared at me in perplexity and shrugged his shoulders. We were talking different languages."

That's true. When we have this discussion in the next two days, as you have the discussion in the Socialist Workers Party conference, we have already made one great gain. We have already begun to speak a different language from anybody else. If you want to discuss Portugal, there is only one international current on this planet where you can discuss it. That is ours. If you want

to discuss Spain, there is only one organization in the world where you can discuss it.

We would prefer not to have the differences. But we regard it as a great step forward that we can have the discussion. In that sense, we talk a different language from every other current in world politics. No one should mistake the internal discussion of the Fourth International, the political differences, with the view that we're going to have a split. Even the political changes which have taken place in the internal tendencies and factions of the Fourth International show that. We have had a split in the LTF and a smaller split in the IMT on the question of Portugal.

That still shows that the Fourth International takes its positions on the real and fundamental questions of world politics. In Healyism, you split on dialectical materialism or who's the police agent. In Stalinism, you can never put forward the position in the first place in order to have the split. In Social Democracy, you can put forward the different position, but they won't let you hear yourself put the views forward. We're the only people who have the possibility to have that political discussion.

We talk a different language from everyone else. We will build the Fourth International, all of us. Firstly, the victories and the struggles in Europe and in the colonial world. Finally, the victory of the revolution in the United States. We will play a role with the Socialist Workers Party in creating the conditions for that victory. But it is you who will have to fight and who will have to deliver that final blow.

Something I learned from Argentinian Trotskyism in the last day—with clenched fist raised:

Long live the Socialist Workers Party!

Long live the Fourth International!

Long live the world socialist revolution!



## Greetings From Lutte Ouvrière

by Comrade Jacques

On behalf of Lutte Ouvrière, I am pleased to greet the twenty-eighth convention of the Socialist Workers Party. And I thank the comrades of the SWP for the invitation which they have sent to my organization.

It is the first time in the long history of the two organizations that a representative of Lutte Ouvrière has attended a convention of the SWP. We hope that it is the beginning of a comradely and fruitful contact between us.

We wish complete success to your convention, the consequences of which can be important not only for the SWP but also for the whole international Trotskyist movement. There are three reasons why we think it is important to establish regular relations between your organization and ours.

First, because what happens in the United States determines what happens in the rest of the world. You fight in the country which is the most important and most powerful imperialist country in the world. The defeat of this imperialism is indispensable if we are to build a new world, a socialist world. We know that this imperialism can only be defeated by the working class, and particularly by the American working class. We know also that only under the leadership of a revolutionary, communist, internationalist party, that is, of a Trotskyist party, will the American working class realize this task and win the victory.

We follow, therefore, with much interest, the efforts of all the Trotskyist revolutionaries who are devoted to building a true revolutionary workers party in this country.

Second, the relations between your party and our organization are important for us because we are interested in the current policy of your party, in the turn toward the working class which you decided upon at your last convention.

In France, Lutte Ouvrière has long advocated the idea that the Trotskyist movement must make its primary aim its implantation in the working class. We think that all the other tasks must be subordinated to this aim.

We think that the Trotskyist movement has remained essentially a petty-bourgeois movement for too many years, despite its program. We think that this is the cause of a big part of its mistakes and even of its divisions. We think it is vital that this Trotskyist movement roots itself in the working class. We think that the Trotskyist movement has not done this.

There are many differences between Lutte Ouvrière and the SWP on the way to do political work toward and inside the working class; for example, on the way to work in the unions, and these differences should be discussed and confronted.

Nevertheless we follow with great interest your activity in the working class. We wish the SWP complete success in this task.

Third, the relations between the SWP and Lutte Ouvrière are important because they hold the possibility of opening up international relations in the Trotskyist movement.

The international Trotskyist movement is deeply divided. Of course, there are deep political divergences between its different organizations and different currents. It would be foolish for us to deny them or to hide them.

But we think these differences should not prevent comradely relations, discussion, political confrontation, and common work between the different organizations and the different international tendencies.

As Trotskyists we want to build a world party of revolution which is centralized and democratic, a true Fourth International. Such a party will not be built in one day. In order for this party to really exist, three conditions are necessary: First, its national sections should be implanted in the working class. Second, part of the current differences should be overcome. Third, there should be an international leadership competent and recognized by the whole movement.

In our opinion, these three conditions don't exist today. But this doesn't mean that it is impossible to begin work which aims in the direction of constructing the Fourth International. It is possible to establish relations between groups which have been totally separated. It is possible to begin discussion, not to see what the differences are, which we already know, but to see exactly what are their practical implications. It is possible to have a common activity. It is possible to build an international organizational framework which encourages all of these things.

Such an organizational framework would be a first step in the direction of building a true international. It will have to be followed by many others. And it is indispensable to take the other steps.

These proposals were made in an address which Lutte Ouvrière, together with Combat Ouvrier, Union Africaine des Travailleurs Communistes Internationalistes, and Spark, made to the whole Trotskyist movement. We proposed then, and we continue to propose now, to establish an international framework within which there could be regular relations, exchange of information, discussion and common work on the international scale.

We are sure that some day the Trotskyist movement will drop its sectarian attitudes and undertake this task. This task doesn't depend only on the SWP and Lutte Ouvrière. But if we are able to establish comradely and fruitful relations, it would make this task easier. We could demonstrate that two important Trotskyist groups, despite deep differences, can discuss and, we hope, have a common activity. It would be an example which could have important consequences on the international Trotskyist movement.

Comrades, I give again the greetings of Lutte Ouvrière and wish for complete success of the work of your convention.

Long live the American working class!

Long live the American Trotskyist movement!

Long live the Fourth International!

## Greetings From the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International

by Comrade François

First of all, in the name of the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International (OCRFI), and especially of its organizations which are present at this convention, the GSTQ of Québec [Groupe Socialiste des Travailleurs du Québec], the Liga Obrera Marxista of Mexico, Política Obrera of Argentina, and the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste of France, I thank the leadership of the SWP for its invitation to attend this convention.

Our delegation is fully aware of the importance of the discussions taking place at this convention. This importance is linked to the major position occupied in the world class struggle by the American working class. Thus, the problems of the building of the revolutionary party in this citadel of imperialism, taking into account the concrete forms of capitalist rule in this country and the forms through which mass mobilizations develop against it, are of the greatest importance for Trotskyists all over the world. You may be assured that we will convey to our different organizations what we witnessed at this convention.

It is not possible in the limits of these greetings to deal with all the aspects of the present development and struggles of the SWP. But there is one thing we wish to emphasize. All the delegates at this convention—and all the members of the SWP—should not only be proud but conscious of the international importance of the blows their party has dealt the FBI and the CIA.

The fact that the political police of the ruling class of the most powerful imperialist country in the world has been obliged to retreat—and to retreat because of the offensive waged by the Trotskyist party—not only symbolizes the link between the struggle for democratic rights and the struggle for the socialist revolution, it is also an element which strengthens worldwide the struggle of all those who organize on the basis of the program of the Fourth International, and of all those who face repression.

Comrades, it would be improper to use the opportunity given by these greetings as a substitute for the political discussion which must take place and therefore to indulge now in polemics. Nonetheless, this contribution would lose much of its content if we did not make clear how we understand our participation at this convention.

For us, our presence at the Twenty-Eighth National Convention of the SWP is in accordance with the whole approach we've had to what we regard as the continuing crisis of and responsibility facing the Fourth International.

It will not be necessary to deal at length with this problem because our positions are public and you have published here, in your internal bulletins, all the correspondence and the documents.

In May 1973, we asked for a discussion with the United Secretariat—the framework we suggested then being our

participation in some form at the Tenth World Congress—because, as we wrote, *“we considered that in the present conjuncture it is possible to develop a clear discussion on the differences that exist and in a different sort of context than one in which the 1952-53 split occurred and hardened.”*

As you know, we have since many times repeated those proposals in different forms. We do not raise any preconditions to the opening of the discussion, we leave open the question of the agenda.

The objection has been made that such a discussion would be meaningless because we regarded the positions of some of those to whom we were offering to discuss as contrary to the program and the principles of the Fourth International.

We are indeed convinced that matters of principle and program are involved, that positions contrary to the program of the Fourth International have been developed and are at the root of the entire crisis, and must be politically eliminated to ensure the stability of a unified, rebuilt Fourth International.

But we ask no one to share those views as a condition to start the discussion. We are open to the possibility that discussion and common work may demonstrate that some of our initial views are off the mark. And we assume members of the United Secretariat will take the same objective stance. And it is precisely the seriousness of the ideas in debate that emphasize the need for an objective discussion that takes into account the concrete development of the class struggle.

Our whole approach proceeds from the fact that we relate the problems of the Fourth International, of its history, of its crisis, to the objective developments in the world class struggle. And the most recent developments in our opinion have made still more acute the need for such a discussion.

Of course, the revolutionary movement has always known—and has developed—through ideological struggles. In the years of the formation of the Fourth International, before World War II, there were also differences, factional struggles, splits, and more than one organization in various countries. But on the main problems of the world class struggle (for instance, the Spanish revolution), the political authority and guidance of Trotsky made clear what a revolutionary policy was and what it was not.

Today we have experienced again the first expression of proletarian revolution in Europe through the Portuguese events. And far from witnessing the unification of the different forces claiming to be Trotskyist around this major issue, we have witnessed a deepening of the differences, reaching to the point of fundamentally opposed politics in the class struggle.

But at the same time, those events—the Portuguese

revolution, but also the main trends of the world class struggle as they have developed since—not only create favorable objective conditions for the building of strong national sections of the Fourth, but provide the basis and the experience through which the discussion can reach a positive conclusion, that is, a strengthened and unified Fourth International, solidly based on the Trotskyist program. That is why we once again say that the most urgent need is to set up a proper framework for an organized international discussion among the different organizations who state their willingness to build the Fourth International as a democratic-centralist organization. No Trotskyist can deny the need for such a discussion.

That is why we say again that we raise no conditions as to the form of the discussion.

Comrades, we are all convinced that objective conditions, as favorable as they may be, will not by themselves solve the crisis of revolutionary leadership. On the contrary, they emphasize the responsibility of revolutionary organizations.

Even a swift glance at the world situation is enough to confirm the revolutionary character of the period we are living and struggling in. The shock wave of the defeat of U.S. imperialism has hit all continents—the uprising of the Black masses of South Africa is a clear indication of this. At the same time, as can be seen in Latin America, American imperialism is fighting back with a savage violence.

In Europe, political and social crises are ripening not only in Italy, in France, but also in countries like Britain. And in Spain—as in Portugal at the eve of April 1974—all the conditions of a revolutionary explosion are combining. It is not a mere coincidence that at the time when the Spanish postmen were imposing against the Francoist monarchy the right to strike, the Polish workers were answering them at the other end of Europe, resuming the movement toward the political revolution.

Trotsky once remarked—in his 1928 criticism of the draft program of the Communist International—that politics understood as a mass historical force always lags behind economy. In that sense, when we speak of the full validity of the Transitional Program, we are not only referring to the theoretical basis and tradition of our movement, but

stressing the fact that we are living in the period which is fully the period for which the Transitional Program was written.

And this brings me back to the remarks by which I started this contribution: the international importance of this convention, the key international importance of the struggles being waged in the U.S.A.

In the presentation he gave for comrades attending a convention of the SWP for the first time, Comrade Pulley said that American imperialism is the main obstacle to the emancipation of mankind.

Yes, indeed, and that is why all the allies of imperialism, their agents in the workers movement, always attempt to identify American imperialism with the American people and the American working class.

It is a necessary international duty to expose everywhere that lie. The present ruling class is even afraid to tell the truth about the way in which this country came into being two centuries ago.

But let's not forget another date. If the international day of struggle of the world working class is the first of May, it is because of what happened in Chicago in May 1886, when the Chicago police used against the American working class the methods that were going to be developed and used on a world scale by American imperialism.

