

YOUNG SOCIALIST

REVIEW

CONTENTS

PRE-CONVENTION DISCUSSION

INCLUDED ARE --

Draft Resolution on Youth and Campus, and
Draft Resolution on the crisis of world Stalinism

also, suggested amendments to resolutions

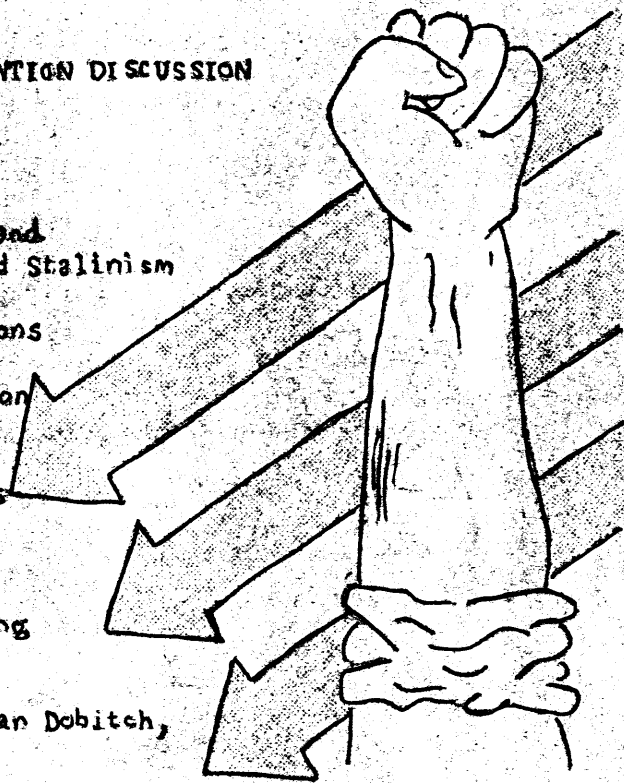
Articles by Sam Taylor and Shane Mage on
social democracy and unity, etc.

An exchange of letters between Comrades
Arlon and Tim; an open-letter from
Gordon Haskell,...

Some comments and such by the Left Wing
Caucus

and others by J. North, D. Meier, Bogdan Dobitch,
Tim Wohlforth, and 3 Newarkites

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INFORMATION AND
DISCUSSION BULLETIN
OF

THE YOUNG SOCIALIST LEAGUE

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(Editors Note: ATTENTION! The contents page doesn't really tell the story--which is a very chaotic one. Apologies, but! All articles begin on the right side of the page, but the pages are not numbered consecutively which means the right side of the page may be an even or an odd number! Some blank back pages are assumed to have numbers, some not--and sometimes a blank back page exists in the middle of an article in which case this is noted in the contents. Pages 42 and 46 somehow just don't exist--they "disappeared" in the process. So don't worry if you skip from page 41 to 43 for example. The final two articles aren't numbered correctly at all since they were done completely in New York and each begins with page one. Also, the articles done in New York are mimeographed on only one side of the page. You may have to ponder a bit, but if you've got the intelligence to be a socialist you ought to be able to figure it all out--it'll divide the wheat from the chaff or something--so there!)

EDITORIAL NOTES

What the YSR is

The Young Socialist Review is the information and discussion bulletin of the Young Socialist League. The YSR is prepared by the Chicago unit of the YSL.

The aim of the YSR is to constitute a forum for the expression of all points of view within the YSL and is open to any member. Contributions from non-members will be accepted if of sufficiently high interest also.

Articles signed by individuals do not, of course, necessarily represent the views of the YSL; "official" material will be clearly labelled as such.

The YSR is published at least bi-monthly, or more often when there is sufficient material. So, PLEASE SEND COPY AS SOON AS IT IS READY! Copy should be sent to 1343 E. 50th Street, Chicago 15, Illinois. Submit copy stencilled, single-spaced if possible; otherwise it must be typewritten, double-spaced.

The circulation of the YSR is not restricted to YSL members. Though issued primarily for members it is open to all interested. Members should make every effort to get copies into the hands of all interested persons. Copies are available by writing either the editor or the YSL National Office.

This issue

From all appearances we will be putting out an issue (until we run out of money) every few weeks, so just keep sending material in. Also remember the National Office's financial state and send your dues, pledges, etc., to the NO so that we are able to continue these frequent YSRs. This is, as you can see, another big bulky issue put out under rather rushed and hurried circumstances. The next issue, I hope, will be small and I expect you will be receiving it only a week or so after this one.

Two NAC Draft Resolutions are contained in this issue--one at the beginning and one at the end. They should be read with special care as these two, plus the Resolution on American Perspectives in the March 30th issue are the three major resolutions for the July convention, which is officially called for in this issue. Remember to save these YSRs for Convention purposes!

Sloppy typing, page numbering and the like will simply have to be excused because we are trying to do a herculean task and we have decided that the mistakes are better than the slow-down we would have if we tried to put out a neater and more perfect issue.

Again for those not "up" on YSL affairs, the Left Wing Caucus was formed in opposition to the NEC and NAC positions on socialist regroupment; the caucus is often referred to in this issue as the L.C.

Please, please, please make a special point of trying to stencil your own material before sending it to Chicago, and use a cleaned typewriter and a hard touch. We have lost the services of one of our Chicago typists due to Spring examinations, so this is all the more essential to our operations!

--Debbie Meier
April 16, 1957

YOUNG SOCIALIST LEAGUE

Call For The Third National Convention Of The Young Socialist League

April 10, 1957

To All Units and Members of the YSL

Dear Comrades:

In accordance with the YSL Constitution, the call for the convocation of the Third National Convention of the Young Socialist League is hereby issued. The convention shall be organized, delegates apportioned and elected, and the pre-convention discussion conducted as provided for by the appropriate provisions of the Constitution and in the rules adopted for the convention by the National Action Committee and the National Executive Committee.

The convention shall be held on July 1, 2 and 3, 1957, in a locality to be subsequently determined.

The following are proposed as the main points of the agenda, the rest of the agenda to be subsequently determined.

1. Socialist Regroupment
2. Youth, Campus and YSL Perspectives
3. The Crisis of World Stalinism

The issuance of this convention call formally opens the pre-convention discussion period in the YSL. The draft resolutions proposed by the National Action Committee on the main points proposed for the convention agenda have already been issued to the League. All Units are to set aside time for adequate discussion of these questions, making time available for the presentation of all views in regard to these and all other convention matters.

All Units shall be entitled to at least one delegate to the convention. Representation shall be on the basis of one delegate for every five members or major fraction thereof, e.g., one for seven, two for eight, two for twelve, three for thirteen, etc. Units should also elect a number of alternates, designating these in numerical order for purposes of replacing delegates who cannot be seated due to absence.

Representation shall be based on the regular membership of the Unit as of April 1, 1957. Only members who have joined the YSL prior to April 1, 1957 shall be represented by delegates, shall be eligible to run for delegates and shall be eligible to vote for delegates. In addition, in order to be represented by a delegate at the convention, in order to run for delegate, or to vote for delegates, members must on June 1, 1957, be in good standing. To be in good standing, a member must on June 1, 1957, be no more than three months in arrears on payment of dues. Units, therefore, shall be entitled to delegates in proportion to the number of members they have on the night that voting takes place who were members prior to April 1, 1957 and who are paid up in dues to March 1, 1957, and only those members entitled to be represented are eligible to run for delegates, and vote in the election of delegates.

Units may elect delegates on the basis of a political division, and must do so if requested by any regular member who is entitled to be represented. Such a member must present a resolution or motion to the Unit on the basis for the division. Majorities and minorities shall be established on the basis of the votes cast for any resolutions or motions so submitted, and such majorities and minorities shall name the delegates they are entitled to and be formally

certified by the Unit. In a Unit entitled to one delegate, the majority shall choose the delegate. In a Unit entitled to two delegates, a minority receiving one-third of the vote shall receive one delegate; in a Unit with three delegates, a minority receiving one-fourth of the vote shall receive one delegate, etc. In Units with an odd number of delegates in which there is a 50% - 50% division, representation shall be ensured by one-half votes for delegates to each group. The proportion of delegates minorities receive is based on the ratio of the votes they receive to the total votes cast. The majority receives the rest, unless abstainers constitute themselves a separate minority on a political basis. Abstentions count among the total votes cast, votes of "not voting" do not.

If there is a general political division in the League, Units may elect members from other Units or from among Members-At-Large as their proxy delegates, if this is the only way to ensure representation for their political viewpoints.

All Members-At-Large, meeting the eligibility requirements outlined above, shall be represented at the convention. M-A-L's shall be represented as if they constituted a single Unit. A communication shall be sent all M-A-L's requesting that those who desire to run for delegate of the M-A-L's so notify the national office, and inquiring if any M-A-L desires a political division. If a division is requested, all M-A-L candidates for delegate shall write a fifty-word statement of their views on the question on which the division takes place. A ballot, containing information on how many delegates the M-A-L's are entitled to, the names of the candidates and their statements, shall then be sent to all eligible M-A-L's, who shall then elect their delegates by proportional representation. M-A-L's may also elect alternates on the same basis. M-A-L delegates must be M-A-L's, but to ensure political representation, members of Units may run for M-A-L alternates if there is a political division among M-A-L's, but can do so only on the basis of political views.

Election of delegates by Units should be held between June 1 and June 15.

There is a general convention assessment of \$1.00 per member to aid delegates in traveling to the convention. Units should collect these and forward to the N.O.

All members and alternates of the YSL National Executive Committee shall be fraternal delegates to the convention, entitled to voice but not to vote.

All members of the YSL may attend the convention as visitors.

The forthcoming convention of the YSL will be an extremely important one. It shall consider questions of great consequence for the YSL. All Units and members of the YSL have the duty therefore to carry out the necessary preparations for the convention, as outlined above, and for conducting the most thorough and most democratic pre-convention discussion, so that the convention's decisions, which will be binding on the League, shall represent the views of the YSL and consist of the best answers the YSL can develop to the questions facing us.

Forward to a fruitful convention!

Fraternally,

Michael Harrington
National Chairman

Max Martin
National Secretary

Youth and Campus and the
YSL Perspective

1. For the first time in many years the socialist movement faces a period in which it will be possible to enlarge its ranks in a modest way and to break out of its complete isolation from the mainstream of American political life. To the YSL as a socialist youth organization this has special significance: it is the young workers and students of today who must provide the basis for the socialist movement of tomorrow.
2. In the three years since its founding, the YSL has been able not only to maintain its strength, but to undergo a modest growth. It has succeeded in many localities in establishing a base of younger members and secondary leaders upon whom the leadership of the socialist youth movement will shortly fall. It has succeeded in broadening the scope of its appeal and has become a socialist youth movement, rather than a shadowy parody of an adult socialist organization. The YSL has become in more than just theory the major national socialist youth organization in the United States. It has made healthy moves away from the totally inward-looking life of a political sect... and now the socialist youth movement has a genuine perspective of looking outward even more toward the broad masses of students and young workers.
3. The situation of the YSL in the immediate period must be seen within the context of both the current situation on campus, which must remain its major arena of activity and the broader social changes currently at work in the United States. The socialist movement is being revived by the slow awakening from the almost complete political stagnation that has prevailed in the United States in the past eight or more years. The YSL, as a youth organization, most particularly, can witness a period of growth in this situation. These changes upon which the current new mood are based are several:
 - a. The easing of the cold war and the related decline of the more extreme manifestations of the witch-hunt. The decline of the witch-hunt and the decrease in the danger of a Third World War has had a noticeable effect on the campuses. Where formerly students feared to attend a liberal meeting, let alone a radical sponsored one, refused to sign petitions, avoided taking "controversial positions" etc., they now begin to appear cautiously on the political scene. In recent months, socialist speakers have gained receptive audiences on previously hostile campuses, and a moderated intellectual-political revival has been seen on campus. In New York City, traditionally the most advanced area of student political life, the most heartening sign of this revival was in the protest against the banning of John Gates, editor of the Daily Worker, from the campuses of the City Colleges. The YSL can well feel proud of the important ~~and~~ and democratic role it played in this campaign.
 - b. The renewed struggle of the Negro people for civil rights. If any one thing has had an invigorating effect on present day American politics, it has been this courageous struggle of the Negroes, primarily in the South, for elementary democratic rights. This struggle has created significant gaps *

in the social unity of the Democratic Party and has brought forth new forces to carry on the fight. Most significant from a socialist perspective has been the hesitant, but nevertheless increasing, tie-up of the Negro struggle with the trade union movement. The southern Negro movement has been ~~giving~~ given its major impetus by the changes being produced in the south by the increasing industrialization of the area. This fact immediately raises the necessity of union organization. Such union organization, despite hesitancy and remnants of racist ideologies, must struggle for the equal organization of both Negro and white workers in the same unions. The leaders of the national labor movement, like the IUE and UAW, albeit at times in a vacillating fashion, have acted as the "left" wing of the movement for civil rights legislation. The activities of A. Phillip Randolph of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters - who, in the organization of IN FRIENDSHIP, has once again resumed the leadership of the most militant section of the Negro movement - is indicative of the fruitful alliance that can and should be built between the Negro movement and the labor movement, an alliance which should eventuate in the formation of a labor party. The Negro struggle has had particular impact on the campus. The murder of Emmett Till and countless other examples of lynch-law have cut through the apathy of many students. In the fights of Miss Autherine Lucy, of Reverend Martin Luther King and the heroic Negro masses of Montgomery, of the Negro students and workers of Tallahassee, and other similar battles, the sectors of ~~the~~ the campus have found something to identify with. New NAACP clubs have been organized in some areas, and students have engaged in limited campaigns in support of the struggles of Negro students. The Enroll for Freedom campaign of ~~the~~ a group affiliated with In Friendship was able, where leadership was forthcoming, to gain student support for the Negro movement. On such campuses as Antioch, Columbia, the University of Chicago, Brooklyn College, as well as in ~~the~~ other areas, where the issues were presented to the students vigorously and the organization was sufficient for the occasion, the Enroll for Freedom campaign met with moderate success. It was indicative of the fact that with the proper orientation and organization, the civil-rights campaign on campus can be most fruitful.

c. The disintegration of Stalinism and the Hungarian revolution. Stalinism as a live political movement in the United States has been all but destroyed by the events of the last year. The Khrushchev revelations followed by the events in Eastern Europe started a process within the American CP and the stalinoid movement which promises to culminate in its total destruction. The LYL as a youth group of the CP has officially dissolved and its membership is in a state of political turmoil - to the extent that they continue (or ever were) interested in socialist politics at all. Generally speaking, their direction has been that of the Gates tendency within the CP - that is, they are moving in a democratic direction. They become open to our political influence and we can win sectors of them to the politics of the YSL. Moreover, the disappearance of the LYL removes from the campus scene a pseudo-radical alternative for radical students to a socialist youth movement.

The disintegration of Stalinism and the Hungarian revolution, in which the students, the intellectuals, and the working-class joined forces, has important results for the socialist movement. Not only does it give us revived heart and enthusiasm, but it demonstrates that our perspective of a democratic, revolutionary

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alternative to capitalism and Stalinism is not Utopian, but indeed the heart of the matter. This fact enables us to break in upon the cynicism and lesser-evilism that is prevalent among the most advanced students, particularly among graduate students who once were radical, but who succumbed to the mood of hopelessness.

4. The campus scene that we face today is a different one than in the years of the Korean and Indo-Chinese wars. It is also different than the last period of student political concern which ended shortly before the Korean War. The general mood of conformity, based basically on the protracted recent history of American capitalism, offering, as it does, moderate financial success to college graduates willing to conform to the patterns of middle-class life, has penetrated every niche of campus life. There has been a major break with the traditions of the thirties, and the forties. Students, for the most part, are less concerned with serious ideas today and are less sophisticated about them, than were their older brothers and sisters. It is becoming more common for college instructors to teach courses that skirt "dangerous ideas". Thus, many courses in philosophy or sociology degenerate into the presentation of lists of "ten principles of Marx" and a parallel "ten errors of Marx", rather than seriously discussing such ideas, either as advocate or opponent. There are few students who are prepared to challenge the authority of the instructor. Thus, it becomes less and less frequent that classrooms become places for fruitful ~~xxx~~ dialogues between instructors and students.

In this situation, the YSL must be aware of the ways in which its activities are limited, as well as being able to take advantage of the opportunity presented to offer to those students seriously concerned with ideas, a type of intellectual stimulus not otherwise found on the campus. We must ~~xxxxxxx~~ not assume that the average bright American student is prepared immediately to comprehend the categories of thought and language which are commonplace to the older members of the YSL. We must learn how to present our ideas to the campus in the least obscure, exotic, and sectarian way. We must constantly guard against introducing into campus work hackneyed and esoteric language and concepts.

This does not mean that we must water-down and sugar-coat our ideas. The very fact that YSLers are people with ideas and a certain degree of intellectual and political sophistication offers us the opportunity to provide a genuine center of intellectual ferment and activity on the campus. Those students who are looking for people who take living ideas seriously will be attracted to the YSL, if we present out ideas to them in non-sectarian tones. We must avoid carrying over into campus work the "short-hand" of our internal discussions and bull-sessions.

5. This total situation makes it possible, we feel, to rebuild the socialist youth movement in the United States. On our part, we envision unity between the ISL and the SP-SDF, with the YSL functioning as the youth affiliate of the united movement. We look upon this as the first step in creating a broad Debsian socialist movement in the United States. Such a development would mean, we feel, that the YSL would be able to attract to it the numerous critical, radical, and socialist youth, as well as ex-LYers, who are not looking for a sect to join, and who rightly see no hope for American socialism within the old sectarian framework. Such a socialist youth organization, affiliated to a revived SP, would be capable of attracting to it, we think, literally tens and hundreds of young people in the near future. This socialist regroupment we envision must have an unambiguous position on Russia, and cannot in any way hedge on this question. Any other form of socialist regroupment can provide only a halfway house for those elements

breaking with the CP and therefore dealy their development toward democratic socialism.

6. In our efforts to broaden our contact with the life of young people we must define our relationship to other tendencies that exist in the youth arena.

a. The LYL and its periphery. Some of the best work of the YSL in recent months has been done here. In Los Angeles, Berkely, New York and Chicago we have been in contact with LYLers and their sympathizwrs and have been able to talk to them about our politics. Since the dissolution of the LYL and the general cirisis in the CP, we have been able to effect them appreciably by our perspective for democratic socialist unity and with, of course, our fundamental criticism of Stalinist politics. The Benson pamphlet on the crisis in the CP which sets forth the perspective of our tendency on socialist unity has been extremely well received in these circles.

The entire new development in this arena, requires a formulation of our position of united fronts with the remnants of the LYL and independent clubs which they dominate. Given the new situation inside of the Stalinist movement, democratic socialists should pay close attention to the developments and attempt to establish contact with those closest to the Gates point of view. We should attend their open forums and meetings, read their press, and if circumstances warrant it, attempt to establish informal discussion groups. Many Stalinists have been shaken to the very foundations of their political beliefs about the Russian society and are ready to discuss political questions about socialism and democracy in a more since and consequently more meaningful way than previously was true.

While we seek to establish contact and encourage the Gates tendency, it does not mean that we abandon our criticism of Stalinism. The essence of our criticism of Stalinism is that democracy and socialism are inseperable, and that socialists must be for democracy not only in the United States, but precisely where the CP is in power.

Our bridge to the CP is our understanding of the current develtpments and our intention to encourage and participate in furthering it. However, this does not mean that we welcome Stalinist youth into united fronts as "comrades". What our attitude should be in any particular circumstance should be dependent upon which tendency the particular Stalinist youth groupx falls into. In the united front activities, where possible, we shall try to raise the political criteria of opposition to totalitarianism and dictatorship everywhere. At the same time we do not have a policy of excluding Stalinist organizations from United Front activites, nor are we in favor of including these groups under all circumstances. Due to the flexibility of the current situation and the broader consequences of activity in local areas, all units, fractions and members at large must discuss with the N.O. all questions of their activity in respect to Stalinist youth organizations. While we do not believe that democratic socialists should provide a cover of respectability for the Stalinists under which they can resolve their differences in peace and quiet, on the other hand, we reject the sectarian attitude of those who refuse to have anything to do with the Stalinists until and only until they have made the complete evolution toward democratic socialism.

It should be clear that we must make every effort to convince those youth who are breaking with the Stalinist movement to ~~join~~ join the YSL even before they have made the complete theoretical and ideological commitment to third-camp socialism.

b.SDA. This organization has virtually collapsed and really only has any membership in Philadelphia and New York. The liberal student movement today is generally weak and shows little vitality. We should attempt to cooperate with liberal students wherever possible and to draw them into joint activity on many political issues--civil liberties, civil rights, etc.

c.SLID. This organization has witnessed a modicum of a revival in recent months and may in the next period show even more activity in a number of areas. We should attempt to remain on friendly terms with it, participate in joint forums and discussions, etc., while not forgetting that it clearly is a competitor of the YSL.

d.YPSL. The youth section of the SP-SDF is very tiny and has only two groups--Los Angeles and Chicago. They are both third-camp politically and vigorous organizationally--attracting a broad range of socialists. The YSL should seek to continue and further the fruitful joint activities and discussion with the YPSL which are already the rule in the two areas mentioned. This tendency represents one with which we should build the closest fraternal relations.

e.The American Youth for Socialism. This group is the youth organization of the Socialist Workers Party. Its political direction is Cannonite and its membership at present is almost universally SWP. In the area where we have had contact with them they have given the impression that their most immediate concern was the recruitment of YSL members. Both because of its Cannonite ~~xxxx~~ politics and because of its orientation, the AYS is obviously a rival group to the YSL and our relations with them should be governed accordingly. While we are not against participating with the AYS in joint activity, it should only be on a basis of firm political agreement. In no case should our third-camp politics be subordinated to vague and misleading Cannonite formulations. Because they do represent a distinct and genuine tendency in the socialist movement we are willing to cooperate with them but not at the cost of our clear anti-capitalist and anti-stalinist politics which distinguish us ~~x~~ from the SWP-AYS.

f. Independent socialist clubs, etc. These groups and forums are usually the centers of Cochranite and Sweezyite activity on the campus. We should endeavor to establish contact with them and to send speakers and literature to them. Our participation in such clubs must be determined in relationship to our relative strength in the locality and is a matter which must be decided in each ~~xxxx~~ individual case in consultation with the N.O.

g. ACLU. We have participated in civil liberties clubs on campuses in the past three years. However, it seems that now it will be possible to really get much wider support on a firm civil libertarian basis from all kinds of elements. The recent experience in New York City centering around the banning of Gates from the city colleges illustrates that for the first time in many years

one can rally support for a civil-liberties,academic freedom issue with some ease. We should play an active role in such groups,encourage their formation in areas where they do not exist,and in general demonstrate that socialists have a consistent positive contribution to make in this area.

11.Much of what has gone before is brief and undetailed,yet it provides the basis for a fundamental generalization of our perspective among American youth.

This is a period in which we can begin to break out of our isolation on campus. Indeed,as many of the examples cited before prove,we have done this in a number of instances. So far,our activity has been largely confined to contact with politicals who have been shaken up by recent events. But we must look beyond this. We must orient toward the broad student ~~in~~ body which remains today apathetic,even with the various stirrings which we can document. We seek,not simply to regroup the existing socialist and radical students:we aim to bring new elements to the cause of socialism.

In order to do this,we will continue,of course,our broad organizational perspective,that is,we put the YSL forth as an organization capable of containing various socialist tendencies,pacifists, etc. We are quite willing to join with a wide range of students and student organizations on issues involving democracy,civil liberties,academic freedom,and the like.

As a corollary to this immediate attitude,we will of course,continue to fight for our over-all position on socialist unity:for a united organization of the democratic socialist youth,affiliated to a broad Debsian party of American socialism. And this,as we have indicated in another resolution of this convention,will be brought much closer to reality by a unity around the SP-SDF.

In a very real sense,the kind of organization which we projected at our founding Convention--broad,heterogeneous,democratic, anti-Stalinist and anti-capitalist - is now a real possibility on the campus. A development of such a movement would provide the very best means of fighting,within a united socialist youth movement,for our political program,for the Third Camp.

- March 30, 1957

Amendments to the Resolution on Youth and Campus

by Debbie Meier

The following amendments are put forward to improve the style and also to alter some unfortunate political and substantive sections. I put these amendments forward in a tentative fashion, with an interest in finding areas of agreement, compromise, etc. before the Convention. Comrade Arlon has already informed me of his intention to submit a substitution for the entire Section 6(a) which deals with the LYL and related groups and our relations with them. I feel his criticisms are in keeping with the spirit of my own and that his whole approach to this crucial question would be an improvement. I cannot of course give a final opinion on the matter until I see his suggested substitute.

* * * * *

1. Omit Section 1 and the first paragraph of Section 3. Thus beginning the Resolution with Section 2. (Motivation: less wordy, more to the point.)
2. After Section 2 add the following paragraph:
We are faced today with some new situations and a need for a new perspective for youth activity. This new perspective has been made possible by the following circumstances:
3. Omit the second sentence in Section 3(a). (Motivation: repetitive, adds to the general over-weighting in this resolution of general political analysis--thus having the effect of dulling its major purpose--to outline our youth and campus tasks.)
4. Omit in Section 3(b) from "This struggle has created" on the bottom of Page 1 through "in the formation of a labor party" in the middle of Page 2. (Same motivation as above)
5. Omit in section 3(c) the sentence beginning "The Khrushchev revelation..."
6. Omit Section 5 entirely and replace with:
These facts and considerations are what make it possible for us to look toward a unified and regrouped socialist movement in the next period, the details of which are dealt with in another resolution of this convention.
7. In Section 6(c) on LYL: omit in the last paragraph, p. 4, sentence 2, "However, this does not mean...."
omit, in the last paragraph, p. 4, sentence 4, "at the same time we do not have..."
(Motivation: In the present period in particular this negative way of putting it is not only awkward but obscures the real point to be made. The major point is the positive approach we wish now to take--the stress should be placed on the flexibility and permissibility of cooperation with those groups with stalinist illusions, or with stalinists themselves who are however in the midst of tremendous shifts and changes.)
8. substitute for section 6 on ypsl the following:
The youth section of the SP-SDF is very tiny and consists of groups in California and scattered members in other places, almost all of

whom are also SP members. It is within YPSL however that the most vigorous support for the Third Camp is found and the YSL should seek to continue to further fruitful joint activities and discussions with any YPSL members or groups. YPSL has always represented a political tendency with which we had special hopes of building close fraternal relations; this is only reinforced in view of our perspective of unified activity with them in the future."

