

YOUNG SOCIALIST

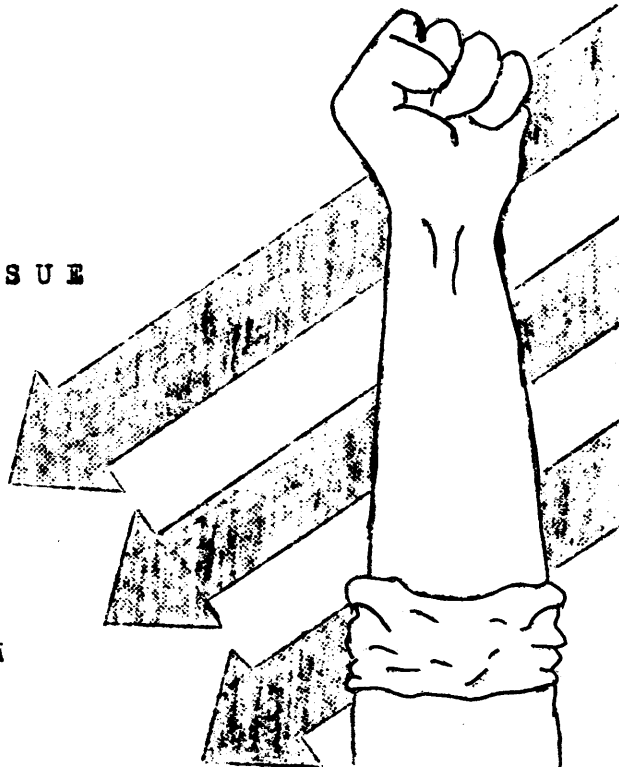
REVIEW

CONTENTS

SPECIAL CONVENTION ISSUE

No. 1

- Page 1 EDITORIAL NOTES
Page 1 CONSTITUTION OF THE YSL
Page 9 PERSPECTIVES FOR AMERICAN
SOCIALISM
Page 16 THE CRISIS OF WORLD STALINISM



Information And
Discussion Bulletin

of

The YOUNG SOCIALIST LEAGUE

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EDITORIAL NOTES

What the YSR is

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

The aim of YSR is to constitute a forum for the expression of all points of view within the YSL. It is, therefore, completely open to any member who may wish to contribute his views. Contributions from non-members will also be accepted, if of sufficiently high interest.

For obvious reasons it should be understood that articles signed by individuals do not necessarily represent the views of the YSL. Any material that is "official" will be clearly labelled as such.

The YSR will be published at least bi-monthly, or more frequently if sufficient material is available. So, Please Send Copy as Soon as It Is Ready! Send to 1343 E. 50th Street, Chicago 15, Illinois. Material must be typewritten, and, if possible, it should be stencilled as well.

The circulation of YSR is not restricted to members although it is issued primarily for YSL members. Every effort should be made however to get copies into the hands of all interested persons.

This issue: 1957 Special Convention Issue, No. 1

This is the first of two Special Convention issues. This issue contains three of the four major documents emerging from the 1957 YSL Convention. The fourth, not contained here, is a resolution passed by the Convention on Youth and the Campus. This resolution dealt with a survey of the campus scene, a discussion of the special needs of youth, and an examination of a number of organizations which function in the youth arena which are of concern to YSL members. It was however referred back to the National Action Committee for stylistic and grammatical changes (with the exception of one section which was left for final determination by the next NEC meeting). The final text of the Youth and Campus resolution will appear in a future issue of YSR.

The three documents included in this issue are: first of all, the amended Constitution of the YSL. The second is a resolution dealing with the important topic of regroupment and unity of the socialist movement in the U.S. This resolution, which constituted the center of internal discussion within the YSL in the past period, passed by an overwhelming vote. Finally there is the resolution on the Crisis of World Stalinism which deals primarily with the YSL's approach to recent events in Eastern Europe and Russia. Aside from examining the causes and the impact of the recent crisis within the Communist movements, the resolution deals with its relationship to the YSL's Third Camp position, to the imperialist policies of the Capitalist west and to the tasks of American socialists in the coming period.

A second Convention issue of YSR will appear shortly. It will contain all other Convention resolutions and motions--both those passed and those defeated. And finally, late in August the first regular YSR will appear again.

Debbie Meier, editor
August 9, 1957

I M P O R T A N T !

Within the next two weeks the second and final Convention issue will be out and in the mails. Then we will begin work on the regularly scheduled YSR for August.

The first real post-convention issue will appear late in August or early September, the deadline being August 24th for all material! We already have some copy for that issue - a long article on Poland by Paul Germain and an article on politics in Great Britain by a friend from England. A report by the National Secretary and several unit reports will also be included. Comrades and friends are urged to send in their contributions - be they long or short, organizational or political in nature, highly theoretical or not, bibliographies, class outlines, basic educational articles - in other words, almost anything of interest. While polished articles are always a pleasure, remember this is one place that members can use to practice up on their writing skills, to get experience in expressing their ideas....

