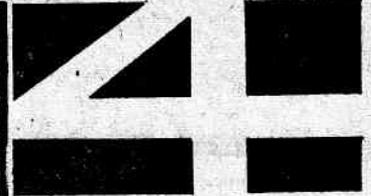


SPARTACIST



NUMBER 8

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1966

10 CENTS

"GREAT PROLETARIAN CULTURAL REVOLUTION"

MAOISM RUN AMOK

The Red Guards, bearers of Mao Tse-tung's thought, instruments of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, have answered their critics: "Revolutionaries are Monkey Kings, their golden rods are powerful, their supernatural powers far-reaching and their magic omnipotent, for they possess Mao Tse-tung's great invincible thought. We wield our golden rods, display our supernatural powers and use our magic to turn the old world upside down, smash it to pieces, pulverize it, create chaos and make a tremendous mess, the bigger the better! We must do this to the present revisionist middle school attached to the Tsinghua University, make rebellion in a big way, rebel to the end! We are bent on creating a tremendous proletarian uproar, and hewing out a proletarian new world!"

And *Peking Review* (9 Sept. 1966), the authoritative foreign-language political organ of the Chinese government, approves.

Bureaucratic Dangers

Such grotesqueries are symptoms of the dangers a bureaucracy, once its power is consolidated, poses to any workers state. When such a bureaucracy attempts to build socialism in one country, surrounded by the pressures of imperialism and cut off from the world revolution, it can view the economic and political needs of socialist development only in terms of maintaining its own privileged position. The position of the Chinese bureaucracy is apparently now so ossified that it threatens to destroy most of the gains made by the third Chinese revolution. If, as the above quote would indicate, the Chinese bureaucracy has chosen chaos and mysticism as the means of curing China's problems, we can validly question whether there was any other choice open to this "Marxist" bureaucracy, short of its own removal through a workers revolution which would institute soviet democracy and the whole range of associated fundamental advances.

The first Chinese revolution of 1911, a bourgeois-democratic movement led by Sun Yat-sen's Kuomintang (KMT), was unable to complete the two most pressing tasks confronting it: agrarian reform and bourgeois-nationalist unification of the country. The subsequent history of the KMT under Chiang Kai-shek totally confirms Trotsky's general analysis of such a revolution:



MAO's HEAD floats down the Yangtze while Stalin's has come to rest on a Budapest street.

"Not a single one of the tasks of the 'bourgeois' revolution can be solved in these backward countries under the leadership of the 'national' bourgeoisie, because the latter emerges at once with foreign support as a class alien or hostile to the people. Every stage in its development binds it only the more closely to the foreign finance capital of which it is essentially the agency." (Introduction to Isaacs' *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution*)

Revolutionary Defeat

The defeat of the second Chinese revolution of 1927-29 occurred in great measure due to the policy of Stalin's Comintern, which subordinated the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to the bourgeois-dominated KMT. Despite a series of bloody massacres of workers and CCP cadres carried out by Chiang in 1926-27, Stalin continued to look on him as a revolutionary. More correctly, Stalin wanted a "friendly" bourgeois government on the southeastern border, and to that end he sacrificed the Chinese workers movement. (Although in 1927 he was to "discover" that the person "responsible" for these defeats was CCP chairman Ch'en Tu-hsiu, from 1924 to 1927 Stalin refused to listen to Ch'en's objections to the Comintern policies.) Only when Stalin and the other bureaucrats, trying to consolidate their

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Revolution and Truth

G. Healy, general secretary of the British Socialist Labour League, and his publicists in the American Committee for the Fourth International are evidently striving to compensate with volume for what they lack in cogency. Determined to do a "job" on the Spartacist League, Healy's efforts to discredit our "clique of petty-bourgeois friends" is frankly impressive: very heavy coverage in five issues of Wohlforth's *Bulletin*, four of the SLL's *Newsletter*, sections of the August issue of *Fourth International*, and a 38-page pamphlet reprinting the first six attacks. As if the split itself did not have enough of a Kafkaesque quality, Healy and his ACFI mouthpiece accuse Spartacist of "sectarianism," "declaring war," and "pouring out slanders and lies"—in *replying* to the attack which the *Bulletin* initiated.

But the split's grotesqueness must not obscure its seriousness. The Hansen pamphlet *Healy 'Reconstructs' the Fourth International*, published by the SWP, only suggests the value of the breach to the revisionists. Healy and Wohlforth, with whose organizations the Spartacist League remains in essential political agreement, actually seem to gloat that unity with us was not consummated; yet we have already expressed our bitterness over "the temporary set-back to the world movement and to our prospects in the U.S.," "the resultant aid and comfort given to the SWP and to Pabloist revisionists internationally," and the "delight to Stalinists of all varieties who have for years attacked Trotskyists as unprincipled splitters." (Letter of Spartacist leader H. Turner to Healy, 30 April 1966.)

The Calculated Lie

A set-back of another sort has also resulted. ACFI's efforts to rationalize Healy's anti-Leninist organizational practices have driven these comrades into a truly appalling anti-Marxist direction: the conscious embracement of *calculated deception* as political methodol-

ogy. Our comrades formerly in the Socialist Workers Party first fully tasted Wohlforth's talents in 1963 when, as *de facto* party prosecutor, his lying accusations were the basis for their expulsions. The April conference debacle has again revealed Wohlforth's and Healy's expertise. Striving defensively to project the image that everybody is a bit of a liar, they challenge our assertion that James Robertson, SPARTACIST editor and a delegate, was expelled from the conference for refusing to acknowledge our "petty-bourgeois" nature and other characterizations. These charges constituted the bizarre motivation of a demand for an "apology" for Robertson's absence from a session.

ACFI brands our version as "mythology"; but they and Healy have inadvertently let slip a glimmer of the truth. The 12 September *Bulletin*, while ignoring Robertson's several apologies to the delegates for an unintentional infraction of "protocol," describes the ultimatum thus: "Only when he continued to refuse to acknowledge that he had caused the conference to be inconvenienced was his *attitude characterized as that of a petty-bourgeois*. . . . But he continued, for the next 24 hour period of the conference . . . to refuse to apologize." Healy's letter of 15 April to Turner picks up the story: "At the end of this session . . . Robertson was then asked if he would carry out the unanimous request of the Congress and apologize for his *attitude towards the Congress*. He refused to do this and was accordingly asked to leave. . . ." (Our emphasis.) Healy's docile words fail to convey the full flavor of this verbal hate session, culminating in our delegate's expulsion.

Wohlforth and Struggle

Our ACFI comrades have been particularly hard put to defend the allegations that we "write off the white working class as quiescent and oppose any agitational work," especially since this charge emanates from a group which in its entire existence has issued three leaflets directed to situations of struggle—and two of these were issued jointly with Spartacist, which has more than 90 of its own to its credit! Wohlforth's isolation from civil rights struggles, as from the labor movement, is reflected in his obsequious "Open Letter to SNCC" (*Bulletin*, 10 October) and more significantly in ACFI's incapacity to recruit a single Black member. Apparently as a wishful consolation, the *Bulletin* prints a photograph of a tin-hatted Black worker as its "Labor Scope" mascot; and while claiming to be "printed entirely by union labor," the paper lacks the authority of a printers' trade label—a suggestion of cynical ignorance of even the anti-scab traditions of militant trade unionism.

Having many times acknowledged the Spartacist League's modest but real involvement in mass struggle, our ACFI comrades had to explain their post-conference public fabrication. After first expressing unconcern, ACFI members tragically began to suggest that dishonesty as such is correct in principle. On 17 September, at ACFI's first public function since their April rupture with us, a Coordinating Committee member privately boasted, in the presence of unaffiliated observers, that ACFI would stoop to any debasement to safeguard its connection with Healy. Similar cynical admissions began to accumulate. Finally on 2 October, in the first of several classes on "Leninism" (actually an

Aesopian re-run of the split aimed at hardening ACFI's membership) Wohlforth codified his "method." Discussing Trotsky's 1925 denial of Lenin's Testament, Wohlforth acknowledged that Trotsky misled his comrades. But, said Wohlforth, exalting this desperate evasion into a principle, "TROTSKY TAUGHT US WHEN TO LIE AND WHEN NOT TO LIE."

The fact that Trotsky's disavowal was committed at the decision of the leading body of the Opposition, and under terms dictated by Stalin, did not prevent it from accruing heavily to Stalin's advantage and producing no little disorientation among Trotsky's followers. But the profoundly cynical assertion of *deception as a principle*—which represents Wohlforth's abdication of any intention to function as a revolutionist—was learned from Healy, not Trotsky. In fact, Wohlforth takes that action which our opponents have sought to exploit as the "core" of Trotskyist practice and himself turns it into the *essence* of Trotskyist practice!

The minuteness of Wohlforth's literary sect does not deflect from the power of this poison. What is at stake is no less than whether the future Leninist vanguard—of which we today are the progenitors—will have the *capacity* to carry through the task of leading working people to revolutionary victory. But the proletariat's conscious understanding of its tasks, central to Marxism, is only nourished to the extent that the workers realize the clear and sober *truth*—including about ourselves and our opponents.

Treating this problem in *Their Morals and Ours*, Trotsky reasoned: "The liberation of the workers can come only through the workers themselves. There is, therefore, no greater crime than deceiving the masses, palming off defeats as victories, friends as enemies, bribing workers' leaders, fabricating legends, staging false trials, in a word, doing what the Stalinists do. These means can serve only one end: lengthening the domination of a clique already condemned by history. But they cannot serve to liberate the masses."

The *Bulletin* itself of 29 March 1966, describing the "political methodology" of Progressive Labor, anticipated its own tragedy: "It has been said by someone who probably learned the hard way, 'never trust anyone who lies to you.' . . . It would be thought that anyone belonging to an organization that aspires to revolutionary victory of the working class would examine the history . . . and see the political method of *the lie* as an important component of the reformist degeneration of the Communist parties throughout the world."