Par

9. Substitute the following for Section 6 on the AYS

This group is the youth organization of the S.P., and is composed almost entirely of S.P. members. The AYS at present appears to be concerned almost exclusively with the YSL, which concern we consider flattering. However, since the S.P.'s perspective today is aimed only at recruiting individual rank-and-filers from all other organizations to their own anti-third camp program and organization, rather than genuine organizational unity and regroupment, it is obvious that their attentions are in the interest of splitting the YSL for the advantage of their politics and organization. The AYS must be viewed in light of this. To offer to cooperate with the AYS in the same manner we would with any other rival socialist youth organization which represents a distinct political position different than ours. We urge them, and the S.P., to reorient themselves to the need for a genuine, nonsectarian approach to regroupment. (Motivation: It's incorrect to say the AYS is moving in the direction of Cannonism--it's there. In other respects I think the emphasis and approach in this is more accurate and better in tone.)

10. Omit, in section 6 on independent socialist clubs (p. 6) the entire last sentence which begins with "our participation" and replace with the following (which will follow the previous sentence without a period.)

"..and carry on any activity in relations to them that is aimed at bringing them firmly into the camp of democratic socialism and of furthering a cooperative and open political relationship."

(Motivation: Again, let's watch sounding very restrictive, and closed and sect-like--the point to remember is our orientation toward bringing these groups together and not of alienating them.)

11. Omit entirely section 7 (called 11 in the document!) and replacing with:

This summary of activities provides the basis for an understanding of our youth perspective. The major theme running through it all is the need to break out of our isolation in terms both of the radical and socialist arena and the broader student and youth arena. This means more emphasis on cooperation with other socialists and radicals, greater concern in avoiding sectarian sounding phraseology and finally conscious concern at all times for making a reality out of our proposal for a broad, unified all-inclusive party of socialism with a strong youth and student section around the framework of the present SP-SDF. In the next period our energies must be devoted toward this possibility. We come before the radical world with a bold proposal and a sincere desire to engage in all those measures necessary to carry it out. We look toward the day when all democratic socialist opinion will be united together, and when the political program and leadership of the YSL can help in building a new and reinvigorated student movement.

(Motivation: somewhat shorter, more pointed and stresses the major role of our regroupment perspective in terms of our concrete tasks.)

INDEPENDENT SOCIALISM, SOCIAL DEMOCRACY AND UNITY

by Sam Taylor

In way of a preface, the following remarks are based on the debate on Social Democracy held at the meeting of the New York unit of the YSL on March 7 between Tim Wohlforth and myself. I have added a number of comments referring to additional discussion which took place at the March 9 meeting of the Brooklyn groups on the same subject with the same participants.

In the second issue of the "Left Wing" Bulletin there appears an editorial which has as its purpose to create an impression among YSLers out of New York that the minority, and specifically Tim Wohlforth are not being given an opportunity to present their views in open discussion and debate before the membership. This is clearly not so as all members in New York know. In addition to the above mentioned meetings, Tim Wohlforth has presented his point of view in debate before the Columbia group. All of these took place before the appearance of the editorial creating the opposite impression. Therefore it can only lead a person to believe that the intent was pernicious in keeping with the "left wing's" attempt to raise the issue of "suppression" and "bureacracy" as a smokescreen to hide the fact that the leading spokesmen of the "left wing" (Shane Mage, Tim Wohlforth and Jim Robinson) are moving in the direction of adapting the politics of SWP, or else to de-emphasize this fact.

An additional remark about ISL intervention into the YSL discussion. That same editorial raises the issue of an "unfraternal act" on the part of the ISL in that at a class given by the N.Y. YSL Max Shachtman criticised Tim Wohlforth. Surely no one takes the point of view that he is above criticism, especially after at a public meeting at a N.Y. hotel before several hundred, (the meeting on "Socialist Regroupment" at which Max Shachtman, Farrel Dobbs of the SWP, A.J. Luste and John McManus of the National Guardian spoke) Tim Wohlforth took the floor and publicly attack Max Shachtman and implied that Shachtman is ready to support American imperialism. Now it is Wohlforth's right to express his point of view, but the exercise of that right implies a willingness to grant the other person the right to criticize you in turn. In addition Tim Wohlforth was not criticized for his point of view on unity but only in respect to the fact that in the previous class he had come as close as it is possible to counterpose Marxism as an existing body of ideas and categories to a scientific methodology in social science. He was prepared to take his stand with "Marxism" looking upon it as an inflexible body of dogmas as against a scientific methodology (which Marxism is) which has to be flexible enough to take into account new developments which are incapable of being understood on the basis of old categories. And it is his right to do so. It is also strange that the author of a document and the participants in a bulletin which have devoted a major share of its time to attacking the ISL (a right which they have) should raise the charge of "interference in the internal political life" of the YSL.

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This is the first formal meeting of the entire N.Y. unit since the plenum of the NEC in February where we witnessed the formation of another "left-wing" faction in the YSL. The first one was formed several months after the founding of the YSL in 1954. At that time the ultra-lefts discovered that the YSL was following a pro-American imperialist or at best an abstentionist policy toward the real manifestations of American imperialism as well as a Stalinophobic policy in that the YSL refused to support the Stalinist dominated movements in the colonial areas, Indo-China specifically. They wrote a document, "Tasks of the September Plenum" which can serve as a model for any ultra-left tendency in a youth organization.

The situation we face this time is different. Now there are real political issues involved, the question of the independent socialist attitude toward a regroupment of the socialist forces in the United States, and not merely the manifestation of Shane Mage's development in a sectarian and Cannonite direction.

As I see it, at issue here is nothing less than an opportunity which affects the future of the socialist movement in the U.S. Never has the socialist movement been as isolated, weak and divided as it is today, and at the same time, never has there been so much discussion and concern over the need for the regroupment of this small fragmented movement. It reflects both a change in the objective conditions in the world today, as yet not fully manifest, as well a change in the subjective thinking of socialists of almost every tendency.

The specific topic at this time is social democracy. Now there is a comrade who wants to discuss nothing else but social democracy. No matter what the subject of the meeting when this one particular comrade takes the floor, it is difficult for him not to launch an attack upon Social Democracy - the "putrid, stinking corpse of Social Democracy" as he says with such scientific precision and impersonal objectivity. Now we have an entire evening devoted to just this point, and I hope it will satisfy him for this evening - at least.

But there is much more to be discussed in the course of the pre-convention period, for as important as a discussion of Social Democracy is, everything is not subsumed under that topic. At issue and which we have to discuss to one degree or another at a later time are:

(1) the present situation of the socialist movement in the U.S. and the perspectives for this movement given the present and the immediately foreseeable developments of American capitalism;

(2) a conception of the labor party and the probable course of formation and development, including the role of the labor bureaucracy;

(3) the various proposals for unity, especially the "left-wing's" proposals since they have presented several proposals;

(4) What is meant by unity to the "left" or a "revolutionary regroupment"? who is included and what is our attitude toward these groups?;

(5) I also think that a proper subject for further discussion might be "What is the YSL" since a number of comrades have raised the cry of "Build the YSL" as a factional issue. I want to know what kind of the YSL? Are they referring to the YSL with its present Third Camp politics or a YSL with different politics more in line with their current political development, that is away from Third Camp politics? Are they counterposing "Build the YSL" to a regroupment of the American socialist movement?

I raise this last point in view of the changing "unity" proposals which we in New York have heard from spokesmen for the "left wing". The "YSL Left-Wing Declaration" calls for "the formation of a revolutionary democratic socialist youth movement", their editorial statement calls for the maintainance of the YSL as "an independent organization of revolutionary socialist youth", and then Tim Wohlforth tells us that the "left wing's proposals means that they are for "a broad youth organization in which a revolutionary wing can play a role." I find it difficult to reconcile the last with the first two statements.

I also raise this point because of the political development of the three leading spokesmen of the "left wing"... I would say that they no longer have the Third Camp politics of the Independent Socialist tendency and that they are in varying degrees in fundamental agreement with the SWP. Politically speaking I believe that we have to view them as political spokesmen for the SWP in the YSL. (And Shane in the second "Left Wing" Bulletin has virtually admitted as much)

Therefore in view of this situation, I believe that we ought to look at the present discussion along the following lines:

(1) An attitude toward socialist regroupment in which there are disagreements about an evaluation of the American political scene and the need for regroupment and the meaning of the present orientation toward SF-SDF unity being proposed by the majority of the NEC inside of the Third Camp Independent Socialist tendency. It is a disagreement over an important issue among those who are inside the same tendency.

(2) An attitude on the part of comrades who are no longer in fundamental agreement with the politics of the YSL, and who are in various stages of development toward another and hostile tendency. The entire logic of this schism is that they orientate toward winning over the YSL to their new point of view and leading a split out of the YSL as SF-SDF unity moves toward fulfillment, and toward unity with the emerging SWP youth organization, the American Youth for Socialism.

I think this later point of where their orientation leads them is manifest in the type of discussion they have embarked

upon in their bulletin. Not only have they picked up every argument of the SWP against the ISL and YSL but the slanders as well. Specifically I refer to the literary efforts of Tim Wohlforth, Dave Carleton (later Martha Wohlforth and John Worth). The general tone of abuse, especially in the first bulletin, could only be characterized as the "hooligan methods in polemics" which Trotsky described as one in which "theoretical impotence unites with lies and calumny."

In discussing Social Democracy, we first have to know whom or what we are referring to. I raise this only because I believe there is a confusion on Tim's part about the similarities and differences between the labor bureaucracy and Social Democracy. At last Sunday's class on Social Democracy given by Don Harris, Tim Wohlforth referred to Dave Beck of the Teamsters, David MacDonald of the Steelworkers and Gus Tyler of the ILGWU as "social democracy"

At a certain point in the development of the political organization of the working class the labor bureaucracy and social democracy are identical. But who can seriously maintain that this is the situation or the stage of development we see today in the U.S.?

What is the point in the course of political discussion when arguing against a point of view or tendency of drawing a definition so wide and thereby to bring in other social groups or points of view with which there may be some similarities but yet they are distinctly different in the present circumstances? This is the method of beating a straw man to death. You draw the circle wide enough to bring in a group which you can attack with great ease (Beck) in order to attack social democracy. After you beat Beck to death, you then say, "And here's an example of social democracy for you." This convinces no one but the primitives and uninitiated.

By this method, where it is not deliberate but merely a question of confusion, you have this situation: Beck is a social democrat, so is MacDonald, Tyler, Reuther, John L. Lewis, George Leany and Jimmy Hoffa. Norman Thomas and Sam Friedman of the SP are social democrats. But then so is Max Shachtman, or else he is becoming one or in the process of capitulating to social democracy. Hal Draper and Gordon Haskell are capitulators to capitalists and so on. And if we understand the politics of the leadership of the "left wing", William Z. Foster while not an actual social democrat, is part and parcel of the same labor bureaucracy and is thereby equated with social democracy, that is capitulates and compromises with capitalism.

When you are through, everyone, but a few sterling revolutionaries are social democrats or capitulators to social democrats. With this tour de force the term becomes completely and totally meaningless.

What you have thus done is to convert the term "social democrat" from one referring to a specific tendency inside of the socialist movement to a term of opprobrium. As the Stalinists used to call everyone with whom they disagreed a "Trotskyite" or a "fascist", we now have a situation where "social democrat" for some comrades shall serve the same function.

What the labor bureaucracy and social democracy have in common is that they are both part of the labor movement. At a certain time they are identical, but not always. Social democracy under certain circumstances aspires to become the labor bureaucracy, but the converse does not hold true. Our tendency is part of the labor movement and yet is not identical with the bureaucracy, nor for that matter is the S.F. If this is all Tim Wohlforth meant to say, then that is what he should have said, and not compounded a false amalgam.

Inside of the labor movement there are various tendencies, although not all of them do we consider part of the labor movement, i.e., the Stalinist. We have to make distinctions between these tendencies even in the face of their similarities. Although a Reuther and a Carey are non-socialist labor bureaucrats along with a Dave Beck and a Jimmy Hoffa, each of these types represent a different wing of the labor movement and we can not dump them at all times into the same barrel.

Dave Beck and Jimmy Hoffa represent the most backward of conservative business unionism. They are almost racketeers pure and simple in the business of unions. Carey and Reuther are among the more progressive and socially conscious sections of the bureaucracy. Although there are areas of identity between the two groups and in their social outlook - both seek to create a privileged position for themselves and the lower bureaucracy they represent - there are also differences in their social outlook. Carey and Reuther are more socially conscious and more adequately represent the interests of their membership than Beck and Hoffa, assuming they do at all. This, of course, does not mean that Carey and Reuther really adequately represent the interests of their unions as well as the working class, only more adequately than Beck. Therefore inside of the labor movement, given its present stage of development where the struggle is between the more progressive as against the more conservative forces, and in the absence of an independent rank and file movement, socialist critically support the more progressive forces; at the same time they attempt to build independent rank and file movements. You can participate in the current developments in the labor movement only in this way and only on the basis of this differentiation. (It is therefore not accidental that some of the comrades in the "left wing", notably Tim and Martha Wohlforth have adapted their present attitude toward the Senate racketeering investigations. It is the failure to understand the present stage of political and social consciousness of the of the American working class.)

By saying socialists critically support the more progressive forces in the current struggle inside of the labor movement means only that socialist prefer the victory of the Careys and Reuthers as against the Becks and Hoffa and even MacDonalds. It does not mean that socialist look to the bureaucracy to lead the struggle or support the bureaucracy against the rank and file, not even social democracy could be accused of that today in the U.S. The struggles that take place among the leadership of the trade union movement are of concern because they provide the cracks in the bureaucracy through which it may be possible for the ranks to assert themselves against the bureaucracy. In the current situation we are "giving" the labor bureaucracy nothing which they do not already have. All we are saying is that socialists have to recognize the differences inside of the labor bureaucracy (as well as that between it and social democracy), and recognize that given the present level of the class struggle in the U.S. certain sections can play progressive roles in leading issues of the day. But this does not mean, I must hasten to add, that they play a progressive role in all issues or even in other important issues, as for example they play an objectively reactionary role by keeping the labor movement tied to the Democratic Party and through their support to American imperialism.

The difference between our attitude toward the struggle for hegemony inside of the labor movement and toward the Stalinist movement in the colonial countries ought to be noted at this point. Toward the former we say we are for the Careys and Reuthers coming out on top insofar as this is the present stage of the development; but in respect to the colonial movements which are under the control and domination of the Stalinists, we are not for the victory of these Stalinist movements. In the former situation, it means a step forward and away from the domination of the most backward forces in the labor movement; in the latter, while the victory of Stalinism means the defeat of the old feudal and imperialist forces, it also means the victory of a force which is as reactionary and even more reactionary. It does not mean a step forward but a defeat for the working class and peasantry despite whatever may be the immediate illusions created.

Ideologically, social democracy in the U.S. is closer to the Reuther-Carey-Dubinsky wing of the labor bureaucracy. And yet they are not identical. While both are inside the labor movement and both have a political program which is similar at many points and both are for reforms of certain kinds, there is yet an important, if not fundamental difference which are not exhausted by stating that the "SF-SDF represents in its ideology the labor bureaucracy."

This difference is that the SF-SDF is for socialism while Reuther and Dubinsky are not. SF-SDF is for the nationalizing of

commanding heights of industry while Reuther and Dubinsky do not. Both seek reforms, but the SP-SDF seeks those reforms in addition to the ones it shares with the most progressive sections of the labor bureaucracy, which will lead to some kind of a socialist society. In addition, the SP-SDF is for a labor party and for breaking the labor movement from the Democratic party, Reuther and Dubinsky are not.

I have defined the areas of difference in terms of the most pressing problem from the point of view of the socialist movement - the development of a labor party. It is political blindness not to see these difference and shortsighted not to act in such a way that they can be utilized.

In short, the SP-SDF is to the left of the Democratic Party, and to the left of the most progressive sections of the labor bureaucracy. There is no doubt that the SP-SDF very often looks toward or orientates toward the left wing of the labor bureaucracy, especially the secondary leadership, in an attempt to push it in a leftward direction. But from this no one can conclude that it is tied hand and foot to the bureaucracy or that it defends the bureaucracy against the pressure of rank and file movements. At some future time when there is a different relationship of forces inside the labor movement, the reformist wing of the socialist movement will be identical with the labor bureaucracy. This is one of the things which defines their role as a reformist wing. But this is, by no stretch of the imagination, the situation today.

It is not a question of whether the SP's criticism of capitalism is forceful enough to bring forth a labor party. This is a strange way of formulating the problem. There are all sorts of tendencies which use extremely forceful language, and the fact is that there is often an inverse relationship between what they regard as forceful criticism and their strength and influence. The problem is one of the correct criticism and how to formulate it in such a way that taking the present situation as the starting point we can influence the labor movement toward playing an independent political role.

The formation of the labor party will not be the result of "forceful" criticism, but of the inability of the labor movement to achieve even the limited goals it sets for itself inside of the framework of the Democratic Party. It will come through the experience in learning that the Democratic Party can not be a vehicle for these goals. This experience will not be lost even by a certain section of the labor bureaucracy. In order to preserve their position, and even to extend their power and influence, it is quite likely that sizeable sections of the bureaucracy will take the lead in the formation of a labor party. Not in the abstract of course, but as part of a leftward movement inside the entire working class and as a result of the pressure of this leftward movement.

Once again I must hasten to add that this does not mean that anyone is for "giving" to the labor bureaucrats the role which would be done much better and more democratically by the rank and file itself. It is an analysis of the role which the labor bureaucrats have given even indication that they are capable of playing. Let us not have any illusion about this and lose sight of it behind a cloud of "revolutionary" phrasemongering. To seriously question this means that you have to put the problem in this way: before there can be even a labor party there will have to be a complete change in the leadership of the trade union movement. By this you can not mean a change in leadership of the most backward and conservative unions, but precisely in the more progressive ones. And then not merely a change in a person or a name but a change toward a leadership with a distinctly more radical outlook. If this is maintained then there is a real difference about the tempo of development that is foreseen based upon the foreseeable future.

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As to the question of its inevitability, probability, or possibility, only history will determine that. It does not settle the question to set up a whole string of possibilities as Shane Mage or Tim Wohlforth do when they start to hedge and show their "dialectical" flexibility. Of all the possibilities you have to settle down upon the most likely or probable, and then act or proceed in accordance with it. You have to have some attitude toward the existing situation and the possibilities it offers. If they are really serious about all of their possibilities and give them equal weight, then the only result could be paralysis until they do decide upon one.

In summation at this point, what we see today is a social democracy separated from its traditional role in the labor movement as it plays it in Western Europe, as it is developing in Southeast Asia. Therefore when we determine our attitude toward it we have to carefully take this differentiation and the actual role which it does play into account. We can not set our political positions based upon what role Social Democracy played sometime in the past or will play in the future. In other words we can not view social democracy in the abstract. It is a tendency in the socialist movement capable of a wide variety of response and developments and similarly revolutionary socialists have had radically different attitudes based upon these changes. For example there is a vast difference in the attitude between that held in 1917 as against that held during and after the coming to power of Hitler in 1933.

It is historically true that one of the divisions inside or the socialist or labor movement has been between the reformist and revolutionary wings. It is also true that there has been the even more sharp and irreconcilable difference between democratic socialist of various tendencies and Stalinists. Of this division you will find scarcely a word in any of the "left wing" documents and it certainly plays no part in any important point they wish to make.

However let us assume for the sake of discussion, as Shane Mage and Tim Wohlforth do in their documents, that the only barrier to the advance of the socialist movement and the achievement of socialism is social democracy. However true it may be in other countries, this has not been the case in the U.S. where the indigenous native working class has never been organized inside of the socialist movement

To state as Shane Mage does that: "The YSL continues to believe that only the political victory of revolutionary socialism over social democracy can establish the necessary preconditions for successful proletarian revolution" as he does in his document on unity present to the plenum is to express the classical ultra-left formulation of a political perspective. Presented in the unity document it is highly abstract and a guide to continued isolation.

As a general statement it is correct insofar as it expresses the fact that the YSL believes that its program is superior to that of Social Democracy's. As a matter of fact, almost all ultra-left principles are generally correct in that they are usually the correct formulations of the historical alternatives valid for the epoch in which we live. But it is not the formulation of the actual concrete alternatives which are politically relevant today. It just does not correspond to the actual level or stage of the class struggle in the U.S. in this period.

Can anyone seriously maintain that the stage of the class struggle is one where the American working class is confronted with a choice between reformist versus revolutionary socialism? Is this the level of the class struggle and the degree of class consciousness at which the American working class stands? A working class which has yet to form a political party. Of course not, unless you persist in amalgamating the labor bureaucracy with social democracy, and then loudly proclaim, "We are the only real alternative".

The best we can say, to put it into political terms, is that the American working class has reached the level of trade unionism that is orientated toward bourgeois politics. The real alternative that faces it is some kind of vague reformist orientation. Therefore to act today, and to attempt to draw the political lines today as if the struggle were at a higher and more conscious level is to completely cut off the revolutionary socialists from coming developments.

It is this tendency on the part of some comrades to speak and act as if the historical alternatives were the political alternatives at all times which is the essence of ultra-leftism. Instead they are so intent upon discovering stages which can be "skipped over" that they actually only manage to skip over the present situation, and proceed directly into isolation.

When you consider the role of any tendency you have to do it in the present circumstances and against the needs of the period in which we live. This is fundamental to any scientific or Marxist analysis. The most important and decisive need for the socialist movement is to break out of its isolation, and for the American working class to break with bourgeois politics and form a labor party. Without this step, the socialist movement is doomed to isolation. The socialist movement will not wither and completely collapse, or that a regroupment is impossible short of this development does not follow. It does mean that there will be little prospect for a fundamental change in the relationship between the socialist movement and the working class without this development. On the other side, it is quite likely that there can be significant growth, especially compared to the present situation, as a process of radicalization takes place short of the formation of a labor party.

Where does Social Democracy stand in respect to this fundamental task? The answer is obvious. It stands to the left of the labor movement; that is, it stands for independent political action and organization by the working class. Any democratic group or tendency which is part of the labor movement and has this point of view plays a progressive role given the present situation we are in today.

This, however, does not exhaust a characterization of the role of social democracy in today's circumstances. However, any analysis of social democracy which leaves this out, leaves out an important part if the intention is to give an accurate and honest characterization. It leaves out an aspect of social democracy which is of decisive importance today.

Thus when the "Left Wing Declaration" states that "the socialist movement can be built only by political struggle against the class collaborationist and pro-imperialist politics of social democracy" (emphasis added) it demonstrates the ultra-leftist thinking.

- (1) It expresses only broad historical alternatives;
- (2) It expresses only part of the political role of social democracy, the side with which we are in disagreement, and ignores the fact that social democracy does play a progressive role;
- (3) In effect it rules out the possibility that a mass social democratic party can be built in the U.S. It would take a reckless person to come out and state that in a clear unequivocal fashion since it is buttressed with nothing but prejudices;
- (4) Or else it is trying to say that the "left wing" does not regard social democracy as part of the socialist movement when it states that "the socialist movement can only be built" If this is the case, then it ought to also be stated clearly.

It is difficult to see how it would have been possible to pack more theoretically and politically errors in one sentence. Any one of which would be sufficient to raise serious doubts

about the "left wing orientation.

The other side of social democracy in the U.S. today are the many political positions they have taken in response to political issues. The major area of disagreement is that of their attitude toward U.S. foreign policy. On the fundamental issue of the cold war, the SP viewing the issue as one essentially between "democracy" and "totalitarianism" gave critical support to the camp of the democratic imperialism as against the totalitarian imperialism. But despite this, the SP is probably one of the most left wing of all the social democratic parties in the Second International. I am also in disagreement with a tendency on the part of SPers, now made "permissive" in the SP-SDF Memorandum of Understanding, to support candidates endorsed by labor and liberal groups. That there is disagreement between the YSL, ISL and the SP-SDF over these two questions is well known. At the same time we must recognize that a significant Third Camp minority exists in the SP-SDF and probably a majority are opposed to support of labor-liberal candidates, that is Democratic Party candidates.

We should have no illusions about the area and nature of differences, and at the same time to acknowledge that they do not constitute an insurmountable barrier inside of a democratically organized party. Without developing illusions, we must be honest enough to give a fair estimation of what role the SP-SDF does and can play.

Although we have disagreements with another political tendency it does not mean that all sorts of wild charges are now in order and permissible. An example of this is the statement from Shane Mage's resolution of the American SP introduced at the plenum when he states that "we consider the influence of the SP-SDF within the labor movement to be reactionary and seek to combat it politically".

While it may sound not too bad at first blush, if you examine it for a moment you will see that it is political nonsense. Here I refer to calling the influence of the SP-SDF "reactionary". If that were true, then we would expect to find that the SP-SDF is to the right of the labor movement and that it exerts what influence it does have to move the labor movement to the right. As I have indicated earlier this is nonsense because on the most important issue - the labor party - the SP-SDF is to the left and exerts a progressive influence. Even on the question of foreign policy and civil liberties where the SP did move to the right during the period of the cold war along with the rest of American society, the SP-SDF is still to the left of the Reuthers, Careys and Dubinskys, not to mention Dave Beck and David MacDonald. It was far more critical of American foreign policy and had a better position on civil liberties than the labor movement. It was not our position, of course, but still to the left of the labor movement. Therefore to say that it exerted a "reactionary influence" on the labor movement is ultra-left phrasemongering.