There is a tradition of ruthless violence, of racism, of frame-up trials on the part of this ruling class. There is also a revolutionary heritage of the struggle of the working class, of the Blacks, and of all those oppressed in the U.S. by American imperialism.

And that heritage that the SWP is rooted in and rests on in its fight for the political independence of the working class is part and parcel of an international program, the perspectives and the program of the Fourth International.

I think that is the message that one can read loud and clear in the proceedings of the twenty-eighth convention of the SWP.

And it is in that spirit that I am happy to convey our fraternal greetings to your twenty-eighth convention and wish you new success in your fight to build the revolutionary party.

Long live the Socialist Workers Party!  
Long live the Fourth International!

## Welcome to Convention

by Betsey Stone

We have gathered here for the Twenty-Eighth National Convention of the Socialist Workers Party not only delegates to the convention, members of the Socialist Workers Party, members of the Young Socialist Alliance, and more people who are at a convention of the SWP for the first time than ever before; we also have many important guests from countries throughout the world as well as guests from the U.S.

We have a delegation here from Puerto Rico. There are representatives here from Mexico, from Argentina, from Costa Rica.

There are comrades here from revolutionary movements in Germany, Denmark, Italy, Iran, Spain, Sweden, Britain, France, Portugal, and Ireland.

There is a whole group of Australians—I think as many as eight or nine. Also a good many Canadians, with quite a large contingent from Québec.

There are also many others who would like to have been present but who are unable because they are under travel bans of either the U.S. government or governments in their own country. This includes comrades from India, New Zealand, Britain, Belgium, and our Chinese comrades.

Everything at our convention is being translated into both French and Spanish. Among our guests from here in the U.S. are people who are active in a number of different organizations fighting for social change. These include activists in the National Organization for Women, the NAACP, the Gary Tyler Defense Committee, and the trade-union movement. I don't know if they are here yet, but there is also a large contingent from the Raza Unida Party in New Mexico.

There's another group we should give a special welcome to. You can tell who they are, because you walk up to them, and out of habit, they ask you if you are a registered voter in the state of California. That's the California petitioners to get the SWP candidates on the ballot. Just this week they filed more than 138,000 signatures for the SWP presidential ticket of Peter Camejo and Willie Mae Reid and more than 134,000 signatures for the SWP candidate for U.S. Senate, Omari Musa.

We should also take special note of the delegations here from new branches of the party in cities where we had no branch of the SWP before.

Since our last convention, branches have been formed in twelve new cities. These include: St. Paul, Minnesota; Toledo, Ohio; Cincinnati, Ohio; Dallas, Texas; Oakland, California; Kansas City, Missouri; Richmond, Virginia; San Antonio, Texas; Baltimore, Maryland; New Orleans, Louisiana; San Jose, California; and Newark, New Jersey, where we now have two branches.

There are also SWP organizing committees in three other new cities: Indianapolis, Indiana; Louisville, Kentucky; and Tacoma, Washington.

In addition to this, there are contingents of people present at the convention from cities where we hope that in the not too distant future we will have branches:

Albany, New York; Salt Lake City, Utah; Phoenix, Arizona; and Miami, Florida.

Next, I want to read a short message from a comrade who wanted to be here very much, and who, if we have anything to do with it, is going to be here at one of our future conventions—that's Hugo Blanco.

Hugo Blanco is a Peruvian revolutionary. He was a leader of mass peasant struggles in Peru and is a leader of the Fourth International.

For many years Hugo Blanco has been subject to severe repression because of his commitment to the revolutionary-socialist movement. He spent years in prison, and his life was spared and he was freed only after an international protest campaign waged by the entire world Trotskyist movement. He's also spent many years in exile. Just recently, the reactionary Peruvian government showed again that they are still afraid of even the presence of Hugo Blanco in Peru, because they have exiled him again. He wrote us this message from Stockholm, where he now is. I'm told by people who know Hugo well that the message he sent is typical of him, that is, both concise and to the point.

He says:

"Dear American comrades,

I hope your convention will be successful and that you will continue to set an example of how to persevere in building the revolutionary party."

Signed, Hugo Blanco

Hugo Blanco has been banned not only from Peru, but also from the U.S., and we are now fighting, along with other supporters of civil rights, to remove this ban. In the meantime, we know Hugo Blanco is with us in spirit at this convention, and for this reason the Presiding Committee would like to place a special proposal before the convention: That is, that we make Hugo Blanco honorary chairperson of this convention.

Of course, in addition to Hugo Blanco, there have been many comrades throughout the world who have been subject to repression in the last year. In Argentina since the right-wing coup, the repression has been especially severe. Many comrades in Argentina have been killed. Many others are in jail.

Later in the convention, there will be a special point about the repression in Argentina that will tell more about the situation there and how we can help.

As we begin this convention, I think we should take a moment to remember our comrades in Argentina and our comrades throughout the world who have died in the last year. Also, since our last convention, the SWP has lost one of its own longtime leaders—Comrade Herman Kirsch—who died in Cleveland last fall.

I would like to ask you all at this time to please stand for a moment of silence in honor of the contributions these comrades have made.

The SWP convention is the highest body of the Socialist Workers Party. It is here where the decisions will be made that will guide our work until the next convention. The convention delegates will also elect a new party leadership—a new National Committee.

There are three major resolutions before this convention. The Political Resolution, a resolution on the Chicano struggle, and one on the struggle of Puerto Ricans in the U.S. All these resolutions have been discussed in the party branches in the three months leading up to the convention. The party has also published an internal discussion bulletin during the last three months in which any

member of the party could write down ideas on any topic for the rest of the party to read. These bulletins are available for anyone attending the convention to buy.

The delegates have been elected to the convention only after thoroughly discussing and voting on the resolutions.

Last night, at a meeting of the outgoing National Committee of the party, the National Committee voted to present to the convention a series of proposals for how to organize the convention; that is, proposals for the agenda, schedule, and the rules that will govern how we proceed. At this time we will take up these organizational proposals so we can then proceed with the business of the convention.

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# Schedule

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## TWENTY-EIGHTH NATIONAL SWP CONVENTION

### Saturday, August 7

- 8:00 - 8:00 Registration, *Skating Rink*
- 12:30 - 1:30 Lunch, *South Hall* (not prepaid)
- 6:00 - 8:00 Dinner, *South and Dascomb Halls* (meal cards)
- 8:00 - 10:00 Introductory meeting and get-together for members and friends who are attending their first SWP convention, *South Hall Dining Area*  
National Committee plenum (National Committee members, branch and local organizers), *King 306*  
Set up for convention sessions; volunteers needed. *Skating Rink*
- 8:00 - 1:00 Registration, *South Hall*  
Swimming Pool open, *Phillips Gym*
- 10:00 - 1:00 Cabaret, *Lord Hall*  
Snack Bar open, *Wilder Hall*  
Movie, "Lucia," *Hall Auditorium*

### Sunday, August 8

- 7:30 - 8:30 Breakfast, *South and Dascomb Halls*
- 9:00 - 12:00 CONVENTION SESSION, *Skating Rink*
- 9:00 - 10:00 **Welcome to the Convention**  
**Organization of the Convention.** Reporter for the Political Committee: Betsey Stone
- 10:00 - 11:15 **Political Resolution Report.** Reporter for the Political Committee: Jack Barnes
- 11:15 - 12:00 Discussion, Political Resolution Report
- 12:00 - 1:30 Lunch, *Fieldhouse, South and Dascomb Halls*
- 1:30 - 5:30 CONVENTION SESSION, *Skating Rink*
- 1:30 - 3:45 Discussion continues, Political Resolution Report
- 3:45 - 4:15 Summary and vote, Political Resolution Report
- 4:15 - 5:15 **Desegregation Struggle Balance Sheet Report.**  
Reporter for the Political Committee: Malik Miah
- 5:15 - 5:45 Discussion, Desegregation Report
- 6:00 - 8:00 Dinner, *South and Dascomb Halls*
- 8:00 - 10:00 SPECIAL CONVENTION REPORT, *Finney Chapel*
- 8:00 - 10:00 Expansion Fund Report

10:30 - 1:00 Cabaret, *Lord Hall*  
Snack Bar open, *Wilder Hall*  
Swimming Pool open, *Phillips Gym*  
Movie, "Malcolm X," *Hall Auditorium*

### Monday, August 9

7:30 - 8:30 Breakfast, *South and Dascomb Halls*

9:00 - 12:00 CONVENTION SESSION, *Skating Rink*

9:00 - 11:30 Discussion continues, Desegregation Report

11:30 - 12:00 Summary and vote, Desegregation Report

12:00 - 1:30 Lunch, *Fieldhouse, South and Dascomb Halls*

1:30 - 3:30 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL TALK, *Skating Rink*

1:30 - 3:30 **The Role of Women's Liberation in the Socialist Revolution.** Reporter for the Political Committee: Mary-Alice Waters

3:30 - 5:30 WORKSHOPS, PANELS, FRACTIONS, and CLASSES

3:30 - 5:30 Party Participation in the Struggle Against Racism—led by Malik Miah, *Warner Auditorium*

Defense Activity for Latin American Political Prisoners—led by Mirta Vidal, *King 106*

Steelworkers—led by Andy Rose, *King 327*

Pathfinder Literature Distribution Perspectives in the New Branches—led by Peggy Brundy, *King 341*

Party Finances—led by Ove Aspoy, *King 337*

Public Employees—led by Ray Markey and Walter Lippmann, *Bryant in Kettering Hall*

Coalition of Labor Union Women—led by Carol DeBerry, *King 223*

Defense of Soviet and Eastern European Dissidents—led by David Frankel, *Beaumont in Kettering Hall*

Chinese-Americans, Filipinos, and Japanese-Americans—led by Diane Rupp, *King 227*

Campaign Media—led by Jean Savage, *King 219*

Youth Support to the 1976 Election Campaign—led by Betsy Farley, *King 306*

First of Three Talks on the Canadian Political Situation, In English—*King 101*; In French—*King 201*

6:00 - 8:00 Dinner, *South and Dascomb Halls*

8:00 - 10:00 CONVENTION SESSION, *Skating Rink*

8:00 - 9:00 **The Crisis of American Capitalism and the Struggle for Chicano Liberation Report.** Reporter for the Political Committee: Olga Rodríguez

9:00 - 10:00 Discussion, Chicano Report

10:30 - 1:00 Cabaret, *Lord Hall*  
Snack Bar open, *Wilder Hall*  
Swimming Pool open, *Phillips Gym*  
Movie, "Salt of the Earth" and "Yo Soy Joaquin," *Hall Auditorium*