Wohlforth's Method

Armed with this "method," Wohlforth has had no difficulty in subordi-

nating theory and truth to his tactical needs. Thus, to resurrect the slander of Spartacist's denial of the working class, Wohlforth in the *Bulletin* of 10 October isolates a quotation from our last issue referring to the New Leftists' "image of an apathetic white working class"—in order to attribute this view to us in the very article by us calling for "arousing the working class" to a political struggle against capitalism! Similarly Wohlforth, like Healy, relishes in endlessly slandering individuals who break with the movement. Thus Wohlforth vituperates Shane Mage while printing in the 24 October *Bulletin*, without a single acknowledgement, an article on Hungary almost wholly adopted and plagiarized from Mage's work!

Our experience with Healy's and Wohlforth's opportunism, which predicates such dishonesty, dates back to our original split in 1962. Rewriting the history of his relations with us in a series, "Problems of the Fourth International" (*Newsletter*, 22 and 29 October), Healy serves up as "educational assistance" the ultimatum given our comrades then in the SWP—not simply to accept the discipline of his group with which they had only close but ill-defined relations, but to *renounce* their views before the party. Healy explains that he was "opposed to any attempt to sharpen up the internal faction struggle inside the SWP . . ." (*Newsletter*, 22 October), and, through Wohlforth at the time, circulated charges of our comrades' "indiscipline" and "split perspective" (*SWP Discussion Bulletin*, June 1963); yet Healy's 29 October version endeavors to prove our alleged anti-internationalism by citing that we were "ready to accept SWP discipline"! Healy's contradiction reflects his flip-flop at the time: Healy was willing to police our tendency in exchange for a deal with Dobbs; when this proved fruitless, Healy had Wohlforth drop the "party loyalty" line and virtually invite expulsion. Our comrades, on the other hand, steered one straight course until their expulsion: a principled, vigorous struggle inside the SWP for a revolutionary program.

While Healy largely just rehashes the *Bulletin's* well-worn lies, these articles further reveal the man's Stalinist-conditioned idea of an International: not a disciplined collective of peer sections, guided by a democratically-selected center, but a network of puppets obedient to Healy for his "revolutionary integrity and rich experience." A dubious integrity, indeed, after the "rich experience" of "advice" to our "goodselves" like the following: "We do not want to impose [our proposals] on you. If you do not like to accept them, then there is no need to accept them. All those comrades who do accept them will be considered as part of an international tendency. . . ." (Healy's letter to Revolutionary Tendency of

SWP, 12 November 1962.)

As the servant reflects the master, Wohlforth exposes the political character of Healy; and their performance as micro-careerists repudiates their literary Leninism. The latest manifestation of ACFI's left-centrist behavior has been their electoral positions: in New York City they supported the middle-class Hal Levin campaign; meanwhile ACFI's man on the West Coast caved in to the "boycott" line of the Scheer liberals—placing ACFI to the right of even the *National Guardian*, which supported the SWP's write-in campaign. Such opportunism links to Healy's own shortcomings which we would have sought to correct *within the International Committee* had we not been expelled: especially his tendency towards a Great-Power insensitivity on the national question; the SLL's tactical vacillations between unprincipled concessions and violent sectarianism; and the Healy regime's anti-Leninist bureaucratism. ACFI, parodying Trotsky, begs these questions by "defying" us to explain the "social roots" of Healy's practices. The *Voix Ouvrière* comrades have observed that while a bureaucracy such as the Stalinists' has a basis in social and economic causes, including the conservative protection of material privilege, Healy's bureaucratism is a product primarily of his incapacity as a revolutionist!

Trotskyism and Truth

While Healy's practices, aped by Wohlforth, increase our opponents' vulnerability, the Spartacist League takes no pleasure in the business; the 29 March *Bulletin's* sober commentary on PL ironically well foretold our present assessment of ACFI: ". . . We do not simply gloat over the self-destruction of a political organization. Progressive Labor's behavior can have no other effect than to isolate and demoralize its own membership as well as creating skepticism and mistrust in the minds of workingclass and student militants toward communist organization and struggle. All in all, a criminal waste!"

Yet Wohlforth assails us for not "closing ranks with the IC" by denying that a crime was committed! There is compounded irony here—the Spartacist League is politically much closer to the IC than, for example, to *Voix Ouvrière*, with whom we have strong differences over their state-capitalist position on the Sino-Soviet states, their tendency towards syndicalism, and their erroneous assessment of the Fourth International. But we, like *VO*, recognize that true solidarity with the International Committee forces requires that we help it *purge its ranks* of criminals, not deny their deeds. The honest engagement of this task itself facilitates the rebuilding of a Leninist Fourth International. ■

Texas Farm Strike

Austin: This summer a farm workers' union in the Rio Grande Valley called its first strike; it was lost, but the battle to organize the lowest-paid workers in Texas has only begun. The AFL-CIO has made perfunctory attempts to organize the Valley field workers for five years, but serious efforts only began in May when local men started the Independent Workers Association. The IWA was joined by Eugene Nelson, staff member of the National Farm Workers Association, while he was in Texas to get support for the boycott of Schenley products. When Schenley recognized the NFWA on 5 April, Nelson decided to stay and help organize a similar union in Starr County.

Strike Called

Soon after Nelson's arrival the union leaders began organizing the workers at night rallies in Rio Grande City; at the 29 May meeting to elect officers there were over 400 members. By the following day, Nelson claimed 1,000 members, and a strike was called for 1 June—if the growers refused the union's demands for recognition and the \$1.25 minimum wage for the field workers. By 2 June Los Puertos, La Casita and Suntex farms were struck and picket lines set up. Although the union leaders claimed that 95 per cent of the workers manned the picket lines, they stated that there was no hope of halting the melon harvest—and the growers claimed there was no strike at all, merely picketing by unemployed workers and "outside agitators." To assist the workers who scabbed, the growers brought over Mexican "commuters" early in the mornings before the picket lines were set up. Although the AFL-affiliated produce packers from California honored the picket lines, the grow-

ers began training local labor as packers, and announced that no delay in the harvest was anticipated.

Confused by the partial failure of the picketing to affect the growers, Nelson advocated individual "civil disobedience"; he himself was arrested for blocking a moving produce train. Such tactics had no effect on the employers. On 2 June the growers obtained an injunction against mass picketing of the farms in Starr County. Nelson and his lieutenants called off the pickets—and the strike was dead. (The workers were not so legalistically minded—the FBI investigated "complaints of intimidation and threatened violence" against the scabs!)

The union put out a strike newsletter entitled "Voz de la Gente." The first one (30 June) reveals some roots of the strike failure. It contains an amalgam of good explanations of bosses' tactics for strike-breaking, some ultra-radical demands and opportunist appeals to the reactionary religious background of the workers. One quotation will illustrate this:

"The people of Starr County have shown the people of Texas and the world that they are the sons of Zapata. They are marching under the banner of our country, our union and the Virgin of Guadalupe for JUSTICE NOW."

When it became clear that the strike was lost, Nelson began to accept the support of organized religion, deflecting the energy of the workers to "symbolic," rather than economic, actions. A series of marches was begun to protest the plight of the workers and their families. The first of these, on 7 June, was headed by union members carrying U.S. and Mexican flags and pictures of "Our Lady of Guadalupe," and ended in mass in a church in Garciasville.

What is the role of the Church in this struggle? Perhaps the most reactionary segment of the ruling stratum in the capitalist world is the church. Not only the churches but the very existence of religion itself is an impediment to the development of class consciousness. Marx, in the "Introduction to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right," stated: "... Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of a spiritless situation. It is the opium of the people. The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of the people is required for their real happiness." The support, which workers may receive from the churches should be used gingerly and viewed with suspicion. As a union becomes more and more militant, and comes into greater conflict with the existing society, the religious elements

will try to restrain it.

The gradual takeover of the farm union by religious types is only part of the picture. The leadership of the union has not so far proven itself capable of uniting all the Valley workers behind a militant program. Nelson came into the valley with good intentions, but little experience, and has not been able to break loose from local religious and conservative control. Margil Sanchez, IWA leader, was opposed to affiliation with the NFWA because of "revolutionaries" among its leadership; he prides himself that "every leader of the Rio Grande City union has signed an oath saying he is not a member of any organization found to be subversive by the Federal Government." (San Antonio Express, 6 July 1966.)

The union has also been weakened by its nationalist orientation and lack of a working-class program. Many members are unemployed and are therefore limited to protest action rather than actions with significant economic leverage. The union leadership has failed to advance any program other than higher wages. A strong union cannot be built on wage demands alone, but must recognize the interests of the working class. For the union to grow and accomplish even minimal goals, there should be an orientation to all the farm workers in Texas and cooperation with any similar efforts elsewhere in the South.

Texas Labor Party

A strong farm workers' union could also form the nucleus for a labor party, a necessary beginning step towards the achievement of workers' political power. A Committee for a Texas Labor Party was formed last April but has failed to function, due to its isolation from trade union and civil rights struggles, and its poor understanding of working-class politics. It was composed of liberals, unaffiliated radicals and Stalinists who follow the line of the Communist Party.

The reactivation of the Committee working in conjunction with the farm union would be immensely helpful to both efforts. The union would gain a great advantage in its fight if it raised the demand for a labor party and implemented this demand in the Valley by running its own independent candidates on a working-class program, against the Republicans and Democrats, Mexican-American or Anglo. The Committee would gain tremendously by having the support of a union behind it and would be able to coordinate any other efforts toward a labor party from within other unions. ■

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own position in Russia, were embarrassed by the pointedly correct analyses of the Left Opposition, did the Comintern call for the Canton uprising. This adventure, dictated from the top, at a time when the workers movement had already been bloodily defeated, ended in the still bloodier Canton commune.

This is the heritage with which Mao associates himself — the betrayal of workers movements by Stalin's zig-zag policies of bureaucratic, self-interest and the still-born bourgeois-democratic revolution of Sun Yat-sen.

