

SOCIALIST WORKERS 1968 NATIONAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

873 Broadway, New York, N. Y. 10003, tel. (212) 673-0790

Fred Halstead for President

Paul Boutelle for Vice President

Clifton DeBerry
National Chairman

June 6, 1968

Jack Barnes
National Campaign Director

NEWS RELEASE

Douglas Jenness
Ass't. Campaign Director

For Immediate Release

Caroline Lund
National Campaign Secretary

George Novack
Treasurer

William Martin
Public Relations Director

Brian Shannon
Editor, National Campaigner

Helena Hermes
Campaign Photography

Jon Britton
State Ballot Coordinator

Evelyn Reed
Research Director

The following is a statement by Fred Halstead, Socialist Workers Party Presidential candidate, on the assassination of Senator Robert F. Kennedy:

The Socialist Workers Party condemns the assassination of Senator Robert F. Kennedy as we condemn all political assassinations. This act can only serve the forces of reaction. The ruling class is already seizing upon it as a pretext for new legislation and repressive measures aimed against all critics of their basic policies.

Since the shooting of Senator Kennedy, capitalist politicians and commentators, one after another, have taken to the airways to demand harsh new restrictions against students, antiwar demonstrators and black militants. In the midst of this barrage of smear attacks President Johnson has appointed a special commission to study ways of dealing with "violent men among us." His entire pronouncement is cloaked in sheer hypocrisy. He tried to divert attention from the real perpetrators of violence, those responsible for spreading an atmosphere of hatred in this country. He did not say one word about the blood bath which the Washington government has visited upon the people of Vietnam, and its assaults with cops and troops on Afro-American communities. Johnson should have named the ruling powers, including himself, who are responsible for these outrages against humanity, when he said: "We must not permit men that are filled with hatred and carelessness--and careless of innocent lives, to dominate our streets and fill our homes with fear."

In his statement setting up the commission Johnson declared: "We cannot sanction the appeal to violence--no matter what its cause, no matter what the grievances from which it springs. There is never--I say never--any justification for the violence which tears at the fabric of our national life."

Does this mean that young men are no longer to be torn from their families by the draft; that GIs are no longer to be trained to kill Vietnamese and other revolutionary peoples around the world; that GIs are no longer to be sent to die in wars to defend capitalist profits, investments and future investment possibilities? Does this mean that U.S. generals are to cease wiping out whole villages and even sections of Saigon to the point where it has now become common to hear the statement "we destroyed it in order to save it."? Does this mean that our daily papers and TV broadcasts are no longer to bombard us with gloating reports of body counts? Does it mean the police are going to stop carrying guns, clubs and black-jacks and stop using them on black people? Does it mean the CIA and its coups and assassination plots are to be abandoned? Does it mean the nuclear bombs are to be dismantled?

Obviously Johnson has reference to none of these crimes. He and the rest of the bipartisan warmakers in Washington, in fact, are escalating such acts of violence. At the same time they seize upon the assassination of Senator Kennedy as a pretext for a new assault on critics of their violent policies and to prepare new repression against the victims of the violence of capitalist society. As Malcolm X used to say: "They try to make the criminal look like the victim and make the victim look like the criminal."