

VANGUARD newsletter

Published monthly by independent revolutionary socialists

Editors—Harry Turner, David Fender, Ed di Tullio

P. O. Box 67, Peck Slip Station, New York, N. Y. 10038

Vol. 4, No. 9 Price 10¢ (\$1.00 per year) Labor donated November 1972

The Vietnamese Revolution Betrayed!



Auto Workers Combat GMAD

How NOT to Fight for the Shorter Work Week

Spartacist Hypocrisy Exposed

Leninist Faction Resigns From SWP

Contents: About Our New Contributors	p. 148
"Friends" of the NLF-DRV Help Betray the Revolution	149
Leaflet: The Vietnamese Revolution Betrayed!	
Auto Workers Combat GMAD	153
How <u>Not</u> to Fight for the Shorter Work-Week ...	155
Correspondence:	157
Leninist Faction Resigns from the SWP	158
The Spartacist School of Slander and Character Assassination - Part II -- The Morals of Petty-Bourgeois Revolutionists ...	162
Spartacist Hypocrisy Exposed!	165
Historical Roots of the Degeneration of the Fourth International and of the Centrism of the SWP	168

ABOUT OUR NEW CONTRIBUTORS

Comrade Les Brown, the author of the reply to the letter from readers in Sacramento, California, was introduced to our readers in our last issue with his introduction to the statement of the united front for defense as was Comrade Susan Viani with her article on "The Struggle in the Schools."

Comrades Brown and Viani both joined VANGUARD NEWSLETTER after the New York Revolutionary Committee (NYRC) dissolved in June of this year.

The NYRC was formed by a group of people who had left the Workers World Party (WWP) in August of 1971. These people had attempted to launch a struggle within the WWP against the bureaucratic nature of the organization and for a re-examination of its policies. The leadership of the WWP discovered that an opposition faction was in formation and launched a series of Moscovtrial type meetings to prevent it from coming into being. When it became obvious that it would be impossible to remain within the WWP and work as revolutionists, seven people resigned from the party to form the new organization.

The NYRC was able to win some

independent revolutionists and in January of 1972, the NYRC launched its own paper, "Common Ground."

After a time, a tendency began to develop within the NYRC that wished to shed all of the politics of the WWP and re-orient towards Leninism-Trotskyism. A fierce struggle erupted within the NYRC, resulting in the departure of the anti-Trotskyist elements and leaving the committee with a membership of five. Of these five, three, Cdes. Henry Platsky, Les Brown and Susan Viani, have joined VANGUARD NEWSLETTER to continue the struggle to build the Leninist-Trotskyist party. A fuller treatment of the evolution of the NYRC is planned for a later issue.

Comrade Viani began her career in revolutionary politics when she joined the NYRC towards the beginning of 1972. Before that, she was a member of the Social Service Employees Union and a contributor to its paper.

Comrade Brown, at present a garment worker in NYC, had been a member of Workers World for five years and was one of the original founders of the NYRC, before joining VANGUARD NEWSLETTER.

"FRIENDS" OF THE NLF-DRV HELP BETRAY THE REVOLUTION by Henry A. Flatsky

The world proletarian revolution has received a sharp setback-- the decades long struggle of the Vietnamese workers and peasants against British, French, Japanese, and US imperialism and all of their respective domestic stooges has once again been defeated.

The Vietnamese masses heroically stood up against the napalm, B-52's, the half-million imperialist invaders only to be defeated by the false program of their "leadership," by the bureaucrats in Moscow and Peking, and by the so-called "friends" of the Vietnamese, particularly in the advanced capitalist countries.

The lesson of Vietnam must be brought home to every communist and socialist, to every thinking worker: without organizing the working class to lead the petty-bourgeois masses (peasants, students, intellectuals, etc.) in a struggle to overthrow capitalism--the struggle for national liberation is doomed! The "leaders" of the Vietnamese revolution, however, have been trained in the school of Stalin where graduates are assured of the ability to derail and destroy the revolutionary potential of any movement of which they can gain the leadership.

While the vast majority of the left has preferred to close its eyes to these facts--VANGUARD NEWSLETTER has continuously pointed out that without a correct strategy and program the Vietnamese revolution could only suffer defeat.

Now, when this defeat has become almost an accomplished fact--certain "friends" of the Vietnamese struggle moan endlessly about Soviet and/or Chinese betrayals or posture "militantly" against State Department peace frauds--or other "friends," the more vulgar Maoist-Stalinist-pro-Soviet coteries, hail the ignominious defeat as a victory and demand, without even blushing at their own cynicism, that the "defeated US" be "forced" to sign its name to the agreement reached in Paris--the "achievement" of over thirty years of struggle by the Vietnamese masses--a coalition between the NLF and Thieu to supervise elections!!!

The city of New York was recently privileged to witness an assemblage of these "friends" this past November 4th.

A demonstration was called by a vast assortment of Maoist and semi-Maoist groups. The march and rally termed the latest peace settlement a victory and was called to pressure US rulers into recognizing said "victory." The accessories to this symbolic dance on the graves of the Vietnamese masses, who have "won" the assurance of continued US imperialist domination through a puppet police-state regime (which might even include a few "liberation" leaders for window dressing), were the Revolutionary Union, the Puerto Rican Socialist Party, the Black Workers Congress, the Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers Organization (the new name for the old Young Lords Party), the Vietnam Veterans Against the War and others. Also participating were the Workers World Party and Youth Against War and Fascism and such luminaries as William Kunstler, Gilberto Gerena Valentin, and Jesse Gray. Those persons and organizations that participated in this atrocity should be forever marked as unworthy of the slightest consideration by workers and revolutionists.

On the "outs" of this demonstration were most of the ostensibly "Trotskyist" organizations. The Workers League (WL) members hawked the latest "Bulletin"--decrying the "sellout" settlement. Strong words from an organization that has refused to say one word about the program of the leadership of the Vietnamese struggle--preferring to reserve its polemical fireworks for the more venerable idols in Moscow and Peking.

Their article "Vietnam 'Peace' Fraud Covers US War Plans" in their November 6th issue, sold at the demonstration reveals the essence of their distortion of the question:

"...the capitalist press is admitting that Nixon is gratified by the intense pressure the Soviet Union has placed on Hanoi to come to terms....The almost unchallenged victories of the NLF made it clear once again, that the Vietnamese workers and peasants are now in a position to topple the Thieu regime and throw the Americans out of Indochina....Just as the revolution stands on the brink of victory, the American Communist Party is leading the drive to push through the betrayal desired by the Kremlin bureaucrats."

The foregoing openly implies that the strategy of the NLF to "topple the Thieu regime and throw the Americans out" could have succeeded when, in reality, the program, tactics, and strategy of the NLF leaders assured that this would never happen under their leadership. Or perhaps the WL would have us forget that the NLF (and the North Vietnamese) made a bloc with the national bourgeoisie, refused to demand land for the peasants, claimed repeatedly that they were not struggling for socialism, repeatedly offered to participate in coalition governments, etc., etc. An elementary reading of Trotsky on China or Spain will tell the WL that this is a program of betrayal! The Maoists are at least able to recognize that the agreement reached in Paris only differs tactically from the NLF's own 7-point program. That is why they can delude their following into believing that the Vietnamese have "won." The "Trotskyist" WL are not "fooled," they simply ignore the real program of the NLF and create their own version of it, thus adapting to world Stalinism from the "left."

The Socialist Workers Party (SWP) handed out a leaflet announcing a forum that will discuss the peace "agreement" wrung from the Vietnamese through the most extensive bombing campaign in history..." Rather than expose the program that enabled the Vietnamese to be so "wrung," Fred Halstead, writing

in the "Militant" of Oct. 27th urges his readers to restrain from criticizing the tactics of the NLF leadership. Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Trotsky should have been privy to such wisdom--perhaps the volumes of writings, examining the defeats of the Paris Commune, the 1905 Russian Revolution, the German, Chinese, and Spanish revolutions, would not be in existence to embarrass the likes of the SWP who want only to be the "friends" of the Vietnamese Stalinists--never to criticize them--even if it means losing a revolution or two.