During the 30s and 40s, Mao kept refurbishing the alliance with the KMT—a "patriotic" alliance designed to defeat the Japanese bourgeoisie by aiding the Chinese bourgeoisie—despite continuous betrayals on the part of Chiang. After the Japanese were defeated, Mao and the People's Liberation Army (PLA) dampened peasant efforts at land reform, so as not to disturb Chiang and his landlord backers. Only when Chiang rebuffed the last attempt at a coalition government in 1947 did the PLA issue its own call: for a "democratic coalition government."

The nature of this "democratic coalition government" can be seen from the actions of the CCP as it was driving out Chiang: in response to *workers uprisings* in Shanghai and other cities the CCP put a ban on strikes, instituted compulsory arbitration, slashed wages and lengthened the working day to appease the "nationalist" bourgeoisie.

"Bloc of Four Classes"

The CCP came to power in this third Chinese revolution representing a coalition of classes. It introduced into the newly forming workers state many of the old contradictions from the bourgeois system. Having to rely on the workers and peasants to sever China's dependence on imperialism, the bureaucracy also believed it had to rely on the patriotic "nationalist" bourgeoisie to guarantee its own survival. Balancing between all these classes, the bureaucracy has been forced more and more to elevate itself above the population, to assume the role of arbiter between classes, eventually to take on the cover of infallibility.

By 1966, the infallibility had slipped—Mao, Lin Piao & Co. must now resort to wide-scale purges to silence the doubts. In defiance of party rules, there has been no party conference since 1955, and the previous CC plenum was in 1962. Of the 12 men listed as Political Bureau members in 1955, only four, Mao, Lin, Chou En-lai and Kang Sheng, are still on the P.B. Peng Teh-huai was purged in 1960, Peng Chen in

June 1966. Liu Shao-shi, Chu Teh, Chen Yun and Teng Hsiao-ping have all been "demoted" in recent months, contrary to party procedure for such changes. In addition three others are no longer listed and may also have been demoted.

Between several hundred and several thousand other top cadre have been purged so far, the concentration falling on the military, high ranking party officials, including the whole Peking Municipal Committee, university professors and administrators, and economists. In addition the Young Communist League has been dissolved and all schools closed.

Political Purges

Those purged certainly do *not* form a coherent political opposition to Mao—the sterility of the CCP's political history itself would militate against such a possibility. Apparently some purged have wanted closer ties with Russia and even with the U.S.; but others have protested the lack of workers' control over the state apparatus. What all do have in common seems to be disagreement with the control clamped on the party, and with bureaucratic anti-intellectualism which substitutes Mao for technical knowledge and scientific investigation.

Most significantly, almost all the important officials purged, no matter what their field, have at one time or another criticized the last Great Leap Forward, in 1958-59. The removal of this opposition would be a logical preparatory step for the attempted next leap.

Through these purges, the Central Committee has been turned into a rubber stamp, allowed only to approve past actions, never to discuss present or future ones. (The communique from the August Plenum is direct confirmation of this.) Similarly, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution is designed to fix absolutely the hierarchical succession of directives from top to bottom. The juveniles currently passing under the pseudonym of Red Guards can be whipped up into a demonstration whenever Mao & Co. find the need to bring recalcitrant local party organizations to heel. But then, since the schools have been emptied, marriage and sexual relationships forbidden until age 26, and little work provided for the hordes streaming into Peking, Mao & Co. have found little difficulty in suggesting a whole host of spontaneous "proletarian" actions to their "monster"-chasers.

"Cultural" Revolution

But let us overlook its juvenile shock troops and instead examine the "cultural" and the "proletarian" aspects of this revolution.

To the Red Guards, Beethoven and Bach are "bourgeois revisionists"; Shakespeare and Goethe, "royalists";

the purged Chou Yang, a "Ringleader of the Sinister Gang in Literary and Art Circles"; Confucius, "an ox, a demon, a snake and a devil"; and Greek sculptures, smashed.

(We can imagine the number of penitential swims in the Hudson River Progressive Labor Party leader Milt Rosen has taken since the last *PL* magazine goofed. Not only did an article on China credit Mao's version of Marxist thought to his background in Confucian studies: "this fourth current [Chinese classical philosophy] is the source of some distinctive features of Marxist theory as developed by Mao Tse-tung . . ."; the article also described a recent Chinese celebration as the now "revisionist" music: "a million people, who danced all night long, hour after hour, rejoicing, a living embodiment of the last movement of Beethoven's Choral Symphony with its prophetic hymn to the brotherhood of man." It must be uncomfortable to be a Maoist today, not being able to guess what will be "true" for tomorrow.)

Lenin, Trotsky, Marx and Engels repeatedly attacked the idea that the mission of the proletariat was to destroy the old culture: "Marxism has won its world-historic significance as the ideology of the revolutionary proletariat because, far from rejecting the most valuable achievements of the bourgeois epoch, Marxism, on the contrary, has assimilated and reshaped the more valuable elements accumulated in the course of more than two thousand years of development of human thought and culture." (Lenin's Draft Resolution on Proletarian Culture)

Now as for the proletarian aspect—metal workers in Kweiyang clashed with the bearers of proletarian culture; textile workers in Shanghai opposed the seizure of party headquarters by the young students; factory workers in Canton fought the Red Guards until troops were brought in to protect the young students; other such clashes occurred in Harbin, Tsingtao, Tientsin, Hangchow, Changsha, Sian and Wuhan.

Apparently in their efforts to teach the proletariat what proletarian culture is, these young students have encountered a true Maoist "contradiction."

Double-Talk=No Criticism

The double-talk aspect of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution is of course much less significant than the use Mao & Co. make of it. The various versions of Mao-culture, purges and juvenile shock troops all make the point very clearly: "There is to be no criticism of the bureaucracy or of its program." The bureaucracy must now totally mobilize and absolutely control all China's resources if it is to impose its own program on the workers and peasants. The Proletarian Cultural

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Revolution means nothing more than the destruction of all political-social culture in order to destroy the ideological basis for opposition to the bureaucracy.

The need of the Chinese bureaucracy for absolute control and the need to infuse that control with the sense of "revolutionary" orthodoxy could already be seen ten years ago. The purge of Kao Kang and Jao Shu-shih in 1955 apparently resulted from a dispute over production sector allotments. The bureaucracy, in an attempt to prevent future such "evil-doers," set up a control commission; justifying it with a quote from Lenin's *Left-Wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder*. Predictably, the quote was taken out of context—so out of context that the meaning was nearly reversed. The Chinese version of Lenin indicated that no one should be allowed to weaken "the iron discipline" of the party. Lenin's version of Lenin, however, indicated that such control is possible *only* when the party is reinforced by the *participation of the toiling masses*.

Imperialist Pressures

What in the current Chinese situation necessitates all this fake Marxism-Leninism? First, China now feels very acutely the pressures of imperialism refracted through and mediated by the bureaucracy. The U.S. has continually menaced China—through the Korean War, through its refusal in the early '50s to make China a nuclear-free zone, through its support of India's attacks on China's border, through the overall thrust of the Vietnam war. The bureaucracy has reacted to these pressures by trying to match U.S. military technology and by linking itself to "friendly" bourgeois governments, such as Ghana, Pakistan, and Indonesia, rather than by linking itself to proletarian revolutionary struggles. As the bourgeois governments one by one retreat from China, and the links with Russia and other workers states are broken, the bureaucracy retreats more and more into the isolated circle that U.S. imperialism has plotted for it.

Accordingly the success of the latest nuclear test cannot be viewed as an uncomplicated triumph once the economic meaning of that test is clear. To have developed nuclear capacity to the present Chinese level, the bureaucracy has been forced to unstructure the economy in a number of dangerous ways. The amount of money funneled into defense work has been estimated as high as 50% of government expenditures. More than half of the physicists, chemists and engineers working in China work on armament projects; undoubtedly a comparable section of

the industrial working class is so employed. Moreover, to have developed an intermediate range missile with nuclear warhead in so few years is not proof of the "miracles" attained by socialist construction; rather it indicates that all research has been vertically directed to the narrow empirical result desired, a nuclear weapon, and not horizontally developed so that all industrial fields could share in the results of scientific investigation.

Misstructured Economy

This misstructure is directly related to China's agricultural situation. Estimates of this year's grain harvest put it at about 5 million metric tons lower than last year's; this decrease will nearly double the amount of grain China has been forced to import annually since 1961. The decrease is superficially the result of drought or flood in some sections of China. But more basically, it results because there is no reserve in the agricultural sector able to absorb a calamity hitting any section of the country. Agriculture is strained to its limit under the present methods of production: intensively farmed, the Chinese land already produces one of the highest per acreage yields in the world, achieved almost wholly through unmechanized labor power; but there is little even potentially arable land left.

As long as agriculture remains non-mechanized and as long as the economy is so disbalanced by armament production, the rest of the economy must nearly stagnate. Two pairs of figures indicate the acuteness of this danger: in 1954, over 85% of the population was rural, only 2.4% of the population belonged to the industrial working force; today, over 85% is still rural, and the industrial work force has not yet risen to 3%. China has come nearly to the end of its present course of economic development.

In analyzing the direction of the Soviet Union under Stalin, Trotsky noted, "The instability of the Soviet regime, on the contrary, is due to the fact that its productive forces have far from grown up to the forms of socialist property." (*The Revolution Betrayed*) The same analysis is even more appropriate for China today. Obviously this contradiction between property form and technology will exist in any underdeveloped workers state. What is particularly crucial about China and other deformed workers states is that the bureaucracy by its very existence neutralizes the workers and creates waste. The myth of Mao's infallibility, protected by the elimination of contradicting technical studies, will hinder rational planning; erroneous instructions, never questioned because they come from the top, will continue to add to the waste—just as erroneous irrigation instructions resulted in the

alkalinization of great sections of formerly arable land in North China. Moreover, by building the revolution on a nationalist sentiment (now developed to the point of xenophobia), and by asserting that China would build socialism in its own country in its own way, the bureaucracy cut itself off from outside help. The bureaucracy has already begun to sacrifice workers and peasants movements in other countries (see SPARTACIST No. 5 on the Indonesian slaughters) to the exigencies of internal economic development, just as Stalin sacrificed China in 1927-29, and just as the Russian bureaucracy is doing again today with China.

