

The logo for the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) is rendered in a stylized, white, sans-serif font against a red background. The letters 'S', 'W', and 'P' are interconnected, with the 'S' and 'W' sharing a vertical stroke and the 'P' being positioned to the right.

discussion bulletin

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AN OPEN LETTER TO THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE

By L.D. Chambers

I read Comrade Marcy's reviews on the "Clark Article" with great interest, not because they expressed my opinions completely, for we are miles apart on many questions; but for what seems to me to be almost a lifetime, I have waited for someone to open up this subject to debate. Comrade Marcy's efforts in this direction are, in my opinion, a great contribution to the party. His candor, his piercing wit, has bit deep and leaves the practical politician with a bleeding wound that no verbal bandage can conceal. No matter how highly I may regard the letter as a political document, inasmuch as it agrees with my own opinions, as a Marxist, I must admit that posterity will mark it more for what has been "omitted" than what has been "admitted." In this we must not reprimand Comrade Marcy, for in writing the article he displayed political courage, and if he didn't exhaust the topic, we can lay the blame to brevity, if we wish to make an excuse to the Marcy group.

Of course, my position as a worker-Bolshevik is a delightful one for I am not hampered by any such inhibitions, and because of this, feel no compulsion for making excuses for the Marcy group. From this point of view, of course, I see their letter in an entirely different light. Comrade Marcy complained bitterly about our conciliatory attitude towards the Stalinists, but his position on the Chinese question has inhibited him to such an extent that he is impotent as a real fighter against the Stalinist conciliators that he hates.

As may be supposed, I have been waiting for some time for this subject to be opened to debate. In this direction I have been waiting in the hope that our party intellectuals would eventually lay down their pipes and take a good look at "Regroupment" and what it has cost us. I hoped they might not see it through the "rose colored glasses" of the election returns, or the popularity that we now enjoy in the liberal circles and with the former Stalinists. I have been reading each copy of the Militant, each bulletin, each ISR in hopes that I would see some evidence of this trend, and yet today, after several years of waiting, I am convinced that the intellectual life of our party, has become hopelessly seduced to this new route to revolution, that painless path that Pablo chose. As a worker-Bolshevik, I have become convinced that if any effort is to be made towards aligning ourselves with Marxism and Trotskyism, it must come from the workers themselves. That is if we still have such an element within our midst after that shameless love-affair we have been carrying on with the workers "class enemies."

I do not mean to say that we have suffered some kind of mass desertion. What I mean is this, I wonder how many can remember the time when a Socialist was a person who believed that the "revolutionary reconstruction" of society could only be achieved through the efforts of the "working class." This theory has been completely ignored by the "Guardian group," and completely forgotten by the "practical politicians" in our midst. Those that have been seduced to this new route to revolution feel that the road to heaven is paved not with workers but with "choral groups" and cocktail parties,

with "CHIC" conversations with those more understanding and "INTELLIGENT CREATURES" in the Guardian group. In making life comfortable for these new recruits to revolution, we have spared no cost. We started out by calling China a "worker-state" and thus apologized to a certain section of the Stalinists. We pulled in our "horns" in the trade-union movement so that they might not be embarrassed by the noise of angry workers voices. This action, demonstrative as it might be, is not sufficient for the "practical politicians" who wished to prove their loyalty in a more "REVEALING" way. We pushed the Militant into the background and crowded the Guardian into our lives. Instead of standing on street corners selling Militants to workers, we took the Guardian from one door to the next, usually in some nice residential area. Finally, we wound up this campaign for allegiance with the psuedo-socialists and the Guardian crowd with our petitions for "Sobell."

Our "practical" friends felt safe in this type of work for they realize that in all Marxist literature, the worker is portrayed as a "pillar of patience." He is reluctant to assume his historic role, if any other solution can be found for his problems. We have seen that he will listen to the lies and propaganda of his class enemies, provided they can offer a "PEACEFUL SOLUTION" to his problems. There is a "POINT OF NO RETURN," however. When he (the worker) can see no hope, when he sees his living standard deteriorating, and when the bastions of reaction begin attacking his organization, he becomes violent. The worker-Bolshevik reacts in precisely the same way. To this I can testify.