However those policies of the SP with which we disagree are generally those which it shares with the labor movement. It is against policies such as these that Labor Action and the YSL Challenge devotes the majority of its energy. And we do a far more effect job than the Militant for example. We do it in such a way, or try to do it, so that it is possible to enter into a dialogue with those to the right of us. It is not accomplished by the hysterical tone and studied torrent of abuse which convinces no one who is not already convinced, and which passes for "working class agitation" in certain super-radical quarters.

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There are two parties in the "left" which have ever developed above the level of a sect - the Socialist Party and the Communist Party. The CP is a thoroughly discredited party although it is by no means through yet. It has been discredited as the defender of a brutal totalitarian systems which everyone rightly suspects it would impose upon the American people if it ever got the opportunity. Stalinoid illusions may exist for an indefinite period, but it is extremely unlikely, although it can not be absolutely ruled out, that it will ever regain its influence.

The SP has likewise dwindled in strength until it is today a sect on par, with one exception, with other sects in organization terms. But it did not decline because it was a movement which was discredited in the eyes of the American people. The SP declined under the pressure of New Deal reformism, the prosperity of the cold war and the cold war itself. Many of its members left to go into the liberal and labor movements. But, for the most part, they did not leave as enemies of the party, as did CPers. The discreditment of the SP exists primarily in the eyes of the ever diminishing numbers in the radical movement. However, among the wider circles of the labor movement, they appear as the American party of socialism. They are not a party which lead the American working class in a series of betrayals and defeats. It is this fact which constitutes the main piece of political capital for the SP.

It is this piece of political capital as well as the fact that the SP is the only heterogeneous socialist tendency not firmly fixed to a longstanding body of theoretical positions and historically containly a broad spectrun of democratic socialist points of view which make the SP the only tendency around which a democratic socialist regroupment can take place. No other group can serve this purpose. Anyone who does not have a raid or a grandiose recruitment campaign in mind/to take whatever can be pryed away from other sects knows that if there is to be a regroupment which has the chance of breaking out of the present isolation it is the SP constituted as a broad Debsian party. The fact of the matter is that if you are not in agreement with this as a perspective then your motives may be the highests, but you just do not have a serious proposal for a democratic socialist regroupment. At best then you propose to just stand still or to recruit a few drifters under the guise of regroupment.

But we have been told by Tim Wohlforth, and the essential idea is in everything that Shane Mage has written, "revolutionary socialists and social democrats can not exist in the same organization." We were further informed by Tim Wohlforth in his document "Unite for Unity" that "we must constantly keep in mind that our task is to build such a revolutionary movement and that we must build it today." After having been informed of this latest version of the iron law of revolutionary politics we inquired how, in view of the recently revealed eternal verities, it is possible to reconcile it with the fact that most of the revolutionary groups have entered social democracy in Western Europe, at least wherever this was possible, include the remnants of the First Fourth International? Or how, in view of the fact that revolutionary socialists and social democrats can not exist in the same organization, did revolutionary socialists arrive at the conclusion that even though the European working class was at the level of social democratic politics they should join the reformist parties and not counterpose themselves to these mass organization?

To these and similar type question there has been one answer: social democracy is a mass organization in Europe and it does not have any masses in the U.S. If you are going to take facts into account then what happens to all your ultra-left dictums? Are they to be considered as valid and proven to the hilt, but unfortunately not applicable?

Then you must admit that it is not "capitulation to social democracy" to propose unity with social democracy? Not at all will be the reply, with you it is capitulation. But we can point out that you, Tim, have said that you are willing to consider unity with the SP-SDF if it can be shown that such a regroupment about the SP will lead to a growth and an influx of workers. If so, then why does our proposal now to create the basis for such a growth constitute "capitulation", that is, the abandonment of our politics? To this inquiry there has not been an answer much less a satisfactory one. There isn't one because the entire point of view of the "left wing" comrades is in the process of evolution.

They are in the process of abandoning the talk of a "revolutionary" regroupment and now refer to a "broad youth movement which can contain a revolutionary wing". This at least is Tim Wohlforth's way of putting it. Somewhere along the line the need to build the revolutionary party today was abandoned without the slightest acknowledgement that anything has happened. The same torrent of abuse and slanders still continue, only the proposals change. Is it because this is now the SWP's line for their youth perspective?

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I believe that the socialist movement in the U.S. is coming out of the long night of isolation. We are on the threshold of a growth of a socialist working class. We have been encouraged by

the heroic revolution of the Hungarian and Polish working classes. This destruction of the myth of Stalinism opens new perspectives which has affected and will continue to affect the labor movement for years to come. We see the first signs of movement in the magnificent struggle of the Negro people for full equality and the unification of the labor movement. I do not believe that capitalism can avoid an economic crisis over the long run even with the economic injections of the war economy. But I do not believe that in the immediate future we will experience a serious economic decline on the magnitude of the 1930's.

I believe that our program is essentially correct, and that the developments of the past years have tended to verify the independent socialist analysis more closely than any other tendency, certainly far superior to the SWP.

And yet is there anything to justify the belief that with the awakening of the American working class to socialist consciousness that the main beneficiary will not be some form of social democratic organization. This is the entire meaning of the labor party slogan and perspective from this point of view. If it true that a labor party is a reformist organization, then whoever adapts this as a perspective adapts the perspective of participating in and building a reformist party as a "loyal left wing". The task of socialist will be to move this party to the left, toward a more conscious and more articulate expression of the historical needs of the working class.

The task of revolutionary democratic socialists is to be on the inside of such a development where they can participate in this process and not be forced to enter years later as an isolated sect living on the fringes of the movement. All of the revolutionary perspectives of jumping this stage or that stage as if we are playing a game of checkers have not been fulfilled. We believe that the first step of this process necessitates a regroupment of the democratic socialist forces which we believe can only be done in the framework of a broad Debsian party. Toward this goal we have proposed YSL, ISL and SP-SDF unity.

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Reply to an Open Letter to Haskell and Draper

March 29, 1957

Dear Comrade Arden:

The closing paragraph in your Open Letter to Hal and myself makes me hesitate to try to answer it at all. Although I am pretty well inured to the rough-and-tumble game of politics, and have taken my share of insult and slander from enemies of the organizations with which I have been associated over the years, I have rarely encountered anything quite as vicious as this in all the years in which I have been a socialist.

But on a careful re-reading, I find that the closing paragraph is of a piece with the rest of your letter. If you think that this letter falls within the category of legitimate political discourse, I am only sorry for you, and even more for some good comrades who are associated with you in the fight in the YSL.

Consider for a moment the implications of your letter. If the only leading comrades in the ISL whom you can imagine as your allies are distinguished above all by political cowardice, and have a long record of it over the years, then surely any further concern for what they, or their organization may or may not do, is a waste of time. It takes a brave man, or a man whose political animus has robbed him of judgement, to make a charge like that!

The simple political truth about your relationship to the ISL (all wings and "tendencies" in it) is that you never grasped, or never agreed with our analysis of Stalinism and its relationship to capitalism, the social democracy, the labor movement, etc. Your concept of "third campism" was one of equidistance, at all times and on all questions between Stalinism and not only capitalism itself, but the social democracy and labor movements in capitalist countries. To be even more precise, you were for equidistance with a little "English" on it in the direction of Stalinism and the Stalinist movements. It was this which so often inclined you to prefer the analysis of the Militant to those of Labor Action on various questions. It was this which induced you, like Tim and others of your tendency, to discover a constant strain of "Stalinophobia" in our press...as much in the articles written by Hal and myself as on those written by others. The rigidity of "principled" hostility you have always shown toward all varieties of social democracy has never been matched with a similar rigidity toward Stalinism and its supporters, agents, apologists, etc. Thus, whatever your opinions may be of the theoretical postulates of the S.F., you have often found their politics more sympathetic than ours.

That, of course, is your right. But only the inexperienced will then take seriously your pretense that, if only we had the courage, we would have to join you and your colleagues in your current fight in the YSL.

Hal and I have a position on the question of ISL-SP-SDF unity. We have set it forth, and are going to fight for our views, as we always have when important issues are at stake. But since we have absolutely nothing in common with the politics of the S.F., or with their "regroupment" position, it should be amply clear to every political person why we cannot associate ourselves with a group who, whether consciously or not as far as all its members are concerned, are carrying on a destructive factional struggle in the ISL whose sole beneficiary can be not some variety of "left-wing Third Campism," but only the copywrite holders on "Defense of the Degenerated workers State."

Gordon Haskell

(The Open Letter by Comrade Arden referred to appeared in the LWB, vol. 1, no. 2)

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MORE CORRECTIONS

Comrade Haskell, evidently without taking the trouble to determine the actual standing of his charge, suggests that the Wohlforth report of the Shactman-Haskell debate, was circulated surreptitiously, evidently to "stoke" some furnaces--at any rate, to provide fuel for gossip. I haven't the slightest idea whether the document in question was circulated or not in New York. If it wasn't it should have been. However, the supposition that it could fall into the hands of the "experienced" wing of the ISL only by accident is a little bit wide of the truth. If not "wide"--then not aimed very closely.

For the sake of clarity I am printing the first paragraph of a letter covering the report in question. The section can be examined by Comrade Haskell, a delegation, or parties interested or disinterested in the question. If this is a method of 'surreptitious' communication, then Comrade Haskell can make the most of it. To the best of my recollection, the article in question was distributed generally within a day or so of its receipt. I must confess to special care in its placement so far as left and centrist elements are concerned. I assumed that it would not influence the right-wingers. I am certain, nonetheless, that the discrepancy in distribution between left and right wings was not more than twenty-four hours.

February 22, 1957

Dear Scott, Ed, Jim and Shane:

Enclosed are copies of a report on the recent Haskell-Shactman debate. I have attempted to make it as accurate as possible but being a lousy note taker I am afraid I could not use too many long quotes. In any event I feel it gives one a hint of what went on. I feel this is extremely important and that we must do all in our power to further this discussion in the ISL. I suggest that you all see that this report gets into the hands of as many ISLers and YSLers as possible and it should help immeasurably to clarify the whole struggle. You will note that Hal and Gordon make many of the same points we have been making and from them it sounds more authoritative. However, I suggest that you use your discretion in distributing the report. I have it entitled a report to the left wing so as to exclude any charge from the Martinites that we are somehow violating discipline by publishing the internal proceeding of the ISL. It was a meeting open to YSLers by the way. Therefore, I suggest you hand the reports around explaining that this is a left wing caucus report but the party might be interested in it. We of course should not be everworried about such matters as the important thing is to get the truth to the membership.

Obviously, a discrepancy exists between the evaluation of the debate summarized by both Haskell and Wohlforth. Haskell certainly has the right to say that the debate, though it sounded vicious, factional, or just plain loud, -- wasn't. I trust that this will be taken into account in future reports from New York. And it certainly is comforting to note that Comrade Haskell, certainly one of the "experienced" wing, will deign to contribute to light, comradeship, and clarity in such lucid fashion,

J. Worth

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REPLY TO OUR CRITICS

II * Meier - Fantasy as Political Analysis

Comrade Meier starts her article with a critique of the SP-SDF and of its politics - and this procedure is itself a welcome departure from the ordinary arguments of the Right wing comrades. She even makes a number of good and perceptive criticisms of it - admittedly not a very hard task, but still more than any of the other Right wingers had done before her. However, the entire purpose of these criticisms is not to educate the members of the YSL concerning the organization they are being asked to join, but to give authority to the illusions regarding the illusions comrade Meier is engaged in spreading in order to whitewash the SP-SDF as much as possible.

A minor example of this sort of thing is her statement that, "the SP at its convention in June 1956 passed what was a good third camp type of resolution." This is simply untrue - no such resolution was passed at the SP convention. In YSR, vol. 3 no. 2, Comrade Harrington wrote "a Third Camp resolution almost carried the 1956 SP convention" (emphasis added). And as to how "good" this resolution, defeated by the SP convention, was, the members of the YSL have no way to find out since, as Debbie admits, the resolution has never seen the light of day!

Much worse is her statement that "the political position of the SP-SDF "is no worse than the entire European socialist movement from its best (Britain and Germany) to its worst (France - if one can still classify the French SP as socialist - and Italy) ... the SP stands, both in the world scene and especially in the U.S. on the EXTREME LEFT"**. The essential absurdity of this statement is illuminated by what Labor Action said in its extremely gentle criticism of the SP-SDF Memorandum of Understanding: "it gives a measure of approval to the current United States policy that goes far beyond anything even

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suggested by the statement of principles of the Socialist International.."
 How can a socialist compare the SP-SDF "Memorandum of Understanding
 with the political positions of mass Left Social-Democratic groups
 like the Revan tendency in England or the Demmi party in Italy and say
 that it is "no worse".

But that is a minor consideration compared to what is involved
 in this sort of defense of the SP-SDF. Debbie is saying that the politics
 of the SP-SDF are fundamentally socialist because they are essentially
 the same as those of European Social Democracy. She is not merely
 defending the SP-SDF, she is defending Social-Democracy in general!
 Thus she writes:

"I assume, by the way, that Shane-Tim et al classify the British
 Labor Party as 'anti-socialist', 'pro-capitalist', and pro-imperialist'.
 For if the American SP is, than the BLP is 100 times more so, since the
 British working class is more class conscious than the American and be-
 cause the BLP's politics are in fact more conservative than the SP's. I
 will be attacked for this point on the grounds that these (sic) latter
 organizations are mass parties of the workingclass, etc., etc. However,
 that is not what is being discussed here. Rather I am discussing the
 characterization of the SP's political program."

What cutting sarcasm! How can the SP-SDF have anti-socialist
 politics when that means the BLP is "anti-socialist", and isn't it obvious
 that the BLP is no such thing?

It isn't obvious at all. In fact it's obviously false? The
 politics of international Social-Democracy are pro-capitalist, pro-imperialist
 ialist, anti-socialist! Most decisive of all, the social role played by
 the leadership of the Social-Democratic parties is a pro-capitalist one!
 Can Debbie, the self-styled "revolutionary", deny this?

* (pg.1) a discussion of perspectives for a labor party and the role of the
 labor bureaucracy which I intended to include in this section of REPLY TO
 ODA CRITICS, will instead be included in Section III.

Why then, should a socialist be a member of this pro-capitalist, pro-imperialist, anti-socialist BLP? Because that is where the workers are, that is the party which enjoys the confidence of the workers, that is where the left-wing socialist forces are gathering! The political program of the BLP, comrade Debbie, is anti-socialist - the class base is not. But what is the SP-SDF? The anti-socialist politics of Social Democracy without the proletarian class base of some Social-Democratic parties!

- The SP SDF And its "Comrade", Mollet

But this fact of the SP-SDF's total isolation from the working class does not faze Debbie - in fact for her it seems to be the basic justification for the SP-SDF's social-democratic politics. She "illuminates" this by comparing the SP-SDF to -- the SFIO! No more devastating comparison could have been found than the one she has committed to paper:

"Mollet in France is playing the role of "socialist cover" for reactionary politics; he can be referred to as an "agent" of imperialism etc. The American SP cannot. For .../Mollet/ trades on his socialist reputation. But to even speak of a socialist in America in 1957, giving the State Department of the organized labor movement a socialist 'cover' is to be living on Mars. The American labor movement and the U.S. State Department are not looking for, and in fact DO NOT WANT, a 'socialist cover.'

This is nothing less than a "theoretical" effort to absolve Social Democracy of responsibility for the role of Mollet, to show a basic difference between American and French Social democrats. Its crudest form is Debbie's statement that she doubts that "one can still classify the French SP as socialist" or, even clearer, her statement at the plenum that "Mollet isn't a Social Democrat." Obviously, if

Mollet and the SFIO are not social democrats then international Social Democracy has no responsibility for what is happening today in France and Algeria!

A more subtle form of this theory is Debbie's assertion that "Mollet can be referred to as an 'agent' of imperialism", not because of his social-democratic politics but only because he "trades on his socialist reputation... to carry out capitalist and imperialist politics."

But Mollet has not always carried out "capitalist and imperialist politics." In fact, for a time he appeared to be "highly critical" of the politics of French capitalism - the SFIO was in continual opposition for many years before 1956, and sometimes sounded very radical indeed. That is the only way Mollet was able to acquire a "socialist reputation" to "trade on."

Did Mollet just pose as an opponent of French capitalism in order to betray labor on? Was he suddenly corrupted, passing for a good honest social-democrat to a bought and paid for agent of the bourgeoisie? Within the limits of her theory Debbie must choose one of these two hypotheses, both of which are contradicted by the fact that Mollet has consistently been supported by the huge majority of the apparatus of the SFIO, an apparatus of bureaucrats, not of plotters.

To someone with a grasp of the Leninist theory of social democracy, who understands that "within a few decades the Second International intertwined itself with the bourgeois-democratic regime, became in fact a part of it and is rotting away together with it", the role played by Guy Mollet presents no mysteries. He has always been, is now and will always be a social democrat - that means his entire political conception is one of reforming French capitalism with the cooperation or toleration of the "liberal wing" of the bourgeoisie. Thus he cam-

paigned in the 1956 election is a bloc with the capitalist "Radical-Socialist" party of Mendes-France, and formed a government relying on the votes of the Radicals, and other capitalist parties. There is no reason to believe that he was not sincere in his desire to end the Algerian war - but on February 6 the fascists of Algiers showed him that the only way French capitalism would permit him to bring peace to Algeria was the way Hitler brought "peace" to Europe. At that point he had to choose - either give up the sweet fruits of power and allow an openly reactionary government to be formed or else become the willing tool of the most reactionary forces in France. There was a third choice, but Mollet and the SFIO were inherently incapable of taking it because of their social-democratic nature - that third choice of course, was to mobilize the French workingclass in revolutionary struggles in solidarity with the Algerian peoples.

The entire point of the above is to show that Mollet's politics are entirely bound up, inseparable from, his social democratic background and ideology. To act in any different way he would have had to break completely from social democracy, leave the SFIO and attempt to build a revolutionary party. The social-democrats of every other country are the same; just as Mollet will remain the same if and when he leaves the government and rejoins the "loyal opposition". It is impossible to draw any principled line between Mollet and the leaders of the SP-SDF, and no one would have dreamt of doing any such thing a little over a year ago. The SP-SDF is an American organization to be sure, and it has its special American characteristics, good and bad, which Debbae has gone into at quite adequate length. But it is also part of an international movement - it is the American representative of the international Social Democracy, and must be considered as such. The leaders of the SP-SDF consider Mollet to be their "comrade", and

and rightly so, do the members of the YSL ?

The pro-capitalism of all social democrats in politics and in theory thus cannot be divorced from the pro-capitalism of a Mollet in practice. What then can we say about Debbie's assertion that "to even speak of a socialist in America in 1957 giving the State Department or the organized labor movement a socialist 'cover' is to be living on Mars. The American labor movement and the U.S. State Department are not looking for and do not want a 'socialist cover' "? To the extent that this is true it entirely misses the point that a tendencies historical role is primary - its momentary concrete aspect, imposed by external conditions is secondary. Thus, before seeing Debbie's article, I wrote, "Despite the fact that the American labor bureaucracy today feels no need for a 'socialist' covering, and consequently the official social democracy is tiny and isolated from the labor movement, the identity of social nature and class interest between the two is what decides;"

- The "Uncovered" Imperialists

But even within these limits Debbie's statement that "the American labor movement and the U.S. State Department are not looking for and in fact DO NOT WANT a 'socialist cover' " happens to be quite false. And you don't have to be as far away as Mars to see this - just far enough away to get a slightly broader view of this planet than one apparently gets in Chicago.

American capitalism and the American laborbureaucracy do not need a "socialist cover" at this moment in history. But they, or their most intelligent representatives, know perfectly well that they may very well need a bit of "socialist cover" before too many years have elapsed. This Walter Reuther, whose winged words "no one is gonna run around my left end" ought to be indelibly engraved on the mind of every socialist,

maintains excellent relations with the social democrats. His staff is full of ex-SPers and nominal SPers. He and many others of the "left" bureaucrats even maintain a kind of formal organizational tie with the social-democrats - this tie is represented by the "League for Industrial Democracy", on whose board of directors the Reuthers sit beside the Thomases!

Undoubtedly Debbie has never read an editorial birthday greeting to Norman Thomas in the "Chicago Tribune". But the most serious and representative newspaper of the decisive sections of the capitalist class, the "New York Times", has a different attitude toward the "grand old man" of American social democracy. It has hailed him with warm editorials, on more than one occasion. The "letters to the editor" column of the Times is, as we all should know, virtually closed to genuine socialists. But it is wide open to Norman Thomas. The same with the Magazine Section and the Book Review Section.

Of course, American capitalism does not need a "socialist cover" today -- but it has a definite use for such cover. America happens to exist in a world in which there are other countries -- and the people of these countries do not exactly have the same attitude toward socialism as does the American people; nor do these people have the same attitude toward American capitalism. If U.S. imperialism can point to a few tame American "socialists" as its faithful supporters, it makes it somewhat easier for it to ask European and Asian socialists to support the "democratically established military agencies" of "the free world", doesn't it, Comrade Debbie?

The State Dept. has always been willing and eager to use American socialists for its own imperialist purposes. I need only mention a certain leaflet put out by the SP, the SDF, and a certain other organization which will here be nameless; a "socialist" leaflet which was dropped over the Chinese mainland by the planes of Chiang Kai-Shek!

Before taking leave of Debbie's attempted whitewash of the SP-SDF, we should discuss two more examples of the falsehoods with which she attempts to give the members of the YSL a distorted picture of the political nature of the SP-SDF.

She writes that: "The SP is, to state a bald fact, highly critical of the present politics of U.S. labor and the US State Dept." A "bald fact"? A bald untruth! This is what the leader of the SP left wing, McReynolds, said about the political program of the SP-SDF: it "means full support for the worst, most shameful policies of the State Dept. and John Foster Dulles". (quoted in ISR, vol. 18, no. 1, p 7, emphasis added.)

A little later, she writes that: "The SP today stands far to the left of the Reutherite type labor leadership and even farther to the left of the rank and file on EVERY QUESTION CONCEIVABLE". Her own emphasis calls attention to her wild falsification of reality. The article on the SP-SDF in the Mar. 18, issue of Labor Action was in no way inspired by a desire to criticize the SP-SDF, ~~in order~~ to put it mildly. But even the author of this article, faced with the political program of the SP-SDF, was compelled to state: "There have been statements from the UAW, deriving in no way from socialist principles, that are far more critical of American policy." EVERY QUESTION CONCEIVABLE? Indeed!

-- ON 'UNIMPORTANT' DIFFERENCES --

There is one passage of her article which is particularly interesting because it is so revealing, if not of Debbie's political position, then of the type of confusion she is attempting to create in the minds of the YSL membership. In discussing the SP left-wing, McReynolds & Co., she writes, "on the basis of the YSL's politics, membership and origins not only would we welcome them but we DO NOT HAVE ANY IMPORTANT OR UNIMPORTANT DIFFERENCES WITH THEM." Does Debbie seriously mean to equate McReynolds' politics with those of the YSL i.e., the politics of the YSL majority, i.e., her own? Now I am not extensively familiar with the politics of the SP-SDF "left-wing", which are not expressed publicly if they are expressed at all, but I have heard the leader of this "left wing", McReynolds, speak on the "Third Camp" -- he considers that the capitalist regimes of Nehru and Sukarno are part of the "Third Camp". Does the YSL agree with this international class-collaborationist definition of the "Third Camp"? Does Debbie agree with it?

McReynolds is a declared pacifist. Presumably this means he opposed the armed struggle of the Hungarian workers against stalinism; opposed the armed struggle of Egypt against Israel, Britain, and France; opposes the armed struggle of the Algerian people against French colonialism. But the YSL is for the military victory of the Hungarians, Egyptians, and Algerians, isn't it?

In his celebrated letter to Labor Action, McReynolds attempted to defend the action of the SP right wing in expressing solidarity with the butcher Mollet. Jim B. has attempted to defend the "Kid Gloves" fashion in which L.A. handled this letter as simply the adoption of a certain tone toward a comrade with whom we do not agree but with whom we wish to unite (and he would be right if the Algerian question was not the most important issue of simple decency and socialist morality in the world today.) Is this a question on which, according to Debbie, "we DO NOT HAVE ANY IMPORTANT OR UNIMPORTANT DIFFERENCES" with McReynolds?

Undoubtedly, Debbie will arise to exclaim that she, personally, does not agree with McReynolds on these points, but that these disagreements are no bar to unity with the "SP left-wing". Of course! That's exactly the point I made, against which Debbie is arguing. I do not quote Debbie's expression of complete solidarity with McReynolds' politics, which she considered essential enough to capitalize, in order to convict Debbie of adopting McReynolds' political position. But members of the YSL, particularly those impressed by her article, should be aware that in her effort to show that we of the left wing caucus are "completely unaware of what organization they have been in during the past umpteen years!" Debbie is willing to "educate" the YSL to believe that it has no differences with McReynolds and thereby to disarm it on the questions on which real differences exist, or ~~xxx~~ should exist.

THE NATURE OF UNITY

Debbie paints the right wing's proposal for unity with the SP-SDF in the most glowing possible terms. The new organization would grow rapidly, attract all sorts of people, would be alive, vigorous, active, internally democratic -- it would have a "revolutionary" left wing seeking to have its political positions adopted by the party, and it would avoid positions on "theoretical" questions of either capitalism or Stalinism." The only things wrong with this picture are a.) that it has no relation to

the reality of the SP-SDF as it exists, and (b.) that it is a complete falsification of the actual proposal for unity with the SP-SDF, put forward by the Right Wing, and of course supported by Debbie.