China under the CCP began its planned development starting from a much lower stage than did Soviet Russia, with a per capita income approximately one-fourth that of Soviet Russia in 1920. In 1952, just before the beginning of the first five-year plan, it was probably less than \$80 a year. During the years of the first plan, China developed at an average rate of 12% annual growth in gross national product, partially achieved by taking up the slack in the economy left over from Chiang Kai-shek's corruption, internal warfare and capitalist plunder. By 1959 the income had been raised to about \$100 per capita.

Great Leap Forward

Then, in the middle of the second five-year plan came the Great Leap Forward. To label this adventurism is surely to miss the main point. By 1958, China was able to ascertain its position. The rate of economic growth had dropped back nearly to its present 5 to 7½%; the population continued to increase at a rate between 2 and 2½% annually. Given these rates of growth, China could not have been expected to reach the 1930 level of Soviet Russia, that is the level *before* Stalin's forced industrialization, until 1980, much less to approach the level of technology in present day Russia or the advanced capitalist nations. China had to find a short cut for converting its peasant population into the capital goods needed for industrialization. This was to be accomplished through the Great Leap Forward. The Great Leap involved sufficient risks so that when these were compounded by three years of drought, a retreat was necessary. The bureaucracy in an attempt to short cut urban industrialization had to depend heavily on the peasantry, a petty-bourgeois class, to achieve many of the tasks of socialism. When the pressures accumulated, the peasants could not maintain their "collective spirit" and the bureaucracy retreated.

Thus, the Great Leap Forward was defeated and with that defeat the economy was set back approximately five years. Production of grain did not return to the 1958 level until 1963; since

then it has remained constant at about 180 million metric tons. The same pattern of fluctuations is true of the total national income. But since 1958, the population has increased by between 75 to 100 million more people; therefore per capita production of grain and per capita share of national income has dropped from its high point in 1958.

One result of that defeat serves as illustration of the vicious circle confronting a workers state bureaucracy attempting to industrialize an underdeveloped country. Because the Great Leap had been instituted from the top, to have admitted the magnitude of the defeat would have called into question the infallibility of the bureaucracy. Even to have allowed release of statistical analyses to the top party cadre would have given ammunition to opponents of Mao & Co. Starting early in 1958, statisticians were warned through official publications that they lacked "political consciousness." Eventually the State Statistical Bureau not only quit publishing the immensely detailed studies of China's economic situation, but also stopped most of its research.

Planned Economy?

But this "little" matter is immensely important for a planned economy. Is the population 760,300,000 or 800,292,000 or 894,493,000? A plan based on 760 million could turn out disastrously if it gradually became evident that there were 894 million people to feed.

Thus the pressures of problems in the economic base forces the bureaucracy to negate the political gains of the third revolution. As these are negated and the bureaucracy is revealed more and more as a Bonapartist dictatorship, the political decay serves to destroy the economic gains made in the early years of the revolution.

Faced with the bristling threat of American imperialism and weakened by Russian opportunism, China must break out of the circular nature of development in an underdeveloped country. But because its own interests don't allow the bureaucracy to choose ultimate self-removal, it must force China into the mold of its own solutions. The only solution the bureaucracy has left itself is another attempt at forced industrialization, i.e., another Great Leap Forward. Apparently this is the choice the bureaucracy has made, for a hard-sell campaign to institute "a new big leap forward in China's socialist construction" has been dominating *Peking Review* in recent months. Once again the bureaucracy will attempt to proletarianize the peasant and decentralize industry.

New Leap

What is most significant is not whether this particular leap will succeed or fail; rather, China, starting

now with economic conditions less favorable than those of 1958, has been forced into this measure by the international policies and internal waste of its bureaucracy.

At this point the bureaucracy has chosen to make a new forced march to industrialization—this will mean that little more than bare means of subsistence can be allowed the population. But we can see where this will lead. Trotsky (again in *The Revolution Betrayed*) described a similar situation in Russia: "On a basis of 'generalized want,' the struggle for the means of subsistence threatens to resurrect 'all the old crap,' and is partially resurrecting it at every step."

The Chinese bureaucracy now speaks of Russian revisionism, particularly in relation to Libermanism; what they don't recognize about their own country is what Trotsky recognized very early about Russia—that the seeds of Libermanism are sown at an early stage in the revolution. Just last year, the bureaucracy was forced to give back small individual holdings on the land to the Chinese peasants—the bureaucracy, no matter how much it inveighs against the "four olds," is resurrecting "all the old crap." This didn't just happen, of course; it resulted from the bureaucracy's need to maintain its own position. This step, feeding petty-bourgeois ideology, must lead to the next step back—or to a Stalinoid attempt to crush the peasant "obtusiveness" through slaughter. Neither is the means for building socialism.

The particularly crucial problems facing China today result from the intersection, within the boundaries of an underdeveloped, massively-populated country, of various lines of self-interest: U.S. imperialism with its Pax Americana; the Russian bureaucracy which, although casting off Stalin, has not cast off Stalinism; and the neo-Stalinist Chinese bureaucracy.

Imperialism Served

Imperialism could not have found a better way to serve its own interests than if it had itself severed the ties between Russia and China. So long as the two are at odds, imperialism is free to gradually annihilate Viet Nam and other countries like it, with China itself the prime target.

So long as the Russian bureaucracy avoids its responsibility of giving aid to the world revolutionary movement, it will find it easy to concentrate on means of making its own position secure. In Russia that means passing off as "socialism" all the economic "reforms" taking place in the Soviet bloc today.

So long as the Maoist bureaucracy isolates China from the aid and the responsibilities of the world revolutionary movement, China will pour im-

mense amounts of its available resources into military power. And yet such a serious disbalancing of the economy cannot create a military power capable of defending the *socialist gains* of the third revolution. Moreover, if an economic crisis leaves Mao without the support of the population there will be no guerrilla defense of China—no matter how much thought of Mao has been forced onto the population.

If imperialism didn't also have its own problems, all it would need do is maintain the pressure and wait—for a capitalist mode of production in Russia and economic collapse in China. But imperialism is also faced with all the sharp contradictions of its own decaying system. Because the Russian and Chinese bureaucracies find their own position in contradiction with the need to exert pressure on imperialism, they each allow Viet Nam to face imperialist aggression alone, and each blame the other. The final proof of the need to remove them lies in their inability to provide joint international revolutionary leadership (a task not possible between two Stalinist bureaucracies, each determined to institute "socialism" in only one country and each country at a different stage in its development, therefore with different self-interests).

Workers Revolution

Only the revolutionary Chinese proletariat can lead the Chinese workers state out of its present deformity. The task of building a Leninist party inside China, able to lead the proletarian vanguard and the peasantry to a definitive clash with Mao's bureaucracy, is of utmost importance. Without leadership, the Chinese proletariat will not be able to establish itself as ruler of its own state.

The destruction of Maoism in China, at the hands of the proletariat, will open the door to the victory of the exploited masses of Asia and it will accelerate the revolutionary struggle in Viet Nam, India and Japan. In turn, workers' governments in these countries, particularly in industrially advanced Japan, can help China to break out of its present viciously limiting circle of economic development.

Similarly, in order for the Russian bureaucracy to be defeated, opening the way to European and Latin American workers struggles, demands the building of a new Leninist party inside Russia.

Finally, a workers revolution in any of the technologically advanced countries would speed immensely the overturns of the Russian and Chinese Stalinists.

Stalinism must be defeated in order that the imperialist exploitation of Africa, Asia and Latin America and the capitalist exploitation of workers can be erased forever from the face of the earth. ■

Political Revolution in Hu

Beginning on 23 October a decade ago, Hungary's working people rose in an historic attempt to overthrow Stalinist political rule and move forward to a socialist workers republic in their country. The Hungarian working class fought valiantly for several weeks before their revolution was crushed—but not before it created an example of heroic struggle capable of inspiring and guiding the international proletariat in its warfare against imperialist and Stalinist oppressors alike.

The 1956 revolution not only devastated all mystiques regarding the deformed workers states but provided a powerful vindication of the Trotskyist position. Thus the counterrevolutionary policies of the Stalinist bureaucracy decisively exposed it as an ally, when necessary, of imperialism against the working class—a revelation leading to defections of cadres from Stalinist parties over the globe. The familiar image, projected by middle-class cynics, of an emasculated working class forever reduced to mindless passivity and impotence under totalitarianism, also crumbled as hundreds of thousands of Hungary's industrial workers appropriated direct control of their factories and mines and took to the streets to defend their newly-acquired power. And the imperialists' contention that the Hungarian masses would embrace fascists and monarchist reactionaries of the Horthyite-Catholic variety in a headlong rush to return to capitalist exploitation (a slander which especially the Stalinists have assisted them in promoting) was demolished not only by the actions of the revolutionaries—including the violent suppression of what anti-Semitic and White Guard threats actually existed—but by the workers' militantly communist aspirations and their unambiguous hatred for capitalism.

The spontaneous creation of industrial workers councils throughout the country as the elementary machinery of proletarian rule carried forward the example set by the Paris Commune of 1870-71 (the inspiration for Lenin's *State and Revolution*) which was brought to fruition in the establishment of the Russian Soviet Republic in November, 1917. The Hungarian *soviets*, assisted with food supplied by the peasantry, effectively democratized political and economic life for most of the period of their existence.

Communist Principles

The revolutionaries, while denouncing the Stalinist "prostitution" of communism, were unequivocal in expressing their determination to build upon the existing achievements of nationalized property, agrarian reform, and planned economy. The National Writers Union, at the start of the uprising, voiced many of the revolution's ambitions, which included "an independent national policy based on the principle of socialism" and "true and sincere friendship with our allies—the U.S.S.R. and the Peoples Democracies. This can be realized only on the basis of Leninist principles." (*Proclamation*, 23 October 1956.) In a similar declaration issued 26 October, the Miskolc Workers Council echoed the resounding demands for political power for

the *soviets* and called for a government of "Communists devoted to the principles of proletarian internationalism."

