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MAR 1 1974

(March 7, 1974

Editor, The Militant
14 Charles Lane
New-York, N.Y. 10014

Dear Editor,

The article in the March 1, 1974, issue of the Militant, by your correspondent, Bob Schwartz, gave a rather incomplete view of the bourgeois press' treatment of the left organizations reaction to the Patricia Hearst kidnapping. The article attempts to show that the bourgeois press has been unable to tarnish the Left as a whole with the label of terrorism. This is what Schwartz writes:

' But at the same time, statements by radical groups disassociating themselves from the SLA have been given prominent treatment. One Chronicle article quoted an unnamed "Stanford authority" as saying that "the Socialist Workers Party for example has come out against individual acts of terrorism in the United States".'

This however, is only half the quote from the San Francisco Chronicle of February 9, 1974. The full quote from that paper should read:

'The Socialist Workers Party, for example, has come out against individual acts of terrorism in the United States, but there is a minority within which upholds such acts.'

This attack on an allegedly terrorist minority inside the SWP is not an isolated one. The Wisconsin State Journal of February 28, 1974, carried an article by syndicated columnist Victor Riesel, which read:

' From the RU sprang the Venceremos Brigade (originally Chicano-oriented) and the Symbionese Liberation Army. There are more violence-kidnapping forces -including dissidents in the Socialist Workers Party organization known as the Internationalist Tendency.'

In addition, a House Internal Security Committee report on the Socialist Workers Party, put out in late summer 1973, attempted to label the Internationalist Tendency as a terrorist tendency.

These statements are typical attempts by the bourgeoisie to brand revolutionaries as terrorists, and deserve to be answered. Neither the SWP nor any tendency within are terrorists. The use of terrorism by the bourgeoisie as a means of political control, from the mass bombings of North Vietnam, to the garroting of political prisoners in Spain, and the torture chambers of Brazil, has naturally brought forth violent reactions from the masses of the oppressed, reactions which in no way come close to the horror and devastation wrought by the bourgeoisie. Marxists always evaluate such actions according to their ability to advance the cause of the working class and the oppressed. They never concede one inch on the right of the working class to achieve its interests by any means necessary. While there may be disagreements on the way in which particular action has affected the class struggle, Marxists always reject the capitalists' attempt to divert attention from the massive capitalist repression by singling out revolutionaries for condemnation as terrorists. The attempt to brand the Internationalist Tendency as terrorist is just such a diversion, and will no doubt be followed by more attacks of the same kind. It is the duty of the Militant to

denounce such attacks.

Comradely,

John Barzman

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Political Committee, SWP
14 Charles Lane
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March 7, 1974

Dear Comrades,

Enclosed you will find the copy of a letter I am submitting to the Militant for publication. I am requesting that you instruct the "Militant" to publish it. It would also be useful for an editorial of the "Militant" to deal with the specific attacks mentioned in the letter in a more authoritative way.

Some additional comments are called for to clarify our view. We believe that with the increase in class conflict will come an increase of class violence, including acts of terrorism. As revolutionary Marxists we should be careful to point the tactical incorrectness of such acts when not geared to forwarding the mass struggle. At the same time, we should not relinquish the working class' right to use any tactic necessary for its liberation.

As the dynamic of the class struggle develops in the United States, we can predict that there will be no such thing as "American exceptionalism" regarding the use of terrorist methods. Undeniably, the ruling class will fasten onto such acts to whip up hysteria and frenzy in order to discredit and divide the working class movement. We know from history that the ruling class is even capable of perpetrating such acts themselves to fuel the fires of "red scares." Therefore, it becomes imperative for the revolutionary press, while differentiating itself from isolated acts of individual terrorism, to take an aggressive stance against any potential witch hunt attacks, and to mount a clear defense of the working class movement as a whole.

The kidnapping of Patricia Hearst by the so-called "Symbionese Liberation Army," is the first such "political" kidnapping in the United States, and hence has become an important test for all American radicals. By ignoring the second half of the San Francisco "Chronicle" sentence and stopping its quote in the middle, the "Militant" has done a double disservice. Firstly, it has sown the illusion in its readership that the SLA kidnapping is not being utilized by the bourgeoisie to create a witch hunt atmosphere. Secondly, by ignoring the second half of the quote, you in effect disclaim the party minority, and renege on the duty to defend it against a distortion of its views, and as a result, leave them vulnerable to attack. Since the views of the Internationalist Tendency are similar to those of the International Majority Tendency, you have failed by omission, to defend the International as a whole.

These events in San Francisco are only the opening pinprick of individual terrorism in the United States. Whether we like it or not, the intensifying class struggle will inevitably bring more such actions. The way the "Militant" has responded to the Hearst kidnapping falls short of what is required. Comrades, we call upon you as the majority

of the SWP, and its exclusive leadership, to correct this error and to take up the aggressive defense of the entire party and the entire International, whenever any component of either is attacked or vilified. Our policy, especially regarding our own comrades, must remain "an injury to one is an injury to all."

Comradely,

John Barzman
for the Internationalist Tendency

John Barzman