First, consider the possibilities for growth of the SP-SDF if it accepted into membership the present members of the ISL and YSL. Debbie claims that it would grow rapidly. I believe it would be nothing but the SP-SDF plus the ISL-YSL, and might even decline. Neither of us can prove the other wrong. Time will answer that. But we can state, as I pointed out in the first part of this article, what are the limits to its growth placed on it by the present objective situation in American. It will in any case, whether or not it is able to grow, be a small socialist propaganda group, in no way qualitatively different from the existing socialist groups. And that means that the decisive criterion is whether or not it is an effective propaganda group, whether or not it is capable of serving as a center for socialist regroupment -- the issues raised by Debbie's description of it.

Let us examine her claims for the SP-SDF if it unites with the ISL. She says, that it "would avoid resolutions or official documents on theoretical questions - relating either to the nature of the Russian state or for that matter the capitalist state. Of course every writer and every speaker (and that goes for us too) would start with his own assumptions and would express his own viewpoint...all will be equally free to use whatever theoretical bases they wish."

What does this mean as a concrete proposal for unity? First of all it means that the SP-SDF would have to abandon its present positions on a whole host of "theoretical questions" -- and the SP-SDF does have such positions even if they are spelled out very crudely and inelegantly, and without the use of Marxist terminology. The SP-SDF has a position on the Russian state -- it is a "Leninist-Stalinist totalitarianism... dynamically engaged in a totalitarian process of expansion".* The SP-SDF has a position on the "capitalist state" -- they consider the capitalist states to be "the free world".* The existence of these positions means that speakers with differing viewpoints would not be "equally free" to present them. State Dept. Socialists would speak and write as representatives of the official viewpoint of the SP-SDF. "Leninists", like Debbie, Jim B., and, presumably, Phactman, if they were permitted to speak and write publicly at all, could do so as members of a specifically condemned minority of the SP-SDF!

Does the Right Wing demand that the SP-SDF abandon these positions as a condition of unity? Of course not. They specifically repudiate making "changes in the program or leadership of the Socialist Party" conditions for unity. They are for unity on the political basis of the present SP-SDF program.

That is their right, but the right wing comrades have the obligation to be honest about it. They have no right to promise an organization that would "avoid resolutions or official documents on theoretical questions" in order to persuade members of the YSL to favor unity on the basis of the present SP-SDF program.

Perhaps the YSL members can find solace in Debbie's promise that we would be part of a "revolutionary wing" which would "put forth a consistently democratic, militant, and revolutionary position." That would be a fatal error. The NEC resolution specifically disavows any intention to "take over the new organization or have it adopt our complete worked out political and theoretical program. But what is the "consistently democratic * SP-SDF "unity statement"

militant, and revolutionary position" on all issues on which the party should take any stand at all, as promised by Debbie, if not a "complete" political position, implying a complete theoretical position? And of what value is it to advocate any position if you are not prepared to "take over" the leadership of the party in order to make sure it is implemented? Again, the Right Wing has a right to refuse in advance to struggle seriously for its point of view inside the SP-SDF. But it has not right to pass off this formula of political and organizational capitulation to the social democrats as an intention to build a "revolutionary wing".

Finally, Debbie says that the Right Wing proposal to enter the SP-SDF is "a specific proposal for uniting socialists of all tendencies." It is nothing of the sort. The big majority of socialists in America, even aside from the hard-core Stalinists, consider Russia to be some kind of socialist state, or at best a degenerated workers state. The unity proposed by the right wing excludes these socialists by stating (NEC Resolution) that "The new movement as a whole cannot be in any way committed to the idea that Russia is a socialist society..." (Shactman has specified that this also excludes any variation of the "degenerated workers state" idea.) Thus almost all other socialist tendencies are told that they are welcome to join, but they cannot express their ideas on Russia and seek to have them adopted! * This would be enough to exclude any serious political person, or anyone concerned with organizational democracy. But more -- how can anyone in his right mind expect the SP-SDF leaders to admit these tendencies -- particularly the biggest of them, the S.P., even with a "frozen" position on "Stalinism?!!"

* * * * *

* It is necessary to say a couple of words about Debbie's absolutely incredible rationalization for this prohibition. She says: "This general approach, of demanding above all else a clearcut anti-Stalinist approach, has no kinship with chauvinism or pro-Westernism. In a historic period where two social systems contend for power such an approach is necessary, not only for workingclass tendencies within the capitalist orbit, but equally so for those within the Stalinist orbit. An anti-CP, anti-government group in the Stalinist world, for example, might have a million and one fuzzy ideas about Stalinism, might capitulate here or there... However, it would be absolutely essentially that it be unequivocally anti-capitalist..."

This is nothing short of a general, "theoretical" basis for capitulation to everyone, everywhere -- by this "logic" we would have to support Kadar against the Hungarian workers, who had many illusions about the "West"; we would have to support Gomulka against Po Prostu, which has its share of illusions or, closer home, we would have to support Gaistkill against Bevan, Paragat against Wenni, Mollet against the "New Left" -- or Hoopes against Dobbst.

Thus we see that the promises Debbie makes for a united SP-SDF-YSL-YSL have nothing in common with the actual unity proposed by the Right wing and spelled out in the NEC resolution on Socialist Unity. "Anyone who is for unity with the SP-SDF on the basis of the description of it in Debbie's article must realize that this is not what is being proposed. If Debbie is in the least serious about desiring the sort of unity she describes it is absolutely incumbent on her to insist that any proposal to unite with the SP-SDF include at least the three following conditions:

1.) The SP-SDF must give up its present "resolutions or official documents on theoretical questions" relating to capitalism and Stalinism, and replace them with positions politically acceptable to both sides.

2.) The "revolutionary wing" must declare its intention to "put forth a consistently democratic, militant, and revolutionary position", to gain a majority for this position, and to take leadership of the united organization in order to implement it. The same elementary democratic right would, of course, be guaranteed to the "non-revolutionary" (better termed "counter-revolutionary") or social-democratic wing.

3.) The new organization would be all-inclusive and would invite all socialist tendencies to join it on the basis of full equality.

Of course unity with the SP-SDF will never be realizable on these terms, and that is why Debbie's picture of the united SP-SDF-YSL-YSL is a delusion. The SP-SDF will no more agree to these terms after unity than it would before unity. And that is why the only tendency in the YL with a real perspective for a broad, democratic, and militant regroupment of socialist youth is the Left Wing Caucus.

THE CHOICE BEFORE THE YSL

I repeat, the only tendency in the YL with a real perspective for a broad, democratic, and militant regroupment of socialist youth is the Left Wing Caucus. The comrades of the Right Wing have done their best to hide this fact, to turn it into its opposite, to accuse us of sectarianism, of desiring to unite "only with ourselves." This campaign may have influenced a few individuals, mainly because of the prestige of the comrades engaged in it. However, I am confident that a clear comparison of the regroupment proposals before the YSL will be sufficient to establish the real issues in dispute and to dispel the silly charges of "sectarianism".

The first thing members of the YL should keep in mind is that the YL is a youth organization. We should certainly be concerned with, and take a stand on, the regroupment of the various "adult" ~~xxxxxx~~ socialist propaganda groups -- however, our primary concern must be with the regroupment of socialist youth. Above all it is necessary for members of the YSL to evaluate the proposals before the League as representing concrete and definite proposals for socialist youth regroupment.

First of all, we should be absolutely clear as to the concrete meaning of the right wing proposal on "unity" -- it means the dissolution of the YSL, and entry of present members of the YL into the YPSL and SP-SDF -- and the Right Wing comrades have never denied this. True, they do not state it openly, and may even play around with other formulas (perhaps like the YL affiliating to the SP-SDF as its youth organization.) But they know perfectly well that this sort of "unity" - dissolution and entry -- is the only way they will be able to get into the SP-SDF.

The next question is -- once the YSL has been dissolved and its members have entered the YPSL, what will be the character of the new organization? This cannot be answered on the basis of the assertions (all absolutely arbitrary, unprovable, unreasonable speculations) by the comrades of the Right wing as to what the YPSL and SP-SDF will be one, five, ten, or twenty years in the future. What is being proposed concretely is "unity" with the Socialist Party as it stands today". In plain English this means unity with the YPSL without a single change in its political or organizational setup. What would be the concrete nature of this "unity"?

According to the Right wing, the new organization would be "non-programmatic", "broad"; "loosely structured". In every respect these claims are the opposite of the truth,

First of all, the YPSL as the youth section of the SP-SDF would not be a non-programmatic group based only on "socialism in general" but, as I have already shown, would be a political group with a right-wing social-democratic program.

Secondly, the new organization would in no sense be a "broad" one. As I showed earlier, the political conditions attached to "unity" by the right wing are in themselves an exclusion from the new organization of all serious socialists who happen to believe that Russia is some sort of "socialist" or "degenerated worker state." Moreover, members of other socialist organizations than the IL and SP-SDF could not be members of the YPSL, since the YPSL Constitution (published by YPSL as of March 1, 1957) states that "Membership in the YPSL shall be incompatible with membership in any rival political organization." (Art. III, Sect 7.) This is, of course, a much narrower basis for membership than that of the YL -- and it absolutely precludes any serious regroupment of ~~any~~ socialist youth unless and until a regroupment of all American socialists has taken place inside the SP-SDF -- not exactly a likely prospect.

An even more serious aspect of the Right wing proposal, for all those who genuinely desire a broad socialist youth organization, is that the YPSL they propose to join would be much narrower than the present YSL. The YSL today is an organization in which distinctly different points of view can and do coexist. The YSL has room in it for Harrington's point of view, for mine, for McReynolds' -- if he were willing to join. But in the YPSL there is no room for the YL Left Wing, and even less room for those socialist tendencies not today in the YSL but which I believe can be brought into the YSL! The only "broadening" proposed in actuality by the right wing is the inclusion of a few SLID types (and there aren't many!) In return, their proposal involves a real and sizable narrowing of the socialist youth organization.

Finally, it is absolutely untrue to say that the YPSL would be "loosely structured" in any sense. There are two aspects to the structure of a socialist youth group which must be loose if it wishes to be at all attractive to radical minded youth in search of a center for regroupment. It must be, at worst, highly autonomous with regard to "adult" socialist organization (and I believe it should be completely independent). It must provide full freedom for all political tendencies within it to express their views internally and externally.

How will the YPSL shape up on this score? The answer is not to be found in the speculations of some YSL right-wingers, or in the reminiscences of others. It is to be found in the real constitution of the YPSL -- a document that reads as if it has been designed expressly by the SP-SDF to provide

a means of absorbing the ex-YSL!

This is the sort of "loose" organizational "autonomy" to be found in the YPSL: "The YPSL is the youth section of the SP-SDF. Actions of all governing bodies and officers and sub-divisions shall be subject to the general supervision and control of the NEC of the SP-SDF." (Art XI, Sect 1. Emphasis added.)

And this is the sort of "free expression" tendencies which disagree with the politics of the SP-SDF will be able to obtain in the YPSL: "Members of the YPSL shall be guided in all their actions by the principles and decisions of the SP-SDF and of the YPSL. No member may publicly declare or issue statements to non-socialists or thru non-socialist channels or pursue a policy in mass work that shall conflict with the constitution, policies, principles, and decisions of the YPSL and of the SP-SDF." (Art III, Sect 3, emphasis added.)

The Right wing comrades, I repeat, have a perfect right to enter the SP-SDF or the YPSL (although most of the leading right-wingers of the YL are, unfortunately, too old to be members of the YPSL which has an upper age limit of 26.) They have no right whatever to deceive the members of the YL as to the nature of these organizations; Members of the YL who follow the Pied-Pipers of the right wing into the YPSL will not find themselves in a "loose" organization, but in a tightly centralized, disciplined, highly bureaucratic outfit, completely under the thumb of the SP-SDF.

Thus, we see the real essence of the right wing's proposal for "socialist unity". Not "non-programmatic" but on a right-wing social-democratic program; not "broad", but narrow; not "loosely structured" but under the tight discipline of the SP-SDF.

UNITY TO THE LEFT

What does the Left wing offer in place of this parody of "socialist unity"?

We offer a broad but decent socialist political basis for regroupment. We genuinely seek to unite with all tendencies among socialist youth. We propose a fully independent socialist youth organization which would provide all its members with the fullest freedom of internal and external expression.

1.) The political basis on which we of the Left wing hope to see regroupment take place was spelled out in the resolution I introduced at the NEC plenum. It is summed up by essentially these four points:

- a. Civil liberties for all, under socialism as under capitalism.
- b. For the Polish and Hungarian workers, against the Stalinist bureaucracy.
- c. For a labor party, against the capitalist parties.
- d. Against the foreign policy of U.S. imperialism; for the colonial revolutionary movements.

In her article Debbie attacked these four points as nothing but "the major points of the YSL's excellent program with the exception of the one point upon which we have disagreed with the YSL, or in other words the YSL program as Shane would like to have it revised."

Now, this criticism is not at all valid. The present YSL program is much, much more extensive than these four points (and, in practice, the YSL right wingers extend it even further, to include the program of the ISL on the grounds that the YSL is part of an "independent socialist tendency."), and the YSL program is a broad program to start with, lacking any position on such key points of revolutionary theory as the nature of the state, the nature of imperialism, the permanent revolution, the road to power or many others including Marxism itself: Some of the programmatic points of the YSL, (some of which I agree with and some I disagree with), not included in the basic program for regroupment I advance are the YSL's positions on the nature of Stalinism, the Third Camp, socialist policy toward the Third World War, "peaceful co-existence", neutralism, the United States of Europe.

Thus the four points I advanced represent a considerable broadening of the YSL's already broad program. In no sense is Debbie right to charge that they are simply "The YSL program as Shane would like to have it revised." The YSL program, as I would like to have it revised (at least on international affairs) is nothing but the "International Resolution" I introduced at the 1955 convention. I stand on that document and I believe that the events of the past year have proven it right in all important aspects. But Debbie really would have a right to scream if I attempted to introduce that statement of "the YSL program as I would like to revise it" as a political basis for regroupment?

2.) Is the broad and principled four point program I advanced broad enough to serve as a basis for the regroupment of socialist youth? While this question cannot be definitively answered in advance of a genuine effort to achieve unity on this basis, I believe that there is good reason to think so. With what groups of socialist youth have we a real perspective for unity? I think a regroupment of socialist youth should appeal to the following three broad categories: 1) left-wing social democrats like the current SP-SDF left wingers; 2) independent and unaffiliated radical youth, orienting toward the SP or towards magazines like the "American Socialist" and "Monthly Review", and #3) former members or sympathizers of IYL and YPA who have broken with Stalinism at least on the Hungarian Revolution and on the CP's support to Stevenson. The political program, such as they are, of all these groups are at least in general agreement with the program I have suggested. It follows that this program is broad enough to serve as a basis for unity with them. The only "socialist" tendencies that would find it difficult to accept this as a basis are the hard core "Fosterite" Stalinists, who could not accept the point on Stalinism, and the right-wing social democrats who are unwilling to unite with anyone on any terms but their own. However, both these tendencies are not merely the worst ones politically - they are also the most insignificant in the present spectrum of radical youth in America, and so the most easily dispensable in terms of the present regroupment process in the youth field.

3.) It is true that a good and broad political basis does not guarantee a successful regroupment. It is above all necessary that independent, radical youth feel that the new group is a genuinely broad one, not a broad front for any existing "adult" socialist group, and not closely identified with the specific and worked out political analysis of any existing socialist group. If a socialist youth group is to make a broad appeal, radical youth must feel that they are joining it, and not some other group; that they are expressing agreement only with its program and politics, not with the program and politics of some other group.

If the present YSL is to serve as the focus for socialist ~~XXXXX~~ youth regroupment in America, a development which the Left Wing considers both possible and desirable, it must clearly be this sort of organization in the eyes of the radical youth. This means that the YSL must declare itself independent, not merely organizationally, but also politically. Comrades Simas, Rubin, and Thorne of Newark have pointed the way in which this should be done: the YSL should not have exclusive fraternal relations with only one "adult" socialist group, as it does today -- instead it should establish close friendly and co-operative relationships with all socialist groups, and invite young members of all such groups to join the YSL on the basis of full and complete equality.

Adoption of this perspective would give the YSL every chance to become the center of socialist regroupment among radical youth -- but it would also be an enormous contribution to the general socialist regroupment process. The existence of a strong, united, and militant socialist youth organization in which adherents of different viewpoints could work and discuss side by side would be living proof that the "adult" socialist organizations could and should unite in the same way.

Thus are counterposed the two perspectives before the YSL .

The Right Wing is for a regroupment whose political basis would be the politics and program of the SP-SDF. The Left Wing is for socialist unity on a broad but principled basis.

The Right Wing is for a narrow regroupment of itself and the few youth in the SP-SDF. The Left Wing's perspective includes the majority of American socialist youth.

The Right Wing is for a youth organization that would be under the control of the SP-SDF, a youth organization in which only the position of the SP-SDF would have free and public expression. The Left Wing is for an independent socialist youth movement in which all tendencies would enjoy freedom to develop and express their views.

These are the choices before the YSL.

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There is no page 42.
Proceed to page 43.

THE EVIL COMRADE ROBERTSON

by Jim Robertson

The latest issue of the Young Socialist Review (Vol 4, No 1,) made fascinating reading for me personally.

On p 27 Comrade Harrington writes: "A leading member of your caucus quit the YSL, engaged in anti-YSL activity, rejoined the YSL when the faction fight began recently. (Comrade Jim, Berkeley)"

On p 45, Comrade Becker writes: "Let us first look at Robertson from Berkeley. A short time ago, Robertson resigned from the YSL, saying it was too right wing, and presumably because it was hopeless in this respect. In the meantime he foiled around with various friendly "rivals" to the YSL and finally, upon hearing of the faction fight, one assumes, decided to rejoin. Which is certainly his right--only it should be made clear that Robertson wants to change the YSL into something quite different than it was, something not so hopelessly right wing. It isn't just unity with the SP which is bothering this spokesman for the left wing caucus."

On page 47, Comrade Becker writes: "...the antics of Robertson in Berkeley bring up whether they (the left wing) are past the stage of split and only regard the YSL TODAY as a temporary home, to raid and wreck."

On page 56, Comrade Denitch writes: "In Berkeley: the building of the YSL here took strange, not to say devious roads. The leading comrade of the minority has been out of the YSL for some time attempting to build a "rival" organization on the grounds that the YSL was beyond redemption. After the faction fight started he all of a sudden discovered that bye gones are bye gones and with a group of friends has decided to save the (doomed beyond redemption) YSL out of an obviously unsectarian comradely desire to build for socialism in general and not for "leninist league" or whatever it is called in particular."

Now as to Facts

Comrade Harrington, I ask you: what "anti-YSL activity" ?

Comrade Becker I ask you: document your version of my motivations for resigning from the YSL a year ago. Further to what "antics of Robertson" "to raid and wreck" do you refer?

Comrade Denitch: what "rival" organization (with or without quotes on your part) have I been attempting to build? where, anywhere, is this "leninist league" or whatever it is called?

A Challenge

Harrington, Becker, and Denitch -- you three comrades are passing on falsehoods to the entire YSL and its periphery about me. Obviously if what you have written is true I should be expelled from the YSL. I propose the

following: either you initiate specific charges against me based on the allegations you have made or you apologize and humbly. It will be enough for you merely apologize and retract since I am prepared to believe that you acted in that kind of good faith which operates in a charged factional situation. The good faith which seizes upon the accusations of a lying hysteric with a long record of unreliability and personality politics; the good faith which passes on such trash without seeking verification, (Lacking absolute proof, I will not name your obvious source despite the fact it is plainly the person who (1) has been the only communicant to the N.O. from this area; (2) has insinuated such remarks here; (3) has circulated in correspondences similar libels which have come back to me.)

I must state that I do not expect you to take up either of my proposed alternatives, but instead to hedge and bluster since to retract your factional position and to press charges would reveal very clearly what kind of material serves you as "evidence", hence would weaken your factional position and discredit you before the entire radical public. Such an impasse on your part will be your problem and your shame.

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WHAT ABOUT BERKELEY AND MY RECORD

For the no doubt many curious comrades who are wondering just what has been going on in Berkeley for the past year, here is something of a review.

In February of 1956 I resigned from the YSL for the following related reasons: (1) the YSL was at that period, at least on the Coast, simply and solely the working arm of the ISL; (2) the failure of any serious opposition to come forward over the years nationally to oppose the decay of the CP/ISL as a revolutionary Marxist organization, despite rumbles from Draper, and partial stands by Byer and Berg of the national committee. Hence, it seemed futile for me to go on acting as the driving force of the ISL-YSL in the area when what I achieved was to the organizational benefit of Shattman and Co., not to the maintenance of the revolutionary socialist movement in a very bad period. So to step down as a local leader, I left the YSL and took a leave from the ISL for six months, up to last September, when I resumed full branch activity.

What I did not know a year ago was that it would seem I was not the only one to arrive at the conclusion that the ISL was no longer viable, had passed a point of no return and must go on decaying. For according to Draper writing in Forum it was just about at the same time that Shattman himself first came forward in the Political Committee with the beginning of what I would characterize as the proposition to dump what was left of ISL (and the YSL along with it) into the Socialist Party. Had this been evident then that a quick end rather than a slow death was to be offered the organization; and had it been possible to foresee the coming "regroupment" opportunities to strengthen and rearm the cadres of revolutionary socialism in this country, then it obviously would have been better to allow no discontinuities in my membership.

In the period I was out of the YSL, I didn't just sit on my hands, however. Given the collapse of the YSL after my departure and noting the absence of most other tendencies around in organized fashion, some other (YSL) comrades and I explored the possibilities of getting kind of inclusive student forum

groups going. I made a point of seeking to involve the local "official" YSL from the beginning. At first the official comrade in question went along, but shortly balked fearing competition so we let the effort lapse for the time. Today we are all up to our necks in regroupment forums locally, and very similar to what was projected earlier. Further the ISL and YSL had an easy, early entrance to them in large part because of my earlier orientation and contacts.

Later, but even before the regroupment developments actually hit the Bay Area, other comrades and I could see generally what was coming. We felt the need for an organization through which to work; elaborated a perspective (which as finally adopted by the Berkeley YSL will be sent to YSR shortly as a unit report) and resumed operating from the YSL as the focus of activity. In my case this meant taking up YSL membership again.

In one sense it can be accurately said that the first regroupment we were involved in locally was the reunification of the YSL unit with its membership after a year long rift. For in the preceding year the YSL had been a hollow shell; virtually no membership meetings, no execs, no regular dues collection, the membership half of what it was before, and after, in short, a paper organization. Today the Bay Area YSL organization is one of the most active locals and the second largest one in the national YSL. This is something all comrades should take pride in, not sneer at a la Denitch.

Hard on the heels of our revivifying the Berkeley group, the factional struggle nationally descended on us as a deluge at the time of the suppression of the Whitforth document and the January plenum. But that is another story except that confounding the charges that the rebuilding of the YSL was some kind of factional plot, is the fact that in the first impact locally it was by no means clear to us here who would become the future left and right. Rather there was a rapid subsequent process of development, based to be sure, more-or-less on previous years of division. Only fertile minds fed by lying gossip can make this out as a conspiracy. Indeed the lines here didn't become really hardened until Phactman hit town and dumped his load of hostility and suspicion.

So in summary, whether YSL comrades agree or not with my participation in the Left Wing Caucus, before any would again seek to label me as alien and a disrupter, consider the following:

(1) Background: member of the national committee of the SYL from 1951 on, later on the NEC of the YSL until resigning last year, member of the Workers' Party-ISL from 1949 continuously through the present; for several years, 1952-56, the local public spokesman for the ISL.

(2) A YSL Founder: one of the leading comrades of the ad hoc majority at the 1954 YSL Founding convention; such documents as the then resolution on campus functioning, statement on war and constitution have much in them that was my own contribution.

(3) While Out of YSL: a) remained in the ISL where no discipline question in any form was ever raised with me over any "attempt to work to the detriment of the YSL"; b) urged various co-thinkers to remain in the YSL, which they did (e.g. Dave, Roger, Stan); c) sought to get young contacts to join the YSL.

San Francisco Bay Area -- April 5, 1957

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REPLY TO OUR CRITICS

by Shano Mage

III. Some Points of Clarification

1. "Cannonism"

Virtually every article representing the Right Wing tendency has described my political position as "Cannonite". This is an illegitimate political technique -- its purpose is to prejudice the reader against my point of view on the issue at hand, socialist regroupment, by labelling it with a term whose entire emotional content for most YSL members is a highly negative one. It is purely and simply a way to avoid a serious discussion of the issues I have raised.

The label of "Cannonite" is also a dishonest one. In no sense do I base myself on a body of political theory elaborated and defined by Cannon. He himself would certainly deny that any such body of theory exists. Certainly I agree with the S.P. on many points; disagree with it on some; and am uncertain of my own position on others. However, in all cases in which the Right Wing has attacked my stand as "Cannonite", I am not basing myself upon the S.P., but upon the theory and method of Trotsky. In all these instances, if I am a "Cannonite", so was Trotsky.

Therefore, I respectfully request the comrades of the Right Wing to stop labelling my views with a term I find insulting. Labels for political views are not much help toward political clarification, but if they are used they should be fair and accurate. If the comrades of the Right Wing absolutely require a label for my views I insist they use the term "Trotskyist". That is an appellation which I consider honorable.