Vigilantly hostile to capitalism, as to bureaucratic oppression, the masses were forced to defend their revolution not only against the Khrushchev bureaucracy but against small but potentially dangerous right-wing elements who endeavored to utilize the revolutionary crisis (a relatively puny threat which the Stalinists have grotesquely exaggerated in order to slander the revolution and anoint their own treachery). Fascist activities were suppressed. The Hungarian Army newspaper *Magyar Honved* of 1 November reported: "At Győr, certain extreme right-wing elements wanted to hold a big meeting. . . . But the workers of Győr prevented them from doing it. We want no fascism, we have had enough of tyranny, whether it be the tyranny of Rakosi or Szalasi." Similarly, the 2 November *Igazság (Truth)*, paper of the Revolutionary Youth, gave an abrupt but poignant expression of popular feelings: "We hate the fascists who are lurking in the shadows and who want to exploit the revolution." Not fascism, but Stalinist terror was the dominant force of counter-revolution in Hungary.

Clearly, the Hungarian proletariat, overwhelmingly supported by the peasantry, stood at the threshold of state power in 1956. Eighty per cent of the Hungarian Workers Party (Communist) supported the revolutionary masses. Many students and intellectuals, courageous partisans of the working class, fought and died valiantly alongside their comrades from the industrial enterprises. Workers and students marched through the streets of Budapest bearing portraits of Lenin. As in any truly popular revolution, the armed forces were profoundly shaken, with large sections of the Hungarian Army joining the insurrection. (Even among the Russian troops, many of whom were duped to believe they were fighting Anglo-French imperialists in Egypt or fascists in Berlin, there were defections to the revolution.)

Dual Power

Thus, a condition of civil war existed between the power represented by the workers councils and defended by the armed masses . . . and that of the Stalinist apparatus, backed up only by the secret police and Russian troops. Why, in this most favorable of revolutionary situations, did the workers lose? It is not sufficient simply to enthuse about the revolutionary successes and vituperate the triumphant enemy. Solidarity with our fallen comrades compels us to examine and seek to understand the weakness of the 1956 revolution.

As with all previous confrontations of dual power in labor history, the outcome of the revolutionary struggle in Hungary balanced on the problem of its leadership. To whom, and to what program, did the masses look to guide them? This question flows ineluctably from the fact that Marxism is founded upon the capacity of the working class to consciously assume direction of society. The self-emancipation of the proletariat depends upon the proletarians' conscious recognition of their tasks.

Hungary — Ten Years After

Much of Lenin's contribution to Marxist theory is summarized in his observation that "in its struggle for power the proletariat has no other weapon but organization." This voice concretely what the world proletariat has to a great extent learned intuitively; and it is obvious to every worker that *organization posits leadership*. Indeed, program and leadership are, for the working class, the most crucial expression of organization, to the extent that organization is a manifestation of the "class-for-itself."

Leadership Lacking

It was on this critical level that the Hungarian insurrection foundered. The working masses, crying out for drastic changes, for socialism, groped for a leadership which would clarify, focus, and consolidate their aspirations—a *revolutionary* leadership, consisting of the most militant and class-conscious workers, and constituting the class vanguard. Writing in 1924, Trotsky put forth in *Lessons of October* certain revolutionary maxims whose burning validity is underscored by the Hungarian events: "... without a party capable of directing the proletarian revolution, the revolution itself is rendered impossible. The proletariat cannot seize power by a spontaneous uprising." And further: "... circumstances may arise where all the prerequisites for socialism exist, with the exception of a far-seeing and resolute party leadership grounded in the understanding of the laws and methods of the revolution."

Such a party in Hungary would have had the task of winning the workers to a program transforming the *soviets* from organs of insurrection to the organs of *dominant state power* in the country. While endeavoring to win over the Communist Party insurgents, a revolutionary party should have posed the necessity of completely smashing the Stalinist state apparatus in Hungary, and urgently sought to establish, for example, a national congress of representatives from the revolutionary and workers councils in its place. Its members rooted in the working class across the land, and thus instantly cognizant of and responsive to the needs of the masses and to developments in every area, such a party would have made possible the centralized coordination of economic life and the military struggle which was so fatally absent. And, while advancing the necessity of blocking with the deformed workers states against world imperialism, the party should have sought to dispel all illusions of the "friendliness" of the bureaucracies of these states towards a popular socialist revolution, and urged the workers to depend upon their own strength and determination to win.

But no revolutionary leadership materialized to advance such a program and give culmination to the revolution. The workers, headless, called merely for reforms in the regime and saw their councils, not as a counter-apparatus of state power, but merely as machinery to give them a "share" in management and defend their interests. Searching for leadership, they fixed upon certain vacillating, conciliatory liberal-reform elements of the Communist Party, led by Imre Nagy, who

accepted power reluctantly and all but handed it back to Khrushchev. Far from fighting for the supremacy of the *soviets* as organs of *proletarian class dictatorship*, the revolutionaries called for universal elections from all classes to a democratic parliament—a process which would have transferred power to the Catholic-peasant majority of the population, thus potentially menacing the workers' truly *socialist* demands and giving a foothold to the imperialists-restorationists. Perhaps as equally a product of confusion, some revolutionaries looked for help to Stalinist bureaucracies abroad, such as China's, which meantime was supporting Khrushchev to the hilt and preparing to send "anti-revisionist" Chou En-lai on a tour of Europe to lend Peking's prestige and blessing to the butchery.

Defeat in Isolation

Perhaps the most serious weakness of the 1956 uprising, however, was its predominantly isolated, *nationalist* character. The revolt against Stalinist suppression of national identity assumed at times almost bourgeois-nationalist forms. The revolution was sparked by, and prepared during the insurgent wave which traversed the deformed workers states at this time; yet the militant workers and radical intellectuals, whose demands for political and economic reforms led to the outbreak on 23 October, made virtually no effort to extend their activities beyond Hungary's boundaries. Hence the revolution neither received succor from nor expanded its thrust into the other states of Europe—ultimately the *sine qua non* of victory. Even with the existing flaws, the chances of revolutionary survival would have been enormously enhanced had the Hungarian workers been emulated by their brothers in adjoining lands; isolation, on the other hand, promised certain defeat.

Thus a revolutionary party in Hungary would not only have assumed the task of leading the Hungarian workers to state power, but, as a section of a disciplined *international* party, would have assisted in the vital work of preparing and leading insurrections in other European countries. Such an international revolutionary center, representing the continuity and international linkages which the Hungarian insurgents so desperately lacked, could have prepared the workers of these areas for action in solidarity with the Hungarians. Such a center, by transmitting the revolutionary example of Hungary to the proletariat of all Europe and co-ordinating it with the upsurges in other workers states, might well have triggered a final historic confrontation with imperialism during which the Stalinist bureaucracies would simply have been swept away.

For the Fourth International

The tragedy of the Hungarian commune must not blind us to the power of its example. As the Paris Commune of 1870-71, even in defeat, inspired the Russian Bolsheviks to eventual victory, so the energy of the Hungarian workers' struggle must flow into the veins of a world revolutionary party—the Fourth International—which alone can enable the international proletariat to seize victory from such defeats. ■

WE ARE HERE!

Founding Conference

The Spartacist League held its Founding Conference in Chicago over Labor Day weekend. This Conference, attended by some 50 delegates and observers from all parts of the country, laid a firm political basis for the new organization by adopting a declaration of its revolutionary aims and principles. Also adopted, with large decisive margins, were resolutions to guide Spartacist League work in the Negro struggle, union movement, anti-war movement, and other major arenas. In addition, the Conference elected an authoritative and representative national leadership to unite and lead forward the new organization over the coming period.

The Spartacist League, with local committees and supporters in more than 15 areas, has indeed come a long way since the expulsion of its initial cadres from the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in December 1963. Expelled for their ideas alone, these cadres had been struggling inside that party as its Revolutionary Tendency for three years for a revolutionary international perspective, for the Trotskyist position on Cuba, and against the SWP's uncritical adaptation to Black Nationalism. Following their expulsion, the ex-members began the publication of SPARTACIST, the first issue of which stated their determination "to further a revolutionary regroupment of forces within this country such that a Leninist vanguard party of the working

class will emerge." This orientation remains central to the goals of the Spartacist League today.

Cadre Origins

The beginnings of the realization of this perspective can be seen in the present composition of the League. Present at the Conference and driving the organization forward was a living communist cadre that has evolved as a deep fusion in struggle of several tendencies and elements. In addition to those from the SWP, a number had previously formed the Revolutionary Tendency of the Young Peoples' Socialist League (Socialist Party youth group). These latter left the YPSL to unite with the Spartacist tendency late in 1964 after a long development towards revolutionary internationalism and "Lenin's and Trotsky's conception of the nature and role of the revolutionary party. . . ." Several of the older Spartacist comrades had formerly been members of the Communist Party. Allying themselves with these more experienced comrades have been the sizeable number of students and young people and a small but significant number of militants won from the Negro struggle in such diverse areas as Harlem and the deep South.

Fraternal Guests

Giving testimony to the continuity of the Spartacist League with the earlier

Trotskyist movement was the fraternal presence at the Conference of two veteran Trotskyist leaders, Richard Fraser, an able theoretician on the Negro Question and co-leader of the Freedom Socialist Party of Washington State, and A. Philips, spokesman for his tendency and a very experienced trade unionist. The tendencies represented by these two comrades had both been forced out of the SWP at the height of its gross class-collaborationist betrayal of the anti-war movement. Comrades Fraser and Philips presented greetings to the Conference on behalf of their groups, and Comrade Fraser, a co-reporter on the Negro Question, traced the evolution of the SWP's theoretical bankruptcy and unprincipled practice and our present Marxist position on this question.