I was "disturbed" when the slogan "Build a Labor Party" was removed from my paper. I was "shocked" when we invented the idea of "PULLING IN OUR HORNS" in the labor movement, thus removing ourselves from the trade union. I was ANGRY when the dreamy-eyed theologians decided that maybe the Stalinists could lead a successful anti-capitalist struggle, and foolishly mistook a bourgeois revolution for a workers-state, and in doing this made our apologies to the Stalinists for those harsh and uncompromising words of former days. But when they ask me to crawl in with LIBERALS AND THE STALINISTS, I am doing as the song suggests, "I'm Rolling Up My Sleeves and Fighting Back." Fighting in the political sense is very difficult for the worker-Bolshevik. All his cherished methods of attack are frowned upon by the intellectuals. Since the parliamentarians and more "practical politicians" would use it against him, he must, therefore, if he is to fight in their "arena," use their methods. Their methods, however, are foreign and clumsy, and the worker picks up the pen and invades the sanctuary of the "intellectual" only under great duress. He must be moved by a terrific compulsion to engage in a fight that will force him to use methods that can be mastered by him only with great difficulty. The thought of life in the other world is so intolerable, however, he feels that no sacrifice is too great. For those of you with more sensitive ears, I assure you that the scratches you hear are not that of my pen. It is that of a militant clawing at the walls that have imprisoned him with the cocktail crowd.

The first volley that we shall "fire" at these political sinners that would have me out selling the Guardian is, of course,

this letter to the Political Committee. It is an outline of my opinions on the subject. In addition to this, I have two other bulletins in outline form. The first of these is entitled "REGROUPMENT, THE NEW DEAL AND SOCIALISM." Its purpose is to show the party the effect that this "Regroupment Policy" has had on a branch that has earned the title of "THE PROLETARIAN HEART OF OUR PARTY." The second bulletin which has not been christened will deal with the military problems facing America in the event of a third world war. It occurred to me that the betrayal of the Stalinists could best be pointed out in military terms. The purpose for the second bulletin, therefore, is to show the fact that the military initiative has always lain in the direction of the masses. Of course, there is a very interesting sidelight to this. If this can be proven true, we are then in a poor position to be parroting the phrases of the bourgeois press with such terms as "stalemate." There will be another reason for this bulletin. We will not only be able to demonstrate the treachery of the Stalinists with such an examination, but it will also allow us to examine our own conciliators treachery. We must remember that if we suggest that the military situation between Russia and America is a stalemate, we are in no position to accuse the Stalinists of a sell-out of the Indo-China and Korea. After all, we cannot blame the Stalinists for something we have already agreed is a physical impossibility.

It is not merely my dislike for the new policy or the utter contempt I feel for the "Soldiers of Sobell" that has driven me to this fight, it is the realization that the ash-can of history has been filled with political parties that have found it was necessary to follow the practical way of life. If these "practical politicians" have twisted the platform of the workers-party to such an extent that this letter is falling on "deaf" ears, then a very historically significant event may have occurred. Frankly, it is well within the realm of possibility if this trend is not revised, that the first thing on the agenda of the American working class is not the revolution but the building of a party to "lead" it, a party freed of petty bourgeois ideology and of Stalinist influence that can lead the workders in a successful anti-capitalist revolution. Such a statement may seem to some to be a hopeless exaggeration. My friends would say that Larry thinks because he has strong breath, he must use strong words. Lets see if this is true.

We have entered into a policy wherein we are offering our platform to any former Stalinist as a means of airing his views. We beg him to mend the error of his ways, and that if he does so, we promise him that we will cheerfully forgive him. These former Stalinists will then be invited to dine at our tables and to sleep in our beds. At this very time when world opinion has destroyed Stalinists and pushed them into a shallow grave, we now reach down and with the tenderness only a mother could feel, we are dusting the sand and dirt from their troubled brow and breathing life into their bodies. We then present them with a new home, with a clean and decent address, and last, but not least, we give this policy the cynical name "ANTI-STALINIST CAMPAIGN."