However: In the case of material submitted by members of organized YSL units, we have decided to consider it the primary responsibility of said units to stencil all material emanating from their unit. If this is impossible in some units we will make special exceptions. In general, may we also suggest, that since there is no special art to stencilling (just a typewriter and a hard touch - and remembering to put the ribbon on stencil and to buy good stencils for typewriting) that all contributors should make a point of trying to send their copy in stencilled form. No lengthy articles will be accepted which are not stencilled and no articles, of course, no matter how long will be accepted which are not typewritten.

We expect to put YSR out at least bi-monthly (every other month). We would be glad to have it go out more often than that, but no matter how great the response is you will be receiving YSR at least once every two months even if it should contain only a front and back cover and these editorial notes!

Unit Organizers: Please remember to send in reports for YSR occasionally - every quarter or semester at least - with a review of unit activities, perspectives, problems and ideas.

CONSTITUTION OF THE YOUNG SOCIALIST LEAGUE
(as amended by the 1957 YSL Convention)

Art. I NAME: The name of this organization shall be the YOUNG SOCIALIST LEAGUE, hereinafter referred to as the YSL.

Art. II AIMS AND PRINCIPLES: The YSL is a democratic socialist organization striving to aid in the basic transformation of this society into one where the means of production and distribution shall be collectively owned and democratically managed. The YSL attempts to make the young workers and students, who form its arena of activity, conscious of the need for organization directed against capitalism and Stalinism.

The YSL rejects the concept that state ownership without democratic controls represents socialism; or that socialism can be achieved without political democracy, or through undemocratic means, or, in short, in any way other than the conscious active participation of the people themselves in the building of the new social order. The YSL orients towards the working class as the class which is capable of leading society to socialism.

Art. III PURPOSE: The purpose of the YSL shall be to carry out its aims and principles and such policies as its authorized bodies may adopt in pursuit of its aims and principles.

Art. IV MEMBERSHIP:

Sect. 1. Membership in the YSL is open to those in substantial agreement with its purpose and statement of principles and program; and who are willing to accept the responsibilities of membership and participate in the work of the organization under its direction. This does not mean, of course, that applicants must, as a condition for membership, agree with all policy decisions of the YSL. If they accept the aims and principles and agree to abide by the Democracy and Discipline section of the Constitution they are eligible for membership.

Sect. 2. Every member of the YSL shall belong to a local section of the organization. Exceptions to this policy may be made by the NAC. In cases where none exists in his locality he shall be a member-at-large, responsible directly to the NAC for the conduct of his socialist work.

Sect. 3. Applications for membership shall be passed on by local sections subject to review by the NAC within one month after the local section notifies the national office of its action on the application. All applications shall be forwarded to the national office within two weeks after they have been acted upon.

Art. V LOCAL ORGANIZATION:

Sect. 1. Five or more members in any locality upon application to the NAC may be chartered and known as a Unit. Units have the right and duty to perform all YSL activities in that locality.

Sect. 2. Where more than one Unit exists in any locale, a district organization may be set up, subject to the approval of the NAC, with a district executive committee elected by a district convention. When so elected it shall be the highest governing body for that area, and may, with the concurrence of the NAC, charter new Units in that area.

Sect. 3. Where there exists more than one Unit in any geographical area a regional organization may be set up with the concurrence of the NAC. A regional executive shall be formed composed of representatives from the participating Units. It shall have the power to issue a regional organ and to organize regional conferences. It may also, with the agreement of the NAC, charter new organizing committees.

Sect. 4. In localities where more than one but fewer than five members reside the NAC may charter an Organizing Committee, which shall have the same rights and duties as a Unit, except for the right to pass on membership applications in its area and the right to elect delegates to conventions. In regard to such matters members of an Organizing Committee shall be regarded as members-at-large.

Sect. 5. Units and Organizing Committees shall be responsible to the NAC for the conduct of their work.

Sect. 6. In all areas and organizations and on all campuses the YSL policy shall be executed by the members in that situation acting as an organized body, subject to the decisions of the higher bodies of the organization.

Art. VI NATIONAL ORGANIZATION:

Sect. 1. Conventions.

A. The highest body in the YSL is the National Convention. The National Convention has the power to adopt all political and organizational policies of the YSL, and to elect the leading committee of the organization, the National Executive Committee. The convention shall meet at least once every two years, on call of the NEC. The NEC shall allow at least ninety days for pre-convention discussion in issuing any convention call. The ninety day period shall begin only when the NAC has published and circulated the major majority documents, except in the case of an emergency convention. The NAC shall draft a proposed Convention agenda and Rules.

B. Only members in good standing shall have the right to vote for delegates. Voting shall take place on a Unit basis, and each Unit shall elect one delegate for a given number of members in good standing, or major fraction thereof. The number is to be specified by the NEC in its convention call. Units may elect alternates to the convention.

C. A special Convention may be called by a majority of the NEC, one third of the membership or two fifths of local sections. On receiving such a call the NEC shall schedule a special convention within four months, allowing three months for discussion.