### Tuesday, August 10

7:30 - 8:30 Breakfast, *South and Dascomb Halls*

9:00 - 12:00 CONVENTION SESSION, *Skating Rink*

9:00 - 10:00 Discussion continues, Chicano Report

10:00 - 10:30 Summary and vote, Chicano Report

- 10:30 - 11:30 **The Emerging Puerto Rican Struggle in the United States and Its Perspectives Report.** Reporter for the Political Committee: Catarino Garza
- 11:30 - 12:00 Discussion, Puerto Rican Report
- 12:00 - 1:30 Lunch, *Fieldhouse, South and Dascomb Halls*
- 1:30 - 3:30 CONVENTION SESSION, *Skating Rink*
- 1:30 - 3:00 Discussion continues, Puerto Rican Report
- 3:00 - 3:30 Summary and vote, Puerto Rican Report
- 3:30 - 5:30 WORKSHOPS, PANELS, FRACTIONS, and CLASSES
- 3:30 - 5:30 The Women's Liberation Movement Today—led by Cindy Jaquith, *Warner Auditorium*
- The Party's Suit Against Government Harassment—led by Syd Stapleton, *Finney Chapel*
- How to Write for the *Militant*—led by Nelson Blackstock, *King 223*
- Blacks in the Unions—led by B.R. Washington, *King 306*
- Defense of Iranian Political Prisoners—led by John Benson, *King 237*
- Party Participation in the Chicano Movement—led by Mike Zárate, *Bryant in Kettering Hall*
- Basic Bookstore Techniques—led by Terry Lunn, *King 341*
- Election Campaign Finances—led by Arthur Hughes, *King 243*
- Party Education Plans—led by Fred Feldman, *King 239*
- Fundraising in the Antiracist Movement—led by Maceo Dixon and Lisa Potash, *King 241*
- High School Activities—led by Rohima Miah, *King 343*
- Election Campaign Traveling Teams—led by Betsy Farley, *King 337*
- Defending the Arab Revolution—led by Peter Seidman, *King 106*
- National Education Association—led by Ed Fruit, *King 323*
- Second of Three Talks on the Canadian Political Situation, In English—*King 101*; In French—*King 201*
- Historical Experience of Splits and Fusion—Building the Bolshevik Party, Communist International, and Fourth International—by Alan Jones, *Physics Building Auditorium*
- 6:00 - 8:00 Dinner, *South and Dascomb Halls*  
YSA National Committee plenum, *King 306*
- 8:00 - 10:15 CONVENTION SESSION, *Skating Rink*
- 8:00 - 9:15 **Tasks and Perspectives Report.** Reporter for the Political Committee: Larry Seigle
- 9:15 - 10:15 Discussion, Tasks and Perspectives Report
- 10:30 - 1:00 Cabaret, *Lord Hall*  
Snack Bar open, *Wilder Hall*  
Swimming Pool open, *Phillips Gym*  
Movie, "How We Got the Vote," and "Ten Days That Shook the World," *Hall Auditorium*

### Wednesday, August 11

- 7:30 - 8:30 Breakfast, *South and Dascomb Halls*
- 9:00 - 12:00 CONVENTION SESSION, *Skating Rink*

- 9:00 - 11:00 Discussion, Tasks and Perspectives Report  
 11:00 - 11:45 Greetings: Lutte Ouvrière, Organizing  
 Committee for the Reconstruction  
 of the Fourth International
- 12:00 - 1:30 Lunch, *South and Dascomb Halls*
- 1:30 - 6:00 CONVENTION SESSION, *Skating Rink*  
 1:30 - 2:30 Discussion continues, Tasks and Perspectives  
 Report  
 2:30 - 3:00 Summary and vote, Tasks and Perspectives  
 Report  
 3:00 - 3:45 Greetings: United Secretariat  
 3:45 - 4:45 Youth Report. Reporter: Nan Bailey,  
 YSA National Chairperson  
 4:45 - 5:45 Discussion, Youth Report
- 6:00 - 8:00 Dinner, *South and Dascomb Halls*  
 YSA National Committee plenum, *King 306*
- 8:00 - 9:15 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL TALK, *Skating Rink*  
 8:00 - 9:15 **The Revolution in Southern Africa.**  
 Reporter for the Political Committee:  
 Tony Thomas
- 9:30 - 11:00 Special Concert by Gaudencio Thiago  
 de Mello, *Finney Chapel* (Ausp. USLA;  
 voluntary contribution)
- 11:00 - 1:00 Cabaret, *Lord Hall*  
 Snack Bar open, *Wilder Hall*  
 Swimming Pool open, *Phillips Gym*  
 Movie, "Gold Rush," *Hall Auditorium*

#### Thursday, August 12

- 7:30 - 8:30 Breakfast, *South and Dascomb Halls*
- 9:00 - 12:00 CONVENTION SESSION, *Skating Rink*  
 9:00 - 9:30 Discussion continues, Youth Report  
 9:30 - 9:45 Summary, Youth Report  
 9:45 - 11:45 **Report on Key Issues of the Portuguese,  
 Italian, and Mexican Elections.**  
 Reporter for the Political Committee:  
 Barry Sheppard
- 12:00 - 1:30 Lunch, *South and Dascomb Halls*
- 1:30 - 5:30 CONVENTION SESSION, *Skating Rink*  
 1:30 - 4:30 Discussion, Elections Report  
 4:30 - 5:30 Summary and vote, Elections Report
- 6:00 - 8:00 Dinner, *South and Dascomb Halls*
- 8:00 - 10:00 WORKSHOPS, PANELS, FRACTIONS, and CLASSES  
 8:00 - 10:00 Fall Circulation Campaign for the *Militant*—led  
 by Harvey McArthur, *Bryant in Kettering Hall*  
 1976 Election Campaign—led by Andrea Morell,  
*King 306*  
 Building Trades—led by Steve Bloom, *King 237*  
 American Federation of Teachers—led by Jeff  
 Mackler, *King 337*  
 Speakers Bureau—led by Michael Maggi, *King 323*  
 Hospital Workers—led by Lynn Henderson, *King 201*  
 Party Participation in the Puerto Rican Movement—  
 led by Catarino Garza, *King 241*  
 Party Participation in the Struggle for Black  
 Women's Liberation—led by Cathy Sedwick, *King 341*  
 YSA Finances—led by John Linder, *King 101*  
 Electrical Workers—led by Frank Lovell, *King 235*  
 Transit Workers—led by Steve Beumer, *King 327*



Teamsters—led by Larry Stewart, *King 221*  
Printing Trades—led by Mark Ugolini, *King 343*  
Presentation on Spark, *King 106*

10:30 - 1:00 Cabaret, *Lord Hall*  
Snack Bar open, *Wilder Hall*  
Swimming Pool open, *Phillips Gym*  
Movie, "The Harder They Come," *Hall Auditorium*

### Friday, August 13

7:30 - 8:30 Breakfast, *South and Dascomb Halls*

9:00 - 10:00 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL TALK, *Skating Rink*  
9:00 - 10:00 **Stalinism and the Political Revolution  
in China.** Reporter for the Political  
Committee: Doug Jenness

10:00 - 12:00 CONVENTION SESSION, *Skating Rink*  
10:00 - 10:30 Credentials Committee Report  
10:30 - 12:00 **Report on Special World Movement Point**

12:00 - 1:30 Lunch, *South and Dascomb Halls*

1:30 - 4:00 CONVENTION SESSION, *Skating Rink*  
1:30 - 3:00 Discussion, Special World Movement Point  
3:00 - 4:00 Summaries and vote, Special World  
Movement Point

4:00 Singing of "The Internationale"

4:00 - 6:00 WORKSHOPS, PANELS, FRACTIONS, and CLASSES

4:00 - 6:00 How to Win New Members—led by John Hawkins,  
*Warner Auditorium*  
How to Take Better Photos for the *Militant*—  
led by Lou Howort, *King 223*  
Equal Rights Amendment Support Activity—led  
by Nancy Brown, *King 306*  
Communication Workers—led by Chris Rayson,  
*King 237*  
Auto Workers—led by Frank Lovell, *King 221*  
Producing Politically Attractive, Regular Forums—  
led by Melissa Singler, *King 323*  
Panel Discussion by Chicano Activists, *King 106*  
The NAACP in the Black Movement Today—led  
by Malik Miah, *King 337*  
1976 Election Campaign Candidates Workshop—led  
by Andrea Morell, *Kulas Hall*  
International Women's Liberation Panel,  
*Bryant in Kettering Hall*  
Lawyers and Law Students—led by Syd Stapleton,  
*King 327*  
How to Comply with Election Disclosure Laws  
and File Federal Reports—led by Arthur Hughes,  
*King 243*  
Mineworkers—led by Ed Heisler, *King 227*  
Last of Three Talks on the Canadian Political  
Situation, In English—*King 101*; In  
French—*King 201*

Set up for evening Rally; volunteers needed, *Skating Rink*

6:00 - 8:00 Dinner, *South and Dascomb Halls*

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8:00 - 10:00 SWP Party-Building Rally  
Speakers include Peter Camejo and Willie Mae  
Reid, SWP candidates for U.S. president and  
vice-president, and special guests. *Skating Rink*

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10:00 - 1:00 Final Cabaret, raffle, *Skating Rink*

**Saturday, August 14**

7:30 - 8:30 Breakfast, *South and Dascomb Halls*

8:30 - 12:00 CONVENTION SESSION, *Warner Auditorium*

8:30 - 12:00 Election of the National Committee (Delegates and Fraternal Delegates)

9:00 - 12:00 Clean up at the rink; volunteers needed; *Skating Rink*

12:00 - 1:30 Lunch, *South and Dascomb Halls*

## **Campaign Against Repression in Argentina**

by **Judy White**

In the four months since the military coup in Argentina, that country has come to look more and more like Chile. General Videla's campaign to annihilate "subversion" has resulted in the imprisonment or death of thousands of revolutionists, trade-union and student activists, and supporters of the previous Peronist government. Even priests have been killed and arrested.

There has been a campaign of xenophobia whipped up against political exiles living in Argentina. Bans have been placed on everything from Marxist literature to the functioning of political parties and trade unions. The Videla junta has brutally slashed the standard of living of the Argentine people.

In many ways, the situation in Argentina is more dangerous than in Chile, in fact, because it is not as well known. That is one reason there have been fewer protests, which means Videla can get away with his barbaric repression more easily than Pinochet could.

But we do have some facts available on the extent of the repression in Argentina. The official repression, by the army, has cost the lives of at least 400 so-called subversives. Among them are dedicated revolutionists like Mario Roberto Santucho, leader of the People's Revolutionary Army, the ERP, who was gunned down in a raid on an apartment near Buenos Aires July 19. It has since been reported that Santucho's compañera and their four- and seven-year-old children were killed at the same time.

Political prisoners have been shot to death in police vans, on their way from jail to the courts, in Córdoba.

Política Obrera, the Argentine affiliate of the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International, reported the case of one of its members who was imprisoned in the Córdoba penitentiary. This was a comrade who had been in jail for a year and a half, a former guerrilla, who was recruited to Trotskyism while in prison. In mid-July he died, according to police records from a cerebral hemorrhage. But when his parents went to the morgue to claim the body, they could see that he had been shot in the neck. There were fifty other unidentified bodies in the same morgue.

Then there are the victims of the unofficial repression—the ultraright murder gangs, like the Argentine Anticomunist Alliance. These are gangs made up of military and police personnel out of uniform. The government, of course, claims total ignorance and helplessness to deal with these gangs. They were kidnapping, torturing, and

killing trade-union activists and leftists at a rate of at least 100 per month before the military coup, and reports indicate that they are still operating as before. The difference now is that the newspapers do not report most of their actions.

A July 24 letter from the PST, the Argentine Socialist Workers Party, reported the almost certain death of one of its members, who was a leader in a Buenos Aires factory, Carlos Augustín Falcón. He was kidnapped from his home on March 2. Later he was seen being brutally tortured, and since then there has been no further word of him.

In January a leader of the Córdoba labor movement, Luis Alberto López, disappeared. López was the general secretary of a factory committee at the Fiat plant in that city, a prominent member of a city-wide coordinating committee of workers organizations and a supporter of the Trotskyist journal *Manifiesto Obrero*. He has not been heard from since.

Even the families of trade-union activists and revolutionists, people who had nothing to do with working-class politics, are not exempt from the death squads. Specially targeted by groups like the AAA have been the more than 400,000 Latin American political refugees living in Argentina. Victims of dictatorships in Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, and other countries, they fled to the last haven for leftists in the Southern Cone.

Many prominent exiles have been killed by ultrarightist gangs since the coup, like former Bolivian President Juan José Torres. Dozens of others have been kidnapped, tortured, and told to get out of the country fast or they too would be murdered.

For those who are in prison, conditions are very bad. Most of the estimated 20,000 political prisoners are being held at the disposal of the executive power. That means they can be held indefinitely without trial. If they do come to trial, it is before a military tribunal that hands down sentence within forty-eight hours, sentences like the eight years recently given to a worker who was handing out leaflets in a meat-packing plant.

The majority of these prisoners are workers who are activists in their factories and workplaces. The food they are given is so poor that liver and stomach problems, anemia, and extreme weight loss are common. Prisoners are not allowed to perform any physical activity or to study. Their reading is restricted at the whim of the authorities. At the Córdoba penitentiary, all prisoners

have been incommunicado since the March 24 coup.