2. The YSL as a "Revolutionary Marxist" organization.

Numerous Right Wing comrades have leaped on a phrase in a resolution introduced at the plenum by Tim and myself which referred to the YSL as a "revolutionary Marxist youth organization." They have pointed out, with indubitable correctness, that the YSL is not a revolutionary Marxist organization, and pointed to our phrase as proof of "sectarianism", and to its absence in our subsequent proposals as proof that we are changing our line in some sort of political swindle.

In fact, we did not at all mean by this phrase what the Right Wing comrades assumed we meant by it (without asking us, of course.) We know as well as anyone, and better than most, that the program of the YSL is not a revolutionary Marxist one. All we meant is that we were for continuation of the YSL as it is now; an independent youth organization, the totality of whose leaders consider themselves to be "revolutionary Marxists". We just believe that a desirable prerequisite to such regroupment is the preservation of the YSL as it is. We oppose its liquidation into the SP-SDF.

Obviously, our formulation was a defective one, since it so easily lent itself to a total distortion of our real intention at the skilled hands of the Right "fingers".

And now that this has been clarified, the comrades should go back to the articles by Becker and Harrington and see what kind of structure our Rights have built upon the foundation of this...misunderstanding.

3. The SP-SDF as "Anti-socialist" and "Democratic socialist"

Comrade Harrington's article "What is a caucus" in the last YSR (p27) "discovers" a contradiction between Tim's definition of the SP-SDF and mine: "Comrade Shane, in the same issue, does not regard the SP-SDF as socialist; the day or so after the L.B #2 appears with Shane's denunciation of the SP-SDF; comrade Tim, throwing the net toward a Newark statement, declares that the SP-SDF is a "democratic socialist" organization."

This statement contains a typical Harrington -- misunderstanding. I said, not that the SP-SDF isn't "socialist, but that its politics are "anti-socialist". Is there something strange about the idea that a socialist organization can have anti-socialist politics? Not to someone with a tincture of Marxism; certainly no one who has read the "Communist Manifesto" on "feudal socialism", "Christian socialism", "true socialism", etc.

What about "democratic socialism"? Can a "democratic socialist" organization have anti-socialist politics? To answer this question we must first understand an elementary fact -- one totally unknown to the Right Wing. The term "democratic socialism" is absolutely devoid of scientific content. It is a neologism, invented by the "left" social-democrats of the 20s and 30s to differentiate themselves both from the bolsheviks and the most publicly rotten specimens of Social Democracy. It has never been current in the Marxist movement. There is absolutely no standard definition of it; thus it is the obligation of everyone who uses it to provide one. Although the Right Wing comrades have never seen any need to offer such a definition, both the Newark comrades and Tim offer a definition when they used the term. They defined as "democratic socialist" any organization which considers itself to stand "against capitalism and stalinism."

I have absolutely no wish to argue the merits or defects of this definition. The only relevant fact is that there is absolutely no contradiction between the socialist desires and convictions of the members of social-democratic groups, and the anti-socialist politics and actions of their organization and its leaders.

4. Political swindlers and their "Shell Game".

Harrington and Becker go through some pretty wild contortions to show that our position on regroupment has changed during the past two months. In fact, all that has changed is that they now realize that they can no longer get away with passing off a sectarian caricature as our stand in order to have a nice, safe, scarecrow to knock down at leisure. This has disturbed them.

And so they take us through a veritable Rake's Progress: "In Jan., we are for a principled, revolutionary regroupment; in Feb., we are for a revolutionary organization, but with a real MINIMUM program; in early

March, we are for being a revolutionary TENDENCY within a socialist organization. Late March, the social-democratic reformists ARE socialists. By July, who knows? They may be for unity with ADA."

But alas! for Mike and Mel, the journey is like Don Quixote's ride on the flying horse. At the end we are back at the beginning. As anyone who has read the concluding portion of part II of this essay can plainly see, we stand firmly on the basic lines of the original regroupment proposal introduced at the January plenum -- for a minimum program expressing the "Basic principles of revolutionary socialism" (NB. Not a revolutionary socialist program), for "a united left-socialist movement" (YSR, vol 3, No. 3, Sec 3, p 2); not a "revolutionary organization" or a "vanguard party"; for "unification at any time with any group of socialist youth on the basis of the political principles set forth in this resolution" (YSR, Vol 3, no 3, Sec 3, p 2) not excluding the youth of the SP-SDF.

Will Mike and Mel now finally realize that our position has not changed and that its high time for them to get down to a concrete and serious discussion of it? I don't know. There are precedents in both directions; Don Quixote remained convinced that he had been on a long and adventurous flight. But Sancho panza knew better.

5. YSL and AYS

Mel has asked the following question: "I merely ask them how they feel about the American Youth for Socialism and how that relates to maintaining the YSL as a THIRD-CAMP organization?" A fair question deserving a fair answer. I am for the AYS dissolving and entering the YSL as the YSL stands today. "Third Camp" program and all, with its members enjoying the same rights and assuming the same obligations as other members of the YSL -- no more, no less. This would be an important step toward socialist youth regroupment. And now, as is my right, let me turn the question back at Mel: Do you, and do the other Right Wing comrades, favor accepting the comrades of the AYS as members of the YSL? Or do you want to "regropp" only with the SP-SDF?

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Comments on the "Draft Motion for Implementation of Unity"
by Bogdan Donitch

I am in agreement with the statement on implementation signed by Comrades Harris, Meier, and myself. However, I would like to clarify my viewpoint on this further. The kind of relationship I have in mind between the new youth organization, whatever its name, and the unified Party at least in the initial period, is spelled out in the Resolution on Socialist Unity passed by the 19th Convention of the YPSL. The relevant parts read as follow:

- "1. The maintenance of a programmatically autonomous youth section, under whatever name, democratically run by its own membership, represented in the Party councils through its elected representatives.
- 2) Assurance of continued internal Party democracy; right of the fullest internal expression of minority views; an internal organ of the Party open to all members; proper subordination of the Party officers and functionaries to the rank and file; equitable application of the Party discipline (if any), complete rights to express individual views outside of the party for all members and all points of view...*
- 3) Freedom for individual members to engage in anti-war activity outside the party, to support anti-war publications, to sell and distribute such publications. Freedom for the youth section to publish its own press and to support publications of its own choosing, limited only by the consideration that such publications must not represent themselves as party organs.** "

These are the general type of provisions which I believe we should try to get, particularly in view of the fact that the new party will not be a disciplined party in the sense that the word has been used in the past. As far as the section of the Draft resolution dealing with the program of the new youth organization is concerned, i.e., that the program will be democratically decided at a Convention, that is all the guarantee I or anyone else should ask. All that remains to be added is that I, personally, would, at the time of such a convention, want that program to be a broad, third camp socialist program. It seems absurd to be to leave any doubt in anybody's mind about this with one possible modifying factor. I am for the program being a broad third camp program if the elements involved in the youth field are essentially the YSL and the SP youth. The only possible exception to this could be if large (as yet undisclosed) wells of hidden young socialists spring up somewhere we would insist on a still looser program. What I believe should be rejected is the suggestion that we, we third camp socialists, in the absence of any other forces in this new youth group, should ourselves write a program that is not third camp.

Therefore, for obvious reasons I believe that the composition and views of the negotiating committee will be of the utmost importance. That is: I am for a committee which in essence holds the above views or something close to them.

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* This means all the views within the framework of the party.

** This last clause would not, in my opinion, extend to publications hostile to the party as such.

Harringtonianism, Or, There is Madness in His Method

by Tim Wohlforth

Mike Harrington's reply to my article "Don Harris and his Epoch" was extremely disappointing. The article was written in the hope of provoking a decent theoretical discussion of the right wing's position on unity. Harrington's reply strikes the low point of a person whose thinking seems to degenerate as the polemic progresses.

However, some individuals who consider Harrington a competent thinker still remain in the YSL. In order to dispell this illusion -- to attempt an answer -- I am making a rather rash assumption: that the article, in one way or another, was serious. I trust Comrade Harrington will correct me if I begin with an error; don't know a joke when I see one.

Kautsky, Kerensky, Einstein, and Harrington's Method

Harrington quotes me to the effect that the working class is today better organized, and once in motion, will move more swiftly and with more force than in 1900. This may or may not be true. But it happens to be one postulate that every Marxist tendency that has analyzed American capitalism and its working class, has developed.

I admit to a sketchy treatment of the problem in the article in question. However, the idea involved is very clear. I state that "America is no longer the country it was in 1900. Capitalism is more highly developed, the working class infinitely larger and potentially more powerful, and America is the major world imperialist power. This presents an entirely different situation for the development of the American working class. The workers are more highly organized and when they move, they will undoubtedly move more swiftly and with much more force than was true when the capitalist system had some capacity for reform."

This develops a very simple idea: that the American working class is more highly developed today than in 1900. To deny this is to deny that development has taken place in the past 50 years--a development of the workingclass and of capitalist society in general. Possibly the radical "intellectual" can live in the past--search for his "Debsian Party". The Americanworkingclass cannot? The worker contends with a capitalist infinitely stronger than in 1900; but 15,000,000 workers are organized in a single labor movement now, which is nothing to sneeze at, Comrade Harrington.

This, to Harrington, becomes Kautskyism. How? Because the same conditions existed in Germany in 1914 but failed to prevent the imperialist war.

But I did not suggest that the American situation precludes a third imperialist war, for the simple reason that one factor, which can lead to workingclass power, and prevent another war, is missing -- the revolutionary vanguard party which will lead the struggle for power.

Harrington, however, has forgotten more than one "little detail." The German Revolution of 1919 could have been successful if a revolutionary

party had been in its vanguard.

Harrington's "Kerensky" analogy bears as little resemblance to the meaning of my statement. He wrote: "Thus, comrades, the Russian workingclass, because it was not numerous, because the peasantry supported the SR's, because the intelligentsia (sic) followed the liberals, because of these facts, the Russian workingclass put forth the slogan of a bourgeois revolution and saved the world from Bolshevism. Long Live Kerensky-Wohlfahrt

Is this a paraphrase? The "logical" extension of my ideas? Harrington position on the October Revolution? Despite my "assumption" at the beginning of this article, I find this point difficult to deal with seriously.

As Harrington certainly knows, it was the concentration, organization, and cohesion of the Russian working class that accounted for its actual revolutionary role. This demonstrated that organization and cohesion, as well as size, are important factors in estimating the strength of a given working class. Marx himself made the point from time to time in his analysis of the factors which force capitalism to organize and discipline the working class -- the class which will supplant it.

But, slightly later, Harrington really goes wild. He again takes this paragraph and develops the following paraphrase: "Take any large, organized workingclass in a period of imperialist war, place it in motion, and watch it go." This, says Harrington, means that "the motive force of history is now a series of ideas." From this, I assume, comes the title of this little Opus -- Hegel-Wohlfarth.

Now, my cursory treatment of the organization of the working class, which Harrington "discusses" could lead to the accusation that I am a Luxembourgian, or a simplistic materialist of some sort. What it does lack, however, is any mention of the role of consciousness in history -- the role of a party and the role of ideas. This, Comrade Harrington, is not "Hegelianism"--history as the movement of ideas -- but a rather mechanical materialism (if one's conclusion is based on your distortion of my article, that is.) Why, if your "analysis" is true, should I state in my article, that "The motive force in our epoch (is) the working class," ?

The Mad Method

There is as mad a method in this article as the other articles by Harrington. The first characteristic is extreme theoretical sloppiness and carelessness. He seems to have a literary, rather than a political, approach to ideas. If it sounds clever, it's o.k. for Harrington. If he can find a spare quote from Trotsky that's o.k. too, if it "proves" his view or if it doesn't. Is this a serious attitude toward ideas. I think this is dilletantish, and not very good at this.

A second characteristic of his method is plain dishonesty. Misquotes, twisted paraphrase, and distortion are a stock in trade. In his section on economics (dealt with below), he quotes me to the effect that the war economy "exhausts the present and future resources of labor." Next, this becomes "exhaustion of labor." Where does this phrase come from? Not from my article, though he puts it in quotes in order to attack it. Or are "resources of labor," and just plain "labor" simple synonyms, to be transplanted at will? But those "synonyms" occur by the dozen.

Eclecticism as Marxism

A third aspect of Harrington's method is its eclecticism. This is shown clearly in his section on the American labor bureaucracy. He begins with the usual distortion: accuses me of speaking of "the labor bureaucracy as if it were a homogeneous social phenomenon." I actually spoke of the labor bureaucracy as a social entity -- heterogeneous, homogeneous, or what have you. By a "social entity" I mean to indicate that all labor bureaucrats have certain interests in common, and that these interests are in part different and in conflict with the interests of the working class. The labor bureaucracy is also a labor bureaucracy which means that it is a section of the working class, and must be defended--even a Beck -- against the onslaught of the capitalist class.

But Mike, basing himself on bourgeois sociological eclecticism and not Marxism, claims to see only the differences among the bureaucrats, and not their points in common. This alone allows one to speak of the bureaucracy as an entity. This is one part of his non-Marxist method of thought. He uses the same approach toward the SP during the electoral discussion which he feels cannot be characterized as a social-democratic movement. As everybody knows, McReynolds disagrees with Friedman, who disagrees with Myers, etc.

Now if Harrington were consistent in his eclecticism he would apply the same approach to the capitalist ruling class. For as anyone who has taken elementary sociology knows, there is no ruling class. There are status systems, prestige systems, upper-uppers, lower-uppers, power elites, and all sorts of interesting phenomena. It is even rather doubtful if a working class exists, due to the heterogeneous nature of social phenomena.

So, I repeat; as a Marxist I characterize the labor bureaucracy as a social entity or "caste" if you like, with special interests. I then state that the social-democracy represents these interests within the socialist movement in a way similar to the way revolutionary socialism represents the interests of the working class. This approach has been held by all Marxists, including the "independent socialist tendency," unless it has changed that too in its fever to enter the SP-SDF.

In any event one can go on ad infinitum with this particular approach to social relations. But this approach has nothing in common with Marxism. To borrow this phrase, that idea, from Marxism, Comrade Harrington, will not make you a Marxist.

A Brief Note on Economics

It has been rumored around that Comrade Harrington has read all three volumes of Capital. If this be so there is little evidence of it in his article. I myself must admit that I haven't undertaken this Herculean task, and will therefore confine myself to a relatively brief elaboration of the question.

First, to explain the position which mystifies Mike so easily. Let us begin by placing it in the context of the article. The paragraph dealing with the question read as follows:

"When the present crisis of U.S. capitalism which expresses itself in the need for massive subsidization of the economy -- primarily for military objectives, in the hope for survival -- exhausts the present and future resources of labor either absolutely or relatively, the class struggle will be sharpened on a plane much higher than the thirties. Furthermore, considering the international xx

situation its significance will be even greater."

Summed up in a single paragraph is an analysis of the economy and its future. It is obviously schematic. In the first sentence I refer to the existence of a "crisis" in capitalism today. This crisis, begun in 1929, has yet to be "solved" on a capitalist basis. That is, on the basis of self-sustaining independent profit-making activity. It has been necessary for the government to step in with "massive subsidization." This subsidization comes from somewhere. It comes, as does all wealth, from the products or "resources" of labor, or if you prefer, of "society". It comes from the "present" resources of labor through taxation and, what is extremely important, through an increasing squeeze on the working class in the form of the speedup. Inflation also plays a role. It comes from the "future" resources of labor in the form of the present national debt and high consumer credit debt.

Now this squeeze on the working class could continue to a point where it pushes the working class into action short of "absolute" exhaustion of labor's resources -- that is, short of a depression which is marked by a section of labor being unused because it is not profitable. In other words, the resources of labor could conceivably be exhausted within the framework of full employment, i.e., the entire labor force being profitably used by the ruling class. Such an alternative ("relative" exhaustion of the resources of labor) would be the preferable one from a socialist point of view, as the working class would be in a stronger position than when a section of it is unemployed and impoverished.

But it is more likely that absolute exhaustion will take place in the form of a depression as this is more beneficial to the ~~existing~~ capitalist class.

I hope this helps to clarify the question. Next time, I suggest that Harrington pause at his typewriter for a moment and think back over the three volumes he supposedly read before denouncing something as "gibberish". But this too is part of Harrington's inimitable method.

Conclusion

I hope that I will get a real answer to the questions raised in my article on Harris. In it I described Harris's approach. I then characterized it as a menshevik method, being very careful to make clear what I meant by the term. This has nothing in common with Harrington's ridiculous name-calling approach.

I suggest that a competent comrade in the right wing answer me on this by first questioning my outline of Harris' approach as to accuracy. Then he can, if he wishes, dispute my characterization of it. Or, if he prefers, he can defend the characterization of it and proceed to defend a menshevik theory. In any event, let us hope that in the future the polemic can be conducted on a somewhat higher theoretical plane.

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DRAFT RESOLUTION ON YOUNG SOCIALIST REGROUPMENT
AND YSL FRATERNAL RELATIONS

Desiring to do its utmost to further the welcome tendency toward a regroupment of American socialist forces for more effective socialist action, the Young Socialist League hereby declares its position:

1. The Young Socialist League, as the broadest organization of socialist youth on the American scene, offers itself as the center for regroupment of socialist youth.
2. As it has since its foundation, the YSL urges all unaffiliated youth who desire to work for democratic socialism as the alternative to capitalism and Stalinism, to join its ranks.
3. The YSL invites socialist youth, affiliated with any party or movement standing for democratic socialism against both capitalism and Stalinism, to join it on the following basis:
 - (a) Immediate full membership rights as individuals and minority representation, if desired, on national and local committees of the YSL
 - (b) Formal and public establishment of fraternal relations between the YSL and the party or movement involved, of the same nature as the relations already existing between the YSL and the Independent Socialist League.
 - (c) Agreement by the party or movement involved not to set up or maintain a specifically socialist youth organization in counterposition to the YSL.
 - (d) Reaffirmation by the YSL of its perspective as a youth organization, with no intention of counterposing itself or its activities to those of any socialist tendency not in the youth field.
4. "Stalinism" is here used to denote the present system of the USSR, as well as the regime personally headed by Stalin.
5. The characterization "party or movement standing for democratic socialism against both capitalism and Stalinism" is specifically declared to apply to, besides the aforementioned Independent Socialist League; the Socialist Party-Social Democratic Federation, the Socialist Workers' Party, the Socialist Labor Party, the Libertarian Socialist League and the American Socialist Union, although not necessarily limited to them.
6. Members of the former Labor Youth League who stand for democratic socialism against both capitalism and Stalinism are invited to join the YSL under all provisions stated above, except that the YSL cannot, of course, establish fraternal relations with the Communist Party unless and until that organization publically (sic) counterposes democratic socialism to Stalinism as defined in # 4 above.

Newark

8 March, 1957

To: National Action Committee, Young Socialist League

Dear Comrades;

The undersigned, all former activists of the YSL now functioning in

other arenas, submit the attached Draft Resolution for your comment, discussion] and/or action.

Fraternally,

Elmer Simms

Melanie Thorn

Eli Rubin

RESOLUTION OF THE LEFT WING CAUCUS ON THE NEWARK ISL "DRAFT
RESOLUTION ON YOUNG SOCIALIST REGROUPMENT AND YSL FRATERNAL
RELATIONS .

"In order to facilitate the general regroupment of socialist forces in the youth field on a militant class-struggle basis, the Left Wing Caucus of the YSL endorses the general line of the resolution on socialist regroupment currently being circulated by three Newark comrades; Simms, Thorne, and Rubin.

We specifically stress the importance of the YSL offering 'itself as a center for regroupment of socialist youth.' We also endorse the proposition of inviting all socialist youth whether affiliated or not to join with us in building the YSL as the only national socialist youth movement in the country.

We counterpose this approach--based as it is on the continuation of the struggle against both capitalism and stalinism--to the proposal of the NAC majority to liquidate our movement under the guise of "merging" with the YPSL and becoming the youth affiliate of the SP-SDF.

We believe that the only kind of movement that can be attractive to the radical youth of America is a regrouped socialist youth movement based solidly on the principles upon which our organization was built.

However, we qualify our endorsement of the Newark resolution with the observation that the raising of formal fraternal relations with adult socialist groups at this time is premature. We feel that fraternal relations are in themselves an expression of political sympathy to another socialist tendency or group and not a simple matter of tactical arrangements between two socialist groups. However, we are for the closest possible comradely cooperation with all other socialist groups.

We of the Left Wing Caucus announce our intention of participating with the other comrades of the YSL in an immediate campaign to build the YSL on this basis. In the meantime we will prepare a more detailed expression of this position for the forthcoming convention."

Resolution adopted unanimously by delegates to the First
National Conference of the Left Wing Caucus.

Antioch
Yellow Springs, Ohio -- March 23 - 24th

ARLON-TIM EXCHANGE

Editors Note:

The following exchange of letters between Comrades Arlon and Tim was circulated by Comrade Tim some time ago to a number of YSL members. However, since some comrades did not see it and others expressed an interest in having it available for comment the authors of both letters have agreed to have them reprinted in YSR. A few changes have been made in connection with this printing. Since the first letter by Arlon was not intended for public circulation several of the political points were worded more sloppily or were open to misinterpretation and have therefore been very slightly altered. Other than a few such minor changes the only major revision consists of the omission of some personal references with regard to Arlon's activities in California and a concluding P.S. which dealt with an entirely different matter. Similarly, as Tim notes in his own introduction, preceeding his reply, a few changes were made in his reply.

* * * * *

22 February 1957
California

Dear Tim:

As much as I may have agreed with you, Shane, Scott, Jim, etc. on specific issues in the past, I believe your present course is disastrous. I have no doubt that you can win a number of energetic young people in the YSL to your caucus. The lack of energy which has been apparent in the YSL recently makes it possible for any leadership which shows energy and "radical" spirit to win adherents.

By channeling their youthful dissidence into the entirely illusory notion that the rebirth of American socialism will occur around the issue of revolutionism, you will cut off their Marxist development by isolating them from the real world in a sect like the S.P. Your regroupment means: split the YSL and unite with the S.P. (for who else today can possibly meet your "revolutionary" criterion?)

Short of that radical turn in American life which can at the same time bring a labor party and create the revolutionary wing within it, the forces which can form an American socialist movement are elements who are already political: The bulk of the "socialist" cadre in America has been in and around the Communist Party. The CP has been to these people a mass movement, and at the same time, a sect organized around a narrow program and a particular leadership. If you think that more than a handful of Communists can be attracted toward what appears to be a movement which is even narrower in its programmatic base and its popular influence, you know nothing either about politics or about psychology.

The problem is how to get these people, and hundreds of thousands of others who have been repelled from any kind of socialism by the Stalinists' near-monopoly on American radicalism, into the same general movement with ourselves and our Marxist program. It is for this reason that the SP-SDF plays such an important part in our perspectives for regroupment.

The last of all the sects which any of these elements will join are the revolutionary "Trotskyist" sects, the ISL and the S.P. Fortunately the ISL realizes this fact. The only kind of party which can hold them and develop them must be (1) a "mass" party such as the CP pretended to be, and (2) a democratic, heterogeneous party. None of the sects can become this kind of party, for all of them, the SP included, have been organized around some more or less narrow programmatic conception.

The SP-SDF has a unique opportunity to initiate a broad socialist reorganization largely because (unlike the S.P or ISL) it does not have the reputation of existing for a specific theory on the Russian question. It is this fact primarily that makes the reformist pro-imperialist socialist party far more palatable to Communists than the revolutionary, pro-Russian Socialist Workers Party. (If you have any doubts about this, just go and talk to a few Gatesites!! Don't be deceived by the bluster and boasting of the Cannonites; make 'em produce their droves of CP recruits!)

The pro-imperialism of the SP-SDF is more palatable than the pro-imperialism of the S.P because the former is identical with the chauvinism of the American working class, and is capable of being modified by world events just as the working class can be moved by the same events. The pro-Russian conceptions of the S.P are the product of a dogma alien to the experience of American labor, and are to that extent insulated from history. Even Communists who continue to hold theoretical conceptions favorable to the Russian bureaucracy can see this fact!

For this reason it isn't the pro-imperialism or anti-imperialism of the SP-SDF which is important. The SP doesn't "represent" the State Department any more than the S.P "represents" the Kremlin. The SP-SDF is only a loosely organized sect with a predominantly pro-American line. It isn't "The Social Democracy;" it's only a splinter with more or less Social-Democratic politics. It's incorrect for Max and others to defend the SP's role in socialist reunification on the basis of its agreement with the ISL, and it is entirely beside the point for you to attack it in terms of some mythical "Social-Democracy" to which anyone could possibly "capitulate!"

The SP is important today because it is that sect least committed to any doctrine, the only sect in which a minority can now exist without the majority calling for immediate capitulation. It appears to be the only force that can initiate the regroupment which will put the thousands of socialistic Americans together in the same party with us so that we can win them to Third Come revolutionary socialism.

The crime of the SP-SDF leadership is not its repudiation of the Russian Revolution, nor its illusions about the United Nations, but above all its failure to be moved by the European resolutions and the demise of American Stalinism; its failure to develop a perspective for the development of a real Party of socialism in America. Its sectarian hostility toward sections of the socialist movement more energetic, larger, or more influential than itself is the worst fault of the SP-SDF!

A practical if much oversimplified statement of the SP's role in regroupment might be this: If the SP-SDF will furnish the framework of the new movement, the Communists (i.e. ex-Communists) will furnish the largest portion of the cadre and the ISL-YSL will provide a good portion of the program and political leadership.

As you may not be aware, the SP-DF doesn't share this outlook. If you look closely, you will discover that none of the other splinters does, with the possible exception of the American Socialist (of course they don't want an ISL-type program to be adopted, or even discussed, but that's a different problem). The SP must be won to a new political evaluation; for such a new regroupment to be successful the Gates Communists must also decide to break with stalinism. (Which is not to put the two changes--the SPs and the Gatesits--on a par with each other.) Personally, I'm not too optimistic about the former prospect, but it isn't just a matter of will, and political events are on our side--but we must help them out.