D. When there is a division on the basis of political tendencies in electing delegates to the convention, tendencies seeking such representation are entitled to representatives elected by themselves as follows: in a Unit entitled to one delegate the delegate shall be chosen by the tendency with the highest vote. In a unit entitled to two delegates a tendency receiving one-third of the vote shall be entitled to one delegate. In a Unit entitled to three delegates a tendency receiving one-fourth of the vote shall be entitled to one delegate. In a Unit entitled to four delegates, a tendency receiving one-fifth of the vote shall be entitled to one delegate. In a Unit entitled to four delegates a tendency receiving two-fifths of the vote shall be entitled to two delegates. These proportions shall prevail in the case of all other ratios. A tendency shall be considered established and defined by the presentation for vote of a written document (resolution or motion), which is announced as the basis of the tendency asking for representation.

Sect. 2. The National Executive Committee

A. Between Conventions the highest body of the YSL shall be the National Executive Committee. Between conventions the NEC has the power to adopt all political and organizational policies for the YSL provided that these do not contradict policies adopted previously by the convention, subject to review by subsequent conventions, or by a membership referendum as provided for hereinafter. The NEC shall take office immediately upon election and shall hold office until the next convention, or until a successor has been elected.

B. The NEC shall be elected by the convention. In the event of a political division at the convention the NEC shall be elected on the basis of representation for political tendencies if they so request. Representatives of tendencies on the NEC shall be apportioned in proportion to the strength of tendencies at the convention.

C. The NEC shall be composed of members and alternates, the number of each being determined by the convention.

D. The NEC shall meet at least twice a year. One third of the NEC may call a special meeting of the NEC which must be scheduled within six weeks of receipt of such a call by the NAC. Any member of the NEC may initiate a mail ballot of the NEC on any decision of the NAC, but not on decisions taken by a regular meeting of the NEC.

E. The NEC shall appoint and may remove all national officers and heads of the departments and committees such as it may establish by a majority vote.

F. Any NEC member may appoint any regular alternate to replace him for all or part of any meeting of the Committee.

G. In replacing vacancies on the Committee the NEC may raise alternates to full membership by majority vote. When necessary to maintain recognized factional strength as determined in the election of the NEC by the preceding convention, non-alternates may be co-opted by a two-thirds vote. In the event of further vacancies on the Committee and after investigating the possibilities of a Special Convention, the NEC may co-opt from among non-alternates by a two-thirds vote after the exhaustion of the regular alternate slate.

Sect. 3. The National Action Committee

A. The National Action Committee shall conduct the national political and organizational affairs of the YSL between meetings of the NEC, and adopt policies for the YSL provided that these do not contradict policies adopted previously by the convention or by the NEC, subject to review by the convention or by the NEC, or by an NEC referendum as provided for in Art. VI, Sect. 2, D.

B. The NAC shall be elected from among members of the NEC in the vicinity of the National Office, by the NEC. NEC alternates, and NEC members who are not members of the NAC, who reside in the vicinity of the National Office shall also be alternates to the NAC.

C. The NAC shall meet at least once a month, or on call of one-third of its members.

D. Minority tendencies in the organization shall be entitled to the same proportion of seats on the NAC as on the NEC.

E. All members of the YSL shall have the right to attend meetings of the NAC and NEC except when these bodies shall by a two-thirds vote decide to hold executive sessions.

Sect. 4. National Officers

A. The National Officers shall consist of a National Chairman and a National secretary who shall be elected by the NEC from among its members.

B. The National Chairman shall be the convener of the NEC and the NAC and shall be the political spokesman of the YSL.

C. The National Secretary shall be the organizational executive of the YSL and shall be responsible for the administration of the National Office.

D. There may be other officers such as chairmen or secretaries of departments and committees which the NEC may establish. They shall be elected by the NEC.

E. The National Officers and such other officers as may be chosen by the NEC shall be directly responsible to the NAC and NEC for the conduct of their work.

Art. VII FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

Sect. 1. Every applicant for membership shall pay a \$1.00 application fee to be forwarded to the National Office.

Sect. 2. Every member-at-large shall pay a minimum dues of \$5.00 per year. Members-at-large joining after June of any year shall have their dues computed on the basis of 50¢ per month. The fiscal year runs from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31. Members who are serving sentences for conscientious or political objection to war are exempt from the dues requirements. Other exceptions may be made by the NAC.

Sect. 3. Local sections may establish a pledge system to supplement the regular national dues.

Sect. 4. Every local unit shall send to the National Office a minimum of 50¢ per month per member as dues. Exceptions to this may be made by the NAC.

Sect. 5. The NEC may set special assessments and organize special fund drives.

Sect. 6. Only members in good standing may vote/and/or hold office in the YSL. Any member more than three months behind in his dues shall be deemed not to be in good standing and may be dropped from the organization after a warning.

Art. VIII DEMOCRACY AND DISCIPLINE

Sect. 1. The NAC shall establish a year-round information and discussion bulletin open to all members, where all political and organizational disagreements can achieve their fullest and freest expression. A single copy of this bulletin shall be provided free of charge to all members of the YSL, but its distribution is not limited to members. Members of the YSL shall also receive, free of charge for one year, the YOUNG SOCIALIST CHALLENGE.