For women political prisoners with infant children, a new law has been passed, stating that the child can stay with its mother only until it is six months old.

A series of decrees has banned by name most political parties and organizations. The newspapers and other literature of these groups have been forbidden. Anyone engaging in trade-union activity is subject to imprisonment. The death penalty has been reinstated. And anyone found with arms, who is not a member of the repressive forces, is subject to ten years imprisonment.

Over 100 members of the PST are presently in prison. The party has made the case of its 1973 vice-presidential candidate, José Páez, a focus of its campaign to win the release of political prisoners. Páez was one of the main leaders of the auto workers union in Córdoba that was in the vanguard of the 1969 upsurge in that city, the Cordobazo.

In 1971 he was in the forefront of another mobilization against the dictatorship. Then in 1973 the ruling class decided to hold elections and restore some democratic rights in an attempt to slow down the workers movement, a job the dictatorship could no longer do adequately. The PST proposed running a slate of independent workers candidates against the candidates of the bourgeois parties.

Páez agreed with the proposal and joined the Workers and Socialist Front in the March elections. A few months later he ran as the PST's vice-presidential candidate along with Juan Carlos Coral, getting almost 200,000 votes. Following that, he directed the PST's trade-union work and was a public spokesman for the party until his arrest on January 26 of this year.

Páez is being held at the Córdoba penitentiary, the jail where prisoners have been removed from their cells and murdered in alleged confrontations between security forces and the guerrillas. Páez reports that at least eighteen prisoners have met such a fate. In addition, it is reported that the cops themselves are digging a tunnel in the common prisoners section of the Córdoba penitentiary. Prisoners fear that the military will try to use the pretext of an escape to carry out a massacre.

These facts give some idea of the severity of the repression in Argentina today. But this repression has not been reported in the world press. This is partly because the Argentine military has maintained a lower profile than the Pinochet dictatorship did. And in Argentina a carefully calculated, step by step, plan of selective political repression, starting first with trade-union militants and the mass organizations of the working class, and then proceeding against the left, began over two years before the coup actually took place. It ended up partially decapitating the best organized workers movement in Latin America.

For the SWP, the situation in Argentina has a special importance. American imperialism is directly responsible for the bloody deeds of the Argentine ruling class. Without Washington's support, they could not survive, and we have a political responsibility to expose the truth about Argentina to the American people.

The situation in Argentina is important to us for another reason. There are many Trotskyists in Argentina in the PST and other groups with whom we have a fraternal bond. We are deeply concerned about their fate.

The Argentine PST is the largest organization supporting the Fourth International. Even before the coup, the PST had suffered sixteen deaths from ultrarightist gangs.

Many more Trotskyists from the PST and other Trotskyist organizations are now in extreme danger. Many have already disappeared. Many have been killed. And precisely because there has been less attention to this situation and less protest, the responsibility of the world Trotskyist movement becomes greater.

We do not approach the question of defense work for the victims of the repression in Argentina from a narrow perspective, though. We recognize that the only effective effort can be a united one, a political campaign that publicizes the situation of all the political prisoners and mobilizes support for them, on the basis of "an injury to one is an injury to all." That is why the SWP has for many years supported the efforts of the U.S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners (USLA). USLA publicizes the cases of political repression throughout Latin America. It organizes protests of various kinds and provides what financial and legal aid it can for the victims of political persecution and their families.

USLA's first and one of its most successful campaigns was an international defense of Hugo Blanco. USLA defends all political prisoners, regardless of their political persuasions. In this way, the committee can build the broadest possible support for the defense of human and democratic rights in Latin America.

In the case of Argentina, USLA has been on a campaign that actually began well before the coup. In spring 1975 USLA organized a speaking tour of the United States and Puerto Rico by PST leader Juan Carlos Coral. Every issue of the *USLA Reporter* since spring 1974 has had major articles about the repression in Argentina. USLA was the first group in the U.S. to focus attention on the plight of thousands of Latin American leftists exiled and trapped in Argentina.

For example, among others, the committee has publicized the case of Humberto Valenzuela, the prominent Chilean Trotskyist who is in exile there. The aid USLA has been able to provide Valenzuela has been almost his sole means of survival. It has kept him going, since old age and ill health prevent him from working.

Although financial aid can help ease immediate pain and suffering, USLA's resources have always been very limited. By far the greatest service USLA performs is the task of organizing to put massive political and social pressure on the murderers in power in Argentina.

USLA's first goal, one which we support, is to save the lives of the thousands of political prisoners and win their freedom by mobilizing every ounce of pressure on their behalf.

USLA plans to continue and expand the campaign that has already begun. The committee will focus on the cases of specific victims of the repression, since it has found that to be the most effective way to mobilize people in the United States and around the world against the barbaric practices of regime's like Videla's.

For example, USLA has already issued a fact sheet on the case of José Páez, and has prepared a petition to be taken to trade unions for support to Páez. It will prepare similar fact sheets on other prisoners.

USLA will also be raising a special solidarity fund for victims of repression in Argentina and to help finance the campaign.

The Socialist Workers Party will support this campaign. The depth of the repression in Argentina requires a united effort of as many organizations as possible, and we will be in the forefront of that effort.

## Credentials Committee Report

by Bill Peterson

The Credentials Committee report is basically a report on facts about people attending the convention, facts that we were able to glean from the registration cards. The report reflects the growth of our movement over the last period, and as you will see, reflects the turn the party took at the last convention to deepen our work within the working class and its mass organizations, as part of the struggles of oppressed minorities, as part of the women's movement, and toward the youth of this nation in general.

It was my understanding that the last convention was the largest in our history. Well, we've topped that this year—not by a whole lot, but this one is bigger. To put the size in a certain perspective, I want to give the figures for some previous conventions: 1969—600; 1971—1,100; 1975—1,613; 1976—1,655. A lot of people who have come to our conventions before couldn't make it because of jobs, and so on. But newer members, and provisional members, who have joined since last Oberlin, are here in large numbers. Of the 185 provisional members in the SWP, 104 are at the convention, and 74 are here for the first time. All together, 293 people from the U.S. are attending their first convention.

Of the 1,655 people in attendance, 1,032 are members; 104 are provisional members; 289 are guests from the U.S.; and 230 are international guests. Forty-five percent of all those in attendance are women, which represents an increase over last year. Those attending the convention from the U.S. came from thirty-four different states. The state tally became a very tightly contested race for the largest contingent: California, being over 2,000 miles away, has been in a very close contest with New York, about one-third the distance. Up to yesterday, California was in the lead. But when the late returns came in, New York pulled ahead with 249 to California's 239. In third place was our Canadian guests with 101. And emerging with a large contingent is Ohio, with 96 people. And one of those is a twenty-year-old woman from Oberlin attending her first convention.

The 230 international guests came from twenty-one different countries, from Australia to Italy to Costa Rica to India.

There are a total of 261 elected delegates here, which is a fairly large increase over our last convention. That is mainly because of the different ratio of delegates to members of 1 to 10 used this year compared with 1 to 15 that was used last year. This ratio was changed to allow better representation of the many new and smaller branches. We noted that the increase took place primarily in the age category of 25 to 30. Last year the percentage of full delegates between 25 and 30 was 45%; this year it is 60%, representing a shift towards a younger leadership. We noted also that of the elected delegates, 14 have been in the SWP two years or less, and 3 are attending their first convention, including one woman alternate who has been in the SWP for four months.

But we also noted a significant increase in the number of

women elected to the delegations as well as in the general attendance. Mary-Alice pointed that out in her report. After all the cards were turned in, the final figure for the elected delegates is that 44% are women. I would like to break that down for you so you can see where the increases came from:

### *Full Delegates*

1975: 26 women (35%), 49 men

1976: 48 women (38%), 79 men

### *Alternate Delegates*

1975: 31 women (43%), 41 men

1976: 67 women (50%), 67 men

Because of the increased involvement in the struggles of Blacks, Chicanos, and Puerto Ricans, we have established a new category to report—the number of members of oppressed nationalities:

### *Full Delegates*

Black—12, Chicano—1, Puerto Rican—5, Latino—1 15%

### *Alternate Delegates*

Black—9, Chicano—7, Puerto Rican—3, Latino—2, Japanese—1 16%

The fraternal delegates in the past have been mainly national leaders of the party and the YSA; they now include representatives from organizing committees of new branches. We thought it significant that of all the fraternal delegates, 20% were members of oppressed nationalities. The Credentials Committee would like to note that one person brought to our attention a possible new oppressed nationality when he indicated "New Yorker" on his form.

Of those attending the convention from the U.S., 388 came from seventy-five different trade unions. That is an increase in both categories. We noted the top five contingents: Public Employees, Teachers, Teamsters, Hotel and Restaurant Employees, and Steelworkers.

Many members of the SWP and YSA indicated previous organizations they were members of before joining our movement. In looking over the list, it looks like what some have referred to here as a kind of Vanguard. Well, it's always encouraging to see them moving toward us. Those previous organizations include New American Movement, Communist Party, Socialist Party, Black Panthers, Workers League, SDS, and Young Democrats. In addition, many feminist organizations, Gay Activists Alliance, CORE, and others were mentioned. One person indicated they had joined the YSA too young to be able to join a previous organization.

Groups that we work with and have fraternal relationships with are here, such as the Spark group and the Revolutionary Marxist Committee. In addition, there are

people here we have contacted and worked with from such organizations as the Raza Unida Party, Gary Tyler Defense Committee, National Organization for Women, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and Urban League.

In conclusion, I would like to point out that this information was taken from registration forms we received, and scrutinized in a smoke-filled room in South

Hall into the wee hours of the morning. A lot of comrades helped in this and they deserve appreciation.

For: Sally Frumkin  
Dan Rosenshine  
Bob Rowand  
Keith Jones  
Bill Peterson

## Constitution Committee Report

by Dave Wulp

The constitution of the SWP is a document that contains the elementary formal guidelines to the structure of our functioning.

It spells out the relationship of various party units from the individual member through the national convention. In doing this, the constitution is not a cookbook. It is couched in flexible language—language that allows it to apply to a relatively broad range of varying concrete circumstances. Things not specifically prohibited by the constitution are permissible.

For example, there is a section in Article VIII, Section 3 that reads, "Charges filed before the branch shall be considered by the Branch Executive Committee (or a subcommittee elected by it) at a meeting to which the accused member is summoned." We use this particular sentence as an illustration because a member of the Seattle delegation came before us with a suggestion that the wording of this sentence be changed in such a way as to explicitly state that the accused member should not be present throughout the *entire* deliberation of the Executive Committee. This suggestion was made because, in a recent trial, an accused member believed this section of the constitution gave her such a right.

The Constitution Committee is not making such a recommendation. We read this sentence to positively state a right of an accused member to meet with the trial body; to make a statement to the trial body; to answer questions of the trial body; to provide other documentation to the trial body. The meeting during which charges are considered *must* include summoning the accused member to appear.

How is the accused member to be summoned? Concrete circumstances determine this. The trial body will decide. Can the meeting continue if the accused member does not respond to the summons? There is no prohibition against this. The trial body will decide. Should the accused member be present throughout *all* of the deliberation of the trial body? Again concrete circumstances will determine this and the trial body will decide. The Constitution Committee believes that there are circumstances that could arise when the Executive Committee might find it most beneficial to its deliberation for the accused member to be present throughout the entire meeting. We feel the constitution is a stronger document if this possibility is not specifically prohibited. We recommend no changes in this section.

Our constitution is a living document. It reflects our level of organization. The constitution must be changed as our

organizational functioning changes. We add sections as they are needed. We delete sections that no longer apply, or that are so out of date they can become universally ignored. This being so, the turn we have been discussing at this convention will find its reflection in the constitution. On inspection we noted a number of obvious points that will have to be changed or added to in the near future.

1. Article III, Section 2 provides that application for at-large membership be dealt with by the Political Committee. As we grow, and develop regional structures, this will probably be better dealt with by District Executive Committees.