Despite some differences, the Conference decisions on the wide range of subjects brought before it were characterized by large decisive votes and broad agreement. Unlike the SWP, the work of the Conference was conducted in the spirit of free discussion and in accordance with the principles of democratic centralism, with minority tendencies exercising full factional rights.

The Declaration of Principles adopted by the Conference is reprinted in this issue. It places the new organization firmly within the revolutionary, international working-class struggle for the final destruction of the barbarism of capital and the establishment in its place of a new, socialist order. Comrade Rader was reporter on this declaration.

For Black Trotskyism

Comrade Stoute, co-reporter with Comrade Fraser on the Negro Question, analyzed the mood of "pseudo-nationalism" now prevalent in the ghettos, and pointed out that the struggle for black liberation "is actually the vanguard struggle of the working class," black and white. The Conference then adopted the main line of the draft resolution which demonstrated that socialism will only be achieved by the common struggle of black and white workers for common goals under the leadership of a unified vanguard party. The document found that Negro nationalism has no social basis in terms of American class reality and has therefore been unable to generate a program of struggle. On the other hand, because of the present hostility of large sections of white workers to the special needs of black workers stemming from centuries of exceptional

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GREETINGS TO THE SPARTACIST CONFERENCE

By Dick Fraser

On behalf of the Freedom Socialist Party of Washington, I wish to greet this national gathering of the Spartacist League.

It is an admirable achievement for a small organization to be able to expand into so many cities across the country and then to organize such a representative conference.

Let me tell you about ourselves. We are an independent local organization with some national supporters, brought together in the spirit of revolutionary regroupment. Ours is, however, a much narrower regroupment than we believe to be possible on a national scale in the not-too-distant future.

The main body of our party comes from the former Seattle Branch of the

Socialist Workers Party. Others come from the Communist Party and the ranks of the independent socialists and previously unaffiliated "new left" youth.

We anticipate a close collaboration with you in the future. We feel a mutual political attraction, I believe, because of a common belief in persistent adherence to the ideas of Leon Trotsky, and the close proximity of our approach to the Negro question, a decisive key to the American Revolution.

We wish you well. We hope your conference will be successful and we expect it will mark an important episode in the process of rebuilding the revolutionary socialist movement in the United States.

Thank you.



Photos by Ron Burkholder

"FOUNDING THE SPARTACIST LEAGUE," subject of the public meeting at the Conference. Speakers from left to right were national chairman James Robertson, West Coast editor Geoffrey White, and Central Committee member Paul Gaillard. A comrade from the deep South also spoke. New York organizer Albert Nelson chaired.

Declaration of Principles of the Spartacist League

1. The Socialist Revolution and the Spartacist League

The Spartacist League of the U.S. is a revolutionary organization which, as part of the international revolutionary movement, is committed to the task of building the party which will lead the working class to the victory of the socialist revolution in the United States.

Only the proletariat, through the seizure of political power and the destruction of capitalism in all countries, can lay the basis for the elimination of exploitation and the resolution of the contradiction between the growth of the productive forces of the world economy and national-state barriers. Capitalism has long since outlived its progressive historical role of creating a modern industrial economy. Now in order to maintain their rule, the national capitalist classes must intensify national and racial divisions, through imperialism oppress the colonial peoples and impoverish the masses of the entire world, engage in continual wars for the maintenance and redivision of the world markets in order to prop up the falling rate of profit, and attempt to smash the revolutionary struggle of the workers wherever it breaks out. In its final frenzied effort to maintain its close rule, the bourgeoisie will not hesitate to plunge humanity into a nuclear holocaust or totalitarian oppression of unprecedented ferocity. The United States of America is today the keystone of the entire international capitalist order.

On the other hand, the victory of the proletariat on a world scale would place unimagined material abundance at the service of human needs, lay the basis for the elimination of social classes, and eliminate forever the drive

for war inherent in the world economic system of capitalism. For the first time mankind will grasp the reins of history and control its own creation, society, resulting in an undreamed-of emancipation of human potential, the limitless expansion of freedom in every area, and a monumental forward surge of civilization. Only then will it be possible to realize the free development of each individual as the condition for the free development of all.

2. The Crisis of Proletarian Leadership

History has shown that the self-emancipation of the working class, and therewith the oppressed of all the earth, balances on the question of leadership. The economic preconditions for socialism have long since been reached. But the contradictions of capitalism in its epoch of imperialist decay produce not only wars, but also revolutionary opportunities. The success or failure of the working class to achieve victory in these historic opportunities depends upon the organization and scientific consciousness of the struggling masses, i.e., on revolutionary leadership. Only a revolutionary leadership—the indispensable weapon of the working people—has proved to have the strategy and determination to lead the working masses to victory. The responsibility for the defeats suffered by the working class and the abortion of previous revolutionary opportunities lies at the door of treacherous Social-Democratic and Stalinist misleaders. But the revolutionary will of the proletariat will triumph! The crisis of leadership will be solved! It is to the solution of the crisis of proletarian leadership that the Spartacist League directs its work.

3. The Theoretical and Historical Roots of the Spartacist League

The Spartacist League continues the revolutionary traditions of the international working-class movement exemplified in the work of revolutionists such as Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, Luxemburg, and Liebknecht. Above all we look to the experience of the Bolshevik Party which culminated in the Russian Revolution of 1917, the only revolution as yet made by the working class.

We seek in particular to carry forward the international working-class perspectives of Marxism as developed in theory and practice by V. I. Lenin and L. D. Trotsky, as embodied in the decisions of the first four Congresses of the Communist International and by the Transitional Program and other documents adopted by the 1938 Founding Conference of the Fourth International. These materials are the indispensable documentary codification of the communist movement internationally, and are fundamental to the revolutionary tasks of our organization.

We also look for inspiration to the example of such revolutionists in the United States as F. A. Sorge, Vincent St. John, Daniel De Leon, Louis Fraina, and James P. Cannon. The Spartacist League is the continuator of the revolutionary heritage of the early Communist Party and the Socialist Workers Party. The immediate origins of the Spartacist League are in the Revolutionary Tendency of the SWP which based itself primarily upon the statement *In Defense of a Revolutionary Perspective* and the document *World Prospect for Socialism*.

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... PRINCIPLES

4. The Vanguard Role of the Working Class and the Road to Socialism

Central to the Marxist perspective of world socialism is the vanguard role of the working class, and particularly the decisive weight of the proletariat of the industrialized countries. Only the working class has the social power and compulsion of clear objective interest to liberate mankind from oppression. Having no stake in maintaining the bourgeois order, its enormous power rests in its productive role, its numbers and organization.

The continued rule of a small handful of capitalists is maintained only through keeping the working class divided and confused as to its true situation. In the United States, the ruling class has succeeded in creating deep divisions along racial lines. The Black workers as a doubly-oppressed race-color caste require special modes of struggle as long as racist attitudes continue to permeate the outlook of the working class as a whole. Socialism in this country will be achieved only by the common struggle of Black and white workers under the leadership of a unified revolutionary vanguard.

Historic experience has shown that the road to socialism can be opened only by the intervention of the masses in the course of history and the creation of dual power culminating in the destruction of the capitalist state and the victory of the workers state and development of a new social order. The police, military, bureaucratic, juridical, and political apparatus of the old order will be replaced by the dictatorship of the proletariat based on councils of working people and supported by the workers' armed strength. Such a state would defend itself against the counterrevolutionary efforts of the deposed ruling class to return to power and would reorganize the economy along rational lines. As the economic basis of social classes dwindled, the workers state would more and more assume a purely administrative function, eventually withering away with the advent of classless communism.

5. The International Character of the Socialist Revolution

Capitalism is a world economic system which has created an international working class with identical class interests the world over. The international character of the working class gives it a potentially enormous superiority over the bourgeoisie as capitalism operates by anarchistic methods which set one national capitalist class against another and constantly create new unevennesses and crises. In order to realize this superiority, the proletariat needs an international party to unify the

class across the national and sectional boundaries which divide it and to coordinate the interdependent struggles of the workers of every country. While the revolution may begin in a single country, any partial victory will be only finally secured with the spread of revolution to other countries and the eventual world dominance of socialist economic organization. The Fourth International is the world party of the socialist revolution, whose program and purposes remain as valid today as at its founding in 1938, despite its present organizational disarray. We stand with all those groups seeking the rebirth of the Fourth International and, as a first step, the creation of a *bona-fide* International Committee of revolutionary Trotskyists based upon a real and living democratic centralism.

6. The Necessity for Revolutionary Consciousness

The ruling class has at its command a monopoly of the means of violence, its dominant political and bureaucratic apparatus, its enormous wealth and connections, and its control of education, the mass media and all other institutions of capitalist society. Against such a force a workers state can be brought into existence only by a proletariat fully conscious of its tasks, organized to carry them out, and determined to defend its conquests against the counterrevolutionary violence of the ruling class. The decisive struggle—the conquest of state power—requires political consciousness. Through its acquisition of political consciousness the working class ceases to be merely a class in itself and becomes a class for itself. Such consciousness is not spontaneously generated in the course of the day-to-day class struggles of the workers; it must be brought to the workers by the revolutionary party. Thus it is the task of the revolutionary party to forge the proletariat into a sufficient political force by infusing it with a consciousness of its real situation, educating it in the historical lessons of the class struggle, tempering it in ever deepening struggles, destroying its illusions, steeling its revolutionary will and self-confidence, and organizing the overthrow of all forces standing in the way of the conquest of power. A conscious working class is the decisive force in history.