Sect. 2. All official press and publications of the YSL are subject to the direction of the NAC.

Sect. 3. Local bodies of the YSL may publish material of their choice, however they must make clear that it is a local publication.

- Sect. 4. Minority tendencies or caucuses may publish their own material for internal and external distribution, but they must make clear that these publications do not represent the views of the organization as a whole. All National and local mimeograph and mailing facilities shall be open to such tendencies or caucuses for use at cost.
- Sect. 5. Members of the YSL shall be guided in their political actions and work by the principles and decisions of the League. In pursuing their work they may not take action which is in contradiction to the policies of the YSL. They may make statements in contradictions to the policies of the YSL, if they make it clear they are speaking for themselves and not for the League. This, however, does not include the right to engage in general propaganda campaigns which attempt to persuade other organizations or non-members of the YSL to adopt positions or engage in activities hostile to the YSL or its policies, such campaigns constituting action. It does provide for the right of individual members and tendencies to inform the public of their differences with the YSL and its policies.
- Sect. 6. Whenever a member disagrees with the decisions of the League, he is of course, not compelled to act politically in public against his own convictions. He may abstain from acting according to the decisions of the League although he may not act politically against the YSL or its policies in public arenas.
- Sect. 7. Members of leading national committees of the organization or of Unit executive committees or of district executive committees shall be responsible to the committees they are members of for the conduct of their work.
- Sect. 8. Local Units shall provide members with the opportunity to present their views on political and organizational problems before the membership.
- Sect. 9. Between conventions any decision of the NEC may be overruled by a membership referendum, but convention decisions may not. All referendums shall be decided by a majority vote. Before initiating a referendum there shall be a discussion with local sections on the advisability of a Special Convention with reference to the financial and other problems involved. The initiative for a referendum may be made by: one-third of the NEC, one-third of the membership, or two-fifths of the local Units. Pro and con discussion shall go out with all referendum ballots.
- Sect. 10. There shall be no secret balloting on any committee of the YSL. In order that the record of committee members be available to the membership all votes shall be recorded. Minutes of the NEC and NAC meetings, except of meetings in executive session, shall go to all members who request them.

Art. IX TRIAL PROCEDURE

Sect. 1. Any member or section of the YSL may bring charges against any member for violation of YSL principles, policies or discipline. The initial accusation must be made in writing before the smallest subdivision of the League of which they are both members. The accused must be given notice of the trial date and a copy of the charges against him both 15 and again 7 days preceding the trial date. Failure to appear or to send a letter of defense in the absence of excuse for such failure shall be ground for conducting the trial in absentia.

Sect. 2. No subdivision shall constitute itself as a trial body unless all members have been informed in advance of the business at hand.

Sect. 3. A member shall be tried before the highest committee of the League of which he is a member, in the case where the charges call for his suspension or expulsion.

Sect. 4. In order to expel a two-thirds vote is needed; to suspend or censure a majority vote is needed. A subdivision may dismiss the charges at any time.

Sect. 5. The accused or accuser may appeal to the NAC, the NEC and the Convention in that order. The decision of the Convention shall be final. In order to have the right to appeal a member must file his appeal with the next higher body within 15 days of the trial.

Sect. 6. An expelled member while appealing shall be given the status of a suspended member, his sole rights being the right to conduct his appeal.

Art. X MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Sect. 1. Nothing in this Constitution shall be construed in such a way as to deprive any member of the YSL of the full right to express any political position consistent with the aims and principles of the YSL, either in spoken or written form.

Sect. 2. Amendments to this Constitution may be made only by a Convention of the YSL.

Sect. 3. The NEC may affiliate the YSL to international bodies by a majority vote.

Sect. 4. The Chairman of all meetings and committees has a right to voice and vote at all times. The nay vote shall be called first on voting to call the question.

Sect. 5. All members of the YSL shall be provided with a copy of this constitution.

Sect. 6. At all meetings and at the Convention of the YSL Roberts' Rules of Order (Rev.) shall govern the proceedings, except where they are in conflict with this constitution.

PERSPECTIVES FOR AMERICAN SOCIALISM

I. AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE

American socialists today are confronted by important, though limited, possibilities for regrouping and revitalizing the American socialist movement.

This perspective is based upon our analyses of the specific conditions of American society taken in the context of the international scene. First, we believe that the dominant characteristics of American political, economic and social life of the last decade will, in the main, continue. We do not anticipate an imminent and thorough-going crises in the United States, or a mass radicalization. But secondly, we see that significant changes are taking place in the world and in the United States, opening up new possibilities for socialist action - that the period of ever-increasing polarization on an international scale, and ever-increasing reaction on the domestic scale, is coming to an end. We look toward new beginnings!