Jesus is supposed to have produced some remarkable feats of resurrection. If ours are not equal to His, it is certainly not our

fault. Only the stupidity of the Stalinists could have failed to see the political advantages of such an opportunity to work in the only political party left to whom the workers could look for support. The Stalinists have failed their bourgeois masters miserably. Although this failure is not total or complete, it is realitive. They have failed to see the political possibilities of entering into our organization. At the same time, a sufficient amount of their program is indoctrinated into our organization to render us virtually harmless. For our party to have engaged in such activities ten years ago would have been unthinkable; to do so today indicates a misunderstanding of what a Stalinist really is. In addition, to do this proves that the theoretical bankruptcy of those people who have advocated such form of action. They have not yet learned that one basic fact of life, that is they have not yet learned that the Stalinists are hopelessly bourgeois in character. They are completely tied to capitalism. The pseudo-radical trimmings, their near Marxist phrasology, are merely traps for fools and a convenient mask to hide behind in misguiding the labor movement. It is their job both in and out of labor movements, to perpetuate capitalism in America for the reason that Stalinist Russia cannot live without a capitalist America any more than a capitalist America can live without a Stalinist Russia. One supports the other in this rotted system in which we live.

In analyzing our domestic problems we are forced to review our attitude toward the Chinese Stalinists. This policy was naturally instituted and conceived for the purpose of making these overtures toward domestic variety. Our first concern shall be directed toward them. Just as the class character of the Russian Revolution became the stumbling stone that tripped the practical politicians of another period, so will the class character of China be the undoing of the intellectuals of this generation. When we plow through this maze of history, we will not only clear up this question, but, in addition, we will demonstrate the line of thinking that has led into this bourgeois swamp of class collaboration known as "Regroupment." The error that we made in China, that is calling the Stalinists a group of reluctant revolutionists, demonstrates the point perfectly. For the past five or six years our party intellectuals have wasted time, paper and ink trying to determine just when the Stalinists were able to make a worker-state of China. Some say this remarkable event took place on a cold September morning in 1949. The contending group says this is impossible. This couldn't have happened because they say China didn't become a worker-state and the Stalinists couldn't have become revolutionists until after the Korean War, at which time they felt the pinch of imperialism.

So we have the cliché of the old theologians of the Catholic Church quibbling over how many angels can dance on the point of a needle. Many I suppose would think such a statement as this is rather crude, an obvious journalistic trick. Nothing could be further from the truth. We must remember that the life of Trotsky was dedicated to the proposition that the Stalinists are incapable of showing a revolutionary tendency in their whole body. Yet today we are prepared to deny this, in words as well as deeds. We are saying that the Stalinists are capable of revolution, for only a revolutionary party can build a worker-state.

These are the same intellectuals that shouted with pious indignation at Pablo, called him a revisionist, a dreamer, a traitor to Marxism. The truth of the matter is they were 100 per cent right. This poor devil, suffering the torments of the damned, sought a divine spark of knowledge. Tossing on his bed at night, he begged God for that flash of intellect that would permit him to pierce the future and be told what is to be done in this period, and with the granting of such a gift, he became the first practical politician in our midst. From this gift he came up with the conclusion that the Stalinists were capable of revolution, or at least his analysis of China and the buffer states convinced him that the Stalinists were working in the right direction. Just how far have we strayed towards Pablo's path? I can hear my comrades say with heated protest, "we have never claimed the Stalinists were revolutionary." Haven't we now? Lets be sure, and examine the question just a bit closer. When we, as Lenin's successors and followers, refer to China as a "worker-state." We are saying in effect that the Stalinists are capable of leading an anti-capitalist revolution. We are saying that for the first time in history, the Stalinists standing at the head of an armed people have conducted an anti-capitalist revolt to the successful conclusions of a worker-state. If such a thing is possible, several things are brought sharply into focus simultaneously. First, we have to ask ourselves a very important question. If the Stalinists are now able to lead a revolutionary war for the purpose of establishing a worker-state, deformed, degenerated, or in any other condition, good, bad, or indifferent, then what excuse have we for fighting them? Isn't that our purpose? If we do so, isn't it an act of a counter-revolutionist. "Not so," scream the practical politicians; "they were forced to do this." Then, as an explanation in the hopes that we will buy it, they add this bit of sugar to the buttering up they gave us. If the Stalinists do successfully lead an anti-capitalist revolt, the workers will still have to seize power from THEM.