We in VANGUARD NEWSLETTER went to the November 4th demonstration with the leaflet reprinted in this issue determined to tell all who would listen that the Vietnamese workers and peasants have been betrayed. The leaders of the demonstration reacted in a frenzy. They informed all tendencies not on the list of sponsors that no leaflets or literature was to be handed out at the march! While the others, for the most part, complied with this arrogant and unprincipled edict, VANGUARD NEWSLETTER distributors refused to yield. The march leaders then resorted to pushing, grabbing at the leaflets and open threats of violence. We responded by telling the crowd that this was typical of the response of those who could not answer politics in a principled manner. We answered their shouts of "CIA agents" by shouting "Victory to the Vietnamese revolution and defeat US imperialism," and pointed to the program in the leaflet. The march leaders were forced to back down on their threats of violence by the refusal of the revolutionary communists of VANGUARD NEWSLETTER to be intimidated.

The workers of the world must make an honest assessment of the defeat which their cause suffered in Vietnam. They must determine who bears the responsibility for this defeat and build their vanguard party for the victorious struggle against capitalism under the program of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Trotsky.

THE VIETNAMESE REVOLUTION BETRAYED!

The peace settlement negotiated by US imperialism with the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) and the National Liberation Front (NLF) for Vietnam must be recognized by all revolutionists as an historic defeat for the world working class. Only the most callous and cynical betrayers of Marxism would use this fact as an excuse for refusing to thoroughly examine the lessons of the Indochinese struggle from the point of view of furthering the world socialist revolution.

Some groups in the left will claim that there has been no defeat at all because the Vietnamese through their struggle were able to "wring" certain concessions from US imperialism. Others more adept at the art of political dishonesty will admit that the settlement indeed represents a defeat, but that revolutionists have no right to demand that the Vietnamese continue fighting because of the fact that they were simply unable to stand up to the overwhelming firepower of US imperialism. It should be clear that both the Soviet Union and China, Vietnam's major "allies," must take the blame for the fact that the Vietnamese in the North and the NLF in the South did not have the weapons needed to defeat the US war machine. In fact, both the Soviet Union and China saw to it that the aid given to the Vietnamese struggle was just enough to ensure a minimal defense and too little to launch the kind of offensive campaign that would have been needed to drive the US and its puppets out of Indochina. The bureaucrats in Moscow and Peking were more interested in making loud proclamations of their "support to the struggle of the Vietnamese" and, in reality, doing everything in their power, through diplomatic maneuvering and blackmail, to force the NLF-DRV to suspend the struggle.

Some groups will be more than glad to fill their papers and propaganda with loud denunciations of Soviet and/or Chinese betrayal only to cover up the fact that they have cowardly refused to analyze the strategy of the Vietnamese leadership which has consistently covered up for the bureaucrats of both the Soviet Union and China. The Vietnamese Stalinists failed to expose the kind of "support" opponents of imperialism get from the Moscow and Peking Stalinists to the workers of the world, including the Soviet and Chinese workers, who are the only international force capable of giving the kind of support which can defeat imperialism.

The program, strategy and tactics of the leaders of both the NLF and the DRV were not only inadequate for the struggle to defeat imperialism, but were also an integral part of the world Stalinist program of betrayal. In this epoch, only the strategy of the permanent revolution can succeed: organizing the workers of the colonial and underdeveloped nations to lead the peasant masses in a revolutionary socialist struggle against not only imperialism, but also imperialism's natural ally, the national bourgeoisie. The correctness of this strategy, developed by Leon Trotsky, was confirmed by the Bolshevik revolution. The party of Lenin and Trotsky was able to organize the workers of underdeveloped Russia which was then able to lead the peasants in the first and only successful socialist revolution. But the lessons of the October Revolution were buried by the official "Communist" parties under the direction of the Stalinist bureaucrats who usurped power in the Soviet Union and in the Third International. The strategy of the permanent revolution was abandoned in favor of the strategy of "the revolution in stages" and blocs with the national "progressive" bourgeoisie. This strategy resulted in a string of tragic defeats for the working class in underdeveloped countries--in China in 1928, in Spain in 1936, in Indochina in 1946 and 1954, etc. The leaders of the NLF and DRV still cling to the theory of "revolution in stages" and blocs with the national bourgeoisie, refused a program of struggle for land to the peasants and instead limited the

struggle to the fight for a "peaceful, neutral, independent Vietnam." No strategy could have been more disastrous. Ostensible "Trotskyist" organizations such as the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), the Workers League (WL), Workers World Party (WWP) and their international relations, in the name of "support" to the Vietnamese struggle, preferred to close their eyes to the fact that the program of the NLF failed to mobilize the working class of South Vietnam, the only class capable of leading a successful struggle for national liberation. The workers were assigned a passive role and were stifled under a succession of Saigon-police state regimes. These organizations, rather than defend Trotskyism and the Vietnamese revolution, have given the Stalinist bureaucratic leaderships in Vietnam a free hand to strangle the Vietnamese struggle.

All organizations which refused to tell the truth about Vietnam must take responsibility for the tragic defeat of the more than three decades of heroic struggle by the Indochinese masses. These organizations, in a defensive reaction, have usually preferred to heap criticisms on those who insisted on fighting for a correct strategy to insure the victory of the Vietnamese revolution. The outcome in Indochina has proven that it is those who were unsparing in their criticisms of the self-defeating tactics of the Vietnamese leadership who were the real friends of the Vietnamese workers and peasants and that those who uncritically supported this leadership have helped lead hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese to die for--for "elections" to be supervised by Thieu!!!!

We in VANGUARD NEWSLETTER have been among those revolutionists who have called for the victory of the Vietnamese revolution and, to our knowledge, have produced the only clear and consistent program that would have achieved that victory. We have called upon the international working class to launch a world-wide campaign to:

- *Boycott US products and blacklist all cargo which could be used by the US imperialists against the Indochinese.
- *Demand that the Soviet Union and China give the Indochinese sufficient military assistance for defensive and offensive actions.
- *Call upon the masses in Indochina for a revolutionary struggle, for a coordinated military offensive, for the overthrow of capitalism, the socialization of the means of production and the land by the working class at the head of the peasantry, for workers' power, for the "dictatorship of the proletariat!"
- *Build a network of rank-and-file caucuses in US trade unions to unite the racially divided working class in the struggle against special oppression and to link their daily struggle to the struggle against the war in Indochina and to the socialist revolution.

Those of you who consider yourselves to be socialists and communists must now stop and think. Will you continue to give loyalty to organizations that have not measured up to the historic tasks: that have not defended the Vietnamese revolution from all its enemies both external and internal, or will you join with VANGUARD NEWSLETTER and fight for the program that will build an international working class party which will lead the successful world socialist revolution?

.....
VANGUARD NEWSLETTER, PO Box 67, Peck Slip Station, New York, N.Y. 10038

Send: A free three-month subscription Back issues on the war

NAME
STREET (labor donated)
CITY STATE ZIP CODE

AUTO WORKERS COMBAT GMAD by Jim Hays

On October 13th over 8,500 workers at the huge General Motors Corp. plant in St. Louis struck as part of the UAW new strategy of erratic mini-strikes against General Motors Assembly Division (GMAD).

A second strike in St. Louis was called off when Local 25 bureaucrats reached a secret agreement with the company on October 27th. Despite mammoth bargaining sessions, the rank and file has been kept in the dark about their substance. In fact, union members have had little say-so in strike strategy throughout the country.

Militant UAW District Committeeman Nat Mosley told a recent rank-and-file committee meeting that over 13,000 grievances and 1,400 layoffs have accumulated at the St. Louis factory alone. During the past few weeks, the night shift crew has only been allowed to work about 13 hours a week because of repeated lockouts. These lockouts have been justified by the company as a response to alleged acts of production sabotage. Union militants feel that false charges of sabotage are being used to weed out the opposition to the massive speedup introduced by GMAD. A line speed of 57-58 cars per hour has been maintained despite a considerable reduction in the work force. It is no wonder, therefore, that cars are coming off the assembly line with bolts missing from their transmissions.

Workers who have been on sub-unemployment pay for months are being called in to set an inhuman work pace in order to frighten production workers into submission.

Mosley blamed the UAW leadership for collaborating with the company. By mutual agreement with GM, Auto Workers President Woodcock has allowed Local 25's contract to be totally voided. Under the new arrangement union committeeman representation has been cut in half.

Mosley strongly condemned the union bureaucracy's sellout of the 1970 contract and piecemeal opposition to GMAD. Recently UAW committeemen from 18 plants met in

Detroit to discuss GMAD. There, Mosley demanded that the UAW immediately close down the strategic gear and axle plant in Michigan. For this he was viciously red-baited by Woodcock personally. Instead the bureaucracy advocated phony, 4 day a week strikes, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday. But even this weak protest has been confined to only a few plants and at first was called off when a GM vice-president agreed to temporarily stop GMAD layoffs and firings. Mosley criticized Woodcock's gift of \$ 15,000 to McGovern and his participation on Nixon's pay freeze board. The international union has even gone so far as to borrow \$15 million from GM itself. Many rank-and-file workers present noted the paradox of the union's receiving money from the very bosses it was supposed to be fighting.