Whatever the percentage, the SP (right or left) will never be moved by the vile and intrasigent criticism which you and the SP are committed to. Within the YSL you may get somewhere, for denunciation of the "Social-Democracy" is radical and costs nothing; it has a venerable tradition with volumes of distinguished quotations, and requires no courage nor imagination. If you, Shane, etc., would devote as much energy to seeking a way to undermine the right-sectarianism of the SP "from the outside" as you are doing to solidify it, you might make a real contribution toward extending the influence of revolutionary socialism in America.

Fraternally,

Arlon

Introduction by Tim: (April 9)

The following letter was first circulated to a few individuals in the YSL together with Arlon's letter for their information. Comrade Debbie Meier has expressed to me an interest in seeing both letters given broader circulation by publishing them in the YSR. This seems to me a very good idea for I stand by every statement made in this letter. However I have changed a couple of unfortunate inaccuracies concerning activities of Left-wingers that have since been brought to my attention. I have also allowed the removal of a section not deemed printable.

Even though the letter was written almost two months ago it documents and exposes quite clearly in my opinion the attempt on the part of the YSL Right Wing to answer the political program of the Left Wing Caucus with an hysterical program of red-baiting. This is brought closest to home by the last issue of YSR which contains in virtually every article written by right-wingers hysterical attacks against "Cannonite Agents", "Cannonism," and what not. One comrade went so far as to take this type of campaign to its logical conclusion and frankly ask us to leave.

This same comrade--Comrade Bogdan Denitch--got carried away with himself to the point that he delved into utter slander and mudslinging in his description of the left-wing caucus members. This letter in part answers that outrageous attack. Another article by Jim Robertson also answers it on the part of Berkeley.

However, since I myself have been charged with overpainting the activities of the left-wingers, I wish to publicly request the other members of the right wing to specifically disavow this type of attack and to join with me in asking for a public apology from comrade Bogdan. I myself have corrected any inaccuracies

on my part and openly proclaim my willingness to publicly retract any statements considered by right wingers as being slanderous. Let's try to keep this polemic out of the mud.

For instance Denitch describes Dayton Area activities and only mentions selling Militants and sponsoring an S.P. spokesman. As I understand it both of these acts are undertaken by the Socialist Discussion Club which is considerably broader than comrade Shane. Comrades Shane and Judy have also been involved in selling Labor Action and Anvil, getting Enroll for Freedom under way and helping get Y.L. speakers. But no mention of all this from Denitch. They have also organized a whole unit out there and immeasurably strengthened the Y.S.L. I specifically ask Comrade Debbie whether Bogden's description of Scott is accurate or not. She knows full well that Scott has been active in negro work for the Y.S.L. Also she knows that the request to have on speaker of the S.P. in a debate along with an ISLer was approved by a majority of the Chicago unit--all of whom I assume are "cannonite agents" to Comrade Denitch.

I repeat my demand for a public apology from Comrade Denitch. This letter which states in the frankest possible way our sincere desire to build the Y.S.L. as it is with the present leadership and side by side with the comrades of the right wing is more than ever appropriate today. I hope we have seen an end to the slanders!

-- Tim Johlforth

Reply to Comrade Arlon:

March 1, 1957
New York City

Dear Arlon:

It was very good to get your letter of February 22nd which gave me a firsthand impression of what you are thinking on the basic questions facing the Y.S.L. today. I take your letter to mean that you are not with us on the unity question and that you have solidarized yourself with Martin and Co. on this all-important question.

Before discussing the political argumentation in your letter there is one matter that must be dealt with frankly. You characterize our position as "split the Y.S.L. and unite with the S.P." This is a serious charge and not one to be made lightly. I request, therefore, that you furnish evidence from any source to substantiate this claim.

Furthermore, the claim is part and parcel of the program of Martin et al. to smear the left wing as "Cannonite agents," "disrupters," "disloyal," etc., -- a campaign which you instead of resisting in the interests of elementary decency and fruitful political discussion, have actually been supporting. I refer to your letter to Martin (available to me as a MAC member) in which you speak of expelling Shane -- and this during the height of a political discussion on the electoral campaign. You decided against expulsion not on any principled grounds but because you thought it would look bad to the S.P. Your grounds for expulsion were that Shane was distributing the Militant to the exclusion of Challenge -- a completely unfounded charge based on malicious gossip. And this comes from you, a comrade who a year ago proposed inviting in all S.P.

youth! Now, someone distributes the Militant and you become hysterical. While we are on the topic of distributing publications why was no protest heard from you when the NY exec. decided to sell the Call and furthermore not to distribute L... and Challenge at a SP-sponsored affair? The right wing felt that it would be an unfriendly act to the SP if we distributed our own publications.

I, therefore, request that you refrain from the smear campaign which Shachtman, Martin and the rest are conducting and do your best to resist this development -- a development which can only hinder a fruitful discussion in our ranks aimed at a democratic solution to the question at hand.

Now, as to your present characterizations of our politics, I challenge you to find one mention by any left-wing spokesman favoring either splitting the YSL or uniting with the S.P. In fact, to hear the charge coming from a supporter of Martin is somewhat grotesque.

The left wing stands upon the traditions of our organization and it is the right wingers who have deviated from them. All of us in the left wing are dedicated to building the YSL as a militant, broad socialist youth organization. We are for this not only in our public statements but everyone of us has given and is giving virtually our entire energies to building the YSL and no other organization in the youth or adult fields.

In Berkeley Jim has done wonders in rebuilding the YSL and in functioning/in the regroupment arena as chairman of the regroupment formation out there.

In Chicago Ed is one of several full-time students in the unit active on campus for the YSL and Scott is our key activist in the off-campus local NAACP. Ed also helps out in typing for YSR.

In Antioch Shane and Judy have raised \$95 for Enroll for Freedom and recruited three new members to reestablish a unit there.

In New York City our supporters are active in the Columbia fraction and are devoting many hours to that work. I intend to propose to the exec tonight that we work for a broad radical protest meeting on Algeria and in other ways do my best to strengthen the YSL both nationally and locally in the regroupment situation.

Thus our caucus is made up of activists who are struggling to build the YSL today as it is with its present right wing leadership (which, of course, we hope to displace). I am not trying to make a case for us exclusively. I view your activity in L.A., for example, as commendable, especially on the united front tactics -- which by the way only Shane and I supported in a whole-hearted manner at the plenum.

The charge of splitting is false and ridiculous. We are building and we want to work with you in building the YSL and not some other group, whether it be the SP, S.P. or I.S.L. Secondly, we have no intention of doing otherwise at any time.

It is not we but your friends, Martin and Co., who are disloyal to the YSL. They no longer agree with the whole basic orientation upon which the YSL was built. They now want to dissolve the YSL and enter the SP. Thus their politics today are the diametrical opposite of those upon which the YSL is based -- the building of an independent youth movement and the splitting (if you will pardon the expression) of the YPSL from the SP. We oppose this reversal

and this dissolution because it is a political reversal of our previously correct attitude toward Social Democracy and it is a political dissolution of the revolutionary socialist position. And for this you call us splitters and disloyal elements.

I wonder whether it might not be more accurate to characterize Martin and Co. as putting the interests of the right wing of the ISL before those of the YSL and attempting in the process to wreck the YSL as an independent youth movement. In other words, would it not be more correct to say that Martin is an ISL right wing agent in the YSL who aims to wreck our organization in the interests of the perfidious politics of the ISL liquidators. In this respect I want to know where your primary allegiance lies? I hope it is with the YSL and that you will stick with the YSL and not break away from it in order to get into the SP-SDF. However, should you or Martin choose to follow the ISL into the SP-SDF, all of us in the left wing would urge you to continue your membership in the YSL. We would disapprove of your course, but we stick by the original idea of the YSL as a broad organization including members of all socialist groups including the SP-SDF. I hope you do not join the SP-SDF, but that is up to you.

On the second part of your short but loaded phrase "...and unite with the S.P." The logic involved here is interesting. We set up the YSL as an independent youth movement with only fraternal ties to an adult party and suddenly it has to unite with some adult party, either the SP or S.P. Why, I ask you? Why can it not remain independent, as originally planned, and in fact become the center of radical regroupment on the youth level? Why this sudden urge to merge before exploring the political basis for such a merger? Just because the right wing opportunistically calls for unity with the SP-SDF without discussing program it does not mean that the left wing shares in this opportunistic approach. Has it ever occurred to you that maybe there is some reason for the basic divisions that exist in the radical movement other than sectarianism and that our small size might have some relationship to the objective historical circumstances.

In any event, I again beseech you to insist that the right wing conduct the struggle on a political level and not indulge in tactics akin to red-baiting. Such tactics can only discredit your politics and in the end will demoralize the ranks of the right-wing supporters. Our politics cannot be destroyed by such methods for they are above board and ready for inspection at any moment.

You are absolutely right that our basic emphasis must be toward the Stalinist arena. But how do you jibe this with your SP-SDF orientation? You can only do so by two suppositions. One is that the decent elements among the Stalinists must first be broken from Stalinism to support American imperialism, in the manner that Gates is tending to do. This, to me, sounds strange coming from a leader of the YSL since it was the YSL which taught me that the way to win over the Stalinists is from the left! Only a revolutionary substitution for Stalinism can win over those who join the Stalinists (mistakenly) in order to fight capitalism and capitalist imperialism. It seems the line has changed and an explanation is in order.

Your second supposition is that the SP-SDF will "some day" consider admitting elements from the Stalinist movement. As you know today they oppose any activity in this direction. Also, Shachtman does not consider this question crucial since he is opposed to raising it as a condition of entrance (the question is entrance, by the way, not fusion). In my opinion, this talk about a future change of the SP toward admitting elements in the CP milieu is only a cover for Shachtman's move to enter the SP-SDF no matter what. In this

respect let us remember that this pitch about work among the Stalinists was an after thought, tacked on after the basic orientation had been put forward.

The ultimatum of the SP towards the workers in and around the CP -- and the reformist sectarianism of the SP-SDF, which you evaluate correctly, disclose the falsity of all this "broad Dobian party" business. The SP, in its own way, is more sectarian than any other party outside the SLP as it, and it alone, has refused to enter the arena of struggle to win over CP workers who are breaking with Stalinism. Thus, it is you and not I who are moving in a sectarian direction which will severely limit your ability to function in this all-important arena.

Your other points I will deal with in an article in the Left Wing Bulletin. At this time I wish to mention only one. You tell me that the SP remains more attractive to the workingclass because its pro-imperialism is closer to the workers' own chauvinism. However, there are two facts that you ignore. In the first place, the CP has consistently, through the years, won over a larger share of the working class than the SP. The CP isn't pro-Stalinist, it is Stalinist. Secondly, what worker, in his right mind, who is not ready to break from chauvinism and support of capitalist politics is going to join the SP-SDF? The Democratic Party is also chauvinist and is far more powerful. It makes no sense for anyone to join the SP-SDF for this reason. The SP has no reason to exist and is today nothing but a corpse as a result of this. No other movement is as weak in comparison -- not even us.

In conclusion, just give me a bit of evidence of a movement on the part of the workers towards the SP-SDF and we can talk about it. Otherwise it is just a pipedream in your mind.

In any event, I hope we can keep all future discussion on a political basis. I myself think you are making a terrible mistake blocking with Martin on this question and alienating yourself from the left elements in the YSL. But that is up to you. I only hope that in the course of the discussion you will change your mind.

Fraternally,

Tim

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Replies to Replies;
On the YSL's "tradition," regroupment proposals and the future of the LWC
by Debbie Meier

What started out to be a few notes in reply to... has grown and grown and therefore much to my regret I find it "necessary" to spend more time than I wished replying to a variety of matters taken up in articles in the current YSR. But I hope that in the process the majority's regroupment proposal will be clarified and further explained.

This is divided into three parts and deals with three articles by the LWC or its members.

* * * * *

I. Tim's Reply to Comrade Arlon

As Comrade Tim mentions in his introduction to the Arlon-Tim exchange, in this issue of YSR, I requested his permission to reprint his letter because I felt their were formulation in that document, quite representative of some members of the LWC, which I wanted to answer. Tim's letter is the best example of some of these interesting formulation and in replying to them I wanted Tim's letter easily available so that my "refutation" could be checked against the original.

The first "fabulous" thing about the letter is its tone--a tone in keeping with the left wing caucus leaders (with the exception of Shane who since he more clearly knows where he is headed politically and organizationally does not need to indulge in the same wild polemical style). I am not referring now to the anger, determination, bitterness, etc.--but the shrillness, or, to use Tim's own phrase--the "hysteria."

Let's take up two specific major points of Tim's reply:

A. Tim begins by insisting that Arlon should retract the accusation that the LWC is split-oriented and headed toward the SWP unless he can "furnish evidence from any source to substantiate this claim." It almost sounds fair until you realize that the only evidence Tim will accept as legitimate (he so much as tells us a short while later) is "one mention by any left-wing spokesman favoring either splitting the YSL or uniting with the SWP." That's like saying that Tim can't charge "capitulation" or "sell-out" until he can find "one mention by any Martinite spokesman favoring either capitulation to social democracy or selling out to capitalism." That Arlon obviously refers to, and substantiates, is that the political line of the LWC and the organizational perspectives which are created by this line lead to a split and lead to the SWP.

B. The other major contention of Tim's is that Martin and Co. favor the abandonment of the YSL's basic traditions while the LWC stands firmly on them. To begin with, what traditions of the YSL is the LWC now proposing to maintain--aside from the name?

Several of their leaders are avowedly not third campers any more--a major tradition of the organization--and so far no left winger has bothered to belabor them publicly for this rather crucial abandonment. The caucus has just recently also advocated that we abandon (see Part II of this article) all our political resolutions, etc., and replace them with a four point statement (which any capitulating social democrat could sign--with his own interpretation). The LWC also now advocates that we completely alter our relations with the ISL, which is also part of our tradition. From an organization representing the

ist

independent social tendency, they suggest the creation of a new type of youth organization including at least one other tendency, that represented by the SLP. So--the left wing caucus, led by anti-third camp leaders, advocates abandoning three years worth of resolutions and positions, the adoption of a 4 point plank instead, the severing of all relations with the ISL until all socialist tendencies endorse the YSL, and then cries out that Martin favors abandoning the traditions of the YSL.

What specific traditions is Tim talking about? Is he referring to our third camp tradition? Obviously not, the NAC's resolution is clearly in favor of maintaining a youth organization which is third camp in nature and since Martin and Co., as a whole, continue to fight for third camp politics, while the left wing caucus as a whole does not and can not, it is obvious that this cannot be what Tim refers to. Is he referring to our traditional position on the labor party? Obviously not since it is the Left Wing Caucus which is now attacking the traditional YSL conception of a Labor Party and the whole analysis of the American scene behind it, as expressed in our 1955 Resolution (written, incidentally, by Menshevik Harris). Are they referring to our traditional position in favor of united fronts with pacifists, liberals and right wing socialists? Obviously not, since they are noted for opposition to this position as it has been expressed in resolutions, in our Anvil policy, etc. Are they referring to our traditional analysis of Stalinism? Obviously not since, as I tried to make clear in an article in the last YSR, the resolution of comrade Shane and Tim and their argumentation and analysis indicate a different position on Stalinism than the one the YSL has traditionally held. Are they referring to our attitude toward the adult socialist arena? Obviously not since they clearly are opposed, under any conditions, to the maintenance of the present relationship between the YSL and ISL as expressed in the 1955 resolution on this question (in which the YSL expressed itself as being a partisan of the ISL's, made clear it was not neutral in the adult field and declared itself to be part of the same tendency, the independent socialist tendency, as was the ISL). Are they referring to our traditional position on youth organization? Obviously not, because the YSL has always been opposed to the idea of an independent youth organization and its policy now is advanced as a means of altering that status in a healthy way.

But I'll let you in on the L.C.'s secret. Because in fact it is no secret since Tim tells us quite frankly what he considers the basic principles and traditions which the L.C. is standing firmly by and Martin is abandoning. A few quotes will explain it all: (1) "All of us in the left wing are dedicated to building the YSL as a militant, broad, socialist youth organization. We are for this not only in our public statements but everyone of us have given...our entire energies to building the YSL and no other organization in the youth or adult field." (i.e. we have no ISLers in OUR ranks, dwm). (2) Martin and Co. "no longer agree with the whole basic orientation on which the YSL was built... their politics today are the diametrical opposite of those upon which the YSL is based - the building of an independent youth movement and the splitting... of YPSL from the SP." (emphasis DWM). Reread that again. (3) "In other words, would it not be more correct to say that Martin is an ISL right wing agent in the YSL who aims to wreck our organization in the interests of the perfidious politics of the ISL liquidators." (my oh my - and who is calling whom names?) (4) "Why can't it (the YSL) remain independent, as originally planned...?" (my emphasis, dwm).

So, there we have it. A complete 100% distortion of the tradition and history of the YSL, and one regrets that Tim never understood this better. We never were FOR independence. The SYL accepted it since it was the only basis for unity with the YPSLers. The YPSLers insisted on it since many were not yet ready to join the youth section of the ISL. We prolonged it because we felt

that its autonomy in a period in which the adult movement was divided into small tendencies aided it, so long as it also was clearly part and parcel of the same tendency to which the ISL belonged. In other words we did not envision the possibility under these conditions of creating an all-inclusive organization-- independence and autonomy do not equal all-inclusiveness. Our basic traditions were the political traditions of the SYL and YPSL and the desire to build a youth movement based on third camp socialism and thereby to strengthen the independent socialist tendency.

On the basis of this I suggest the obvious--that the LWC in all fairness to itself and to its clarity of thinking, should begin to recognize that its politics and its orientation represent a break from our traditional views. A break which they have every right to make--since tradition is hardly sacred. But in the interests of educating the membership I only wish they would not try to squash their new ideas and proposals into the old shell and pretend nothing is changed. Break openly, honestly and without evasion--you have nothing to lose, but muddleheadedness. Our proposals for regroupment and for the future of the YSL are clearly a break, we do not deny this--they put forward the proposition that the independent socialist tendency with which we still identify and with which we do not wish to break can, in the period ahead, find a new, broader framework within which to put forth its ideas and program.

--The numbered footnotes 3-6 refer to documentation regarding the YSL's position on a number of questions. For the exact details of this documentation readers should look to the end of this 3 part article where I have appended several quotations from previous YSL resolutions.--

II. Shane and Reply to Our Critics II (an answer to Comrade Debbie).

There are a whole list of points I would like sometime to raise with Shane. A major portion of his article is devoted to the question of social democracy. I assume others will deal with this again and make the point which I also tried to make--that this whole discussion of social democracy has really nothing whatsoever to do with the present proposal since the "social democracy" represented by the SP is not the same one, in the same period, playing the same role, etc., as the one Shane refers to abstractly as "the social democracy." I will deal briefly with a few answers to Shane's general attack but I would like in particular to examine the new youth proposal which the LWC and Shane are now putting forth.

1. The Present SP. Shane bases his case against my section on the present SP by counterposing to it the recent Memorandum of Understanding. But Shane, like me, knows how fallacious that is since he also is aware that the merger of the SP and SDF brought in only a infinitesimal number of SDFers and that the political compromise made in that Understanding in no way represents the composition politically of the SP prior to January 1957 and in no way represents it today. It will also obviously not represent it after the next convention of the SP even if the ISL has no influence on the SP at that time. It obviously has absolutely nothing to do with the type of political thinking which the ISL and YSL members will have to deal with in a united organization. Furthermore Shane also knows that the SP today is so exceedingly loose and undisciplined that various sections, today, present speakers and views in considerable contradiction to what that Memorandum of Understanding appears to say.

2. Shane makes the assumption, never quite stated, that by not making changes in the SP a precondition to unity the I.L. and Y.S.L. are not in favor of such changes being made and do not intend to cooperate with other SPers in making changes after unification and affiliation. This is an utterly callacious implication. The type of changes we would desire are described in detail in both the I.S.L. majority and minority resolutions and in the present NAC resolution (which I sometimes feel the L.C. leaders have never read carefully). All desire an SP and will work for an SP which (1) is thoroughly democratic, (2) which permits the coexistence of various tendencies and encourages all democratic socialists to join in building the SP, and (3) which on the specific day to day questions which arise to face the united SP puts forth a militant stand which can lay the basis for joint and united action.

3. The SP-SDF is not the American representative of social democracy. European social democrats, for example, look to the lib-lab bloc as their American counterpart, and in some senses they are correct to do so (in so far as there is a counterpart). The SP-SDF, while holding a social democratic type of ideology, is not playing either ideologically or programmatically the role of the "social democracy" in America--which is one reason why it was one of the only socialist parties in the 2nd international to condemn Hollet. What Shane is denouncing is simply anyone who does not hold a revolutionary socialist viewpoint and understanding. He argues that anyone who begins upon another foundation is bound to be anti-socialist, pro-imperialist, etc., and why therefore he will not join in common organization with any such (unless he is forced to--when the whole workingclass is there). He knows they are anti-socialist, etc., because he knows that that is where their type of ideology and orientation logically leads them. But I am not concerned now with the possible future logic of the SP's type of thinking--I am concerned with their present political potential. When Shane is through he has relegated the I.S.L., the majority of the Y.S.L., the SP-SDF, the Gatesites, Fosterites, Cochranites, Sweezyites, etc., all into the swamp of social democracy, as organizations, or organized tendencies. Shane therefore proposes to set up an organization which either excludes them, i.e. excludes almost all American socialists, or includes only some of them. In the youth field he appears interested in including the Y.S.L. type of capitulationism (at least for the time), and maybe the "stalinoid" type. But in fact, the more one examines Shane's proposals the more one gets confused about why, when and how he plans to apply his lessons of social democratic perfidy. Shane says--that logically, historically, etc.--social democracy is counter-revolutionary and anti-socialist and that therefore this must apply to America today too. Social democracy is relegated to an abstraction and at times one feels the hint of "social fascism" ringing in one's ears. But we of the majority, not being so sophisticated, have a very simple refutation of all this fancy logic--we know that today in America the various tendencies which still are based on social democratic illusions do not play a reactionary role, but a progressive role. We propose therefore to function with them today. "Tomorrow" it may be necessary to make a major fight over their illusions if they are to continue to play a progressive role. But how much easier it will be to put forth our ideas and convince them of the need for revolutionary politics through a common organization and a common trust in each other which comes through such cooperation in a period when nothing can be lost by doing so--for any of us.

4. Incidentally, a third camp resolution, as well as a "defensist, critical support-type" resolution on foreign policy, was passed at the 1956 SP convention. The convention voted to amalgamate them...incredible? Yes, but it does not contradict my point which was that a sizeable portion of the SP is either for or not adverse to a programmatic statement under which we could quite cheerfully and adequately function as a third camp tendency.

5. And just out of curiosity I would like someone to explain to me how Shane deduces from my discussion of why an American anti-capitalist group must clearly differentiate from Stalinism and a Russian anti-stalinist group differentiate itself from capitalism lead logically to my having to support Kadar? What it leads to rather is this--that whatever may have been the theoretical or programmatic inadequacies of the Hungarian revolutionaries vis a vis their understanding of Stalinism (i.o. did they have a state capitalist, bureaucratic collectivist, degenerated workers state theory), what was essential to their anti-stalinist struggle was their differentiation from restorationism, pro-capitalism, etc., if they were to have any success and if they were to look to the world socialist movement for support.

6. Which comes down finally to the major point--Shane's alternative regroupment proposal. Independent youth. We are not being told now by the L.C. what they propose in the adult sphere. This is done on the pretext that, after all, we are a youth organization. Seldom has irresponsibility or deviousness cloaked itself under a more mealy-mouthed cover as that! These same comrades ponder over and fight for the YSL to take positions on the adult socialist movement of Asia, China, France, England, Russia, etc. But then on the immediate, pressing problem facing American socialists--the regroupment of the socialist movement itself (which means the adult movement) they cannot find common agreement among themselves.

But I will make an assumption--based on their previous statement with regard to the YSL and ISL proposal in the adult sphere. I am assuming that they still oppose the broad-all-inclusive type of party, with the SP or anyone else for that matter, functioning as the framework. For they favor regroupment around a "principled programmatic" agreement of all parties, and the type of agreement which cannot and does not exist between themselves, the independent socialist tendency and the socialist party membership.

In other words for the moment this completely independent youth group will function in the framework of the presently existing sect-environment, they hope.

This youth organization will first sever its ties with the ISL; second it will change its political program so as to make it broader and looser; and third it will drop all previous positions it has taken and adopt only the four planks suggested by Shane (a far rasher capitulation in the youth field that the majority makes) as the program of the organization. These are the first three concrete implementing motions which the L.C. would have to propose in order to clear the way for carrying out their program, if they really hope to bring traditional "anti-trotskyites" etc. into the YSL, in droves.

After doing this their first major problem will be to find a new headquarters, find the money to pay for it, find the money to pay for a press of some sort, a phone, an organizer, etc. Because if they stayed in the ISL office, even if the ISL would permit it, it would frighten away these new elements who fear and suspect our motives. Dues would have to be raised--hardly an enticement for an expanded membership--and services would, at least at first, decline. We could not accept aid from an adult socialist organization until all adult tendencies proffered aid...or it would be labelled a new front. (And incidentally, just for realities sake, which adult organizations does the L.C. actually expect will take up this offer?)

For a moment however let's assume that this new type of YSL miraculously leaped this incredible financial hurdle in some fashion or other..what would then happen in quick order.