Now let us analyze what we are saying. What we have actually said is that within the Stalinists group, there is a Trotskyist movement operating obviously as a very shadowy faction within this organization. This movement is set up to teach the bureaucratic organization of the Stalinists to be more in harmony with the working class. It can't be any other way, for the reason that once you say that Stalinists are capable of leading a revolution that is anti-capitalistic in nature, you have immediately doomed the Trotskyist to being merely a liberalizing action with the Stalinist group. This opinion is already in print and has to the best of my knowledge never been criticized by our party. I am referring to the internal discussion bulletin of May 1957 under the title, "Question of China" by John Peterson, and I quote: "Japan is the only really industrial developed country in Asia. The working class is more or less quiescent. However, sympathy and interest in socialism in the Chinese revolution is universal. Under these conditions the possibility of building a revolutionary-socialist party in Japan is greater than in any other important Asiatic country. The victory of the working class in Japan would push Asia on a path to a socialist revolution. The first task of the Chinese Socialist democracy if it is victorious in China before there is a revolution in Japan, is to aid a revolution in Japan. The victory of the workers in Japan can only be accomplished by a revolutionary-socialist party. The Japanese Communist Party must be turned left and the bureaucrats in turn turned out. To do this is the task

of the Japanese Trotskyist." And so, as we see, it is spelled out in detail for us. Nothing could be clearer than this.

Our apologists suggest that the Stalinists were forced to lead a revolution, that is according to the brilliant "theorist" of our party. They point with pride to the fact that the full socialization of industry didn't come about until after the Korean War, and thus demonstrates their confusion with anti-imperialism and anti-capitalism. The Chinese CP has demonstrated about as much revolutionary fervor as the corner grocer does when he demands more freedom from the National Tea down the block. But our theorists are blind to these considerations. They confuse nationalization with socialism. So long as an industry is nationalized they automatically assume that it is also socialized, without realizing that there is tremendous distinction between these two. The socialization of industries suggests the workers control of government, the seizure of the factories and the means of production. The nationalization of industry on the other hand connotes something much different. We must remember that England nationalized much of its industry but they were a long ways from socialization of industry. In the same direction, Nazi Germany also nationalized many of its industries, but we would be in a poor position to suggest that this was a workers state. I suppose, however, it is almost useless to discuss questions of theory with people that have deviated as far as this. If they are prepared to say that peasantry led by a petty bourgeois party can build a workers state, if they have deviated that far from Marxism, I think debate on theory seems almost useless. But if theory is useless, what about history, can we look towards that.

Has history ever provided us with an example where a petty bourgeois party has turned revolutionary due to the pressure of the masses, or turned revolutionary period for that matter. No, it most assuredly has not. History has shown us to the contrary, that on every occasion the petty bourgeois party has prepared to turn its guns on the working class, the moment their demands embarrass the capitalist masters. It has never happened before, but we insisted it happened in China. In Burma, a sister state of China, there is also government ownership, or the nationalization of certain industries. But we haven't as yet thought of calling Burma a worker-state. Why this distinction do you suppose. Could it be that because our buddies didn't lead the revolution in Burma, or would a more polite explanation be in order. Shall we say rather that the gunpowder that was used in the Chinese revolution clouded our eyes and all we could hear was the noise, and because of this, assumed that it had to be a proletarian revolution. I can't find any other explanation in common sense. One thing is a certainty and that is that all the explanations given so far for calling China a worker-state are not valid. We know for a fact that the workers did not participate in revolution. We know that it was led by a petty-bourgeois party, a Stalinist party. As for their having been forced on a revolutionary path, theoretically this is an impossibility, but actually we have the words of Comrade Peng on this subject, and I quote: "Regarding the relation between the CCP and the masses (including its relation to a 'mass pressure') I am not going to trace the facts prior to and during the war against Japan. However, fully it demonstrates how often the CCP violated the aspirations of the masses and ignored "mass pressure." I shall start with the period at the end of the war. The first period immediately after the war,