2. Article IV, Section 1 says that a branch must consist of at least 5 and no more than 50 members. For some years many thought that the upper limit of 50 was too low. Experience in the next few years may very well show that it is too high.

3. There is nothing at all in the constitution about our new category of provisional membership. This is an experiment. In a year or two we will be better able to evaluate this experiment and may well want to add a new section to Article III codifying this experience.

4. Article IV, Section 3 and Article V, Section 8 provide for the formation of state and regional bodies and the relationship of branches and locals within the region to elected regional bodies. This is an adequate constitutional framework for us to begin the formation of such bodies. Such formations are on the agenda for the near future in several areas. Again, once we have amassed a body of experience on the functioning of these bodies we will want to concretize these sections as well.

5. Article IV, Section 3 mentions regional conventions. What is the relationship of these conventions to a national convention? Will delegates to national conventions be chosen, not by branches, but at regional conventions? Will regional conventions nominate people for our National Committee? Will a nominating committee procedure prove to be the best way to elect delegates to the national convention? Will we fix the number of delegates at a national convention and determine the number of delegates each region receives based on the percent of national membership contained in each region? Should the number of delegates to the national convention be set in the constitution or determined in the convention call? We will be better able to answer these questions when we have some experience with regional structure.

The Constitution Committee cannot foresee the answer to these questions. Time and experience are needed for

that. We feel the current constitution to be entirely adequate for the present and the next two to three years. Therefore we wish to make the following recommendation to the convention:

“When, in the opinion of the National Committee, a sufficient body of experience exists, but certainly within 3 years, the National Committee shall appoint a commission to review the entire constitution and revise it in accord with the reality of party functioning.”

In fulfilling the request of the National Committee, we expect that the commission appointed to review the constitution will have discussions with several generations of party leaders to determine why the current constitution is written as it is. Our constitution is a living document. Every section is there, and worded as it is, because of concrete experiences gained in the struggle to construct a party based on the Leninist norms. It would be extremely valuable as a guide to interpreting the constitution and a document of no little historic interest if—as an offshoot of their labors—this same commission could produce a history of the SWP constitution. We urge, but are not recommending for a vote, that when the National Committee designates its commission, this by-product be kept in mind.

As indicated in the introduction to this report, sections of the constitution that are outmoded or generally ignored should not be in the constitution.

Article X, Section 5 reads as follows:

“The National Committee shall appoint an auditing committee to make periodical audits of the financial accounts of the National Office and national Party departments and institutions, and report on same to the National Committee. Branch, Local and District Committees shall appoint auditing committees to make periodic audits of the financial accounts of the corresponding Party units and of Party departments and institutions responsible to said unit.”

An audit is simply when someone not originally involved in the usual financial structure returns to the source documents that provide the basis for all reports—usually a receipt book on the income side and a checkbook on the expense side—and verifies that all transactions get all the way from these sources into final reports.

In general this section of the constitution is not followed by the party. It is not followed nationally and it is not followed locally.

On a national level, consistent auditing does take place, but it is informal. Reports on the results of the audits are

not presented to the Political Committee or the National Committee.

To the best of our collective recollection, audits are hardly ever done, formally or informally, on a branch or local level.

The Constitution Committee unanimously feels that this is an excellent provision, and instead of recommending its abolition because it has not been party practice, wishes to use this opportunity to call its existence to the attention of the delegates in the hope that it will be more closely adhered to in the future. On a national level, this simply means the formalization of audits that already happen albeit informally. Locally, to perform such audits provides several benefits. First, it gives added assurance to all that party finances are handled responsibly, correctly, and on time. Second, it assures that any problems that exist will not go without leadership attention for protracted periods of time. Third, over time, it will aid in standardizing and strengthening local financial practices.

So, in this case, we do not recommend deleting this section from the constitution. Rather, we urge the entire party to recognize that this section of the constitution exists and to pay attention to it.

Finally, the 1975 Constitution Committee concerned itself with a problem that was brought to their attention in Article IV, Section 2, which states:

“Wherever two branches exist in the same locality, a Local Executive Committee shall be formed by elections at a joint membership meeting. Where three or more branches exist in the same locality, a Local Executive Committee shall be elected at a City Convention.”

Experience in the last year has convinced comrades in New York and Los Angeles, both of which had three or more branches, but which were holding what amounted to joint membership meetings instead of City Conventions, that it is better to hold City Conventions. At the present time all locals plan to function in accordance with the constitution.

Additional experience may show that it is not the *number of branches* in the local that is crucial, but rather the number of *comrades* in the local as well as the physical proximity of the branches. Again, as with the question raised about Article VIII, Section 3, we feel that the constitution is adequate for the next two to three years and would suggest referring any possible changes to the commission to be established by the National Committee.

For: Dave Wulp  
Jim Little  
Vivian Sahner

## Nominating Commission Report

by Mac Warren

Last year's convention marked, by and large, the completion of the transition in leadership of the party to a younger generation.

This included the abolition of advisory membership on the National Committee, and the addition of five new people to regular membership on the National Committee.

This year we viewed the regular list from two angles. First we looked very carefully for new comrades with experience and authority to place on the regular list, and at the same time we emphasized the need for continuity. We felt the regular list was a fairly new list that was developing into a team, and should not be lightly altered.

The outgoing Political Committee made two recommendations to the commission. One was to set aside a space on the regular list for a representative of the party supporters of the IMT. Two, to set aside a space for either Tim Wohlforth or Nancy Fields.

The IMT supporters in the party number about twenty-five people. A number of these comrades are playing active roles in branches around the country. We felt it would be important for these comrades to have a representative of their choice on the regular list. There is no tendency or faction of these comrades on American questions. We asked the supporters of the IMT in the party to make a recommendation.

On Tim and Nancy, we approached this discussion from the point of view of a fusion and we asked them to suggest which of them should be nominated.

Both of these considerations we felt help to strengthen the party and furthered the process of making the National Committee a microcosm of the party.

Three regular members of the National Committee asked not to be nominated this year. Al Hansen came before the commission and asked that his name not be considered. Jean Tussey also decided not to accept nomination. Al and Jean are both longtime leaders of the party. I think both have been on the National Committee well over two decades. They both felt strongly about making room for younger comrades. Carol Lipman, one of the younger leaders of the party, also asked not to be renominated at this time.

With all these considerations, we nominated five new names for regular membership. And thus we want to recommend to the convention that the regular list be enlarged by two to thirty-five.

Alternate membership on the National Committee we viewed quite differently. First, we saw the alternate list as a place for those comrades who are next in line to move onto the regular list. This section of the list remained pretty stable. But we also felt this list should be a testing ground for younger developing leaders of the party.

This process sometimes involves comrades moving on the list one year and moving off the next. For instance, we removed some comrades from the alternate list. We didn't do this because we thought the performance of the comrades was less than what it was last year. But because

we thought someone of relatively equal qualifications should spend some time on the committee. We approached the discussion from the point of view of why should this comrade be placed on the list. This way we were able to make some changes in the list, and we felt the list was strengthened because of these changes.

The most significant single change in the activity of the party over the last year has been the increase in our work as part of the struggles of the communities of the oppressed. A good example is our role in the Puerto Rican struggle. In light of the resolution submitted to the convention on Puerto Ricans in the U.S., we took a new look at the work of the party in this area. We wanted our nominees to have at least an initial reflection of the work we are doing in the Puerto Rican struggle. We think Puerto Rican work will be reflected even more in the National Committee as we root ourselves in the Puerto Rican community and its struggles throughout the country.

Our work in the Chicano movement is also reflected in the list. The party now has a national Chicano work director to oversee and coordinate our work nationally in the Chicano movement, and the party has moved in the direction of setting up more branches in different Chicano communities in the Southwest.

Our work in the women's movement is increasing as the fight around the ERA and other struggles heat up. The comrades leading this area were also discussed.

Three women leaders were added to the alternate National Committee, although the total number of women on the list didn't change, and the percentage of women on the National Committee dropped. We recognized this as the major weakness of our nominations. While more than 44 percent of the delegates to this convention were women, less than one-third of the comrades nominated for the National Committee are women. We feel that more discussion of this problem will be needed in the next Nominating Commission.

The development of new leadership could be seen in every category we discussed. In the Black movement, for example, the party has been playing an important role in the desegregation struggle and other struggles. Our Black comrades have stepped forward as central leaders of the branches, as organizers, candidates, trade-union fraction directors, and leading activists in the struggles taking place. This is reflected in the list.

We tried to reflect the work the party is doing in the trade-union movement. We also tried to reflect the different issues the party was taking into the trade-union movement around the country.

The discussion and development of the alternate list is a tough job. We had to take into account a number of questions in addition to the ones mentioned earlier. All things considered, I think we came up with the best list of nominees we could. The rest is up to the convention.

Here are some statistics on our nominees to the National Committee:



**Regular Members**

9 women same number as last year  
7 Blacks an increase of 1  
1 Chicana an increase of 1  
1 Puerto Rican same number as last year  
The list includes 5 comrades new to regular membership on the National Committee.

**Alternate Members**

7 women same number as last year  
8 Blacks (2 women, 6 men) an increase of 3  
1 Latino an increase of 1  
1 Chicano same number as last year  
The list includes 8 comrades new to alternate membership on the National Committee.

**Composition of Nominating Commission**

1 Puerto Rican  
50% women  
6 Blacks

We wanted to make a couple of points about the Control Commission. One of the things that was pointed out at the beginning of our deliberation is that a lot of times the Control Commission is put off to the end of the agenda

during the Nominating Commission and the proposals are made very quickly.

We approached the discussion about the Control Commission as a very serious one because we felt the Control Commission will in the future play a more active role in the party.

The role won't just be on the level of dealing with questions of discipline. It will be dealing with other questions that the party is faced with in the future. The different conflicts in society, the social questions posed in society, will more and more be posed in the party as the party grows and develops and recruits new people.

We want to make sure that younger comrades who go before the Control Commission feel confident they will get a fair hearing. We want any young woman who goes before the commission to feel confident and comfortable with the commission. Any young Black worker that goes before the commission, we want him or her to feel that there are people on the commission that know concretely what they face in life and the party.

We want the Control Commission to reflect to a certain degree the composition of the party. We were able to take a step in this direction, but we think the discussion about the Control Commission should also take place at the next convention and review this question again carefully.

With these nominations and this report, the Nominating Commission finishes its work and dissolves. The comrades who were on the Nominating Commission go back to being full delegates to the convention. And the selection of the leadership of the party is now in their hands.



## Tasks and Perspectives Report to SWP National Convention

by Larry Seigle  
August 1975

Our party is different than we were at our last convention a year ago. The party is a little bigger. A little Blacker. A little more Chicano. A little more Puerto Rican. We have the highest percentage of women delegates to this convention of any time in our history. We have larger, more active fractions in the trade unions. We have more members active in the NAACP, and in organizations fighting for women's liberation, such as the National Organization for Women.

We are more deeply involved in struggles of the working class, of the oppressed nationalities, and of women. Our members are activists and leaders in struggles for school desegregation, for bilingual and bicultural education, and against the cutbacks in social services. We are involved in some important union struggles. We have participated in national campaigns like the fight to win ratification for the ERA, the fight against the frame-up of Gary Tyler and other Black youth, mobilizations to block Washington's moves toward new foreign adventures, such as in Angola, and solidarity actions with the southern African liberation struggle.

The party is also organized differently than we were a year ago. We are no longer organized in large, city-wide branches. Today our branches are smaller, more streamlined for reaching the sectors from which we're trying to recruit. The branches are more and more located in working-class areas and especially in the Black, Chicano, and Puerto Rican communities. They are oriented to those communities and becoming involved in their political life.

We have tripled the number of branches since a year ago. At the last convention, we had twenty-four branches. Now we have sixty-five, plus branch organizing committees in three more cities—Indianapolis, Louisville, and Tacoma. At the last convention, we had units of the party in twenty cities; now we are organized in thirty-six cities.