Next March, the UAW will be discussing its 1973 contract demands, and Local 25 union militants under Nat Mosley's leadership have already sent a certified letter to Woodcock. Their demands for the 1973 contract include:

- a) 25 year retirement at \$750 per month.
- b) 35 hour work week at 40 hours pay.
- c) a full immediate cost of living escalator clause.

But the developing crisis of world capitalism and the sharpening struggle among the rival capitalist blocs for the world market and their imperialist preserves requires the bosses to cut back the standards of the workers and crack down on their unions. To win even meaningful economic demands today, the workers must raise transitional and political demands which will advance the present trade-union consciousness to

class, that is, to socialist consciousness and which prepare them for the taking of power. The economic demands raised should be linked to the demands for a labor party, nationalization of basic industry under workers control, and the preparation of a general strike against the wage freeze.

The fight for the shorter work-week has to be raised not only from the point of view of economic benefit to the workers in one shop or industry, but as a vital weapon in the fight against unemployment in the auto industry and in the country as a whole of which the especially oppressed minorities, the Black and Spanish-speaking workers, are the worst victims.

The rank-and-file caucus which has developed in Local 25 out of the March 1971 work stoppage against racist conditions has been weakened by reformist, civil-rights and Black nationalist illusions. The right wing of this caucus states, "Let's face it, there ain't gonna be no revolution in this country." This attitude has led to the error of filing a court suit against both GM and the UAW after a recent governmental civil-rights commission report lent credence to their charges of racism and sexism at the St. Louis plant. This reliance on the bourgeois state can only open the door to the attempts by the ruling class to smash the unions through phony laws, which straight jacket the labor movement under the pretext of "reforming" it. The tendency of Mosley and the caucus toward syndicalism is shown by its program and by Mosley's present accommodation toward the International Socialists.

When the St. Louis factory struck on October 12th all the "radical" groups in town--the Communist Party (CP), International Socialists (IS), Workers League (WL), the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and On The Line rushed to the sidewalks outside the plant. Each group was so interested in pushing its own sectarian rag that it refused to form a joint defense proposed by VANGUARD NEWSLETTER

against a squad of about 20 goons of the union bureaucracy at the Old Fisher Body plant door. This led to the isolation and beating with a lead pipe of one comrade from the IS.

These tendencies also exposed themselves at a meeting at the Black Labor Council building near the GM plant on October 15th. A spokesman for the CP-dominated Trade Unionists for Action and Democracy (TUAD) pushed the line of backhanded support for McGovern by giving a boring speech about Nixon's crimes. The IS advocated lowest common denominator "rank-and-file caucuses" based solely on reformist economist issues such as the lack of heat in factories during summer time. Through the United Justice Train Caucus at Chrysler Jefferson in Detroit, the IS is connected to the UAW United National Caucus (UNC).

The Fox-Sims-Kelley leadership of the UNC was represented at the October 15th meeting by Pete Kelley himself. He outlined a vague appeal for "union democracy" through the reformist scheme of referendum elections of UAW officials. The UNC's syndicalist perspective is manifested in Jordan Sims statement in the September UNC paper that "Brother Reuther" is "sorely missed."

During the October 15th meeting, Howard West of the WL was rightly attacked by Mosley for advocating a labor party to be founded by such pork-choppers and pie-cards as Woodcock, Bluestone, and Meaney. The WL was discredited among Local 25 auto workers this summer when one of Wohlforth's goon squads took over a rank-and-file committee meeting and excluded other political tendencies despite the objections of Mosley and other union militants. The October 23rd WL's "Bulletin" wrongly denounces Mosley for not supporting the tactic of isolated local strikes. But class conscious workers know that such mini-strikes without perspective only demoralize the workers and prepare bosses' victories such as those which took place at Norwood and Lordstown.

The WL continues to deny that Black

workers are super-exploited under capitalism. Their only answer to the facts of racism in the auto industry is an idealistic and moralistic appeal for "working classunity" which in reality caters to chauvinistic attitudes among white workers. But even the Federal government admits that 75% or more of those laid-off recently at the St. Louis plant are Black even though they make up only 15% of the work force. Moreover a group of Black women auto workers recently charged that the racist company had attempted to cut their break time in half. Yet Wohlforth maintains that "all Black caucuses are reactionary." The

speech of a white worker from the Corvette plant at the recent Black Labor Council meeting showed that at least some white union militants are beginning to see that discrimination against Blacks is hinged to their own exploitation as well. The leadership being provided by the Black workers against GMAD and the bosses' labor lieutenants, in spite of their nationalist illusions, is only a glimpse of the vanguard role they will play in the struggle against capitalism. Rank-and-file caucuses must be built now on a principled transitional program in the UAW and other unions.

HOW NOT TO FIGHT FOR THE SHORTER WORK-WEEK by Earl Owens

Members of the Workers Action Movement (WAM) and the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) are preparing a petition campaign to put "30 for 40" on the San Francisco ballot.

Their leaflet states:

"Ultimately, 30 for 40, like all other important reforms, will be won only after organized workers have fought hard for it using every tactic (such as strikes) at their disposal. As a step in this campaign we propose that a coalition be formed to organize a campaign to put 30 for 40 on the ballot for November 1973."

Is "30 for 40" a reform? To PLP it is, but to revolutionary Marxists it is a transitional demand for a sliding scale of wages and hours to eliminate unemployment, to provide jobs for all at a decent standard of life. As Trotsky pointed out, it is the program of socialism presented in a concrete slogan. It is true that the struggle for the shorter work-week at the end of the 19th century was reformist--though revolutionaries played an important role in leading it. Revolutionary Marxists participate in all struggles to advance the immediate interests of the working class, even in reformist struggles, to the extent they are struggles and increase the confidence of the working class in itself. However, in these struggles

they fight for the understanding in the class that reforms are not enough, that the capitalists will attempt to destroy them with every crisis and that important reforms are the product not of the reformist, but of the revolutionary struggles of the working class.

Capitalism at the end of the 19th century and at the height of its power could make concessions without undermining the rate of profit. It was, at that point, becoming transformed into imperialism and was able to bribe an "aristocracy of labor" with the crumbs of its super-profits.

Capitalism in 1972 looks nothing like the capitalism of the 19th century. US capitalist "prosperity" is based on debt--the total public and private debt is close to two trillion dollars! The internal market cannot absorb the increasing volume of commodities which can only be bought by increasing the debt, so US capitalism is forced to struggle against its imperialist rivals to maintain its external market for the export of capital and goods. Abroad, it faces German and Japanese capitalism, more efficient and with lower labor costs. US capitalists can only compete by lowering labor costs here, thus increasing speed-

up and layoffs.

It is because PLP, originating as a left split-off from the reformist Communist Party (CP), is still essentially a reformist organization, is without a revolutionary perspective in spite of its occasional super-militant rhetoric, that it can pose "30 for 40" in this period of the crisis and decline of capitalism, as a "reform" demand.

As VANGUARD NEWSLETTER pointed out in September 1969, PLP's original training in the policies of the "Democratic Front" places an ineradicable stamp on it through all its shifts and changes. It refuses to seriously examine its past theories and practices. It rejects revolutionary Marxism of the imperialist epoch, Trotskyism, and seeks to fortify the illusion among its members in its Stalinist heritage. PLP is concerned to achieve the "left-center coalition" with "progressive" labor bureaucrats which the CP had constructed in the "popular front" period of the 30's and to which the "Cold War" put an end.

Every transitional demand can be distorted and twisted into a reformist one. All that is necessary is that the "left-center coalition" coalesce with liberals to petition, lobby or bore from within the bourgeois state to change its basic nature and have it carry out "socialist" demands! The whole question of class power, of bourgeois state versus workers' state and the taking of power is dissolved in good reformist intentions.

The members of PLP are subjectively revolutionists. Quite correctly, they see the central task of revolutionists to be the education and mobilization of the working class as it is. But how?

Until several months ago, there were various "32-4-40 Committees" spread around the West Coast. Apparently, the CP has now lost interest in them and they have folded up. The statement of the "32-4-40 Committees" tells workers to: "Get the word out about 32-4-40. Get it out in the shops, get it out on the unemployment lines. We need to get all American working people talking

32-4-40, retirement at 55, more jobs and stopping the wage freeze," Absolutely correct! But they left something out: the need to build rank-and-file caucuses against the trade-union mis-leaders who refuse to fight for "30 for 40" or anything else. They also left out the need to struggle to raise the present level of consciousness of the workers to revolutionary and socialist consciousness in the process of posing these demands.