from September 1945 to the end of 1946, marked a considerable revival and growth of the mass movement in China. In this period, the working masses in all the great cities, Shanghai being the center, first brought forward their demands for a sliding scale increase in wages, etc. They universally and continuously engaged in strikes and demonstrations. Although this struggle in its main features did not pass beyond the economic framework nor reach a national level, it did at least prove that after the war, the workers had lifted up their heads. They were waging a resolute fight against the bourgeoisie and its reactionary government for the improvement of their living conditions and general position. It actually won considerable success. No doubt this was the expression of a new awakening in the "Chinese workers' movement."

Meantime, among the peasant masses, under the unbearable weight of compulsory contributions, taxes in kind, conscription, threat of starvation, the ferment of resentment was boiling. Some disturbances had already occurred in the regions controlled by Chiang's government. Notably the students, representing in general the petty-bourgeoisie, engaged in large-scale protests, strikes, and manifestations in the big cities, such as Chungking, Kunming, Nanking, Shanghai, Canton, Peiping, etc. with banners and slogans demanding democracy and peace, against mobilization for the civil war, against the Kuomintang dictatorship, against the persecutions conducted by the Kuomintang agents.

On the other hand, returning to the "recovered areas," Chiang's government not only revealed extreme corruption and inefficiency in its administration, but it stirred up very strong resentment among the people. It already gave the appearance of tottering. Its power did not extend into North China for a certain period of time, especially in Manchuria. (It was not until the beginning of March, 1946, that the Soviet Union began gradually to transfer such great cities as Mukden, and Chanchuan, the mine areas to Chiang's government.) During this same period, the military strength of the CCP, its political influence as well, began to grow among the masses rapidly. These struggles of the workers, the ferment of resentment and rebellion among the peasants, the wide spread demonstrations of the students, accompanied the corruption and insecurity of Chiang's regime, with the strengthening of the CCP, resulted in the pre-revolutionary situation. If the CCP would then have been able to stay in step with the conditions, that is, accept "the pressure of the masses," raise slogans for the overthrow of Chiang Kai-shek government (i.e., the slogan for seizure of power) and join this slogan with other demands for democratic reforms, especially with the demands for agrarian revolution, it would have been able to transform this "pre-revolutionary" situation to a directly revolutionary situation. It could have carried through the insurrection and thereby arrive at the conquest of power in the most propitious way.

Unfortunately, the fundamental political line adopted by the CCP in this period was quite different. Contrary to what it should have done — mobilize the masses in the struggle for power, under the slogans of overthrowing the Chiang government, and its agrarian reform, it kowtowed to Chiang Kai-shek and pleaded for the establishment of a "coalition government." (For this purpose Mao flew to Chungking to negotiate directly with Chiang, and even openly expressed his sup-

port of the latter in mass meetings.) It tried its best to pull together the politicians in the upper layers of the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie in order to proceed with peace parleys under the initiative of American imperialism.

As for the economic struggles of the working class, not only did the CCP fail to give any positive lead in transformation of these struggles into political struggles, which was quite possible at the time, but on the contrary, in order to effect a "united front" with the "national bourgeoisie," it persuaded the working masses not to go to "extremes" in their conflicts. Moreover, it dealt obsequiously with the leaders of the "yellow trade unions," in order to check the "excessive" demands of the workers. Its activities in the countryside were limited solely to movements of organizing guerrillas, while it avoided all activity with broad mass action which would have encouraged and unified the peasant masses. The great student movement, in the cities was handled as a simple instrument for exerting pressure on the Kuomintang government, to accept peace parley and were never linked with the strikes of the workers in a common struggle against the rule of Chiang Kai-shek.