We have found that the political climate is favorable for these smaller branches. They don't become large overnight, but they can establish themselves, and participate in working-class organizations and struggles in their cities and communities. They can sink roots and begin to grow. And that is what is happening around the country.

At the last convention we began our turn to take advantage of new opportunities to do political work among important sections of the working class. But we didn't foresee then the extent of the party reorganization, the divisions of the branches, that would become necessary to implement the party's turn.

At the convention a year ago we did decide to take some steps in the direction of smaller branches. But as we began to make the turn, we saw the need for much more extensive changes in the way local units of the party are structured.

So we accelerated the reorganization process. We carried through the branch divisions, and we released comrades

for branches in new cities. It was inevitable that a reorganization of the party carried out on this scale and this quickly would be accompanied by some turmoil and some disruption. But all things considered, the reorganization has been carried out relatively smoothly.

Now, at this convention, we are ready to take the next step in the turn. We are ready to turn our new branches outward. We are ready to take advantage of the new organizational forms we have created, to use them for what they are designed to do: to take the party campaigns around the main national and international political issues to those we're reaching out to, to establish roots in the communities, to deepen our involvement in the labor movement and struggles of the working class and the oppressed, and to win new members from these struggles to the party.

### The 1976 Election Campaign

Between now and November 2, the main vehicle for accomplishing this will be the election campaign. In the discussion on the political resolution, we looked at what the rulers are planning with their campaigns. The question we need to take up now is what we are going to do with our campaign.

The theme of the Camejo-Reid campaign was graphically expressed in New York City when the Democrats held their love-in last month. Outside the Democratic convention were thousands of striking hospital workers, demonstrating to win support for their fight for a living wage. And the most popular sign was the one that appeared on the front page of the *Militant*, proclaiming, "We won't work for peanuts!"

Then, a few days later, at a rally for Peter Camejo, some of those same strikers—who had been out on the picket lines throughout the Democratic convention and been beaten up by the cops—were not only inside our rally, but up on the platform as honored guests and speakers. That pretty well symbolizes the difference between the Carter campaign and the Camejo-Reid campaign.

As we move into the final twelve weeks before the election, the rhythm of our campaign and the place it occupies in the party's activities change. Political life in this country will be dominated by the elections. Now is the time for us to pull out all the stops, to put the party and activists who support our campaign on a mobilization footing.

The Camejo-Reid campaign, and the campaigns of our local candidates around the country, will be the vehicles through which we can carry out a massive socialist propaganda offensive this fall. This is the time for us to reap the full benefits of the work that we have done on the campaigns, including the ballot status we've fought so hard for. It is through our election campaigns that we can

take advantage of the historic opportunity presented by the widespread publicity about our fight against the FBI and the CIA. And it is through our campaigns that the branches can reach out, win new friends and sympathizers, and new members for the party.

We know that the Carter campaign is going to appeal to many of the same people that we are appealing to. We know that he will spout a lot of rhetoric about how he will fight for the interests of working people and of Blacks. And we know that millions will project their hopes onto Carter and vote for him as the lesser evil because they see no meaningful alternative.

But that is only one side of the picture. There is a layer of political activists who are not going to fall for the Carter gambit, who see through Carter and rebel against the idea that they should betray what they have been fighting for in return for a phony promise.

This layer of political activists who will refuse to back Carter may be small relative to the population as a whole, but it is large in relation to the size of our party. And it is to these people that we want to say: The only honest thing you can do, the only worthwhile thing you can do, is to support the socialist candidates in this election.

The last thing we want is to be bashful about asking, encouraging, urging individuals and organizations we are working with to support our candidates. Where we've taken an aggressive approach, we've gotten results. In Houston, the Women's Political Caucus has endorsed Jill Fein, our candidate for county commissioner. The Philadelphia chapter of NOW is considering whether or not to endorse the campaign of Clare Fraenzl, who has been a leader of NOW and the ERA struggle there. In Detroit, Steve Beumer won the endorsement of his local of the Amalgamated Transit Union for his campaign for school board. In Milwaukee, the *Milwaukee Courier*, a Black newspaper, urged a vote for our candidate in the recent election for mayor. And the New Mexico Raza Unida Party has endorsed the SWP presidential ticket.

To make the most of these opportunities, the national campaign committee is proposing that we launch a nationwide drive to get endorsements for the Camejo-Reid campaign to appear in advertisements that will be published around the country. There are going to be three ads: One will be signed by Chicano leaders and activists for publication in Chicano papers. The second will be placed in campus papers, signed by students and professors, for which the YSA will be taking primary responsibility. The third, a general ad, will be published in some nationally circulated papers, including the *Militant*, and will be signed by leaders and activists in the struggles we have been involved in.

Through a national drive for endorsements geared around these ads, we will accomplish two things: First, we will show the breadth of support for, and the kind of people who support, our candidates. Second, we will organize ourselves, through this drive, to talk to each and every person we are working with about the election campaign, and to convince as many of them as possible to join us in this campaign.

Like all of the other campaign activities between now and the elections, this cannot be seen as the particular task of branch campaign committees. It is a drive in which the entire party, all of the comrades and all of the fractions, will participate.

The second major focus of the campaign this fall will be

the final national tours for Camejo and Reid. The tours will begin right after Labor Day. Between them, the two candidates will hit every city where we have a branch or a local, and a few places—like Miami, Phoenix, and Albany—where we hope to have branches soon. These tours will conclude with big election-eve rallies in New York for Camejo, and in Chicago for Reid.

The third focus of the campaign in the fall will be the massive distribution of our literature. This includes a big *Militant* circulation drive—which I'll come back to in a few minutes—as well as widespread distribution of the campaign committee's two major pieces of literature—the new Carter fact sheet, and the Bill of Rights for Working People. We have already distributed three-quarters of a million of the Bill of Rights—including 90,000 in Spanish—and we ought to make sure we top a million before the end of the campaign. These get around—the national campaign committee in New York has already received nearly 2,000 inquiries in the mail, including at least one coupon from the Bill of Rights sent in from Spain during Peter Camejo's tour there.

The biggest single aspect of the campaign so far has been our petitioning drives. Nick Castle's film on the California drive said just about all that needs to be said on that. I'm sure comrades are planning to show the film at campaign rallies around the country. It's a wonderful way to introduce new people to the size and spirit and determination of our campaigns.

But there will never be an audience that will appreciate it in quite the same way as the audience that viewed it here at this convention. It takes people who have been petitioning themselves all across the country for the past few months to really know how true that film is.

We're not quite done with the petitioning. We are ready to do any mop-up work that may be necessary in California. And we're prepared for a political fight there or anywhere else they may try to deny us the spot on the ballot that we have earned.

We've also got a few states yet to tackle: Tennessee, Washington, Vermont, New Hampshire, Mississippi, and a big drive in New York that will begin right after the convention.

## Socialist Workers Party Versus the FBI

Now I want to turn to the party's fight against illegal government spying and harassment.

Before I begin, I'm sure you'll all be glad to know that there is a new defense committee in this country. This committee has been set up to rally support for FBI agents who are facing criminal charges and civil suits, like ours. We heard that some of them wanted to call it the FBI Liberation Front.

A recent article in the *Washington Post*, headlined "Accused Agents Feel Abandoned," says, "FBI agents accused of committing burglaries in the line of duty believe they have been abandoned by the bureau and the Justice Department in the case." A special fund has been set up by the Society of Former Special Agents of the FBI, Inc.—I'm sure that's a progressive group—because the government has told the agents to get their own lawyers. This defense committee is "trying to boost agent morale and defuse the bitterness arising from the department's decision not to represent them."

Another article, appearing in the *New York Times*,

reported that the number of agents facing possible criminal charges has jumped to seventy-five. According to this story, FBI agents and their lawyers are complaining bitterly: "One source asserted that Justice Department lawyers had resorted to 'Gestapo' tactics, calling up agents with no warning and telling them they were under investigation." When the Gestapo starts complaining about Gestapo tactics, you know they're in trouble. "These are terror tactics," one FBI source said. "This could cause mass resignations."

The government side on the case really does have a morale problem. It's a serious one for them. Our suit and the Justice Department criminal investigation our suit has triggered have done things to them that they can't adjust to. They can't adjust to being defendants in their own courts. That don't know how to act, how to argue for their positions openly. It's not one of the things they're trained to do; and historically they've never had to do it.

You can see the demoralization on the faces of the government's young attorneys every time there is a hearing before the judge. The lawyers for the government aren't especially dedicated to the FBI and the CIA. They're just serving time in the U.S. Attorney's office before moving on to the world of corporate law or tax law. And they don't see *this* case as a promising steppingstone for their careers. After one recent hearing, when our attorneys had presented arguments on a procedural issue, the top government attorney told one of our lawyers, "Look, you don't have to worry about the procedural issues; we're going to lose this case on the merits."

I don't think we have yet fully grasped the meaning and consequences of the massive publicity about the party and this case. This is not just one big splash. It's constant repetition, week after week, sometimes day after day, in major newspapers and on radio and television.

Millions are learning the name of the Socialist Workers Party. And if they don't know anything else about us, they know that this is the party that is standing toe to toe with the FBI. Slugging it out. Not giving an inch. And—to the surprise of millions—we are landing some blows, some heavy blows, against the FBI.

It's hard for us to gauge this impact, what it means for the way people view the SWP. But I'm sure everyone here has had a similar experience—with someone at work, or relatives, or friends, or the teller at the bank where the branch account is, who says, "Is your party the one I read about in the paper? That's some job you folks are doing on the FBI!"

When we first filed the suit in 1973, some of our critics in other radical groups attacked us. They said that a lawsuit like this would only strengthen illusions in the government. You don't hear that too much anymore.

Far from strengthening illusions, our campaign around this case has cut through the lies and the cover-ups, and helped to expose the true face of the capitalist government. It has deepened the crisis of confidence in the government. The revelations that have come out about the FBI, largely through our suit, have proven one thing: If you join any struggle for a progressive cause, any organization committed to social justice, no matter how moderate its outlook or program, the government is going to go after you. They are going to find out your name, where you live, your political views, and details of your personal life. And they are going to use that information, and all of the techniques at their disposal, to try to drive you out of political activity. It

doesn't matter if it's the SWP, the NAACP, a group of rebel trade unionists, a women's liberation group, or anything else.

This suit has also attacked the illusion that Congress is going to defend our rights. Remember, it was only a few months ago that the congressional committees completed their investigations into the FBI and the CIA. The Church committee published three thick volumes that were supposed to be the final and complete story on secret police crimes. The Democrats said, "Now this is over and done with. It was a bad period of American history, but it's all in the past. It's all out in the open now."

But only weeks after that report was published, our suit turned up secret files that had been buried in the FBI's fifty-nine field offices around the country. The Church committee never examined those files. Newspaper reporters who are following our case were astonished at this. They all write in their articles that the SWP was able to uncover evidence that even the United States Congress couldn't find. But they can't figure out why.

The answer is so obvious that it escapes them. The liberals in Congress didn't uncover this evidence because they didn't *want* to. Their goal is not to get out the truth, but to get out only enough to satisfy the immediate demands of the American people—to allow the rulers to put the lid back on the can of worms that Watergate opened.

Our goal is exactly the opposite. We want to get out the truth. In fighting to do that, we are fighting in the interest of the working class as a whole. And that's why this case is getting such a wide response.

There is another argument that we don't hear quite so often anymore. This one used to be the standard refrain of the liberals. They said that the worst thing about what the FBI did was that it devoted so much time and so much taxpayers' money to the tiny, insignificant, irrelevant SWP—a party that, they claim, has never had and never will have any impact on American politics. The SWP, they said, is "small potatoes."

But that's changing. It's changing not because we're no longer small. We still are. But because we are demonstrating that even a small revolutionary party that knows what it's doing and understands the importance of the struggle for democratic rights can have a big impact.