Internationally, the danger of World War III has receded. The settlement of the Indochinese war, the Korean armistice, the "co-existence" campaign of the Stalinists, these were the first signs of the new situation. Since then, the tactics of the two war camps have blown hot and cold, yet at no time has the world approached the state of explosive tension which prevailed in 1950 and 1951. More recently, the tremendous events in Poland and Hungary have dealt a serious blow to world Stalinism, and NATO has been strained to the utmost by the Middle-East crisis, by the pressures within various European countries to reduce armaments, etc.

For socialists in America, the crisis in world Stalinism has had the most obvious and immediate effect. The Communist Party in the United States has been torn in an attempt to deal with the Khrushchev revelations and the events in Poland and Hungary. With the collapse of American Stalinism, a force which for decades distorted and disoriented the radical movement, new possibilities have appeared. But it would be an error to base an American perspective on this development alone. Other factors, in particular the position of the workingclass in America form a vital part of our analysis, and our tactics are related to a whole range of situations.

This generally new international situation has already been felt in American life as a whole. The expectation of imminent war was a political and psychological precondition for the growth of the garrison state. As tensions have been reduced, the power of reaction and the witch-hunt has subsided. To be sure, the institutions of repression remain in force, but the power of the McCarthyite right has been curtailed, and the tempo of anti-libertarianism has been appreciably slowed.

Domestically, the permanent war economy is still a decisive factor in American society, its power increased by the Eisenhower budget of 1957. Because of this "floor" of government intervention, we do not anticipate a thorough-going internal crisis of the economy, such as the Depression of the Thirties, in the immediate future. At the same time, there are many signs which point to a more limited type of crisis.

The labor movement organized in the AFL-CIO is today more powerful than ever before, indeed it is the mightiest organized workingclass the world has known. Yet it has continued in a self-imposed bondage to the Democratic Party; it has hobbled its tremendous strength by an organizational alliance with Southern reaction. Consequently, the primary task facing the American workingclass remains that of creating its own independent political party. The tremendous fact of labor unity has made the potential of such a party all the more obvious, yet the mass of American workers have yet to be won to this most primary of struggles.

Thus, for American socialists, the fight for a labor party takes on a central and decisive significance. Today, the American labor movement stands on the left of American society as the basic organized social force committed to a program of liberal reform. At the same time, it is to the right of the entire socialist movement, for it has not yet come to that political class consciousness which is fundamental to even the most reformist socialist ideology. Given our general analysis of American society, we do not expect that the workingclass will, in the next period, make a sudden, violent transition from its present trade union consciousness to revolutionary politics. Rather, its road lies through the creation of a labor party which, in its initial stages, will probably advocate a program of liberal reform. Such a party would nevertheless signify an event of tremendous importance and revolutionary implications: the political organization of the American workers as a class. Once such a party exists it will, of course, be the task of socialists to win it to socialism and to a militant socialist program.

However, the possibilities which have been opened up by the events of the past two years are, with the exception of the mass movement for Civil Rights, largely confined to a small segment of society. Particularly among socialists and radicals, the impact of these events has been great. In the future, the events which today have such an effect upon these groups will reach a broader stratum of American society. The task of regrouping and revitalizing the socialist movement is necessary if we are to be capable of playing an important role when this new situation develops. And today, such regroupment would immediately strengthen socialist participation in the struggle for Civil Rights now unfolding throughout the entire United States. At this time, however, our major immediate task centers about the socialist movement itself.

An example from the youth arena illustrates this important point. The crisis in world Stalinism has resulted in the dissolution of the Labor Youth League. As a result, discussions and debates which would have been impossible two years ago now take place. The Stalinists and their periphery are no longer the pole of attraction they were a short time ago in the student sphere. But at the same time as this ferment has developed among radical youth, the general decline of student political organization, and student apathy have continued. Similarly in the labor movement, where the new opportunities for discussion and action emerged primarily among the advanced workers, among socialists and Communists, but did not come as a broad movement within the workingclass as a whole.

II. REGROUPMENT

We believe that the most effective means of regrouping the American socialist movement is through the creation of a new, broad, Debsian socialist party. We favor uniting democratic socialists of various tendencies on the basis of a minimum common program of commitment to democratic socialism and opposition to both Stalinism and capitalism. In terms of immediate politics, such a party would unite a wide range of democratic socialist opinion behind support to democratic struggles everywhere in the world.

Such a party need not, and in fact in its early stages at least should not, have a defined analysis of capitalism or Stalinism, or many other theoretical questions. Only in this way can it unite within one party reformists and revolutionaries, those with some illusions about Stalinism and those with a sharp, clear analysis of Stalinism, Marxists and non-Marxists, etc. We would not push the party to adopt our analysis of Stalinism as the official position of the organization, for example, because we hope that individuals and groups will be able to function together while holding views which differ from ours. Thus, such a party could legitimately contain members and tendencies who consider Russian society as bureaucratic collectivist, state capitalist, a degenerated workers state, industrial feudalism, some "bad" sort of socialism or just plain "totalitarian." The precondition for a healthy unity in this case would be a willingness and a desire to support all struggles by the Russian and satellite peoples for democracy and freedom, and an agreement that the Party as a whole differentiate itself, clearly and unequivocally, from any kind of support to the Russian state. This does not mean that members and tendencies would have to avoid controversial questions within the unified party, but merely that they should avoid asking the Party to take a stand on theoretical issues and concentrate instead on facing specific problems which confront the American socialist and labor movements.