However, in May 1946, as a result of the incessant military offensive of the Kuomintang, the CCP announced that in certain areas under its domination it had begun agrarian reform, which served only to reinforce its military influence. Yet, this kind of land reform was by no means thorough-going since it consisted largely in compromise with the landlords and rich peasants by preserving all their "industrial and commercial properties." It was also quite limited as to its scope. (For instance, no land reform was allowed in the areas of the provinces of Shantung, Kiangsu, Hopei, Honan.) Moreover, in its anxious desire to accomplish its reconciliation with Chiang Kai-shek, the CCP dissolved the peasant army, in Kwangtung and Chekiang. They removed only part of it to North China, causing great dissatisfaction among the rank and file members within the party itself. These facts sufficiently prove that the policy of the CCP not only did not accede to "the pressure of the masses," but proceed arbitrarily in precise opposition to the will and demands of the masses.

Chiang Kai-shek, on his part, made full use of the time during the peace conference to transport his army with the aid of American planes and warships from the interior to the great cities and the strategic bases in the "recovered areas," to solidify his position and to prepare for armed attack with the CCP. Meantime, he suppressed all the newly arising mass movements, especially the student movements. At the end of 1946, all the preparations were completed. Chiang's government openly barred all the doors to compromise and peace parleys by holding its own "national assembly" and organizing its own "Constituent Government," which shows its determination to eradicate the establishment of any "coalition government" with the CCP. Following these steps it mobilized a great military offensive (such as the seizure of Chang-Chai-kow and some small cities and towns in North Kiangsu.) Yet, up to this moment, the CCP had not given up its efforts at conciliation. Its delegates to the peace conference still lingered in Shanghai and Nanking, trying to reopen peace parleys with the Kuomintang through the medium of the so called "Third Force" -- "Democratic League." Not until later when Chiang Kai-shek drove away the

peace delegation of the CCP did it realize the hopelessness of this attempt. (March 1947, when he succeeded in occupying its capitol and stronghold, Yen-an April 1947.) Only then did it muster its forces to engage in a military defense. But even then, at that time it still did not dare to raise the slogan of the overthrow of the Kuomintang government. It did not offer a program of agrarian reform to mobilize the masses.

Finally, at the moment that Chiang's government made public the "warrant" for arresting Mao Tse-tung (June 25, 1947) and proclaimed the "decree of mobilization for suppressing revolts" (July 4). After several months of hesitation, during which time he seemed to be awaiting instructions from Moscow, the CCP published its manifesto on October 10 in the name of the "People's Liberation Army" which openly urged the overthrow of Chiang Kai-shek and the building of the "New China." Meantime, it once again brought forward its "agrarian law" declaring the expropriation of the land of the landlords and rich peasants while maintaining the "industrial and commercial enterprises." The redistribution of this land was to go to peasants without any or with too little land.

However, this was a remarkable change in the policies of the CCP since the time that it vowed support to Chiang's regime and abandoned land reform in 1937. In view of its relations with Chiang's government, this change in policy can be considered fundamental.

Was this "change" then the result of "mass pressure?" No, obviously not. At this moment the mass movement had already been brutally trampled down by Chiang's regime and was actually at a very low ebb. While the Kuomintang agents raged everywhere, thousands of young students were arrested, tortured and even assassinated, and hunted. The indisputable facts indicate that the CCP was compelled to make this change solely because Chiang had pulled down all bridges toward compromise. It was confronted by a mortal threat of a violent attack designated to annihilate its influence once and for all. So we might gather that this change was the result of Chiang's pressure than the "pressure of the masses." (From S. T. Peng: Report on the Chinese Situation, pages 12-15.) So we see that the Stalinist conciliators are not only an error in theory but in fact as well. Although many may disagree with Comrade Peng's theoretical conclusions, it would take a brave soul indeed to dispute his questions of fact. So we see to call China a worker-state is to fly into the face of history, to ignore all theory of Marxism and dispute reality as it exists.