7. The Bourgeois Basis of Revisionism

Insofar as revolutionary consciousness is not prevalent among the workers, their consciousness is determined by the ideology of the ruling class. Objectively capitalism rules through finance capital, its monopoly of the means of violence, and its control of all existing social institutions. But it prefers, when possible, to rule through

the dominance of its ideas among the oppressed, fostering illusions and concealing its bloody essence. The ideas of the bourgeoisie penetrate into the very movements and organizations of the workers through the agency of the petty-bourgeois labor lieutenants—particularly the parasitic trade union, Social-Democratic, and Stalinist bureaucracies which are based on the "aristocratic" upper strata of the working class. Enjoying privileges not accorded to the vast majority of workers, these misleaders betray the masses of working people through class collaboration, social-patriotism, and chauvinist-racist policies which sabotage proletarian understanding and solidarity. If not replaced by revolutionary leaderships, they will allow the organizations of the workers to become impotent in the fight for the economic needs of the workers under conditions of bourgeois democracy or will allow these organizations to be destroyed by victorious fascist.

The degeneration and capitulation of tendencies within the Marxist movement has been of especially critical value to the preservation of imperialist rule. Submission to the pressure of bourgeois society has repeatedly thrust nominally Marxist currents towards revisionism, the process of ruling out Marxism's essential conclusions. Bernsteinian revisionism, Menshevism, Stalinism, and its Maoist variant, are all illustrations of this process which constitutes a bridge to overtly reformist practices.

Within the Trotskyist movement the problems posed by the post-1943 Stalinist expansions have given rise to the revisionist current of Pabloism. Pabloism is characterized chiefly by a renunciation of the necessity for revolutionary leadership and an adaptation to existing petty-bourgeois and Stalinist leaderships. This deterioration of theory has led to the degeneration of the Fourth International founded by Leon Trotsky, and to its organizational breakup.

The Spartacist League, by contributing to the theoretical clarification of the Marxist movement and to the re-forging of the workers' necessary organizational weapons, upholds the revolutionary proletarian principles of Marxism and will carry them forward to the vanguard of the working class.

8. The Deformed Workers States and the Political Revolution

Historic gains have been made in expelling imperialism from and destroying capitalist property relations in certain backward countries, i.e., the degenerated workers state of Russia, and the deformed workers states in East Europe, and of China, North Korea, North Viet Nam, and Cuba. The nationalization of the means of production, establishment of economic planning,

and the state monopoly of foreign trade have brought tangible increases in the living standards of the masses together with advances in industrial growth in spite of the hostility of imperialism. On the other hand, the failure as yet of the proletariat to successfully carry through a social revolution in any of the advanced countries, the relatively low labor productivity and cultural levels of the workers states compared to the leading capitalist countries, and the numerical preponderance of the peasant class have allowed the formation of bureaucratic ruling castes which exclude the working class from political power and which are susceptible to the development of capitalist restorationist tendencies. These privileged bureaucracies, themselves a reflection of the continued domination of capitalism on a world scale, stand as a barrier to the elimination of class differences within their own national boundaries and the achievement of socialism on a world scale; through their increasingly nationalist deviations, they weaken these conquests of the working class in the face of imperialism and open the way for the repenetration of capitalist economic forms.

The Spartacist League stands for the unconditional defense of these countries against all attempts of imperialism to reestablish its control. At the same time we assert the necessity for the working class to take direct control and defense of these states into their own hands through political revolution and thus sweep away the internal barriers to the advance towards socialism. Only the spread of revolution internally and internationally can successfully maintain these partial conquests of the workers. It is an immediate and pressing necessity to build sections of the Fourth International in the deformed workers states to guide the struggle of the workers for political power and to coordinate their struggles with those of the proletariat in the advanced and colonial countries.

9. The Colonial Revolution and the Permanent Revolution

The partial character of the anti-capitalist revolutions in the colonial world over the past two decades (China, Cuba, North Viet Nam and North Korea) leads us to reaffirm the Marxist-Leninist concept of the proletariat as the key to the socialist revolution. Although existing petty-bourgeois nationalist-led movements against imperialism must be defended, the task of communists is to lead the active intervention of the working class to take hegemony over the national-social struggle. The struggle by the proletarian leadership for self-determination of the oppressed nations is a powerful tool to break the grip of petty-bourgeois nationalist leaders on the masses.

The Spartacist League fundamentally opposes the Maoist doctrine, rooted in Menshevism and Stalinist reformism, which rejects the vanguard role of the working class and substitutes peasant-based guerrilla warfare as the road to socialism. Movements of this sort can under certain conditions, i.e., the extreme disorganization of the capitalist class in the colonial country and the absence of the working class contending in its own right for social power, smash capitalist property relations; however, they cannot bring the working class to political power. Rather, they create bureaucratic anti-working class regimes which suppress any further development of these revolutions towards socialism. Experience since the Second World War has completely validated the Trotskyist theory of the Permanent Revolution which declares that in the modern world the bourgeois-democratic revolution can be completed only by a proletarian dictatorship supported by the peasantry. Only under the leadership of the revolutionary proletariat can the colonial and semi-colonial countries obtain the complete and genuine solution to their tasks of achieving democracy and national emancipation.

10. The Revolutionary Party: Its Program, Organization, and Discipline

"Without a party, apart from a party, over the head of a party, or with a substitute for a party, the proletarian revolution cannot conquer." The revolutionary party is not only the instrument for bringing political consciousness to the proletariat, it is also the main offensive and guiding force through which the working class makes and consolidates the socialist revolution. The revolutionary party is the general staff of the revolution. Its leading cadre have been trained and tested in the class struggle; it has gained the leadership of the class on the basis of its program and revolutionary determination; it has understood the whole of the past in order to assess the present situation with crystal clarity; it recognizes and boldly responds to the revolutionary moment when it comes, that moment when the forces of the proletariat are most confident and prepared and the forces of the old order most demoralized and disorganized. In the revolutionary party is crystallized the aspiration of the masses to obtain their freedom; it symbolizes their revolutionary will and is the instrument of their victory.

The program of the Spartacist League, as part of the Fourth International, is transitional in nature. It forms a bridge in the course of daily struggle between the present demands and the socialist program of the revolution. From the consciousness of the working class today it formulates its

demands and tasks in a way that lead inalterably to one final conclusion: the conquest of power by the proletariat. The united front of differing and otherwise hostile organizations of the working class is a primary tactic in unsettled periods to both mobilize a broad mass in struggle and to strengthen the authority of the vanguard party within the class. The transitional program directs the struggle ever more openly and decisively against the very bases of the bourgeois regime and mobilizes the masses for the proletarian revolution.

The organizational principle of the Spartacist League is democratic centralism, a balance between internal democracy and functional discipline. As a combat organization, the revolutionary vanguard must be capable of unified and decisive action at all times in the class struggle. All members must be mobilized to carry out the decisions of the majority; authority must be centralized in its selected leadership which interprets tactically the organization's program. Internal democracy permits the collective determination of the party's line in accord with the needs felt by the party's ranks who are closest to the class as a whole. The right to factional democracy is absolutely vital to a living movement. The very existence of this right helps to channel differences into less absorbing means of resolution.

The discipline of the Spartacist League flows from its program and purpose, the victory of the socialist revolution and the liberation of all mankind.

11. We Will Intervene to Change History!

"Marxism is not a dogma, but a guide to action." The Spartacist League, as a national section of the international Trotskyist movement, is in the forefront of the struggle for a socialist future. Our day-to-day preparation of the working class and our intervention and leadership in the decisive moments of the class struggle will propel the struggle forward to the final victory. "To face reality squarely; not to seek the line of least resistance; to call things by their right names; to speak the truth to the masses, no matter how bitter it may be; not to fear obstacles; to be true in little things as in big ones; to base one's program on the logic of the class struggle; to be bold when the hour for action arrives—these are the rules of the Fourth International." These are the rules of the Spartacist League as we go forward in the historical task of leading the working class to the victory of socialism in the United States!

—General line unanimously adopted by Founding Conference, 2 September 1966.

—Final draft approved by Political Bureau, 8 November 1966.

Defend Latin American Revolutionists!

LETTER FROM RED FLAG

London, England

We have just received the last edition of 'Spartacist.' We were very pleased to see the article protesting against the arrest and persecution of Trotskyists in Mexico, Guatemala and the Workers States. You are doing a great service to the World Revolution and to the IV International by the campaign you are waging for the release of Gilly and the seven Trotskyists imprisoned in Mexico. In Central America there is a united front of Imperialism, the Soviet Bureaucracy and all the conservative leaderships who, by striking at the Trotskyist vanguard, are trying to intimidate the masses. In this situation it is the duty of all honest revolutionaries to struggle against this campaign of intimidation and terror.

We thank you for your efforts, and send to the 'Spartacist' comrades the warm fraternal greetings of the British section of the IV International.

John L. Davis

Party for the Revolutionary Workers
Party [Posadas]

Hugo Blanco, the Peruvian peasant leader, is again in desperate peril. He was initially sentenced to twenty-five years in prison for the deaths of three rural guards in a clash growing out of his successful organization of the utterly downtrodden and mercilessly abused landless Indians. He is now being retried before the "Supreme Council of Military Justice" and the prosecution is demanding the death sentence! All concerned with his safety and freedom should immediately cable protests to "Consejo Supremo de Justicia," or to Presidente Belaúnde; address: Lima, Peru.

A united committee in the U.S. for the defense of Latin American political prisoners is now being set up.

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Issue no. 2, December 1966, will contain an article on FAR and MR13 in Guatemala.

The following is the text of a cablegram sent Friday evening, 11 November 1966:

"CONSEJO SUPREMO DE JUSTICIA
LIMA, PERU:

HUGO BLANCO HAS BECOME A
DEDICATED SYMBOL TO THE OP-
PRESSED. IF YOU KILL HIM, YOU
WILL DISAPPEAR CURSING YOUR
DEED. FREE HUGO BLANCO!

SPARTACIST LEAGUE"

... CONFERENCE

(Continued from Page 10)

exploitation, a mass organization of black workers around a program of organized self-defense, independent political action, and other transitional demands is needed. The tasks of blackening the Spartacist League and developing a black Trotskyist cadre were described as central to the goals of the SL during the coming period.