This case is not an easy one for the ruling class to resolve. It is not easy because it appeals to some beliefs held deeply by the American people. It appeals to the conviction that the government does not have the right to spy on people because of their political views, that the government does not have the right to disrupt political groups just because they speak out for what they believe in. And it appeals to the growing sentiment that *all* the secret files on government crimes ought to be opened.

This case and the turmoil it is causing inside the FBI pose a problem for the capitalist class for another reason, too. The rulers are coming to the realization that the vast secret police apparatus they have created is not easily adapted to changing political conditions. For instance, from their standpoint, it was not tactically wise to stage that break-in in Denver a month ago. But these G-men are like junkies with a very expensive habit. They can't stop.

There is a growing feeling in the ruling class that the FBI is not fulfilling its function very well. That it's not a flexible enough weapon. More and more we see the FBI

portrayed in the media as a bunch of Keystone Cops who can't do anything right.

But at the same time, the rulers know that they are going to need their secret police more than ever as the class battles sharpen and the radicalization of the working class deepens. What they are grappling with is how to reform this beast they have created, so as to give the illusion of ending its abuse of civil liberties, while at the same time making it more suitable for the big jobs it will have to carry out in the future. This is going to continue to be a major issue in American politics and our suit projects us right into the middle of it.

Between now and November, the best way to take advantage of the suit and the publicity around it will be through our election campaigns. Our candidates should be talking about the case everywhere, responding to the publicity breaks by calling the local media, issuing statements, and arranging interviews. We should be building meetings to urge people to come and hear the views of the party the FBI has tried to silence.

When we talk about the case, we should be aware of one thing. Sometimes we have a meeting to which new people come, and a speaker gets up to describe the issues in this suit. They explain that the SWP has been the target of government harassment and intimidation. And they tell how we've been fired from our jobs, burglarized, infiltrated, shot at, and fire bombed. And you look out into the audience and you see people who are at their first socialist meeting, slowly sinking down in their seats, and you can imagine they must be wondering if they're going to get out of the meeting before some new disaster strikes.

Well, we can't stop talking about the obstacles the government puts in our way. But we can turn it around. We can stress the fact that we've shown that the SWP is the kind of party that can stand up to these attacks and grow in spite of them. It's the kind of party that can organize a fight that can put the FBI on the defensive. We have the kind of party that doesn't let the FBI's dirty tricks divide us, or provoke us, or intimidate us into silence. And that's why people should join us.

We should remember that it's the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance, not the Political Rights Defense Fund, who are the plaintiffs in this case. We shouldn't get tangled up into thinking that we need to have a PRDF spokesperson to talk to the press or speak at rallies about events in the case and the issues involved.

At the same time, we ought to be stepping up our work in support of the PRDF. We have barely scratched the surface in terms of potential sponsorship and financial support that is available for this case now.

If we do this right, we can take advantage of the case to make friends and establish relationships that will be permanent gains for the party. The door is open to us to approach practically every union, every Black, Chicano, and Puerto Rican organization, every feminist group, to talk to them about the case and to exert some moral pressure on them to lend their support.

I have taken some extra time on the party's campaign around the suit because of the importance of the recent developments. We are also doing some other extremely valuable and successful defense work, especially working with the U.S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners (USLA), where we've made some real gains. We are also active in such defense efforts as the fight against the campaign disclosure laws and the Gary

Tyler case. And we are going to be involved in the battles that will inevitably take place in opposition to the reintroduction of the death penalty.

## Perspectives for Trade-Union Work

In our earlier discussion on the political resolution, several speakers emphasized that a break from capitalist politics by a section of the working class is not going to come easily. When it does come it is going to unleash powerful social forces and set the stage for big class battles. We emphasized that this development—the emergence of a class-struggle left wing in the unions—is in the future.

But it is also true to say that this class-struggle left wing exists in an embryonic way today in the form of our comrades and fractions active in the union movement. A key part of the party's turn has been the expansion of the activity and the size of those fractions. We now want to take further steps to strengthen our union fractions, especially in unions like the Steelworkers, where opportunities are opening up to support the Steelworkers Fight Back campaign to democratize the union.

The activity of socialist workers in the unions revolves around the expanding opportunities to take the big political questions that confront the working class into the union movement. We are trying to lay the basis for our participation in the process of transforming the unions—a process that won't be accomplished overnight.

This strategy has several components.

First, we are fighting to overcome the suicidal mentality of business unionism, the idea that unions can ignore political and social questions and focus only on what they can get at contract time for their members. The unions need to think and act socially, to fight on the side of the least privileged, most oppressed in American society. If they don't, they will be torn apart and destroyed over time.

Second, we project a policy of class independence from the capitalist parties at every level of struggle, all the way from how a strike or a demonstration ought to be organized to the question of electoral action. We explain that this is the only policy that can defend the union movement against the employer onslaught and prepare the way for moving the labor movement forward.

Third, we participate in and aid any motion toward more democratic functioning inside the labor movement, like the Steelworkers Fight Back campaign. We are for transforming the unions into organizations run by and for the working masses, not organizations ruled by petty tyrants who think the business of the unions is to provide them with a handsome living.

Fourth, we are encouraging comrades to get jobs in important industries in their areas, like steel, to build up our fractions.

Fifth, and most important of all, we are organizing our fractions and our work to win new members on the job and in the unions.

In a speech given in 1941, James P. Cannon took up this question in a way that is right on the beam for us today. Speaking about the various tasks facing our trade-union fractions, Cannon stressed above all the need for consistent efforts to win new members to the party: "Meet in the fractions and discuss not only the high politics of the union but the simple question of how could we possibly recruit this man who is a good trade union militant and

friendly to us, and bring him into the party. Assign a person to talk to him, two people to talk to him, work out a campaign for the approach and education of a single person in the union, to get him to join the party. That is political work which is ten times more important than any foolish splurging over a high question. What we want is new people in the party." (From "It Is Time for a Bolder Policy in the Unions," in *The Socialist Workers Party in World War II* [Pathfinder Press, 1975].)

With this as a guide to our approach, we can make sure we bring into the ranks of the party the radicalizing women and men we meet on the job and in our union work, and strengthen our forces for the opportunities to come.

If there is one thing that stands out about our union activity today it is that it takes many different forms. There are no formulas that apply at all times and under all circumstances.

Sometimes our work takes the form of helping to establish a committee in a union on a specific issue, like the work we have done around the busing fight in the teachers union. This has been an effective campaign. As Jeff Mackler reported, comrades here at Oberlin are preparing for a large-scale participation at the American Federation of Teachers convention next week in support of the Committee on Desegregation in Education. This committee has taken the initiative in inviting a speaker from the NAACP to come to the convention and it has prepared a lot of literature and is organizing for the fight at the convention to get the AFT to support busing. We have a big fraction going, and it is going to be the largest party fraction to participate in a union convention in a long time.

This is one form our activity takes. Sometimes our union work takes the form of getting a union to take a stand on a defense case in which labor has a stake, such as our suit.

Sometimes it is making use of our forums, such as when the comrades in Cleveland invited leaders of the Steelworkers union there to speak at a forum about their fight to keep control of their own union in the face of an attack by the Abel bureaucracy. Sometimes our members run for union office and take some responsibility for leading and administering a local. Sometimes we have to and can do work without any comrades in the union involved, such as the campaign the Washington, D.C., comrades waged in support of the striking press operators at the *Washington Post*.

Another example of the variety of forms available to us is the experience we had in building union support for the May 16 ERA march in Springfield, Illinois. Comrades in different unions related to that demonstration in different ways. In some cases we worked directly through the union locals. In others we approached the central labor council for support. In some areas we worked through the Coalition of Labor Union Women; in others through women's committees in union locals.

In his report on the political resolution, Jack [Barnes] discussed some of the changes reflected in developments such as the Steelworkers Fight Back movement in the Steelworkers union. These new moods were highlighted at a recent conference of District 38 of the Steelworkers, the district that covers the Western states. The conference was held in South Dakota. Nine hundred people attended, about a third of them Black and Chicano.

A member of the SWP who attended this conference

reports that—much to his surprise—there was a sharp discussion there over the question of nuclear power and environmental protection. Some steelworkers there felt pretty strongly about the deadly threat of nuclear development without regard to safety. Another big discussion broke out on health and safety on the job.

Then it turned out that the union had invited Russell Means, a leader of the American Indian Movement (AIM), to come and address this conference. Means was unable to attend. But he sent a representative, who spoke for forty minutes about the various defense efforts AIM is involved in, and about the ways in which Indians are denied the right to have their own culture.

Our comrade there took the floor several times during the conference on various questions. And he found that he didn't have to seek out the Steelworkers Fight Back forces there—they sought him out about getting involved in the Sadlowski campaign.

We've already discussed the Steelworkers Fight Back movement. I just want to emphasize three points.

First. We want to get our members into this. We want to expand our fractions in steel and we want to participate in and support the Sadlowski campaign.

Second. This campaign is not just of interest to the steelworkers. From the beginning, Sadlowski has aimed his appeal at broader forces. Its impact and its influence are already being seen in the labor movement as a whole. All of our comrades should be alert to ways to relate to it.

Third. All kinds of social and political issues are going to be discussed by people involved in this movement, whether it's nuclear safety, or women's rights, or defense of victims of government attacks like AIM. And among the issues that are going to come up is the question of political power and the need for independent labor political action.

In our work in support of the Steelworkers Fight Back campaign, and in all of our other union work, a big part of our activity consists of talking to people, introducing them to our ideas, to socialism, and bringing them around the party. The one tool that we can use *everywhere* is the *Militant*. The *Militant* is an indispensable tool for all party members active in the unions. And in thinking out how to use the paper, we've got to pay attention to both sides of the question: getting reports and articles on local developments sent into the paper, as well as getting the *Militant* out into the hands of the activists we are trying to reach.

Comrades in Houston last week were right on the ball. When the shooting of the Sadlowski supporter took place there, they made sure that, in addition to helping to organize a response by the labor movement, the complete story was sent in to the *Militant*. Then, when that issue of the paper arrived, they went out and sold seventy-five copies at steel mills in Houston.

We have begun to make progress reflecting in the *Militant* the work we are involved in, but we can still do a lot more in this area. And we are going to be printing more articles like the series Andy Rose did on the issues facing steelworkers. These articles are now out in a pamphlet, *The Fight for Union Democracy in Steel* (Pathfinder Press, 1976): We want to go on a campaign to get this pamphlet into the hands of everyone who is interested in the Sadlowski campaign. We want to sell it at plant gates and union meetings, to working people in the Steelworkers and in other unions as well.

Finally, I want to emphasize one point. While our work in support of the Steelworkers Fight Back will be the most



important job of the steel fractions, we can't put this job on the shoulders of those comrades alone. It is a campaign for the entire party to be involved in.

### Women's Liberation Movement

At our last convention we decided to step up our work in the women's liberation movement, as we saw the beginnings of a significant increase in activity. In the past year we have seen a continuing upsurge in interest and actions. This resurgence is not simply a repeat of the movement of the early 1970s. New forces, broader and more powerful class forces, are becoming involved. The composition of the May 16 ERA demonstration in Springfield was a striking illustration of the fact that union women and Black women are joining this movement.

The central nationwide issue that has galvanized action in defense of women's rights is the fight for the Equal Rights Amendment. This issue has greater weight than it did a few years ago. It has been one of the major issues chosen by the right wing for a mobilization of the forces of reaction and bigotry. Women now see that if the ERA is going to be ratified, it is going to take a fight. The strategy of relying on lobbying and electing Democrats was leading down the road to defeat and disaster. This understanding is what gave rise to the May 16 national march and rally.

The National Organization for Women has played a key role and been a major factor in the ERA fight. NOW demonstrated its willingness and its ability—despite its hesitations and contradictions—to take the initiative and call actions. And, as always happens when an organization leads in action, its stature has risen because of it. NOW remains the largest and most authoritative women's liberation group. It's an organization we should participate in actively.