Comrades, I have never felt the call from God to preach the word, to save souls or to be a Sunday sin buster. But we have taken a long journey from Marxism, a journey that has taken us across the bridge to adultery, political adultery, and I would like to leave with my comrades this one message: adultery is a sin, and the wage of sin is death. I know that this is a harsh and uncompromising message. It isn't designed to win friends and influence people as much as I would like to do so. At the same time, it is the blunt and plain truth. We cannot carry on a shameless love affair with the Stalinists and the liberals and the worker's class enemies, while at the same time suggesting that we are preparing ourselves for the time

when the workers will revolt and look to us for leadership. For if we were really preparing ourselves for this, we would be hating their class enemies instead of softening our moral fibers. Comrades, when the time comes, it is going to be very difficult I assure you to hate someone with whom you have enjoyed such a tender relationship. Every day we are moving a little further to the right. Every step in this direction is justified by the one before, and every step we take means that we are further from the voice of the militant worker who is pleading for us to return. It is repeated in Marxist literature that a revolutionary party is the harshest master of them all, and that is true in periods like this in which we are living in isolation, periods when the workers will not listen to our voices. The pressure against us has become terrific, and so we have sought new roads to revolution to avoid this pressure. A gentle, more comfortable road, not that steep climb to the hearts of the working class. We have seen that as we beat the brush seeking this new route, we found our way to Pablo's path. We are prepared to make amends to the Stalinists, to forgive them, or at least work in that direction, and for political expediency, today we are prepared to make love with the worker's class enemies and to call a Socialist anyone in the Guardian group or anybody that is prepared to make a pseudo-radical speech in which a few phrases that might be loosely connected with Marxism is used. Comrades, I am going to hate the Guardian crowd, I am going to denounce the Stalinists as workers class enemies, I am going to stand up in an uncompromising fight for Trotskyism as I knew it to be ten years ago. Under no circumstances will I compromise one plank in our party platform for the entire vote of the left Socialist movement. It simply is not expedient and it doesn't make good sense. This message is dedicated to the group of people who feel as I do, to those people who are tired of working in this mire of Stalinism, to those who feel contempt for the bourgeois deviationists who will lead us down the road to political extinction. I am convinced that history will one day mark this struggle, for it is of utmost importance to us and to the future of our international movement that this policy be changed. If we are turned into harmless eunuchs of the sultans palace, political dependence on the petty bourgeois masters, some very serious consequences are going to take place. It is up to us to stop the fascists by organizing the working class. If we have been drained of our political strength and robbed of our political potency and separated from the only people with whom we can do business, the working class, this is precisely what can occur. Without a Bolshevik party leading the masses, we can see fascism in America as a foredrawn conclusion. Fascism in America will mean a period of barbarism and brutality that will make Hitler's regime seem like a peevish boy's. These are the stakes for which we are fighting. I am asking the workers to protest and to protest vigorously now to this new policy.

Minneapolis Minnesota
December 1958

CONTRIBUTION TO THE DISCUSSION ON YOUTH PERSPECTIVES

By Ann Zuckoff

The accusations of disloyalty and factional lining up of non-party youth that have been leveled at some of the youth comrades must be cleared up. They have been raised only to becloud the real issues facing the youth today. The real issue is how best to organize and fight for a socialist America. This discussion can be a very fruitful one if it deals with the real problems; the tasks, perspectives and organization of the youth, and not with accusations and counter-accusations.

The problem of how to handle party differences within the youth clubs as they are now constituted is very confused and misunderstood by many comrades. The following excerpts from a letter to a former leader of the Left-Wing Caucus of the Young Socialist League by Murry Weiss indicate very clearly what Comrade Weiss' conception and attitude is on how party differences are to be handled inside a youth movement:

"In the united youth formation that will surely arise in the next period, the Political Committee has unambiguously reaffirmed its view that it is opposed to forming a party caucus in the new youth organization, whatever its exact form may be. And we do not ask SWP members to refrain from expressing differences they may have with majority party positions in the course of the discussions within the youth organization. (My emphasis -- AZ.)

"The concept of the responsibility of a minority to confine its struggle basically to the party has never implied limiting the freedom of expression of supporters of a minority within a revolutionary youth organization, whatever the exact relation of such an organization. (My emphasis -- AZ.) Or, as you mentioned, under certain circumstances, found their major arena in the youth movement."

This was, and to my knowledge remains Comrade Weiss' approach. I was in direct opposition to this concept then and am still of the same opinion; that the place to debate questions of differences with the SWP line is in the party and not in the presence of non-SWP youth!