In come hosts of S.Pers (who are now the largest left wing tendency..?), YPSLers, maybe even a few more ISLers...all eager or maybe uneager for the fray. Some Cochranites possibly, according to plan, and a few other assorted types. And the battle royal begins. To recruit new youth? No. I need only point to what the YSL has gone through and is going through today, and will until the convention, as a picture of what it will or would be like. For all will be in there pitching to recruit to their own tendencies, to solidify their own forces, to prevent the other tendencies from "taking it over." Because, A SOCIALIST YOUTH ORGANIZATION IS OF NECESSITY AN APPENDAGE OF THE ADULT SOCIALIST MOVEMENT. It may have greater or lesser autonomy - the YSL has complete autonomy...but it depends ultimately on its close ties (not merely financial) on a more firmly based, dedicated and committed socialist organization and membership. Youth leaders have always and will always be older responsible youth who are for this reason also members of an adult party or organization. To expect otherwise is to assume some kind of irresponsibility and lack of seriousness of the part of young socialists which one hopes to foster and cater to. It would be a serious mistake to be taken in by this unreal glorification of youth members without adult ties. A socialist youth organization which brags about this is perpetuating a tragic and naive myth.

A youth organization functioning as a political arena for all adult tendencies will have a core and cadre of activists and leaders only in so far as the adult tendencies urge their young adherents to remain there or to go there. And I hope we all know from bitter experience what that means in terms of a viable, healthy youth movement, and what it does to that most important of all capitals of the socialist movement--its sense of comradeship. It is not written-down codes of discipline and programmatic clarity which gives a healthy socialist organization such an advantage over the average liberal type organization--it is also its sense of comradeship which leads to a commitment and a dedication which no formal discipline can ever impose.

To say the only way a genuinely broad youth organization can exist and be a viable force is on the basis of a similarly broad adult organization. The socialist movement produces a youth movement, not vice versa. This youth movement may well be more radical and more revolutionary--but it cannot be entirely independent, autonomous and distinct. It reflects the tensions and strife of the movement as a whole.

Some youthful enthusiasts may get carried away momentarily by this flighty idea, but they must begin to face the reality. No responsible youth with adult ties is going to be a fully loyal and open member of such a youth organization. He will either get out and create a less factional type youth organization or stay in for factional purposes. Neither is a healthy alternative.

For example, why is the S.P interested in this proposal? precisely because they are opposed to a similar regroupment on the adult level, and precisely because they have never been interested in building a youth organization before. They still are not. What they are talking about is much the same thing as the YSL has talked of in the past when it spoke of creating broad "socialist clubs" or "politics clubs" in cities or campuses--to provide an arena where socialist tendencies could function and where the YSL in particular could reach young people. And even in these type of clubs one tendency has generally dominated if it was to successfully engage in healthy educational and political functioning. The L.C and the S.P proposal in the youth field is nothing more nor less than such a "socialist club" on a national scale.

But those interested in a healthy regroupment in America have much to lose by such an orientation. For nothing could be more disheartening than to welcome in the new spirit of regroupment by the kind of spirit which prevails in the YSL as a whole today or would prevail 100 times greater in the event we followed such a proposal tomorrow.

We of the majority want as much autonomy for a youth organization as possible. We are looking for the creation of that type of adult party in which all sections of the party will have great autonomy. We are advocating a very loose type of party structure. In the case of the adult party we make no preconditions for unity--the changes we want we expect the ISL members, the older YSL members can work for, in cooperation with many SPers and many new members after unity is achieved. The changes we will work for are not changes which will make the SP a mirror of the present ISL, but rather those that will enable all democratic socialists to coexist without knock down drag out fights in one framework. It is a bold proposal, but one we concretely expect will be able to work. In the youth field, as spelled out in the resolution, and further specified in the implementation motion I have introduced along with Don Harris and Bogdan Denitch, we will make some of these preconditions first. Our proposal, and ours only, ensures the formation of a healthy youth organization on a broader basis and also makes likely (1) the continuation of a third camp youth organization and (2) a youth organization not paralyzed by inter-party struggles.

The Newark suggested draft resolution of Comrade Sims, et al, for example, is a good description of the type of youth organization we feel the new youth group, which the YSL will call into being, of the SP will be. We are glad to see the L.C, in recommending this resolution, favors this type of all-inclusive organization because it means that, at least on paper, they now realize the value and possibility of an all-inclusive party--if only, as yet, in the youth field. Some of their subsequent statements seem to contradict this concept of all-inclusiveness, but...maybe they are confused. The difference between the 3 Newark comrades and the majority is that we wish to see an adult organization of the same sort and we see the Socialist Party as the best framework for that. And we do not see how one can build a healthy youth movement of this same sort without an adult counterpart. Therefore we call for regroupment around the SP in the adult field, followed by regroupment around the YSL or with the YSL playing a decisive role, in the youth field on the basis of affiliation to this broad, regrouped SP.

III. On Tim's "Defense" of the L.C Members (see Tim's introduction to the Arlon-Tim exchange in this issue of YSR).

Tim spends most of his time attacking Comrade Denitch's article. The attack begins with a denunciation of Comrade Denitch for his "unfriendly" suggestion that the members of the L.C would do well to consider the whole question of their continued membership in the YSL after the coming convention (assuming they are defeated). I for one would like to second Bogdan's idea, and I suspect that many other members of the organization echo this feeling, which has absolutely nothing to do with our personal feelings for the minority members but is a realistic appraisal of what the continued existence of such a minority caucus, unalterably opposed to the YSL's major perspectives, would cause in internal dissension and the ability of the YSL to function effectively in carrying out their perspectives. The question of clarifying this in detail will be one of the tasks of the Convention but I for one favor making it absolutely clear at that time that the victors at this conven-

tion shall be given the power to deal effectively with their perspective, i.e. given the power to see that all steps necessary and effective towards making it a reality shall be taken. To object to this is to propose a permanent paralysis of the organization.

Regarding the charge which Tim spends most time on, however, that Bogdan has indulged in "slandering and mudslinging." Tim in particular appeals to me to chastize Bogdan since I objected to his description of the activities of his caucus as they originally appeared in his reply to Arlon as being inaccurate, etc. Tim is correct that Bogdan's run-down of the Left Wing Caucus has something in common with his own, although they were of course of quite a different character and served the opposite purpose. However, my main attack on Tim was for his outright inaccuracies, which he has since corrected, at least with respect to Chicago, and not his general one-sided slant. Because what Bogdan and Tim's descriptive run-downs have in common is their one-sidedness. Tim is correct that Bogdan only mentions the negative aspects --whereas positive ones also exist. Bogdan claims that this was legitimate since he was not pretending to give a full description of the activities of the L C members but only to indicate something about their organizational loyalties and leanings. Similarly Tim in defending his one-sided descriptions which leave the impression that only the left-wing is active, that he did not intend to imply anything of that sort but only to imply that it was unfair to claim they were disloyal in activity. Both refer only to what helps build their own case. Both are guilty of one-sidedness. But Bogdan, it seems to me, was not guilty of mistating the actual facts in any unit, or at least not guilty of mistating the facts on the basis of the information he had available to him.

On Robertson

In the section dealing with Jim Robertson I can only wait for Jim's own reply before discussing Bogdan's characterization. Unfortunately as I write this I have not yet seen that reply. However the information contained in Bogdan's article was based on information the YSL received about Robertson from the Berkeley unit quite a long time ago, long before the present faction fight over unity began. This information circulated throughout the YSL and was assumed to be true by all its members, right AND left wing, in Chicago, New York and elsewhere. If it is untrue, then we all owe Robertson an apology. We owe him an apology, for example, if it is untrue that he quit the YSL some time ago because it was too hopelessly right wing, too tied to the ISL, too social democratic, etc. We owe him an apology if it is untrue that he quit the YSL some time ago for political reasons at all, reasons not relating to the perspective of SP unity. We owe him an apology if it is untrue that in the interim he attempted to organize a new socialist group to replace in effect the YSL as a center of socialist youth activity in Berkeley. We owe him an apology if his sudden return to the YSL about the time the faction fight was brewing was motivated by some entirely unrelated motivation. Etc. None of these above, even if true, would constitute a crime or would be illegitimate in terms of the YSL. They would simply demonstrate, which is what Bogdan had in mind, that Robertson's present position in the YSL is not based on our unity line but that he has disagreed with the YSL fundamentally for several years at least and that these differences were so great that he felt impelled to resign from the organization. This is the essence of Bogdan's charge, and of Mike and Mol's references to the questionability of Jim's long-range loyalty to the YSL even if unity were not specifically on the agenda today.

With regard to the Dayton area, the only inaccuracy was the beforesaid one of one-sidedness. It is nonsense to "blame" the Socialist Discussion Club for

selling the Militant or sponsoring S.P. speakers. Because Shane has made no secret of the fact that he has urged such steps and that he feels responsible for handling the Militant and bringing S.P. speakers to campus (see Plenum minutes of Sept. 1956). The NEC and NAC do not consider this a crime--but it does imply something about Shane's loyalties and the activities of the Antioch unit. By though, since Shane does not dodge it, but proclaim it, does Tim wish to dump onto the lap of the SDC?

Finally we are at Chicago. To begin with, what that Bogdan said about Scott does Tim wish me to refute? Anyone present at the last Convention (1955, Chicago) knows what I and many others feel about Scott's participation in the YSL. Tim may dispute my judgement, but does he really want us all to repeat verbatim now our long list of grievances against the way Scott has functioned and of Scott's political history? I refer readers, however, to Comrade Haskell's letter in this YSR for just one little piece which conveys my sentiments exactly. Otherwise readers can get an inkling of what bothers me by reading Scott's paranoid reply to me in the last YSR on abstentionism. If Tim were merely complaining that it is unfair to attack Scott in general without a list of particulars I think he may have a point and therefore I have not pressed this and think Bogdan was unfair in doing so. But what in the world Bogdan's comments had to do with whether Scott has been "active in negro work for the YSL" I do not know. But, for the record, "yes," Scott has.

Tim's reply to Bogdan's final comment on the Chicago unit is pure nonsense, altho Tim may not be aware of it. I am not interested in debating the merits of the various proposals for S.P. speakers which Scott and John North of Chicago have suggested to the unit, and which Bogdan referred to in his article. However Bogdan was simply reporting on facts attested to by Chicago meeting minutes, which are also available to him, which point out that in the past few months the members of the Chicago "left wing" have suddenly blossomed forth with several such proposals. First we had the proposal that an S.P. member lead a series of classes on social democracy and the role of the vanguard party, especially the latter. This was to counter another proposal that Comrade Berg of the ISL be invited to lead such discussions. The compromise consisted of inviting an S.P. speaker to debate Comrade Berg following a joint YSL-ISL series. The second case referred to was the suggestion by Comrade North that we sponsor Vincent Dunne, touring for the S.P., and that we sell SWP literature at said meeting. What is at stake in both cases are not the merits or demerits of these two proposals of the past two months. For Bogdan was merely trying to document his contention that there are a number of members in the LC who are sympathetic to the S.P. The latter has not in the past constituted a crime! Tim would do better to accept this fact and not try to hide every indication of such allegiance or sympathy under a carpet. Shane quite openly admits that he finds himself in their political tendency and not ours--i.e. the independent socialist tendency referred to in previous YSL resolutions. Other LC members are moving there; the way to disprove this is not to screech and scream but to indicate publicly, if such is desired, what political tendency they do feel a part of and why.

Finally. I'm very glad to hear that Tim feels his left wing comrades are for building the YSL "as it is with the present leadership" (and that the YSL, in Shane's opinion, should merge with the YSL "as it is," etc). In other words, by the YSL as it is, we mean the YSL which favors affiliation to a new SP, which is fraternally affiliated to the ISL, which is not neutral in the adult socialist field, which is 3rd camp, which favors united fronts with socialist and liberals--i.e. the social democratic, bureaucratic, class collaborationist sect led by Martin and Co. I am glad to hear this,

although it leaves me puzzled as to why they feel they cannot be loyal members of the YSL if and when it affiliates to the SP. After all if the YSL today is a bureaucratic social democratic youth sect dominated by Martin and Co., and still it can serve a useful purpose as it is, why cannot the same attitude prevail in the organization we propose to create around the SP? Since the NYS and the L.C are convinced the YSL today is social democratic, why isn't their proposal for unity between the NYS and YSL a proposal for capitulation?

In rereading Tim's reply to Arlon and his introductory note I realize how amazing are all Tim's utterances-- In concluding I cannot emphasize often enough the value of rereading, word for word and sentence by sentence Tim's reply to Arlon. I suggest that especially to his "supporters," for it is truly an amazing and masterful job of self-characterization. It compounds all the nastiness, shrillness, political obtuseness, the peculiar political shiftiness which is characteristic of the L.C of late. After calling the majority of the organization every bad name, referring to all those who were not in the L.C as "Martin and Co.," etc., and after attacking Arlon for red-baiting, Tim turns appealingly and asks for an end to slander and greater sincerity and so forth. It's like a child who tries to stop a fight but can't resist getting in a last sock or a last kick before calling it quits. Tim sets up suppositions and straw-men and then attributes them to Arlon in a slippery use of the English language which is likely to leave the unwary unaware that it is Tim's suppositions not Arlon's own contentions which he is arguing against! One cannot help feel ambivalent about it--there is a certain pleasure in finding such a masterpiece of self-denunciation. Yet one must feel real sorrow that this comes from the pen of a leader of the organization and that in his several years in the YSL he could not have developed better political sense.

I don't demand or expect apologies and I am, personally, tired of hearing right wingers or left wingers or anyone else plead back and forth for an end to the slanders, etc. We all should realize by now that between now and the Convention we shall all speak and write what we think and that apparently our attitude toward the pathos each has embarked upon appear to the other as slander. Let's accept that fact without this pretentious and demagogic indignation. And let us hope that in the interest of all our views and in the interest of our physical health and forbearance this convention will be able to settle the issue one way or the other,

Debbie Meier

See next page for quotes from YSL resolutions, referred to in Part I, on p. 68.

A FEW QUOTES FROM OLD YSL RESOLUTIONS --

- (1) "YSL'ers, in general, should be known as Third Camp socialists."
(Tasks of the YSL, 1954)
- (2) "This is the reason why socialists must consider as their main political aim the encouraging and promotion of the idea of a labor party...socialists should be prepared to give their full support to a labor party...despite the non and even anti-socialist program of these organizations. Socialists cannot impose as a condition of their support, acceptance of a socialist program or socialist leadership. The latter can come about only by the activity of socialists within the...labor political movement."
(Resolution on the American Question, 1955)
- (3) "One of the aims of our campus work is to break out of isolation, and to join in united front activities with liberal, pacifist and socialist tendencies, primarily on the academic freedom and civil liberties issues. While we clearly differentiate ourselves from pro-war tendencies, there are nevertheless wide areas where we can co-operate on specific issues with liberals and right wing socialists and press our Third Camp position, in addition to achieving the immediate objectives of the united front." (Tasks of the YSL, 1954)
- (4) "While we call for united fronts with liberal groups, this attitude does not extend to Stalinist groups...." (followed by explanation of why we do not consider liberals and stalinists equal enemies, etc.)
(Tasks of the YSL, 1955)
- (5) "There can be no doubt that the only organization to which the YSL could affiliate...is the ISL. At the same time that it declared itself to be an independent group, the YSL made clear that it is not neutral or indifferent with respect to the various socialist parties and organizations. It declared itself to be in the closest possible fraternal relationship with the ISL and implemented this statement by....."

The estimation which the ISL enjoys in the eyes of the YSL and the arrangements and relations flowing from it are not accidental; they rest on a firm political foundation. The YSL and the ISL are the sole organizations of revolutionary democratic socialism in the United States. They, and they alone, are united in their opposition to imperialist war, to the two imperialist war camps, and the regimes and social systems of these camps. They stand for the struggle of the Third Camp...

In addition, the two organizations are in substantial agreement on most major political questions of the day. For these reasons it is accurate to say that in a political sense the YSL and ISL are parts of one movement and that together they constitute one tendency in the working class movement." (Resolution on YSL-ISL Relations, 1955)

- (6) "In accordance with the YPSL-SYL unity agreement and by decision of its founding convention, the YSL was established as an independent socialist youth organization.... This decision flowed from certain very concrete considerations and not from any theory that the independence of socialist youth organizations in general and the YSL in particular is permanently desirable.

On the contrary, the YSL did not and does not hold that an organization of socialist youth should in general be an independent group. Such independence leads to the youth organization itself becoming a "youth party," that is a general socialist organization... For a section of the working class and socialist movement based on an age group and its special problems and needs...to attempt to become the socialist organization of the workingclass as a whole, is absurd.

In general, and here specific factors do not indicate the contrary, a socialist youth organization has to be the youth section of a general or adult organization. Youth groups of adult organizations or parties do, and where they do not, they should have autonomy with respect to the adult party in certain aspects, but nevertheless they are the arms of the general socialist organizations...

That the above was the viewpoint of the founding convention of the YSL is demonstrated by the fact that the convention decided to have the question of the unaffiliated status of the League brought up again at the second convention...." (Resolution on YSL-ISL Relations, 1955)

submitted by Dobbie Meier

NAC Draft Resolution on the Crisis of World Stalinism

(1) Events of historic importance have taken place in the world during the two years since the Young Socialist League last met in convention. In this period there has emerged a new era in world politics: the era of revolution against the Stalinist camp and the Stalinist system. To our age of colonial revolution against capitalist imperialism - hallmark of the first decade after World War II - there has now been added the era of anti-Stalinist revolution by the peoples living under the brutal sway of this reactionary, totalitarian social system.

(2) The momentous happenings of the past year which spell out the uncompleted course of the crisis of international Stalinism are well known. In February, 1956 there were the famous revelations about Stalin in Khrushchev's secret report to the Twentieth Congress of the Russian Communist Party. In June, there was the heroic uprising of the Polish workingclass in Poznan. By October, all Poland was united against the Russian imperialists and their local viceroys; Gomulka took power. And following hard upon the Polish events, indeed, connected to them, there came the magnificent revolution of the Hungarian people, led by the workingclass, with the youth and intellectuals playing a very important role. With November, came the Russian intervention, and the beginning of a Hungarian resistance which still goes on. Behind these, the most central and crucial developments, lies a year of unrest and political opposition throughout the Stalinist empire, in which discontent has manifested itself in Prague, Bucharest, East Germany, and in Leningrad, particularly among the students. Concomitantly, every Communist Party in the capitalist world has known crisis, disintegration and factional struggle.

(3) The fundamental structure of international politics since the end of World War II has been a three-cornered struggle between the imperialism of bureaucratic-collectivist Stalinism, the imperialism of the capitalist camp led by the United States, and the forces of all the oppressed, of the international workingclass and the colonial peoples. This fundamental battle order has not changed, but the relationship of forces within it has been drastically altered in favor of socialism and democracy by the upsurge in the Stalinist empire.

(4) The significance of the revolution against Stalinism can best be grasped by comparing the position of international Stalinism today with its position at the end of the war a little more than ten years ago. Russia had created a new empire in Eastern Europe during the course of the war, bringing many nations and millions of people under its rule, and it had done this at a time when all previously-built empires were disintegrating under the revolt of the colonial slaves. The Stalinist world was strengthened still further in the next few years by the conquest of state power by the Chinese Communist Party, although China under Stalinist rule did not become a Russian satellite on the model of the East European countries. Mass Communist Parties grew in several West European countries. Capitalism in West Europe found itself extremely weak and sterile, being eaten away at by the anti-imperialist revolutions of the colonial peoples and by internal crises. Massive American economic and military aid, with the consequence of increasing American overlordship over West Europe, was necessary to prevent the complete collapse of capitalism and capitalist power in what had once been the dominant countries of the world. Stalinist power on the whole international scene appeared to be moving in an inexorably upward direction, as its fingers reached out for larger and larger sectors of the world.

(5) While capitalism on a world scale showed itself to be in the process of disintegration, and the workingclass struggle for socialist democracy appeared impotent, Stalinism was growing in power and influence. Under these conditions, despair and pessimism about the future of democracy and socialism waxed strong,

as did illusions about the strength, stability and permanence of Stalinism. To many, "1984" seemed to be humanity's future. The anti-Stalinist revolution we are witnessing today reveals the misguided nature of all such moods and vindicates the views of those who did not succumb to them.

(6) The crisis in world Stalinism can be dated as having begun in February, 1953 with the death of Stalin, chief architect of the monstrous system which bears his name. Actually, the Stalinist world had been convulsed much earlier by the break between Tito's Yugoslavia and Russia, a development which showed the power of national-Stalinism as an inhibiting factor in the creation of a monolithic Stalinist world empire. At the same time however, the significance of this event was limited - large-scale illusions about Titoist "democratization" to the contrary notwithstanding - by the fact that it occurred only on the level of relations between Stalinist ruling classes, and neither involved nor produced convulsions among the masses. In addition, the victory of national-Stalinism in Yugoslavia did not spread to other East European nations, all Titoist manifestations in these countries being successfully suppressed in the period which followed. Important as the Tito development was as a step towards the collapse of the Stalinist empire, it did not signify the crisis of world Stalinism which we see today.

(7) For this other events were required, and these were signaled by the death of the Dictator himself. This was followed by obvious disturbance in the ranks of the Kremlin rulers and by inner struggles in the top bureaucracy. Then came the strikes in Russian concentration camps, notably in Vorkuta, the mass strike in Czechoslovakia, and the workers revolt in East Germany. And after this, a series of less notable though significant events in Russia itself: the execution of Beria, the downfall of Malenkov, and the rise of Khrushchev. All of these developments, predecessors to the more stormy events which were to follow the Twentieth Congress, revealed the shakiness of the much-vaunted Stalinist monolith.

(8) The period immediately after Stalin's death was one of relaxation, of easing up, of the "thaw". It was marked by the elimination of some restrictions on cultural and scientific life, e.g., the end of the Lysonko cult, and most prominently, by Malenkov's consumer-goods production program. This relaxation - undertaken by Stalin's heirs as a program for dealing with the critical period they saw facing them - resulted in widespread illusions about the "liberalization" and "democratization" of the Stalinist system by the regime itself, illusions which were later intensified by the Twentieth Congress and which still persist, despite Hungary.

(9) Actually, however, this "liberalization" flowed from a number of factors, among which were considerations of self-interest for the regime itself. Among the latter were: the need to eliminate excesses which had resulted from the totalitarian system but which were not inherent in it nor necessary to its continued existence, and which in fact created difficulties for it; the need to eliminate some of the impositions on society that were due to the personal whims of Stalin as Vozhi; and the struggles between the individuals and groups among the ruling top echelons of the bureaucracy itself. While the totalitarian system needs a Supreme Arbitrator to settle disputes among the ruling group, and while there is an inevitable tendency in this system for such an arbitrator to arise, no individual top bureaucrat could succeed to Stalin's throne immediately. Thus the system required after Stalin's death a "collective leadership", among which jockeyings and struggles for power occurred. Disagreement at the summits of the bureaucracy had to lead, in the absence of a Supreme Ruler, to tokens of "democratization" among somewhat wider layers of the ruling class.

(10) More important than the foregoing, however, was another consideration which led to relaxation: concessions, real or verbal, to widespread discontent existing among wide layers of Russian society. First and foremost, the vast Russian masses, workers and peasants, who seethe with hatred for the regime and the system had to be appeased. The feelings of the Russian people had been demonstrated by the mass desertions from the army during the war, by the fact that in some areas of the Russian empire, primarily those inhabited by oppressed non-Russian peoples, the masses had at first welcomed the Nazis as liberators, and by the concentration camp strikes. It is demonstrated by the very existence of the huge totalitarian terror apparatus, which exists precisely because repression is necessary in Stalinist society. This hostility to Stalinism among the Russian peoples was not, as far as anyone can see, on the verge of resulting in revolution in Russia, but was real enough and strong enough to convince the rulers that a course of appeasement was indicated.

(11) In addition, there was widespread discontent among the mass of ruling-class bureaucrats themselves. The ruling bureaucracy in Russia, especially its secondary layers, has never had the leisure to enjoy its powers and privileges in safety and tranquillity. It has had to work hard, it has been driven by the top echelons of the bureaucracy. The totalitarian regime has had to rule by terror, and the lower layers of the bureaucracy have felt this terror, even though it was primarily directed against the masses. It desired and desires to be able to lead a normal life, and exerted pressure on the regime to this end. At the same time, it transmitted to the regime the pressure it in turn has exerted upon it by the masses. These inter-related factors, the discontents of the workers and peasants, and the dissatisfactions of the bureaucrats played the most important role in producing the relaxation which followed Stalin's death.

(12) This relaxation, therefore, represented a development from weakness, and not, as so many believed, from strength. The Russian rulers felt less sure of themselves, saw their strength sapped, and were uneasy, as a result of Stalin's death. The tyrant had been able to keep a tight control over the seething forces in Stalinist society; with his death, the explosive factors became exposed. The Kremlin cased up in the hope of appeasing the hatred which surged beneath it.

(13) The relaxation flowed from weakness, not from strength: this was recognized by the masses throughout the Stalinist empire, as subsequent events made clear. For in reaction to the "liberalization" which followed Stalin's death and the "de-Stalinization" which came after the Twentieth Congress, there ensued greater discontent and more struggle. To be sure, the explosions of the past year have occurred in the satellite countries of the empire, and not in Russia itself. They have come there first, just as all social systems first manifest decay at the fringes, in the colonies, because to the social oppression of the system which the masses are subjected to, there is added in the empire national oppression as well. But for the explosions to occur at all there must first be weakness in the heart of the empire, and thus it was with Russia.

(14) The wave of crisis and revolution in the Stalinist world, and the Polish and Hungarian revolutions in particular, have dealt shattering blows to the theories of Stalinist society which were much in vogue in the period preceding the new era of revolt against Stalinism, and which still exercise considerable influence today. The first of these is associated with Hannah Arendt and her Origins of Totalitarianism. It held that Stalinism so atomized society as to annihilate social classes; that Stalinism created a mass of a thousand fragments; that under such conditions revolt was rendered impossible. But in Poland and Hungary the social classes were indeed present, and particularly the working class. Revolt did take place, organization for it was possible. The moment when the events took place, it became clear that they developed out of, and according to, the class struggle.