PLP and WAM make the same opportunist error. Immediate demands are posed from which a revolutionary outlook is omitted and even then, it refuses to fight the corrupt and reformist--the "center"--trade union misleadership. They pose these demands outside the unions through electoral activity. Some years ago PLP carried out a campaign for rent control on the same basis and expended enormous effort and sacrifice on it. It was also posed outside the unions as an electoral activity and, naturally, failed.

In San Francisco, PLP is also involved in organizing para-professional teachers in an organization called The Education Alliance. The demands of the group are quite correct --a para-professional in every classroom; no more than 22 children in every class; removal of IQ scores, etc. However, it has been formed, not as a caucus, but as an organization outside the union and with nothing political anywhere in its demands.

VANGUARD NEWSLETTER will work with PLP or any group which is willing to fight within the trade union movement for "30 for 40." That means a fight against the labor bureaucracy and the building of rank-and-file caucuses to advance revolutionary consciousness. We will not be diverted from this fight by gimmicks such as election petitions.

The working class will not be educated by the defeat of "30 for 40" at the polls. Such defeats only add to the cynicism of the working class --that "you can't fight City Hall." WAM or PLP may recruit a few members as a result of the defeat, but the working class itself will be even

further from "30 for 40" without a vanguard part rooted in the organizations of the working class.

The transitional demand for a sliding scale of wages and hours will not be carried out by any bourgeois government. Therefore, an essential part of our fight for "30 for 40" is the agitation for the formation of a workers' party based on the trade union rank-and-file to fight

for "30 for 40." PLP, however, refuses to call for such a party.

VANGUARD NEWSLETTER calls upon the members of WAM and PLP to join with us in a genuine struggle to mobilize the workers for "30 for 40," to conduct a struggle within the trade unions for this demand and for a workers' party which will fight for the immediate and fundamental interests of the working class.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Comrades:

The guiding principle under which Bolshevnik-Leninists gauge support of electoral campaigns is the programs, perspectives and contents of the fight posed by workingclass electoral combinations.

Bolshevnik-Leninists give critical support to electoral combinations that pose a fight along class lines, albeit a defective or limited fight. The aim of such critical support is the support of the fight together with the critical exposure of its limited or defective scope. In the cases of the CP-SWP-SLP no fight along class lines is even posed! Therefore we can find nothing whatever to support!

VANGUARD NEWSLETTER's pitiful "position," "Vote socialist in 1972 --Without Illusions" is most illusory on its lack of understanding of the meaning of critical support. "A position of Abstentionism (?!) would not permit hundreds of thousands (?!) of american socialists to indicate that they do exist" sounds like the subjective identity problem of the editors, not any kind of political strategy! Indeed its bankruptcy is exposed with its "eenie, meenie, miney, moe" advice. Where, indeed, can we find a precedent for this? Not in the history of Bolshevism!

Dear Comrades,

Your position demonstrates a limited understanding of the role of a Bolshevnik party in electoral activity.

Neither Lenin or Trotsky were capable of sowing illusions that the "programs" and "perspectives" of opportunist organizations could pro-

duce a "fight along class lines," but made clear that, while functioning on our side of the class line, they were capable only of betrayal.

As Bolshevnik-Leninists our electoral strategy in this period must be build a Labor Party based on the Trade Unions to pit the political fight as Class vs. Class. This Labor Party must lead workers in fighting against wage controls, gun controls, and anti-labor laws of all descriptions and for a system of public works under workers control, 30 for 40, and Trade Union administration and control of prices, profits, and rents.

The CP-SWP-SLP pose no fight and deserve no support. Our strategy vis-a-vis these organizations must be not to bolster and build them (even vis-a-vis the back door) but to expose and destroy these organizations.

Seeing things clearly, calling things by their right names, this is the task of communists. If we cannot do this amongst ourselves how can we lead the workingclass to dictatorship?

Debbie H., Tim B., Ed S., Mike W.,
David B., Sacramento, California

Our readers are well aware--as you seem not to be--that we consistently exposed the reformists, centrists, and sectarians of the CP, SWP and SLP. Our position on the labor party and the vanguard party is entirely clear.

You project onto the editors of VANGUARD NEWSLETTER an "identity problem" because of our opposition to abstentionism. We believe, however, that it is your subjective

needs which are reflected in your impassioned defense of this position.

Comrades, we welcome criticism in the spirit of Bolshevism. But the extraction of individual sentences from an entire program in the effort to set up a strawman to knock down is unworthy of revolutionists.

Fraternally,

Les Brown for
VANGUARD NEWSLETTER

The concluding sections of "Terrorism and Communism" and "Fundamentals of Capitalist Crises, 'Neo-Capitalist' Theory and the Working Class" will appear in our December issue.

LENINIST FACTION RESIGNS FROM THE SWP

∟We publish below the statement of the Leninist Faction (LF) upon resigning from the SWP.

∟In summarizing the political basis for its resignation, the LF demonstrates that it has arrived at essential agreement with the program of VANGUARD NEWSLETTER. On this principled basis, the two organizations have entered into fusion discussions to identify, clarify and resolve where possible remaining and subordinate tactical and organizational questions, so that a firm foundation for an American section of the international Leninist and Trotskyist working class vanguard party can be achieved.

∟Both organizations have the same understanding of the nature of the epoch as imperialist, as an epoch of "wars and revolution," to use Lenin's phrase, and that a world capitalist crisis of unprecedented dimensions is now maturing. We agree that the struggle between rival imperialists for the world market and for the retention of their mass and rate of profit, and also between imperialism and the degenerated and deformed workers' states must also be exacerbated. We understand that the capitalists in all countries must attempt to shift the burden of the crisis onto the shoulders of the international working class. We understand clearly that in order for the working class to organize a defense against this attack and prepare in the process its own offensive and the soci-

alist revolution, an international working class party of the Leninist type must be constructed.

∟Both organizations defend Marxism as a continuity, as a "guide to action" and endeavor to apply its hard-won lessons to the present as dialectical materialists.

∟Both uphold the working class perspective and the program of transitional demands of "scientific socialism" which the revisionists have discarded in hot pursuit of every petty-bourgeois movement--"anti-war," Black nationalist, "Gay liberation," feminism etc.

∟In the fight against war, both use the weapon of the Proletarian Military Policy of Trotsky based on the class struggle. To unify the racially divided working class, both a call for the organization of a struggle against special oppression and the super-exploitation of Black, Spanish-speaking and women workers in the interests of all workers.

∟The LF emerged from the Proletarian Orientation Tendency (POT) shortly after the August 1971 convention of the SWP upon the recognition that the struggle against the SWP's opportunism made at the convention by the Communist Tendency (CT) led by Cde. Fender was principled and correct. The POT had called upon the SWP to turn from an exclusive orientation to the petty-bourgeois radical milieu to the working class, but had not questioned the SWP's Pabloist political line.

∟As our readers will recall, Cde.

Fender and the rest of the CT were bureaucratically expelled immediately after the convention

On the basis of the similarity in political lines, the LF had taken the principled position that fusion negotiations with both VANGUARD NEWSLETTER and the Spartacist League (SL) were in order. We supported this proposal with the recognition that the political essence of the SL would be more readily exposed in this process and in a fused organization, should the SL agree. Predictably, the SL rejected the proposal and broke off fusion negotiations with the LF because of it

and because of differences over "democratic centralism," by which Robertson means a warrantee for his personal bureaucratic regime.

The four documents submitted by the LF to the SWP--"Marxism vs. the SWP," "The Fourth International," "The Trade Unions, the Transitional Program, and the Party," and "Democratic Centralism" can be purchased by sending \$1.50 (50¢ each if bought individually) in check or money order to: Barbara Gregorich, 94 Welles Ave. Dorchester, Mass. 02124.

The documents of the Ct are once again available through VANGUARD NEWSLETTER for \$1.50 each.

TO THE COMRADES OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY:

October 26, 1972

This is to inform you of our resignation from the Socialist Workers Party.