In the general ferment in the radical world over unity, there have been proposals for unity which center around a regroupment limited to those with illusions or fuzzy conceptions of Stalinism, and Communists who have broken from the Party or are in the process of doing so. We reject this orientation. Given our perspective of a broad, Debsian party, such a move would cut the socialist movement off from those whom it must attract: the advanced workers, the unaffiliated democratic socialists, the socialist-minded intellectuals. Among these groups, and in America in general, any political organization which equivocates on its opposition to Stalinism cannot accomplish the task of revitalizing the socialist movement and of bringing socialism to the workingclass again. At the same time, we continue to seek discussion and debate with Communists and other supporters or quasi-supporters of the Communist system, especially with those of the Gates tendency. But we cannot orient toward a unity in which their ideas would dominate the movement.

The YSL does not wish to take political responsibility for the American Forum - For Socialist Education by sending a representative to join the National Committee of the AFFSE. We take this position because of the refusal of the American Forum to take a stand in defense of democracy everywhere and opposition to totalitarianism everywhere while

at the same time it expresses "concern" over civil liberties, civil rights and militarism in the United States. However, while refusing to participate on the National Committee of the AFFSE, the YSL does intend to continue to participate in all regroupment discussions, including those which may take place in or around the AFFSE. We urge the American Forum to include speakers from the YSL, as well as others not officially participating on the National Committee of the AFFSE, in all such discussions organized by it.'

We believe that the best way to attract people now breaking with the Stalinist movement, and to bring them to democratic socialism, is through the creation of a democratic socialist organizational alternative, not through the attempt to build a half-way house between Stalinism and democracy. In that context, we feel that "Stalinoid" unity is self-defeating, in that it does not offer a real alternative to those who it seeks to attract.

As for the proposal of "revolutionary regroupment," that is, the re-organization of the socialist movement on a revolutionary program, we regard this, in today's climate, as a futile sectarianism. The problem in America today is not that of creating a revolutionary party with a finished program; it is rather one of re-establishing the influence of the most basic socialist ideas - ideas which are held in common by both revolutionary and reformist socialists - in the American workingclass. Specifically, this means the struggle to win the labor movement to independent political action on its own behalf.

Another alternative would be to call for a unity on the basis of our own politics or an approximation of them. But such a call, which amounts actually to a recruiting campaign, cannot today create the basis for a significant socialist movement nor would it be the best means of taking advantage of the present regroupment ferment.

It is the broad Debsian party which, we feel, is the type of movement which would be able to establish itself as the voice of democratic socialism and which could attract all those now seeking some new framework. This kind of party is related to the conditions of American society and in particular to the workingclass. For given the fundamental nature of the task which confronts us, we believe that many ideological differences, which in other periods are decisive, can now be subordinated to the common task of all democratic socialists. This is not to say that those differences are unimportant, or that they will disappear. Far from it, the new party would offer a place for free and fraternal debate within the framework of a united movement.

But not only is the nature of this party rooted in American conditions, the possibility of creating such an organization derives from the actual events of the past two years, discussed earlier. These events have created a ferment among socialists, a general concern for regroupment. The type of party which we have described would answer this concern in a positive and hopeful way by attracting the members of existing organizations, as well as appealing to the many unaffiliated socialists in the workingclass and among the intellectuals. It could serve also as a pole of attraction for those who hitherto have been won to the Communist Party upon breaking with capitalist ideology. It would create a fresh start for American socialism.

III. UNITY

As a step in the direction of creating such a party, we call for unity between the YSL, the Independent Socialist League, and the Socialist Party-Social Democratic Federation.

For a series of reasons, the SP-SDF is the best framework for regroupment. It is identified in the eyes of the more advanced public as the general party of socialism, as the inheritor of the tradition of Debs. Secondly, it is not tainted by former ties with Stalinism; its compromises and illusions about capitalist society, however distasteful they are to us and however dangerous we may feel them eventually to be, do not compromise it in the eyes of the American workingclass which we seek to influence. Even for the other sects, the SP-SDF has advantages since it is the only sect whose existence hasn't largely been identified with its particular and unique analysis of Russian society, a question which has played a major role in separating the sects in the past period. It has contained pacifists, Marxists, non-Marxists, etc., and as a result it is not identified with any hard and fast theory on a whole series of questions. These are some of the factors which give it its opportunity in the present situation.

While the exact details of any unity between the YSL, the ISL and the SP-SDF would have to be worked out through negotiation, the YSL does not make changes in the program or leadership of the SP-SDF a precondition for affiliation; the only condition we seek being that members of the YSL upon unity enjoy the same democratic rights granted to SP-SDF and YPSL members under their constitutions. The YSL is ready to unite with the Socialist Party as it stands today. Neither are we proposing a unity between ourselves and a section of the SP-SDF. We want a unity between the YSL, the ISL and the entire SP-SDF. These conceptions follow from our basic notion that this unity would be the first step in the direction of creating a Debsian party of socialism, and of seeking to establish an organizational focus for democratic socialist unity.