And NOW itself is changing to some degree. Members of the SWP who are active in NOW run into more working women, including unionists, in the organization. And just last week in Pittsburgh, more than fifty women attended a conference organized by Black feminists to discuss how Black women should relate to NOW.

Although the ERA remains the key national action campaign, we are also involved in other issues. There continue to be local actions in defense of abortion rights. Forced sterilization remains an issue around which Puerto Rican women and Chicanas are organizing.

We've also been involved in some very important struggles around the issue of child care. The San Francisco comrades really woke up the whole party to the importance of this issue. It's an issue that ties together women's oppression, the fight against the cutbacks, and the needs of working women and union members.

The *Militant* has begun to write more about this, and our candidates invariably get a good response when they raise it. We want to continue to look for opportunities in this area.

We also want to pay more attention to general educational work around women's liberation and socialism. We have the new Pathfinder pamphlet by Linda Jenness on *Socialism and the Fight for Women's Rights* (Pathfinder Press, 1976). Evelyn Reed's book and her tours continue to inspire young feminists and draw them closer to our movement. We want to make use of the *Militant*, our forums, our election campaigns, classes and study groups,

and educational conferences on socialism and feminism.

### Changes in the Radical Movement

Before I turn to some specific projections for the fall campaigns I want to spend a couple of minutes on changes that are taking place in the radical movement in this country.

The left is being affected by big world events: Portugal; Angola; the evolution of China's foreign policy. It is also affected by the economic crisis and the ruling-class offensive here at home. The radical movement is not frozen, not static. And one of the things that is not frozen is the position of the SWP within the radical movement, the attitude toward us and what we're doing.

For one thing there is a change in the attitude toward us among a section of the relatively large milieu of unaffiliated radicals. These are people who are veterans of the antiwar movement, of the women's movement, and various Black groups. Some are former SDSers. Many are former members of rival organizations. They belong to no organization and many of them haven't been active politically because they haven't been sure of what to do. But they haven't given up their revolutionary ideas. They are listening to us, reading the *Militant*, watching what we do. Many of them find themselves attracted to us. And some of them are joining the party.

They are attracted to us partially because of things such as our election campaign, our suit, our activity around Boston, the ERA, and so on, and partially because of the failure of any of the other tendencies to build a viable alternative. We have seen the collapse of the much heralded regroupment of Maoists, leaving warring sects, none of which have been able to grow significantly, and the stagnation of other groups, like the New American Movement, who seem unable to make the adjustment from the 1960s, when they had their birth on the campuses, to the realities of American politics in the second half of the 1970s.

Another development concerns several groups, relatively small groups, who have opened political discussion with us. Comrades are here at this convention from the Spark group, from the Revolutionary Marxist Committee, and from the Chicago Socialist Group. We consider these developments important for the future of the Trotskyist movement in this country. Provided that there is substantial agreement on what Trotskyists ought to be doing in the U.S. now, we would like to see a fusion of our forces with these groups.

From where we sit, these groups are moving toward us on some important questions. From their standpoint, it appears that the SWP is moving toward them. Okay. That's not crucial. We don't think we need to settle every historical and theoretical question before a fusion can be accomplished. In other words, we emphasize to these comrades that while the SWP strives for political homogeneity, it is not, and we don't think it ought to be, monolithic.

We think that we have some things to teach, based on our experiences, based on the continuity of Trotskyism represented by our party. But we also think there are some things we can learn from the experiences and opinions of other revolutionists.

The Maoist milieu has been thrown into a crisis reflected in the discussion on China's foreign policy begun by the

*Guardian* newspaper. We've responded with the series by Dick Roberts in the *Militant*, and now we'll be able to use the new book *Leon Trotsky on China* (Monad Press, 1976) to participate in this discussion. The *Guardian* has begun the discussion, but if you follow their paper you'll notice they haven't been able to lead the discussion forward. They don't know where they're going. They're finding out that it's hard to disagree with Mao and still be a Maoist.

We should note that one group that seems to be growing is the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, the left-wing Social Democrats. They have ties with the labor bureaucracy; they are active in CLUW and NOW and the ERA activities. We should be aware of the fact that they are open to some forms of collaboration with us. They support the ERA and generally support busing, they have in the past worked with USLA, and they have formally endorsed, and are helping in some concrete ways, the Political Rights Defense Fund.

We've already discussed the Communist Party and the importance of the gains we are making in relation to them. We want to press ahead with our campaign to force them to go on record in support of our right to be on the ballot, and to support the Political Rights Defense Fund.

At the same time, and despite what their response is to our requests for support, we will continue to express our support for their ballot rights. Our commitment to democratic rights for everyone is a principle. It is not conditional on what we happen to think of the people whose rights we are defending. We seek to collaborate with the CP in every way possible against the undemocratic election laws. We understand that ruling the Stalinists off the ballot on the basis of these reactionary laws is a setback for everyone's rights, including ours.

Our support for the CP's ballot rights is not tongue in cheek. It stems from our objective understanding that an injury to one is an injury to all. And if they don't respond to this support, at least we will make the point to the CP ranks and to the entire radical and labor movement of just what we mean by the principle of working-class solidarity.

## **20,000 New Militant Readers**

Finally I want to turn to two specific proposals from the Political Committee for components of the fall propaganda offensive: These are proposals for a big *Militant* subscription drive and for a membership drive.

The distribution of the *Militant* has not kept pace with the growth of the party and the level of activity of the branches. Relative to what we should be doing, we have been slipping. The party reorganization disrupted certain norms of branch activity, including the circulation of the paper. This is not surprising. We expected it and we took it into account in planning our circulation efforts last spring. But it would be a mistake now not to move to turn this around, not to take full advantage of the *Militant* in our party-building work this fall.

Now is the time for us to launch a big, well-organized national drive to boost the circulation of the *Militant*. This drive will tie in with the big final push around the election campaign. It will take advantage of the interest being generated by the publicity around our suit. And it coincides with the rhythm of the party's activity, the stage we are at with the branches and the reorganization of the party. It is an opportunity to aid the branches in turning

outward and sinking our roots in the communities and the movements of the oppressed.

In the past several years our circulation drives have taken the form of single-copy street sales campaigns or modest subscription campaigns. Sometimes we have done both simultaneously. In thinking about the fall drive, it seems clear that the most useful form right now would be a big subscription campaign. This is what fits into the needs and opportunities facing the branches. A big subscription drive can help the branches get to know their communities. We can go door to door in the neighborhoods, talking to people about the party, about our election campaigns, getting lists of names and addresses of potential supporters who we can go back to and try to involve in our election campaigns and other party activities. We can also get the party known and established in these communities through this kind of a drive.

This kind of a subscription drive will have to be completely integrated into the election campaign activities. What we are really talking about is not just a subscription drive, but a massive canvassing for socialism, in which every branch, every party member, as well as friends and campaign supporters, can participate. Those branches that have already tried this kind of subscription work on a small scale have found it valuable and rewarding. The results aren't dramatic, and we shouldn't expect them to be. But with consistent work we can build up a layer of people in the communities where the branches are who will be reading about the party every week, who will be following our activity, what our candidates are saying, and what is happening with the suit.

There will also be another, equally important aspect to this drive, and that will be selling subscriptions to those activists we are working with—on the job, in the Student Coalition Against Racism, in ERA work, in our defense activities. We have had some very successful experiences at some recent conferences and demonstrations when we have focused on selling introductory subscriptions. At the May 16 rally, at several regional NOW conferences, at the Chicano Forum in Salt Lake City, we found activists receptive to the *Militant* and willing to subscribe.

We are proposing a goal of winning 20,000 new readers this fall. This is a big goal, but we think it's realistic. Newer comrades won't remember that we've done subscription drives of this size, and even bigger, in 1971 and 1972. But this drive will be different. Those campaigns were based on the campuses—getting subscribers by going through the campus dormitories.

This drive will be different. We still want those campus subscribers, but that will be primarily the job of the YSA, not of the branches, although some branches may want to get some of their subscriptions on nearby campuses where we're trying to help a YSA chapter get started.

By definition this drive will be different from the low-key subscription drives of the past few years. It will be a major campaign, a major priority, for all the party branches.

## **300 New Members by Christmas!**

The final proposal is something new for the party. And that is a recruitment campaign, or what would better be called a membership drive. This has to be a special kind of party campaign because it is bound up totally with our other campaigns. It will only be through carrying out all of

the other tasks we have discussed at this convention that the membership drive can be a success.

If we look at the statistics on new members, we can draw some conclusions based on our experience of the past year. The first conclusion is that we are winning new members. It's not a giant influx, but it's consistent and it's significant. The total number of regular and provisional members in the party as of July 1 stood at 1,524.

In the three months of September, October, and November of 1975 we took in 112 new members. In the three months from January to March 1976, we took in 206 provisional members. And in the April-June period we took in 169. The rate of recruitment for the first three months of 1976 was thus nearly twice the rate of September-November.

There are undoubtedly several factors involved in this, but the major one is that at the January National Committee meeting we inaugurated the provisional membership program. Provisional membership itself did what we hoped: It made it easier for prospective members to take the step. But something else happened, too. The discussion on provisional membership that the National Committee had, and the discussions that followed in the branches, raised everybody's consciousness about recruitment. We were thinking about it, talking about it, giving leadership attention to it. And as a result we increased the rate of recruitment. We had an informal campaign around it.

Now what we need is to have a serious, thought-out campaign to win new members. We want to systematize it, pay attention to it, and give it the same kind of time and leadership we give everything else that we set a priority on.

The proposal from the Political Committee is that we conduct a drive for 300 new provisional members, beginning with everyone who joins here at the convention and continuing until the end of December. Hopefully, we'll leave Oberlin with a good start toward the 300.

This will be a campaign without any branch or local quotas. It's not like the subscription drive, where if a branch comes up to the end of the drive and sees it is going to fall short, there are special steps to take. But a branch can't say, well, we're three people short of our membership goal, let's have a mobilization Saturday to see who we can turn up.

This will be something of an experiment. We are proposing a modest goal. To meet the 300 goal, we have to boost our rate of recruitment to what it was in January, February, and March—and maintain that rate over the next four and a half months.

Even though we won't be running quotas and score-

boards in the *Militant*, we want to write about this drive in the paper. We can do a regular column with lessons and experiences of the campaign. We can write about the people who are joining the party, what their background is, and why they have decided to join.

In thinking out this membership drive, and our perspectives for growth, we have to keep in mind exactly what stage we're in. We are not at the point where we are signing up new members on street corners. We're not knocking on doors and collecting initiation fees along with introductory subscriptions.

We are going to recruit primarily out of the organizations and movements in which we are active. We are going to recruit people we collaborate with. People who are themselves activists. This doesn't mean we won't recruit people we meet canvassing door to door in neighborhoods where the branches are. Because when we do that, we run into people who are activists in the unions, in community struggles, in the women's liberation movement, and so on.

We'll also recruit out of the unions where our comrades are active, out of our antiracist work, out of our work around South Africa, around opposition to the death penalty, Latin American defense work, etc. The statistics make this very clear. In the first three months of this year, during an upswing in our work around Boston, 18% of the new provisional members we took in were Black. In the months of April, May, and June, at the height of our activity around the Springfield ERA march, 47% of our new provisional members were women, up substantially from previous months.

We've also seen a dramatic change in the percentage of new members who have had no previous experience in the YSA. Last fall, 64% of our new members were members of the YSA. This winter that had dropped to 48%, and it dropped again to 30% in the spring. That means that along with our provisional membership program, and our membership drive, we have to realize that much of the basic education and experience in the socialist movement of our new members is going to take place *after* they have joined. It means we now have to give serious thought to our educational program and our classes for new members.

If we can accomplish these tasks, if we can implement the goals we are setting for ourselves—sign up 20,000 *Militant* readers, win 300 new members, carry out our action campaigns, deepen our participation in broader struggles, and continue the progress that our branches are making—we'll see that the gains we have made in the last year, the changes we have made in the party, will be only baby steps compared to what we can accomplish in the year ahead.