Trotsky taught that imperialist war was one of the central questions of this epoch, and that a principled task of the revolutionary party was to imbue the working class with proletarian internationalism. Thus the slogan of the revolutionary Fourth International used to be, "Only Victorious Socialist Revolutions Can Prevent the Third World War." The SWP has failed miserably in its propaganda on the Vietnam War. Instead of offering a class analysis and class solution to the problem of war, the SWP offers a non-class analysis and organizes around the proposition that the war can be ended by means other than the class struggle. Instead of teaching the working class to rely upon itself, the SWP preaches an "antiwar alliance" with the petty-bourgeois radicals and the liberal bourgeoisie. This is the essence of pacifism--teaching that war can be ended by means other than the class struggle.

The SWP does not teach the irreconcilability of the class struggle. It does not teach the class struggle in any form. It does not (therefore) teach the nature of the state and the necessity of smashing it. If the SWP ever attempts to take its politics to the working class, it will disarm the workers ideologically (and ultimately physically) by

teaching that they can and must end their oppression by means other than smashing the bourgeois state and establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The SWP tells, women, blacks, and Chicanos to form their own political parties; it tells them that this split into many political groups and parties then will, as a result of the successful culmination of their separate struggles; make the revolution. The role of the vanguard party of the working class is thereby dissolved into the many vanguards of the petty bourgeoisie and petty bourgeois parties. This is what we mean when we say that the SWP is a liquidationist organization.

The SWP says the war will end when "the majority" says so, and/or the war will end when the "majority of women..." say so. It tells women and blacks that they can end their oppression by organizing as women and blacks to fight for their rights. Clearly implicit in such positions is the idea that the goal of these protest movements can be achieved outside the class struggle and without a revolution. In other words, under capitalism--within the system. This is what we mean when we say that the SWP is a reformist organization.

The Leninist Faction, basing itself on Leninism, teaches that the

struggle against oppression, if it is to be successful, must be waged by a unified working class led by a thoroughly proletarianized democratic centralist party with a revolutionary program. The struggle cannot be successfully waged by a divided working class led by many vanguards with non-class programs. The aim of the vanguard must be to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat over all other classes through smashing the bourgeois state. There is no other way. No oppressed group will achieve emancipation outside the successful struggle of the working class.

Entering or maintaining an existence in a reformist group is, for the revolutionary organization, a tactical question the answer to which must be based on a sober analysis of many complex factors, including not just the program of the reformist organization, but its traditions, political direction, (including the nature of other political groupings within), the regime, both national, and international, social composition, organizational norms, and more. Before deciding to sever relations with the Socialist Workers Party, we considered all these factors, but two were decisive. They were democratic centralism and social composition.

Democratic Centralism. The first thing any Marxist revolutionary wants to do with his program is to explain it, teach it, and recruit to it. This is a formal-legal impossibility in the SWP. Whatever propagandizing the Leninist Faction has been able to do, it has had to do knowing that if caught--caught talk in politics to the ranks of the party--the party leadership would have it expelled. Aside from the few we have been able to reach, the ranks of the SWP must of necessity know the Leninist Faction only through rumors and heresay. To our knowledge, the SWP hierarchy has not informed the membership of the political nature of the Leninist Faction. This could have been easily accomplished by printing and circulating our documents or, at the very least, printing and circulating our state-

ment of faction sent to the National Office last spring.

The objective fact of the matter is that there is an organized group within the SWP which has political differences on everything from democratic centralism to the antiwar movement, a group which designates the SWP as reformist and the SWP leadership has not even told the party that group exists, let alone inform the party membership as to the nature of the group's politics. This could not have happened in the party of Lenin. This is a mockery of Leninism. This is not democratic centralism, but bureaucratic centralism.

In considering whether or not we should stay in the SWP, the Leninist Faction has had to ask itself what are its prospects of fighting for our program, taking our program to the rank and file of the party. The Leninist Faction submitted four major documents to the SWP, but these documents will not be printed for the party membership, to whom they are addressed. These documents are in the hands of a bureaucratic leadership which does not believe in the freedom to struggle for revolutionary program within the vanguard party. Based on this consideration alone, we would be better off outside the SWP if we intended to reach people inside the SWP. If we had had the channels available to us that exist in a democratic centralist organization, that would have inclined us more in the direction of staying in the SWP to fight to win the ranks to our program. In itself that would not have been decisive, but it would have been a factor.

Social Composition. The inability to legally put forth and defend our ideas would have been something we might have temporarily endured if the composition of the party were sufficiently working class. In other words, if we could have reached a significantly large layer of workers through the limited effectiveness of the underground methods forced on us by the SWP, that most certainly would have delayed our resignation until we had exhausted that possibility one way or another.

As it is, of course, there are no workers in the SWP worth speaking of and no contact with the class except through the union bureaucrats the SWP soloves. Nor is it likely that the SWP will take its reformist program to the class in the near future.

The petty bourgeois who are in the party have been recruited to a non-class program. They do not and never have had any relationship to the class. As a result, they are at best disinterested in the class and often exhibit hostility to the working class, whom they picture, often as not, as white, mindless, honkies.

Political composition of the ranks. Another factor the Leninist Faction would have considered, had it indeed been a factor, was the existence of a large, leftward moving group or groups within the party which we could have influenced. Such is not the case, however. We are not ruling out the possibility of future left-wing developments and splits. As long as the SWP poses as a revolutionary party, there will be those on whom the dawn will come. But for the time being, the dissidents in the party are in disarray with no program and, unless they want to "violate party discipline" they have no way of developing a program. Unless they put the political question of developing a program ahead of the organizational question of staying in the party, they will never develop a program. We say to the leftward leaning dissidents remaining in the party, that unless you violate those oft-referred to party "norms" (as opposed to Leninist norms) and write and circulate documents, hold meetings, discussions and even conventions, (you cannot ratify a political program without one), you will never develop politically. Because the SWP party norms are expressly designed to make political development impossible.

Observing our apparent lack of activity, some in the SWP have surmised that we were becoming demoralized and dropping away from politics. Nothing could be further from the truth. We have been very active in putting together a Leninist organization under difficult conditions. We have carried on full scale discussions in the course of hammering out our program. We have had regional meetings, a convention, and in the process have produced and distributed internally over 60,000 pages of literature. As the same time, we held regular business meetings and educational. We scrutinized the politics of every political grouping in the Trotskyist spectrum, and most importantly, began the systematic nationally directed task of industrial colonization. In addition, we have established a periphery of contacts and recruited from it. This, without the advantage of one full or even part-time staff member is no small accomplishment, and is not the behaviour of a demoralised group on its way out of politics.

We are undeniably small, but have every reason for optimism. Our optimism is first of all based on the revolutionary potential of the working class. We have no desire to separate ourselves from the class while giving lip service to its revolutionary uniqueness. We are now and will continue to be a physical part of the class as well as aspiring to become its revolutionary leadership. The two are inextricable. Opinions to the contrary, we have no intention of "turning our backs on the students." We will instead go to the students with a working class program and an organization firmly rooted in the class, not the other way around.

The Leninist Faction

LOCAL DIRECTORY

Berkeley-Oakland: PO Box 5261,
Oakland, Calif. 94605

Boston: David Jones
617-262-3820

New York: PO Box 67, Peck Slip
Station, New York, NY 10038

St. Louis: PO Box 22134
St. Louis, Mo. 63116

THE SPARTACIST SCHOOL OF SLANDER AND CHARACTER ASSASSINATION - Part II

The Morals of Petty-Bourgeois Revolutionists by Ed di Tullio

Reiterating lies and heaping up invective in order to make an opponent appear ridiculous or even "sordid," for the purpose of inducing an inclination not to listen to what is actually argued, is an old technique that even has a name in the books of formal logic. It is called "poisoning the wells."

As the political helplessness of the Spartacist League (SL) becomes more apparent, the more it must turn to such techniques. Thus the SL, which reserves most of its venom for Harry Turner specifically, lies about VANGUARD NEWSLETTER with relative mildness as just a "'Trotskyist' Lonely Hearts Club," "a catch-all literary discussion group" and "discussion-regroupment operation" with "no agreement on principle and program." If one believes what one reads in the papers, theirs, we are "older, materially well-off radicals" who also happen to be "burnt out" "imposters" and "frauds." Our "combativeness" in the presumably, hoary revolutionary past has been "destroyed." Together with "most of its supporters," who perhaps did not know this heretofore, VANGUARD NEWSLETTER is composed of "rejects" arrived at "their final resting place." It turns out, however, that the "rest home" nonetheless has an attraction for "younger comrades" such that SL has the "obligation" to "try" to "deflect" them not only from discussing with this "little bloc," but from actually "entering."