IV. YOUTH ASPECTS OF UNITY

Our own participation in this development however requires further clarification, since we are a youth organization - the largest, if not the only nation-wide socialist youth group presently in existence. The role of the YSL in such a unification will therefore be different from that of the ISL, for example. In proposing unity between itself and the SP-SDF, the ISL proposes the creation of a single united organization out of the two participants. Our proposal, on the other hand, does not constitute a call for the establishment of a single organization out of the three participants.

By calling for merger of the YSL, ISL and SP-SDF, the YSL states that it favors unity between the ISL and the SP-SDF, and that it desires to constitute or participate in constituting the youth affiliate of the united socialist organization. While we do not know exactly how this will come about, we stand ready to merge with the YPSL, or to participate in any other way in the democratic formation of a youth organization affiliated to the party or organization which would result from the unity of the SP-SDF and ISL. We are for the unity of all young socialists into such a youth affiliate of a regrouped and reunited socialist movement, for we

believe that all the arguments in favor of socialist regroupment in general, and those dealing with the unity of the ISL and SP-SDF in particular, apply with equal force to the student and youth communities.

The YSL is not presently the youth affiliate of any socialist organization or party; being an independent organization our relationship with the ISL consists of fraternal ties, as opposed to direct organizational relations. We favor, however, the participation of the YSL, or any broad democratic socialist youth group which the YSL would help to create, in a general socialist unification on the basis of youth affiliate status. The reasons for this are to be found in the reasons for the present organizational independence of the YSL, and in the difference between the present situation and the one that would be created by unity between the ISL and the SP-SDF.

The YSL was organized on the basis of the merger of two different tendencies, one of which had been the youth group of the ISL, and the other of which came from the Socialist Party. While expressing its fraternal relationship with the ISL, the YSL did not wish to be the youth affiliate of an adult tendency which constituted only one of the elements comprising the YSL. The unification of the ISL and SP-SDF would bring together the two tendencies which joined to create the YSL, and therefore eliminate this reason for independence. Secondly, the YSL wished to be an independent organization because it conceived of itself, and still conceives of itself, as a broad socialist youth group existing under conditions where the socialist movement was divided into different socialist sects. Under conditions where the different democratic socialist groups and tendencies merge to create a broad, Debsian socialist movement, the adult socialist movement will itself have the character that we wished the YSL to have, and affiliation of a youth organization will contribute to, rather than be an obstacle to this kind of socialist youth organization. At the time of its founding, the YSL pointed out that it did not favor independence of socialist youth organizations in general, that indeed, it was against the concept of a "youth party," but that it was to be an independent organization because of existing conditions. The removal of these conditions would remove the desirability and necessity of our independent status.

While standing for affiliation to a united organization resulting from the merger of the ISL and SP-SDF, we favor the greatest possible autonomy for such an affiliated organization, and for democratic relationships between the youth organization and the adult socialist organization.

The YSL has an especially important role to play on the youth field in the various developments towards socialist regroupment - since it is the largest, perhaps the only nation-wide socialist youth organization in the United States. It can be a focal point in assembling all democratic socialist youth into a regrouped and united socialist movement. We call upon all young socialists to join with us in this task and stand ready to unite with all democratic socialist youth tendencies, before, at the same time, or after unity takes place on the adult level, where such unification is in keeping with our general perspective on socialist regroupment in the United States.

V. THE ROLE OF THE INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST TENDENCY

We have, as a political tendency, basic political differences with the SP-SDF. Our disagreements on American imperialism, academic freedom, and other questions are well known. They would continue to exist after unity. But these issues, we believe, are not immediately decisive in terms of organization and should not preclude common membership and common action. It should be emphasized, of course, that a democratic internal party structure is necessary to this conception of unity, and that the right of various points of view to express themselves would be guaranteed. The unification of the YSL, the ISL and the SP-SDF as we conceive it, is a move away from sectarian rivalry, but not a suppression of differences.

We seek to maintain and to augment our own political tendency. We seek to do this however in such a way as to also build a broad socialist party, containing many with whom we disagree, and to attract new recruits to the cause of socialism. Unity cannot be based on the abdication of political identity on the part of various tendencies; it must rest upon a willingness to have a democratic co-existence of tendencies. We will continue to advocate our third camp ideas and our revolutionary interpretation of socialism, but we deny that a sectarian organization is any longer the best means for their expression. We feel that the time has come when the division of the American socialist movement into relatively homogeneous bodies can fruitfully give way to a new type of organization which will be better able to deal with the primary tasks of all American socialists.