Guide to Action

Another key point on the Conference agenda was the discussion and adoption of the main line of "Tasks of the Spartacist League: Theses on Building the Revolutionary Movement in the U.S." The document and report by National Chairman James Robertson affirmed the determination of the Spartacist League to root itself in the various arenas of class struggle in this country, and outlined the general and specific tasks necessary to implement this. Discussing problems of the trade union, anti-war, civil rights and "New Left" movements, the document saw the

development of the Spartacist League into a propaganda group sufficient in size to intervene in action in every major class struggle, with a regular monthly press, as the goal in the next period. Amendments on anti-war work, cadre-building, and press policy were adopted to make the draft theses more comprehensive. This document, which will serve as a guide to action and as an introduction to the Spartacist League, is presently being prepared for publication.

Local reports by representatives of the various areas indicated the accomplishments, problems, and plans of each group. The National Report by Comrade Nelson pointed to the growth of the Spartacist tendency from two locals to a national network with committees in all sections of the country. The need was emphasized to build cadre to overcome the break-up and stagnation in the revolutionary movement which the SL faces as the inheritor of the Marxist tradition in this country. Also heard was a report on the necessity of building a united left-wing defense for Adolfo Gilly and other imprisoned Latin American Trotskyists. Earlier, Conference delegates

and visitors had picketed the Mexican Tourist Office demanding the release of these comrades. An open meeting Saturday night made public the formation and aims of the Spartacist League, and several members described the experiences in struggle which led them to recognize the necessity for revolutionary struggle in this country.

Leninist Vanguard

Final point on the Conference agenda was the election of the new Central Committee following a thorough discussion by the delegates of the qualifications of each nominee. The entire Conference then reconvened, the new leadership was announced, and the Conference adjourned with the singing of *The Internationale*. The founding of the Spartacist League in the United States is a major step forward in the construction of a Leninist vanguard party in this country and an advance in the world revolutionary struggle for socialism. Above all, it symbolized the continuing validity of Marxism-Leninism by defiantly proclaiming to the world that despite every obstacle American imperialism would place in our way, "We Are Here!" ■

... SNCC

(Continued from Page 16)

illusions about the nature of the bourgeois State, implying that all that is needed is to put Black men into the State bureaucratic machine. *Marxists* must point out that the State itself, like the Democratic Party, is a tool of the ruling class and cannot be "taken over" by class-conscious elements—it must be *smashed*.

One corollary of the black-white outlook has been the idea that only Black people must organize in the Black community, and whites must organize whites, whether for civil rights or any other struggle. As a *tactic* this idea is probably wise for neighborhood organization, but it has been raised to the level of *principle* by many Black Power advocates, thereby becoming an obstruction to class-oriented organization for struggle.

Bridge to White Workers

Can the white working class be won over to a Black workers' struggle against capitalism? The white working class has been generally quiescent and largely racist for about 20 years, but with the deepening of contradictions in the American economy white workers are being hit hard by inflation and the domestic repercussion of a growing imperialist war. Recent signs of revolt, such as the Machinists' bitter strike against the airlines, indicate that sections of the white working class may be ready for militant anti-capitalist struggle. Black militants, being in general more class conscious (as well as race conscious), can help considerably in raising the class consciousness of white workers and thereby gain valuable allies for the Black Liberation struggle. The formulation and execution of a *class* program for Black workers would form the necessary bridge to the white working class, stimulating its consciousness and militancy.

Such a program should at least include the following demands:

- For a Freedom-Labor Party — to break the labor movement from its bondage to the Democrats, who provide only war, inflation and wage freezes;
- For a Southern organizing drive, supported by organized labor — to strengthen both the labor movement and the Black people;
- For a workers' united front against Federal intervention—to counter the increasing tendency of the government to intervene in struggles with forces to uphold the ruling class;
- For a sliding scale of wages—to keep purchasing power in pace with living costs;
- For a shorter work week with no loss in pay—to provide more jobs without making the white worker feel threatened by job loss;

—Organization of the unemployed—by the unions, so links are created between the employed and unemployed worker.

Along with these demands, of course, the Black Power advocates should continue to raise demands designed to meet the special needs of the Black people, who suffer the extra burden of racism which white workers do not face. Such demands should include:

- For organized, armed self-defense—to protect against racist terror and police brutality;
- For the right of inspection of the jails and for the disarming of the police—to reduce the power of the cops to terrorize innocent people.

One Social Revolution!

These demands and the struggle necessary to achieve them can only be seriously considered within the context of a *social revolution*, which alone can achieve political and economic power and social justice for the majority of Black people—that is, workers. But the need for social revolution is not felt only among Black people; unemployment, inflation, poverty and all the problems of this society are imposed by the capitalist ruling class on black and white workers alike. There is only *one* ruling class, *one* State power, and *one* struggle must be waged against that power.

Black and White Vanguard

To unite and lead the working class in this fight is the task of the *vanguard party*. The division of the working class into hostile black and white sections is a direct result of the oppression by the ruling class and is carefully nurtured by it in order to alleviate some of the contradictions of capitalism. And it would be a fatal error to assume that the centuries-old racial antagonisms will all be gone *before* the working class can come to power. The American revolution, if it is to succeed, will be the result of struggle by black and white working people, led by class-conscious militants joined in the Marxist-Leninist party. Black militants can and must play a key role in the building of this vanguard party, and only the success of revolutionary forerunners—such as the Spartacist League—in winning the allegiance of militant Black workers and students *now* can assure the success of the future vanguard. Those who feel that the principle of race is more important than the reality of *class* in the struggle against the "Establishment" are doomed to failure; even as is either the black or white sections of the working class if it attempts to carry out a social revolution alone. It is for these reasons that we urge SNCC and other Black militants to fight with us, for a united working class program, for the coming revolution! ■

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REPORT FROM NEW ORLEANS

SNCC and Revolution

In 1964 the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee worked with the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party in an attempt to seat the MFDP at the Democratic Convention. They were refused in favor of the white racists. The result of this snub by the ruling class was to push SNCC and its followers into a more radical posture. SNCC workers began to question the purpose of voter registration if voters then had nothing worthwhile for which to vote, and they began to raise the question of independent politics.

In early 1966 other incidents gave rise to more radical ideas. At a "Poor People's Conference," held at Mount Beulah, Mississippi, in January 1966, the participants, desperate for food and shelter, decided to occupy the deserted Greenville Air Force Base. They were promptly and violently removed by Federal authorities. This incident smashed many illusions about the nature of the Government.

Anti-War Stand

Meanwhile SNCC militants, seeing the connection between the oppression at home and the U.S. war in Asia, issued an angry statement, which read in part:

"We are in sympathy with and support the men in this country who are unwilling to respond to the military draft which would compel them to contribute their lives to U.S. aggression in the name of the 'freedom' we find so false in this country."

All these trends culminated in the May 1966 election of Stokely Carmichael as SNCC chairman. The organization's new position was summarized in the 23 May statement on the White House Civil Rights Conference: SNCC denounced the conference as an attempt by Johnson to improve the image of the U.S.

SNCC's empirical rejection of the more obvious brands of reformism advocated by white liberals and petty-bourgeois Black "leaders" has taken the form of a call for "Black Power," a militant-sounding phrase which frightens the white liberals and Uncle Toms. The concepts implied in the SNCC slogan of "Black Power" are radical enough to have caused the bourgeois press and politicians to show vicious abuse on it, precisely because the slogan is a groping for solutions outside the framework of the capitalist society.

It is clear that SNCC and Carmichael want Black people to have some

kind of "independence" from the power structure so they can achieve liberation. However, one must have a *program* to steer by, and SNCC's is at best rather vague. So-called Marxist organs like *The Militant* and *Progressive Labor* offer no help in this problem, as they applaud uncritically every new development in the Black liberation movement.

Class Politics

SNCC's program is essentially contained in the recent position paper explaining the concept of Black Power. The paper states in part: "If we are to proceed towards true liberation, we must cut ourselves off from white people. . . . We must form our own institutions, credit unions, co-ops, political parties, write our own histories." But as a *program* such a view can lead to no serious improvement of the conditions of Black people. For the primary division of capitalist society is class division, and racial divisions have

been traditionally used by the ruling class to maintain its hold on society. It is precisely the lack of a *class-conscious* position, and the predominance of a race-nation outlook in the SNCC position which leaves it open to serious practical errors.

In the deep South SNCC found it impossible to work in the racist Democratic Party; however, in the North, SNCC's position is much more ambiguous—for instance, Carmichael endorses the "National Conference for New Politics," a peace group organized by right-wing socialists, Stalinists, and reform Democrats. The group is not independent from the bourgeois parties, and its preferred "peace" candidate for President in 1968 is Robert Kennedy! SNCC's black-white outlook also tends to gloss over the serious conflict in class interests between the petty-bourgeois Black leaders and the Black workers.

The black-white outlook also fosters
(Continued on Page 15)

Victory for Gallashaw

The acquittal of 17-year-old Ernest Gallashaw of framed-up murder charges on 13 October in N.Y. State Supreme Court was a defeat for the racist cops in Brooklyn who plotted the frame-up, and an example to Black people in all the ghettos that oppression by the ruling class can be successfully fought. Gallashaw was freed primarily because the "evidence" was so blatantly invented, and the testimony of the brow-beaten witnesses obviously the result of coercion that even the *New York Times* made an exposé of it. But actually winning the victory depended on the articulate, determined defense campaign waged by Mrs. Gallashaw, friends and Black militants from several organizations, including N.Y. CORE and the Harlem Organizing Committee. Reform Democrat lawyer Paul O'Dwyer included in his defense summary a strong indictment of the Brooklyn police and D.A. for their "strong desire" to see that a Negro was found guilty of shooting a Negro during the East New York disturbances. The real murderer of Eric Dean, of course, will never be prosecuted although defense witnesses identified him as a white boy "called little Joe." The

cops will never admit that it is *white* terrorism and *white* racism that causes the so-called "riots." ■



Ernest Gallashaw
(in police car)