As for SL's method of dealing with Harry Turner in particular, and with David Fender, who is also given a good deal of attention, the earlier quote from Lenin describes it perfectly: "to lie, scream, raise a hullabaloo, and keep on reiterating lies on the off-chance that 'something may stick.'" What characterizes Harry Turner, his revolutionary activity and writing? For starters, these lies: "impatience," "instability," "self-inflating claims to be a leader," "factional maneuvering," "savage denunciations," "comic opera overtures," "empty propagandism," "fake agitation," "Aesopian formulations," a "subjective impulse,"

"wounded ego," "fulsome groveling." He is a "not even remotely principled" "parasitic intriguer" "seeking blocs with anyone he can find," who, however, is so inept that he can be "grotesquely used and discarded" and has allowed himself to be used as a "figurehead." Not only that, he just goes on "assiduously cultivating the image of 'honest worker,'" a "deliberately constructed proletarian image" which is a "fraud." One can only wonder who the "younger comrades" are who would "enter" the clutches of such a person! Or into those of David Fender, the militarist, especially now that SL has made revelations almost as startling as those concerning Trotsky, that Fender has been our representative in trying to form a "United Front with the Cops!"

Let us point out a few of the disorienting notions that fill this first small example of SL's polemical prowess. Revolutionists have of course no "obligation" to "deflect" anybody from any organization, anymore than they are obliged to save souls by bringing them into a revolutionary one. SL's tender regard for "younger comrades" --for their "naivete" and "lack of knowledge," if not for their brains-- is merely one of many symptoms of SL's confused conceptions concerning the nature of the revolutionary party. In conformity with its own practice, SL imagines that "the cadres of a serious communist organization....must take responsibility for the political lives and well-being of their comrades!" If by "cadre" they mean the "regime," one will think of Pope, Cardinals, priests, and adoring flock, and the confessional! If they mean by it that everyone looks after everyone

else, what comes to mind are the "encounter groups" and "games" of the soul-sick petty bourgeoisie, complete with boxes of tissue to wipe away tears!

A truly revolutionary party, and our success in establishing one depends on clear conceptions of what its nature must be, is a combat organization in this epoch whose cadre function not at all through ministrations of any kind, but on the basis of adherence to a program they understand very well, scientific ideas, strict organizational principles, and clearly defined tasks--for which a seething internal democracy is only one of the requisites, but an essential one.

Modeled on the Bolsheviks, that party will therefore consist of quite a few independent minded, critical, iconoclasts who will not be "deflected" by anyone from thinking things out for themselves. Neither intimidation nor tender loving care will suppress their personalities. Their "obligation" is to be able to determine each what his or her own role should be in the party and for the revolution--otherwise they would be unprepared to go against the leading organs of the party, alone if necessary, for the revolution, as Lenin taught. We will return to the concept of the vanguard party, since SL makes a fetish of it, and broadcasts many confused and wrong ideas.

Carried away by its invective, the SL also muddles up the relationship between the older and younger generations of revolutionists. They disclose, for example, a most narrow and subjective notion of why many of the older generation have left the road of revolution when they speak of a "social climate" which "degrades and ridicules" revolutionists, instead of emphasizing the material factors--such as, since the Second World War, the upsurge of world capitalism, the formation of deformed workers states, and the theoretical incapacity of the revolutionary movement after the death of Trotsky--as VANGUARD NEWSLETTER has explained. They also insinuate their own undialectical habit of thought, where what leaves cannot return, the

"rejects" do not come to be accepted, and nothing changes once changed, in their one-sided thundering pronouncement that "the revolutionary movement inevitably throws off burnt-out shells." The SL merely transfers its own sensitivity to "the pervasive anti-communist social climate" which so "degrades" and "ridicules," and which compels SL to see itself as "the collective" in which "well-being" may be possible under the aegis of "the regime," to other revolutionists past and present, imagining everyone to be in the same hole they are in.

It is true that many who once performed good service for the revolution see no role for themselves in periods of relative proletarian quiescence, when the revolution does not appear to be on the agenda, as in the period after World War II, in particular when there is theoretical confusion in the leaders. They make a life for themselves in society as they find it, and their politics becomes reformist, possibilist. For this the SL has a certain self-inflating scorn. But the new generation of revolutionists need not write-off the older en masse, any more than they need expect to be "burnt-out" themselves in the grim life of "inner tension," in which petty-bourgeois mentalities "must suppress subjective impulses" and "often have their pride hurt," which characterizes SL's revolutionism. They will instead see with Trotsky that "life is beautiful," and will strive to "cleanse it of all evil, oppression and violence, and enjoy it to the full." As for the older generation, they will understand that:

"Only the fresh enthusiasm and aggressive spirit of the youth can guarantee the preliminary successes in the struggle; only these successes can return the best elements of the older generation to the road of revolution. Thus it was, thus it will be."

SL raises many points which, even if they were accurate, disclose a contempt for the intelligence of the

"younger comrades" on whom it "tries" to impose them. It is not true, for example, that Harry Turner or any other comrade in VANGUARD NEWS-LETTER, can be said to have "a comfortable station in life," and only two by any stretch of the word can be considered in any way "older." But even if it were, it is totally irrelevant to what it is really necessary to be anxious about: achieving a scientific programmatic basis for the reconstruction of the Fourth International. What has Harry Turner contributed to that task? That question will be answered in the course of this article. Here let us say merely that we hope that as many proletarian revolutionists as possible are fortunate enough to become "older," and that they continue to contribute as scientific socialists into ripe old age. As for "comfort," perhaps we will hear more when Engels displeases the SL in his turn, since after all "The General" was also a militarist, so we will confine ourselves merely to digging up a quote for them from Mehring that will serve them as evidence:

"He (Engels) was a highly respected member of the Manchester Stock Exchange and prominent both in the business and in the pleasures of the English bourgeoisie, its fox-hunting and its Christmas parties, but the intellectual leader and fighter (this phrase the mechanistic formalists will find inexplicable and have to expurgate), had a treasure in a little house far away on the other side of town, a Child of Ireland, and in her arms he recovered his spirits when he had grown all too tired for the bourgeois pack in whose midst he was compelled to live."

It should be clear enough that the lies are invariably associated with and are even the product of the "subjective impulses" of petty-bourgeois revolutionism, the source also of all the "hullabaloo." Thus the lie that Cde. Fender "called the cops" to open up a supposedly public forum of auto workers from which the Workers League tried to exclude other ten-

dencies, at the St. Louis Peace Conference, becomes a vehicle for the petty-bourgeois moralism SL injects into that incident. Having asserted that Cde. Fender "called the cops," SL comes up with this "proof" in "Workers Vanguard": he must have "called the cops," "otherwise" after the meeting was "opened," "wouldn't he of course have joined the Spartacist supporters in refusing to enter the meeting?" SL "would not touch such a meeting with a ten-foot pole." The moralism that "will not touch" has nothing in common with proletarian methods, which can utilize bourgeois institutions and legalities without in anyway depending on them or dampening the self-confidence of the workers, and will certainly utilize whatever helps in finding the road to the workers.

Cde. Fender tried to keep the campus administrators and cops out of the incident, who nevertheless enforced their own rules and announced that the meeting was a public one. All tendencies interested in talking to the auto workers wanted to go in. SL, of course, did not. They had nothing to say to those workers or to any other workers at St. Louis, as our account of the conference showed. They substitute sectarian formalisms for facing up to essential tasks, covered when necessary by idle moralizing about all those things that cannot be touched with "ten-foot poles." In St. Louis they thunder without comprehension of the program of "the party," in the abstract, instead of dealing with the situation: advancing concrete programmatic ideas and correct slogans for the workers there.

As we shall see, SL exhibits the same helplessness before the situation, covered by similar formalisms and moralisms, in their screaming criticisms of Trotsky's policies in WW II. They are incapable of seeing, it appears, that at that time, as Trotsky said, it was "not merely a question of a position on capitalist militarism and of renouncing the defense of the bourgeois state," positions SL intones as if on the beads of a rosary, "but of directly preparing for the conquest of power

and the defense of the proletarian fatherland." For historical imagination and boldness in defining historic tasks in critical situations, SL offers middle class complaining and lessons learnt by rote.

A review of SL's attack on both VANGUARD NEWSLETTER's policies and methods and those of Trotsky will help bring out the salient points out of the morass of petty-bourgeois muddle. (to be continued)

SPARTACIST HYPOCRISY EXPOSED!