For us, the unity of the YSL, the ISL and the SP-SDF will be a tremendous step forward. We hope for and we work for such an eventuality. If it does not take place, a real opportunity will have been lost to American socialism, but that will not change our general orientation toward socialist unity. For if it does not begin today, through the type of unity we advocate, then it will take place tomorrow within the labor party. It would be a very real setback if the immediate possibilities are not actualized, but that does not change our general perspective, nor will it lessen our efforts to recruit young people to the socialist cause in general and to our own tendency in particular.

VI. SUMMARY

Thus, the orientation of American socialists today: We live in a time of transition, of limited possibilities developing out of the international and domestic situation. The primary task facing the American workingclass today is the creation of a labor party, and we define our work in relation to this fact. We seek to regroup and revitalize the socialist movement, so that it may prepare itself for the more far-reaching changes which are to come. Today, a whole series of factors indicate that the best way to do this is through the creation of a broad, Debsian party of socialism. The unity of the YSL, the ISL and the SP-SDF would be a step in this direction, with the YSL constituting either part of the youth affiliate or the youth affiliate of such a united organization.

We reaffirm our political program. But today, we believe that our program, as well as the socialist movement as a whole, is best served by our participation in a broad socialist movement. Thus we call for the unification of the various tendencies on the basis of a minimal, democratic socialist program; we call for the unification of the YSL, the ISL and the SP-SDF as a step in this direction.

We look toward a new beginning. We have no illusions that a great, mass socialist movement will suddenly spring into existence. Yet, we see possibilities, an opening in American society brought about by a range of specific events; we call for a turn of the American socialist movement, away from its isolation, toward the American workingclass and the job of building a labor party.

THE CRISIS OF WORLD STALINISM

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.

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 the 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. Concurrently, every Communist Party in the capitalist world has known crisis, disintegration and factional struggle.

A Review of the Past 10 Years

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.

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 been once 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.

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 and stability 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.

The Death of Stalin

The crisis of 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-type 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.

For this other events were required, and these were signaled by the death of the Dictator himself. This was followed by obvious disturbances 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.

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 Lisenko 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.

Causes For the "Thaw"

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 Vozhd; and the struggles between individuals and groups among the ruling top-echelons of the bureaucracy itself. While the totalitarian system needs a Supreme arbiter to settle disputes among the ruling group, and while there is an inevitable tendency in this system for such an arbiter 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 whom 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.

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 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.

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 tranquility. 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.

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 eased up in the hope of appeasing the hatred which surged beneath it.

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.

The Death of Two Myths About Stalinism

The wave of crisis and revolution in the Stalinist world, and the Polish and Hungarian revolutions in particular, have dealt shattering blows to two 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 end 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 workingclass. 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.

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, towards "democratic socialism."

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.

"Reform or Revolution"

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 they have become incompatible with the further development of society. It treats the bureaucracy as a classless 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.

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.

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 toward socialist democracy wherever they feel able to do so without precipitating a showdown fight with the Russian army and secret police if they cannot expect to win such a struggle.

The Role of Nationalism in the Revolutions

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.

The upheavels 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, and an end to the exploitation of workers and peasants.

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, against the Polish Stalinist-"Natolinists." But they cannot give political support to or have confidence in his regime because it provides no democratic 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 working-class.

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 Gomulka's 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.

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."

THE KEY IS DEMOCRACY

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 socialist 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 precluded, 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 working-class elements in the revolution to organize themselves separately on the basis of a socialist program and to contest for the leadership of the revolution.

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.

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.

The Leadership of the Revolution

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.

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 among the youth.

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 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-privatization 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 on the land question under Stalinism stands for giving the land to those peasants 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.

The Role of Reactionary Forces

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. 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.

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 primarily 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.

Revolutionary Organization

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 Potofi Youth Club in Budapest.

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 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.

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 Hungary 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 those 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.

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 derrogate the workers councils, or who would call for their abolition, or restrict or limit them, we stand as their supporters.

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 frequently composed of representatives of the workers councils, of the newly 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.

The revolution created a whole host of new organizations of all varieties: cultural, intellectual, student, religious, etc., as the released pent up 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 groups, and organized their own organizations under their democratically exercised control and freely chosen leadership.

The Capitalist West and the Revolutions

26

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 monstrosity, 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.

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 were heard 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 was distinguished by its non-existence.

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 and under the direction of the people themselves.

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 would 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.

The Anti-Stalinist Revolution and the Cold War

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 system 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 Bagdad Pact - were built up on the promise that a strong military posture was necessary to act as a deterrence 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 these countries, and to contribute to U.S. imperialist domination of these areas.

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 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.

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 the military strength of the Russians 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 West Europe? The answer is obvious. Ever 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.

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.

For the Withdrawal of All Foreign Troops .

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 scale 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.

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 Western Europe because of the Russian refusal to give up their satellite empire, as well as a weakening of U.S. domination over Western Europe.

SUMMARY

It is impossible to predict the exact future course of events in the Stalinist world. The brutal slaughter of the Hungarian revolution may have had the effect of slowing down the tempo of 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 Stalinist 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 into the era of the anti-Stalinist revolution.

This discussion should provide the basis for an analysis of the tremendous 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, 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.

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.

1237