(15) The other theory is associated with Isaac Deutscher. In part it is based on the obvious truism that Stalinism has created conditions (a large, modern workingclass, an industrial society, widespread education) which have profoundly altered the historical situation. But it goes from this correct statement to the view that Stalinism was therefore "progressive" despite its brutalities, and deserving of support. It follows this reasoning to the point of declaring that the sole "raison d'etre" of Stalinism consisted of creating these conditions, and that now they are here, it will automatically disappear of its own accord, because these conditions are incompatible with its continued existence, and because there is in the ruling class itself a strong tendency towards reform, ~~xxxxxx~~ towards "democratic socialism."

(16) This theory, the hollowness of which Poland and Hungary have laid bare, becomes then transmuted among all of those who hold one variety or another of illusion about Stalinism and who regard it as "progressive" or "a kind of socialism" into a program of reliance on the bureaucracy for the struggle against Stalinism. It urges the masses to be quiescent, lest the rulers be frightened into withdrawing their "reforms", and in this reveals its perniciousness.

(17) What this theory ignores is the class-nature of the ruling bureaucracy, its stake in the social system which prevails, and the fact that no ruling class has ever abandoned its power and privileges just because ~~for~~ they have become incompatible with the further development of society. It treats the bureaucracy as a class-less technical stratum, ignoring all of the evidence of its class nature and function. It preaches quiescence to the masses, ignoring the fact that all revolutionary change requires revolutionary mass action by the people themselves.

(18) The question of "reform or revolution" for Stalinism is posed not merely in terms of Deutscher's theories about the self-reforming qualities of the Stalinist rulers, but also in terms of the fact that revolution leads, as it did in Hungary, to the intervention of the Russian Army, the defeat of the first wave of the revolutionary struggle, and the imposition or reimposition of a harsh, old-fashioned, Stalinist-type" regime. Hence the masses are urged to restrain themselves, to limit themselves to a Gomulka-type development. Likewise, the claim is advanced that revolution risks world-wide war - though, in fact, the revolution against Stalinism has had in general the effect of pushing the war danger off into the more distant future, not bringing it closer.

(19) In declaring ourselves for "revolution" against Stalinism, as opposed to limiting ourselves to being advocates of its "reform", we do not thereby mean that the foregoing considerations are irrelevant to the situation. Indeed, they undoubtedly do play a significant role in the thinking of the Polish masses today, and are of tactical importance for the struggle against Stalinism. In declaring ourselves for revolution against Stalinism, we make clear our belief that it is necessary to look to the masses, and their struggles as the road to vanquishing Stalinism, and not to the bureaucratic rulers who are the beneficiaries of the system. Thus we do not call upon the masses to restrict themselves to any stage of the anti-Stalinist revolution, but urge them to press forward until they have put an end to Stalinist totalitarianism and established socialist democracy.

(20) The Polish and Hungarian events reveal a number of characteristics which we can assume will in broad outline be the characteristics of the anti-Stalinist revolution generally. All of these factors will in all likelihood be present in the revolution in each of the Russian satellites, and all but one - the national revolution for independence from Russia - will in all likelihood occur in the revolution in Russia itself.

(21) The upheavals in Poland and Hungary involved both the national revolution, the political revolution, and the social revolution, fusing these into an inter-related struggle. The demand for national freedom from Russian domination, and the struggle against the native Stalinist regime for democracy and an end to exploitation quickly became intertwined. This was most clearly expressed in Hungary, where the revolution very quickly passed from the call for "equality with Russia" to the demands for political freedom, a multi-party system, an end to the exploitation of workers and peasants, etc.

(22) In Poland, the revolution has not run its course. The Gomulka wing of the Polish Communist Party was able to make a "liberal" national-Stalinism, within the context of allegiance to Russia, the focus of the struggle. But it is clear that this is only a temporary solution. Gomulka's national-Stalinism is supported by the nation against the imperialist enemy. Socialists of course, favor the military defense of Poland, even under Gomulka, against any attack by Russia, and would be for military support to Gomulka as against the Polish Stalinist-"Natolinists". But they cannot give political support to or have confidence in his regime because it provides no democratic or socialist answer to the internal, social problem, and it acts as a brake upon the revolutionary development within Poland. Today, Gomulka stands poised between two forces. On his right, is the armed might of Stalinist Russia and the political pressure of the unreconstructed Polish Stalinist-"Natolinists"; on his left, is the nation, above all the workingclass.

(23) In the months since the October victory, the struggle in Poland has continued. Concessions have been made to Moscow, the revolutionary workers and their leaders have been attacked. We cannot, of course, predict the tempo of this continuing fight, or its exact future course. But we know that the Gomulka solution is a temporary thing, an unstable point of equilibrium in the revolution. And those Communists and others who talk about the "Polish road to socialism" as if it were a historically viable alternative, a real path of development, they will eventually be confronted by this hard fact: that the revolution goes on.

(24) The Polish and Hungarian revolutions contained a fusion of economic and social demands with political demands. The Poznan workers in June struck for "bread", but immediately were seen to be struggling for "freedom" too. Poland and Hungary involved in this respect a recapitulation of the workers revolt in East Germany in 1953, where too the workers began their strike over a raising of work-norms and quickly added to their demands the cry for democracy. This feature of the anti-Stalinist revolution reflects the fusion of politics and economics which is characteristic of Stalinist society. The revolution against Stalinism is one for "bread and freedom."

(25) The central political demands of the anti-Stalinist revolution consist of the demands for democracy. Its program can be summed up in this one word, for the social revolution against Stalinism is the democratic revolution. As against Stalinism, socialists will support every democratic movement, every democratic element, every move toward genuine democracy. Even if, as concretely history has proclaimed, the democratic anti-Stalinist revolution were under bourgeois leadership, or under the leadership of forces aiming to restore capitalism, socialists would be duty bound to give support to and participate in the revolution, so long as it was a genuinely democratic one. In giving such support, they would not support the bourgeois leadership of the revolution politically, but would urge the workingclass elements in the revolution to organize themselves separately on the basis of a socialist program and to contest for the leadership of the revolution.

(26) What must be remembered is that under Stalinism, the fight for democracy has a different social meaning than it does under capitalism, so long as it is

limited to general democratic aims and demands no other change. Under capitalism, such a struggle represents a struggle for capitalist democracy. Under Stalinism, where the means of production are statified, the fight for democracy which calls for no other changes, and hence seeks the democratization of statified property, becomes the revolution for democratic socialism, even if it is not so consciously expressed.

(27) The revolutionary movement in Poland and Hungary did, in fact, base itself on the social ownership of the means of production, on the democratization of statified property, and stood against capitalist restoration. Moreover, in both Poland and Hungary, there existed, and exists today, direct, concrete socialist consciousness among very wide strata of the revolutionists. Thus we see clearly that the anti-Stalinist revolution is a socialist revolution, that its social content is one of democratic socialism.

(28) In Poland and Hungary, the leading role in the revolution was played by the workingclass. Armed and in possession of the factories, it won Gomulka his victory. The workers, organized in their class organizations, workers' councils, led the Hungarian revolution and were able to continue a general strike even after military defeat. And this leads to an important insight into the struggle against Stalinism. Everywhere, that social system is an enemy of political freedom; and in the satellite countries, it also stands as the foe of national freedom, of the elementary right of self-determination. The entire nation, the peasants, the remnants of the old middle class, sections of the bureaucracy, all can be brought into the anti-Stalinist revolution. But the leader of the revolution, the main force, is that of the workingclass, thus defining the revolution as a proletarian one. The revolution against Stalinism is, therefore, the democratic socialist workingclass revolution.

(29) Another factor in the Hungarian (and the Polish) revolution is of particular interest to youth throughout the world. That is, of course, the role of the students. These students were not a social class capable of offering an independent program in their own name. For the most part, they were the children of workers and peasants. Yet they, along with the intellectuals, were the first to formulate the program of the revolution. Significantly, they understood that they must direct their appeals to the workers, that they were incapable of independent political action in their own name. And this, of course, explodes the theory that youth under Stalinism are the strongest supporters of the regime, that they have been bought politically because of their privileged position in the society. It is a fact which is not only apparent in Budapest and Warsaw; for there have been many reports from Russia itself indicating a wide spirit of unrest there.

(30) The workers provided the leadership and major fighting forces of the revolution, with the students and the intellectuals playing the important role of helping to formulate the revolution's program. But participation in the uprising against Stalinism was by no means confined to those forces. Indeed, it can be said that in Hungary the entire nation rose against the Stalinist oppression. Although playing a more passive role than did the workers and students, the peasants also supported and contributed to the revolutionary developments, through supplying food to the cities and in the personages of the soldiers (peasants in uniform). While the peasants support the democratic program of the revolution in general, the special demand which they raise is one for an end to the forced collectivizations. In the case of many, probably the bulk, of those who are already in collectives, the demand is for a division and re-privitization of the land. There is nothing in this demand which need frighten socialists, for Stalinist land collectivization has nothing in common with the voluntary collectivization of agriculture advocated by democratic socialists. The demand for land by the state

serfs under Stalinist collectivization has a progressive significance, just as the demand for a division of land under feudalism does. The socialist program for the land question under Stalinism stands for giving the land to those persons who wish to operate it on a private, individual basis, coupled with a program of voluntary, democratic collectivization on the basis of education and example.

(31) While the program, leadership, and overwhelming bulk of participants in the anti-Stalinist revolution, stand for democracy and socialism, it cannot be excluded that here and there the revolution will churn up tiny forces which advocate capitalist restoration, and even reactionary capitalist authoritarianism, or fascism. It is significant to note that such elements in the Polish and Hungarian events were extremely small and carried no ~~weight~~ weight. Socialists will not let this factor effect in the slightest their support to the revolution, so long as it is a democratic one. While standing for the sharpest struggle of the workers and democratic forces against such reactionary elements, the socialists will direct their hostility against those who use the presence or probable presence of such reactionary forces to slander the revolution.

(32) Thus, socialists must deal with the question of anti-semitism in the Hungarian and Polish revolutionary crises. There is scarcely a shred of documentation for the charge of anti-semitism in the Hungarian Revolution. The attempts of reactionary forces to stir the Hungarian masses into anti-Semitic outbursts completely failed, despite the existence of anti-semitic traditions. The entire nation was united against the same enemy - the Russian overlord and the Stalinist system. In Poland, it was the pro-Stalinist, Natolin group which has utilized anti-semitism against the revolutionary forces. Thus, the characterization of the Hungarian and Polish Revolutions by Stalinists, Zionists and others, is a slander.

(33) The revolutionary events in Poland and, most clearly, in Hungary provide the answer to the question of how it is possible for revolutionary organization to take place under the totalitarian vise of Stalinism. The revolution is in large measure a spontaneous affair, a fact which in no way derogates its potentialities for overthrowing the ruling power, since spontaneous revolts have on more than one occasion overthrown despotic regimes. But actually, there was a high degree of organization which emerged in the revolution itself. To a large extent, the revolutionary forces organized within the organizational shells of the official organizations sponsored by the Stalinist regime, most notably in the case of the Petofi Youth Club in Budapest.

(34) Moreover, two types of organization emerged immediately. All of the old political parties as well as ones which had never existed before sprung up, literally, within hours, as old political leaders were released from prisons and the masses began to exercise the rights of normal democratic political life. Mass meetings were held, party newspapers appeared, party organizations were recreated. Multi-party political life began to flourish again. In this connection, we must state our strong belief in full rights for all such parties, including pro-capitalist parties. We stand in opposition to all those who took a dim view of the reappearance of some of the old capitalist or peasant parties, or who advocated the restriction of political rights in revolutionary Hungary to workingclass or pro-socialist parties.

(35) The need for a workingclass political party to best express the socialist aspirations of the masses, to safeguard the revolution, and to help lead the nation to democratic socialism would arise after the victory of the anti-Stalinist revolution. Unfortunately, the Russian butchery of the Hungarian revolution

prevented us from seeing the developments that would occur in this connection. It is impossible to foresee exactly which party could best perform this function, whether it would be the revived Social-Democratic Party, a fusion between that party and the best democratic elements of the old Communist Party, or a new socialist party which would develop, although there is a good possibility that the revived Social-Democratic Party could have carried out these tasks. Certainly, socialists would support the Social-Democratic Party as against the old bourgeois and peasant parties on the one hand and against Stalinism on the other.

(36) One of the most significant features of both the Hungarian and Polish experiences was the overnight creation of workers-councils, of organizations which united the workers for the revolutionary struggle against the regime, and which at the same time could be the organs of future workingclass leadership in the democratic rule of the country. The workingclass made it abundantly evident that it desired to retain these, its class organs, after the revolution, both as instruments of workers control in the factories and as organizations of political leadership in the country as a whole. As against those who derogate the workers councils, or who would call for their abolition, or restrict or limit them, we stand as their supporters.

(37) In addition to workers councils, other forms of revolutionary organization appeared, primarily in the form of "national" committees in the various cities and counties of Hungary. These were frequently composed of representatives of the workers councils, of the newly ~~reformed~~ re-formed political parties, and of student groups. They played an important role in the fight against the regime and in organizing social life in the areas under their jurisdiction for the tragically few days in which the revolution was master of Hungary.

(38) The revolution created a whole host of new organizations of all varieties: cultural, intellectual, student, religious, etc., as the released pentup energy of the people made itself felt. We note in particular the creation of youth and student organizations, as the youth and students of the country flowed out of the official Stalinist youth and student, and organized their own organizations under their democratically exercised control and freely chosen leadership.

(39) The response of the capitalist West and of the United States in particular to the Hungarian revolution, underlines once again the inability of capitalism to offer a democratic and progressive alternative to Stalinism, and shows the embarrassment and uneasiness of the capitalist camp headed by Washington when such a democratic alternative becomes manifest. One section of the capitalist world used the occasion to launch a reactionary and imperialist attack upon Egypt, which aside from its own inherent monstrousness, aided the Russian attack on the Hungarian people in that it enabled Moscow to divert attention from its own brutal acts in Hungary among many in Asia and elsewhere.

(40) The reaction of the governments in Western Europe and of the United States, including the Republican controlled State Department which presumably stands for "liberation" as opposed to "containment", was lukewarm at best. Mutterings about hoping that events would not proceed too far, and outright indication of preference for limiting the revolution to a Gomulka-type or Titoist development were widespread. The joy over the revolution against Stalinism which one might be led to expect among the capitalist opponents of Stalinism of Stalinism was distinguished by its nonexistence.

(41) The reasons for this are not hard to find. Revolution is contagious, and the capitalist powers are afraid of revolution against its enemy, Stalinism, if that revolution is not under its own control. Moreover, regrets were expressed at "the premature and futile expenditure of the anti-Communist forces" involved in the unsuccessful revolution. What this idea expresses is America's perspective for

the masses under Stalinism, as adjuncts to its cold war against the Stalinist camp, and human material in any future hot war. Thus its refusal to support revolutionary mass action against Stalinism when this occurs in the interest of and under the direction of the people themselves.

(42) Not that socialists should have favored American or even UN military intervention into the Hungarian situation. UN military intervention would have immensely increased the danger of the outbreak of World War III and might have in all likelihood led to other reactionary consequences as well. Thus socialists should not, in our opinion, have called for such intervention, at the same time as they understood the widespread desire for UN intervention by many among the Hungarian revolutionists. The real hope of the Hungarian revolution, in our opinion, lay, after the Russian decision to crush it, in the spread of the revolution to the other satellite states of Eastern Europe. The failure, however, of the United States to take any kind of positive, let alone democratic, stance toward the Hungarian revolution, it must be pointed out, just confirms again the bankruptcy of U.S. foreign policy. This bankruptcy flows not from any policy mistakes of the State Department, but from the fact that its policy is based on defending American capitalism and imperialism. The existence of a genuinely democratic foreign policy would require a workingclass government in America, instead of the present one.

(43) At the same time as the revolutionary events in East Europe destroyed the myth of Stalinist "invincibility", it destroyed the view that Stalinism is the "wave of the future" which can only be opposed by reliance on U.S. foreign policy and the world-wide systems of alliances and bases which the U.S. has created. It has also seriously undermined, if not removed from total realistic consideration, the justification for this military-oriented policy. This system of military alliances - NATO, SEATO and the Baghdad Pact - were built up on the premise that a strong military posture was necessary to act as a deterrent to a possibly immanent Russian military push. Of these alliances, of course, only NATO has become more than a paper organization. But they play an additional role besides the buildup of the military strength of the capitalist bloc against any possible Stalinist aggression. They also have as their purpose the internal strengthening of various regimes against any change which would lead outside of the military alliances towards a "neutralist" position. Consequently, the practical effect of these alliances has been to strengthen the more reactionary regimes and social forces in those countries, and to contribute to U.S. imperialist domination of those areas.

(44) The military build up of NATO armed forces since 1949 was justified on the grounds that Russia and her East European satellites not only were capable but were planning a military invasion of Western Europe. The military build up was actually timed against a series of dates on which such a military invasion would possibly begin. However, all indications show that the Russians were aiming at world domination primarily through spreading Stalinist influence on the basis of indigenous movements, rather than by military aggression. The effect of this military orientation to the social and political problems of Stalinism has been to start an arms race, as well as strengthen Stalinist movements in the non-Stalinist world. It reflects the bankruptcy of U.S. Capitalism in a world of revolution and change.

(45) Today we see a growing questioning of the purpose of this military orientation among its former supporters and even in official government circles in Western Europe. This is the direct consequence of the Polish and Hungarian revolutions, as well as the effect of the strain of the war economy on their countries. But it is the East European events which have raised the question

in the sharpest form: if it is now obvious that from the former estimates of Russian military strength there has to be subtracted the strength of the satellite armies and given the growing unrest in the satellites and possibly Russia itself, then how can it follow that there is a danger of a Russian military push into Western Europe? The answer is obvious. Even since the Geneva conference in the Summer of 1955 there has been an easing off of the dangers of a world war despite the fact that there was not and could not be a formal agreement between the two imperialist blocs. In the absence of the East European revolutions it might have been a breathing spell before a new upsurge in the cold war struggle. But the events since Khrushchev's famous revelations have served to re-enforce this present period and further remove the imminence of war.

(46) The Russians have used as their justification for the continued military occupation of East Europe the existence of NATO and of U.S. troops in West Europe. In a bold diplomatic maneuver, they have proposed a conference to discuss the joint withdrawal of all foreign troops from both sides of the iron curtain in Europe. The U.S. has summarily rejected the proposal, even in face of the creeping paralysis of NATO which was heightened by the British reduction of military expenditures and armed forces. It is virtually an absolute certainty that the Russians will not withdraw their troops from East Europe because it would mean the end of their satellite empire. They were able to make this proposal on the knowledge that U.S. policy is so rigid and military-oriented that it is almost inconceivable that Washington can take a step which would fundamentally revamp and reorient the political and military policy of the past decade. The net effect is that even despite the Stalinist brutality in Hungary, the Russians are able to take the political and diplomatic offensive against the U.S.

(47) Despite the cold war jockeying between the two main antagonists, there is no doubt that the withdrawal of all foreign troops from European countries on both sides of the iron curtain would be a progressive development. It would tend to free Europe from the restrictions of the war economy; make possible the freeing of the industrial potential for the betterment of living conditions; it would reduce even further the danger of war; it would hasten the day of liberation of the peoples of East Europe from Stalinist oppression as well as open the way for a development of democratic socialism. Such a development would weaken the power and influence of both Washington and Moscow on the world scene and make possible the rise of an independent Western Europe capable of taking the lead against the dangers of a renewal of the cold war. This would be a concretization of our Third Camp orientation.

(48) All democratic socialists should call for the withdrawal of all foreign troops, both U.S. and Russian, from Europe. Even in the absence of a Russian withdrawal, we are still for the withdrawal of U.S. forces. The effect of such a unilateral withdrawal would not be the danger of Russian aggression but rather the weakening of Stalinism in both East and West Europe because of the Russian refusal to give up their satellite empire, as well as a weakening of U.S. domination over West Western Europe.

(49) It is impossible to predict the exact future course of events in the Stalinist world. The brutal Russian slaughter of the Hungarian revolution may have had the effect of slowing down the tempo of the revolutionary developments under Stalinism, since the masses throughout Eastern Europe undoubtedly fear a repetition of the crushing of the revolution by Russia, if they embark on the road to action against the Stalinist regimes. At the same time, however, it increased the hatred of Stalinism throughout Eastern Europe and laid the basis for a more widespread revolution against Stalinism in the future." But what is certain is that the revolution against Stalinism can and does take place, and that we have entered the era of this anti-Stalinist revolution.

(50) This discussion should provide the basis for an analysis of the tremendous and historic crisis of Stalinism. For now we see:

- (a) that the class struggle continues under Stalinism;
- (b) that the national revolution of the Satellite peoples and the revolution for political freedom, are, under Stalinism, social revolutions, ~~not~~ indeed socialist revolutions;
- (c) that the attempt of the Stalinist ruling class to "reform" the system is decisively limited by its basic intention of defending its own class interest, i.e. the system itself;
- (d) that the capitalist West, which has so often counterposed itself to Stalinist totalitarianism, is incapable of any democratic response to the revolutionary crisis in Stalinism.

(51) The answer to Stalinism is not World War III; neither is it capitalism. It is the struggle of the oppressed, led by the workingclass; it is the revolutionary fight for socialism.

April 6, 1957

Amendments submitted by Tim Wohlforth to the draft resolution on the crisis of world Stalinism.

(The following amendments were submitted to the NAC for the draft resolution on the crisis of world Stalinism by Tim Wohlforth. These amendments, with the exception of the amendment to Paragraph 22, Sentence 5, were not accepted by the NAC, being supported by Wohlforth and opposed by the other members of the NAC. The amendment to Paragraph 22, Sentence 5 was not considered by the NAC at the time of the adoption of the draft resolution. In conjunction with these amendments Comrade Wohlforth submitted the statement which follows).

I am offering amendments only to the sections of the Stalinist resolution dealing with the recent Polish and Hungarian events. This is due to the pressures of time and because these are the most important operative sections. During the course of the debate of the resolution it may prove necessary to amend other sections of the document.

These amendments represent only my own views and do not represent the views of the Left Wing caucus which has no position on this question.

Tim Wohlforth

par 22 sent 5: after the word "Russia." add "or in the event of Western imperialist intervention."

par 22 sent 6: strike "it provides" to "social problem" and insert "because it falls short of establishing worker's power"

par 21 sent 2: strike phrase "for democracy" and insert "for worker's power"

par 25 sent 2: strike "in the democratic revolution" and replace with "is the struggle for worker's power-that is for democracy". Strike section beginning with "even if" and ending with "leadership of the revolution". Replace with "However, we realize that all sorts of reactionary and pro-capitalist movements under stalinism will hide themselves under the cloak of democracy. This is also true of any move for US imperialist intervention. We will under all circumstances expose the real nature of such movements and refuse to support them in any way, shape or form. This is because we refuse to support American imperialism over stalinism and also because we realize that a really democratic revolution independent of American imperialism, but lead by bourgeois and reactionary elements is an impossibility under stalinism today. However, we will oppose any attempt to smear working class and genuinely people's revolutions as being 'counterrevolutionary', 'bourgeois' and the like"

par 26 last sent: following "democratic socialism" insert "i.e. for worker's power"

par 33 sent 2: strike remainder of sentence following "the ruling power" and add "as long as in the course of the struggle a revolutionary party is formed as the conscious arm of the revolutionary workers"

Par. 35 - sent 1: Strike everything after "help lead" to end of paragraph and replace with "the working class to power - the necessary precondition to the destruction of the Stalinist bureaucracy - would become ever more apparant during the course of the actual revolutionary struggle against Stalinism. Its rule would be to lead the working class organized in workers councils to power and to destroy the vestiges of the bureaucracy's power and its state apparatus. Furthermore it would raise the need to spread the revolution to Easter Europe and into Russia itself as necessary to defend the revolutionary struggle against soviet tanks. The party would in all probability base itself on a return to Leninism and on the internationalist program and outlook preserved these many years since the degeneration of the Russian Revolution by the revolutionary socialists. We as socialists dedicate ourselves to do everything in our power to support such a party and urge the Hungarian workers today to begin to organize underground if they have not done so already. In Hungary such a party would probably be built with the cadre of the Communist Party opposition taking the leading role and with the inclusion of many working-class members of the Social Democrats. However, neither the Communists Party as led by Nagy or the Social Democrats in Hungary were in our opinion such a revolutionary party and it is doubtful if they could become so."

Par. 36 - Add at end of paragraph "We ~~do~~ advance the slogan of 'All Power to the Workers Councils' as the key to the victory of the anti-stalinist workingclass revolution".

Par. 42: - Sent. 2: Strike "might" and replace with "would"
Sent. 3: Add following "revolutionists" the following: "We consider it our duty as socialists to warn these misguided elements that UN military intervention would in reality mean the military intervention of US imperialism. We must dispell any illusions about the UN being a force in any way independent of the imperialist powers of the world which dominate it".

Insert at end of paragraph the following in place of the last two sentences: "We realize that this flows not from any matter of policy mistakes or the like but rather from the class nature of America with the State Department acting for the imperialist interests of the American ruling class. The only 'positive' action the US could take would be of an imperialist nature and of far greater danger than its inactivity. The US cannot take any truly non-imperialist progressive action in such a situation until such time as the workingclass comes to power in this country. Thus both for the good of the workingclass in this country and for the furthering of the revolutionary struggle elsewhere we socialists conduct a struggle against our immediate enemy the capitalist ruling class in the U.S."

Par. 49: Insert at end of paragraph - "This brings the necessity of constructing revolutionary parties in the satellites and Russia as well as increasing the solidarity of the international revolutionary working class on the order of the day. We of the Young Socialist League dedicate ourselves to furthering this all important task."