[We print below a letter from James Robertson, National Chairman of the Spartacist League (SL), a rejoinder by Comrade Turner and the response by Comrade Malcolm L. Kaufman, Corresponding Secretary of the Committee for Rank and File Caucuses (CRFC).

[Our readers will be struck by not only the complete lack of the elementary courtesy in Robertson's letter normally found in the public correspondence of opponent socialist and radical organizations, but also by the SL's blatantly dishonest attempt to "improve" the historical record.

[Those of our readers who have received the November issue of "Workers Vanguard," the organ of the SL, will find an article entitled, "For Turner's Vanguard Newsletter, Discretion is Indeed the Better Part of Valor: Harry, Are You Listening?" They will note the prudent trimming of the concluding section of Cde. Turner's letter and the complete omission of Cde. Kaufman's letter--received well before the deadline--from the November issue of "Workers Vanguard" to fit Robertson's thesis that VANGUARD NEWSLETTER and CRFC are attempting to avoid a public debate with the SL! A more complete and deliberate deception in a so-called "revolutionary" publication would be hard to find. It would seem that "Workers Vanguard" is now aspiring to become the "National Enquirer" of the radical press!

[The venomous tone and unrestrained viciousness, the recently undertaken public campaign of slander and distortion directed against VANGUARD NEWSLETTER by the SL--it had previously confined its dishonesties and character assassination of Cdes. Turner and Fender within its own circle--is very illuminating. The SL inadvertantly reveals in its hysterical frenzy that it is reacting in panic to the attraction which the program and organization of VANGUARD NEWSLETTER has exerted

on its own ranks. It is concerned over the demonstrated ability of VANGUARD NEWSLETTER to attract not only new individual forces but also newly emerging socialist formations in direct competition with it.

[The SL has recently lost its most responsible and competent leaders who had concluded that, dominated as it was by the erratic and bureaucratic Robertson, only a narrow personality cult could flower, certainly not the Leninist working class vanguard party.

[The SL has been unable to prevent the Leninist Faction (LF), which recently resigned from the SWP and which it had assiduously wooed, from entering into fusion negotiations with VANGUARD NEWSLETTER. In desperation, it withdrew its five agents from the LF, had them send a letter of resignation to the SWP announcing their intention to "seek fusion" with the SL as the "culmination" of "support to" and "solidarity with" the "Declaration of the Leninist Faction of 15 May 1972." It then printed the letter together with the "Declaration" in its recently revived "Spartacist," so that the unwary would conclude that its five agents with whom "fusion" was to occur were the LF! It mattered nothing to Robertson that his little trick might leave the real LF open to organizational reprisals by the SWP.

[The SL is now forced to attack our politics publically. However, in so doing, it only exposes its own incoherent and confused line. The November issue of "Workers Vanguard" also attacked our position on the elections to "Vote Socialist in 1972 --WITHOUT ILLUSIONS!" In spite of its

abstract disavowal of "abstentionism," its readers will find that in the present concrete electoral situation, it can only offer a position of --abstention!

As we have stated before, repeating Trotsky's words, strategic, tactical and organizational methods flow from a program. The real program of the SL is manifested in the absence of any serious perspective for the construction of a working class vanguard party and in its orientation to the student milieu.

But to attract the students today, it has become necessary for organizations with any pretensions to Leninism and Trotskyism to strike a "proletarian" posture. That it is essentially posture for the SL and not essence can be seen by its ultimatic demand--in which all distinctions between trade union caucus and party fraction are eliminated--that caucuses must adopt the entire transitional program, as the SL understands it, before it will deign to function within it! The SL thus refuses to struggle within "the movement of the present" for the "future of the movement" and to win the workers to the full transitional program in the process of struggle for immediate and partial demands. Students may perhaps be taken in by the SL's super-radicalism but workers are certainly not impressed.

It is because VANGUARD NEWSLETTER has consistently exposed the SL as a student-oriented personality cult with a strategy, tactics and organi-

zational methods in consonance with its nature, that Robertson honors us with vicious abuse. It is for this reason that he has concocted the slander that Cde. Fender "called the cops" and has, on this basis, formed a common front with the Workers League (WL) against VANGUARD NEWSLETTER.

The attack made by Wohlforth on the "anonymous author" of an SWP internal document--which he well knew to be the work of the Leninist Faction and also that this attack would expose the faction to SWP organizational measures--and on Cde. Fender as "a vicious anti-Marxist tendency hostile to the workers movement" in the August 21st issue of the "Bulletin" is aimed in the first place at VANGUARD NEWSLETTER.

Both Robertson and Wohlforth use their choicest invective on VANGUARD NEWSLETTER because they are unable to cope with its politics. They have to resort, not only to the "normal" dishonesties to which centrists are prone, but to outright fraud. As our readers will recall, Wohlforth is forced to lie about his conduct at a meeting with us which his own members were able to witness.

To make his case that we fear a public debate with the SL, Robertson again publicly exposes himself and his organization as unprincipled tricksters. Although the SL and WL may continue to hoodwink the naive for a time, the bankruptcy of both organizations is becoming increasingly visible to serious revolutionists.

Harry Turner & David Fender
Vanguard Newsletter

29 September 1972

In the July-August issue of your publication you printed a letter signed by Malcolm Kaufman of Socialist Forum in his capacity as an officer of your joint front group, CRFC (Committee for Rank and File Caucuses) in which Kaufman gratuitously undertook to deny and defend David Fender from the accusation, publicly made by both the Workers League and ourselves, that Fender brought the police into a WL "public" meeting.

Kaufman, jointly on all your behalfs, challenged us to a debate on this issue. It strikes us that to propose a debate over an alleged act of violation of the elementary class line by a socialist merits not a debate but a commission of inquiry

into the facts to hear witnesses etc. and come forth with a finding. A debate is the appropriate vehicle for a clash of opinion. Nonetheless in our September issue of Workers Vanguard in the lead paragraph of our article, "What is Vanguard Newslet-

ter?" we publicly accepted the debate challenge.

Lo and behold, a month has passed and we have not heard from you. Continued failure to respond to our acceptance of your challenge can only lead us and others to conclude that on this issue, for you discretion is the better part of valor. We would also like to suggest to Brother Kauf-

man that he not be so hasty in the future to go to bat in defense of the political misconduct of his factional bloc partners, especially over incidents which are witnessed by four Spartacist League supporters as well as numerous others in the radical movement.

James Robertson, SL/US

Dear Comrade Robertson,

October 2, 1972

Your petty impertinence in omitting the normal courtesies in correspondence with socialist organizations in an address and closure is in consonance with the gross impertinence which is your letter of September 29th.

Our answer to your recently published amalgam of distortions, half-truths and vicious slanders against VANGUARD NEWSLETTER and comrades Turner and Fender is initiated in our October issue as you, no doubt, expected it would be.

The letter of Cde. Malcolm L. Kaufman of Socialist Forum, Secretary-Treasurer of the Committee for Rank and File Caucuses (CRFC) of July 10th informed you that CRFC and its component organizations were ready to answer your charges in a public forum at a "time and date to be set at your convenience." The Spartacist League's letter of July 28, 1973 in response that letter merely stated that you were:

"preparing a much fuller treatment for our public press of Vanguard

Newsletter and CRFC. At that time, we and/or you might be interested in a debate between our two groups."

In the circumstances, we consider your raucous claim that our "delay" in responding to your "challenge" represents a capitulation to your dastardly attack on Cde. Fender to be ludicrous in the extreme.

Please be advised that we are equally amenable to the form of either a workers' court of inquiry or a public forum between your organization and the component organizations of CRFC in which, not only your spurious charges against Cde. Fender, but also the entire malodorous tissue of dishonesties which you have concocted can be thoroughly aired.

Fraternally, Harry Turner

Dear Comrade Robertson,

19 October 1972

We have received your correspondence of 29 September. We also have in front of us a copy of the 2 October reply of the VANGUARD NEWSLETTER.

The VNL organization is certainly most correct in pointing out your inconsistency of first asking for a delay in the forum and then strongly inferring that it is we who are avoiding a public confrontation. Contrary to your beliefs, Comrade Robertson, we are more than anxious to answer your organizations charges and to expose the hypocrisy of the SL in its own relations with the police. And we shall answer in the context of any format, whether it be

a forum or court of public inquiry.

To see that such sessions are organized as swiftly as possible, I strongly urge that your organization either name a time, date, and place or arrange for representatives of the SL to meet with members of the groups participating in CRFC for the purpose of working out arrangements suitable to all parties.

Fraternally, Malcolm L. Kaufman
Corresponding Secretary

HISTORICAL ROOTS OF THE DEGENERATION OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL AND OF THE CENTRISM OF THE SWP - For a return to the Proletarian Road of Trotskyism
- Part III Introduction by David Fender

Wohlforth tries to apologize for the failures of the Fourth International of the last 30 years with the same old and time worn theme used by Healy, Mandel, Frank, Hansen, etc., that:

"The Fourth International has had to carry out this work under generally unfavorable objective historical circumstances."

Here in a nut shell Wohlforth exposes himself and his non-Marxist methodology in spite of his constant ritualistic incantations to dialectical materialism. All the old political skeletons of the Fourth International and International

Committee's (IC) misleaderships are neatly tucked away in the closet marked historical determinism. The condition of the Fourth International today, it seems according to Wohlforth, has nothing to do with its leadership, "the consistency of analysis and program," that in spite of what mistakes were made, things could not have been qualitatively different than they are today. Such a fatalistic position is adopted by Wohlforth, Healy and Co. in order to rationalize the miserable history of the IC which they claim is the real Fourth International--a subject we will take up at some length in the latter part of the history.]

The SWP was, perhaps, in the best position of all the sections of the Fourth International to deal with the national chauvinist pressure.

The original founders of the Left Opposition in the USA contained a good number of comrades who had come from and had their roots in the working class movement. With the first wave in the rise of the CIO, these comrades were able to take advantage of the situation and lead a very important class-struggle fight in Minneapolis deepening their roots in the proletariat. The fusion with the American Workers Party also brought in fresh cadres, and then the entry into the Socialist Party under "the advice and guidance of Trotsky--a decisive factor in all this work--" (Cannon) was a success, with the party again increasing its ranks and learning precious lessons. The valuable work done by the cadres of the early Trotskyist movement was reflected in the more favorable social composition of the Socialist Workers Party compared to that of the other sections in the Fourth International. The SWP could claim a membership consisting of at least 50% working class, many of them with valuable practical experience.

The fact that the SWP was in the USA and not in Europe is another im-

portant factor that should not be under-emphasized. The impending and immediate crisis in Europe demanded that the respective bourgeoisie use the chauvinist whip much more severely. Unlike Europe the USA was in no danger of becoming a battleground and even its entry was not an immediate question. The economic crisis in the USA was not so aggravated as to necessitate a Fascist dictatorship such as in Italy, Germany, and Spain, or a Popular Front solution as in France, which only laid the basis for the reactionary governments that followed. Whereas the government of France outlawed all communist organizations, Roosevelt prosecuted the leadership of only the SWP.

In spite of the SWP's more favorable position--compared to the other sections--it by no means escaped the nationalist chauvinist pressure. The first real blow came with the Burnham-Abern-Shachtman fight. The party split almost down the middle on a class basis. The petty bourgeoisie deserted to higher ground to avoid the sting of the chauvinist whip.

"The split in the SWP was followed by a split, although a very small one, in the International, where a series of elements like Lebrun, Johnson, Trent, and Anton, who had seats on the International Executive Committee, had in reality adopted the political and organizational positions of Shachtman." (Pablo, "Twenty years of the Fourth International," Fourth International, No.3, Summer, 1968).

The capitulation "before the social-patriotic wave" occurred as early as 1935 in France, as we pointed out, in relation to the Molinier-Frank tendency inside the SFIO. In 1940, only a few months after Shachtman split from the SWP, the French section as a whole openly capitulated, lock-stock-and-barrel, to nationalism. In the "Bulletin of the Committee for the Fourth International" (No. 2, Sept. 20, 1940) we can find a report adopted unanimously by the "Central Committee of the Committee for the Fourth International" (ex-POI) from which the following is excerpted:

"The French bourgeoisie has rushed into a blind alley: to save itself from revolution, it threw itself into Hitler's arms, to save itself from this hold, it has only to throw itself into the arms of the Revolution. We are not saying that it will do so cheerfully; nor that the fraction of the bourgeoisie capable of playing this game is the most important: the majority of the bourgeoisie secretly awaits its salvation from England, a large minority awaits it from Hitler. It is to the 'French' fraction of the bourgeoisie that we hold out our hand...

"We must be the defenders of the wealth that the generations of French peasants and workers have accumulated. We must also be the defenders of the splendid contribution of the French writers and scientists to the intellectual patrimony of humanity, the defenders of the great revolutionary and socialist tradition of

France...."

Among the many quotes to choose from we will satisfy ourselves with only one more. On the occasion of the anniversary of the Paris Commune, the April 1, 1941, issue of "La Verite" (No.11) had the following to say:

"We know like our predecessors of 1871 that we will have to take in hand the struggle for national independence, betrayed by the bourgeoisie...."

The above should be sufficient to show that the political line of the French section had nothing in common with internationalism. The Leninist concept of revolutionary defeatism--the defeat of one's own country being the "lesser evil"--is diametrically opposed to the "struggle for national independence" so clearly stated above.

In 1944 three "Trotskyist" groupings (POI, CCI and Groupe Octobre) unified to form the PCI (Parti Communiste Internationaliste). From a bulletin put out jointly in July, 1943, by the POI and CCI, one learns that although the POI used some "dangerous expressions" (or formulations), the fundamental political position was correct and even farsighted in that the POI saw as early as 1940 the transformation of the national movement into the class struggle. In the unity declaration which appeared in the March 25, 1944, issue of "La Verite," one discovers that the unifying organizations had, since the beginning of the war, maintained an "internationalist position politically and in action." In "correcting their errors, by means of a Bolshevik self-criticism" they noted "some episodic errors of this or that group." The truth of the matter is probably that it was not so much a question of refusing to make a self-criticism, but rather a simple inability to do so. The comrades were hopelessly caught up in the national chauvinist politics of the petty bourgeoisie of which they were only a part.

In August, 1945, the French section published a pamphlet entitled La Lutte des Trotskyistes sous la Terreur Nazie (The Trotskyists' Struggle under the Nazi Terror), the main theme of which is to document the "Trotskyist" struggle against German Fascism. The pamphlet contains an open letter to the president of the Press Federation reprinted from the Sept. 30, 1944, "La Verite" (No. 74). The letter is written in defense of the PCI's demand that "La Verite" be allowed to appear legally inasmuch as "LA VERITE WAS THE FIRST RESISTANCE ORGAN" against the Nazis.

"During four years, in 19 mimeoed editions and 54 printed, La Verite led the campaign against fascism and the occupying imperialism. These campaigns were oriented in the following direction:"

Point # 3 reads:

"3rd STRUGGLE FOR THE RIGHT OF PEOPLES TO SELF DETERMINATION; this right being valid for all peoples, including those of the colonies."

One would search in vain to find anything that even resembled a revolutionary defeatist position in this pamphlet, the 73 editions of "La Verite", or the politics of the French section in general during or even after the war. Even the demand for fraternization was not based on the concept of turning the war into a civil war on both sides but rather of both sides joining together in a "determined struggle against Hitler!" As we shall see, the French section's complete capitulation to nationalism was only one of the extreme manifestations of what took place in the International as a whole.

Comrades of the German section, the IKD (International Communists of Germany) also adopted a straight nationalist line. They wrote in their infamous "Three Theses" document dated. Oct. 19, 1941:

"There is no more burning problem

in Europe than the national freedom of nations enslaved by Germany and its solution with the help and through international socialism is important and indispensable for three reasons," "However one views it, the transition from fascism to socialism remains a utopia without a stopping place, which is by its contents equivalent to a democratic revolution."

In the Dec. 1945-Jan. 1946 issue of "Quatrieme Internationale" in their article "On the European Revolution" the German comrades state:

"The retrogressive development of capitalism leads to the destroying of national independence and of democratic rights in the main European countries. Under these circumstances, class struggle must exchange its old traditions for new methods. Instead of the more or less free play of the different social and political forces of the old democracies, instead of the existence of political parties and trade unions, what we are dealing with now is a national democratic movement of liberation including the whole population in its struggle against national and political oppression...."

For the German comrades the countries of Europe again had to undergo bourgeois democratic revolutions. The national revolution was "the order of the day." Even within their nationalist theoretical wanderings the German comrades did not remain "Trotskyist." They did not even retain the theory of the permanent revolution to deal with the national question--unlike the International--but rather opted for the Menshevik theory of stages with the democratic revolution being "a stopping place." The "important and indispensable" forces of "international socialism" were to "help, and through" them was to be accomplished the "national and democratic" stage which would then, and only then, open the door to the "socialist and proletarian" stage.

(to be continued)