When discussions were first beginning to take place in the YSA around the Independent Socialist Ticket (IST), I went to Bert Deck, the youth organizer and presented him with this problem, namely, that it was apparent that differences with the IST had developed in the party and although Comrade Weiss was of the opinion that comrades could express these differences in the youth group, I was of the opinion that the YSA was not the place to bring them out. I asked for a fraction meeting of the SWP youth comrades to discuss our differences and see if we could come to a compromise, or if not, to at least determine what the policy should be with regard to youth comrades who had differences with the IST. This meeting should have been called to avoid having to bring up party differences in the YSA, and to discuss whether or not Comrade Weiss' policy was valid. I was of the opinion that it was not.

This meeting was called -- and was supposed to have been an SWP fraction meeting. Among those who had been invited to attend this meeting at 116 were two non-SWP members of the YSA.

Comrade Deck assured me that one of them, the author of the current anti-SWP article, "The Necrophilliacs," was coming closer to us (the SWP) and that I could raise any differences I had with the party in his presence.

In spite of this sage advice I did not raise any differences I had with the party then, and have never done so since.

Not too long ago when this same individual was still Chairman of the YSA he proposed that the YSA give the IST critical support and in effect told the SWP youth comrades to vote against their own party line which was for uncritical support. Our youth comrades voted unanimously for this proposal. Perhaps this was done to placate him. But for whatever reasons they voted for the proposal they were incorrect. If any youth comrade favored a policy of critical support of the IST the place to fight for it is in the party and not accept full support in the SWP and then vote the opposite in the youth.

At a recent YSA meeting, during a discussion on youth orientation, several majority comrades spoke on regroupment and made the charge that anyone who was not in favor of a campus orientation was against regroupment and should say so. This was of course in the presence of non-party youth.

I questioned Comrade Bert Deck about this in a note and reminded him that I for one didn't intend to break party discipline by discussing regroupment and that I would limit my remarks to the topic under discussion. Comrade Bert then made a public statement in which he stated that he would take full responsibility for what he would say, and that SWP members are under no discipline from the party and should discuss anything they wanted to regardless of how they differed with the majority line of the SWP. He further stated that any SWP member who keeps silent on regroupment, even if they are in fundamental disagreement with the party line, are doing so by their own choice.

I can only speak for myself when I say that I will remain in opposition to this false conception of how party differences are to be handled in the youth clubs. I have never, and will refuse to discuss any minority differences with the majority line of the party in the youth; and maintain now, as I have in the past that the proper place for these discussions is in the party -- whether they be on the question of State Capitalism, Hungary, the IST, Regroupment, or any other major differences that the youth may have with the party line. This policy can only serve to confuse non-party youth, who are looking for socialist answers and are not interested in listening to SWPers argue over these questions among themselves.

In defense of those minority comrades who have brought out their differences in the youth, I want to stress that it is unfair and unwarranted for the majority to charge them with disloyalty. The

majority youth comrades have insisted and urged them to speak their differences. How can they now, in all fairness, make such a charge.

What must be clarified here, is that the SWP youth aside from talking to each other as individuals, never got together formally to discuss this, and many other questions pertaining to our youth work. We have never discussed exactly what our policy and attitude toward the youth group should be. We have never had the chance to exchange information or ideas or to express what our feelings were with regard to youth policy so as to enable us to coordinate our youth work and determine what our policy and attitude toward the youth group should be. We had nothing more to go on than our own instincts and ability to judge each particular situation as it arose. This is not accidental. It is to be explained by Comrades Weiss and Deck, who have violently opposed any kind of get-to-gether on the part of SWP youth comrades on the grounds that we would appear to dominate the youth clubs. But it has worked out just the opposite in reality. By not discussing youth policy, we appeared more often than not to dominate the organization. We had no vehicle to coordinate our youth work properly. This policy alone was responsible for a good deal of the confusion and haggling over secondary organizational questions among the SWP comrades within the YSA.

It is imperative that a fraction be set up immediately! The youth must be able to properly discuss political questions pertaining to youth work and come to decisions on important issues and determine what our attitude shall be in relation to the party. This was a confusing issue when the YSA was formed, and it is even more confusing today.

Unfortunately, there has been a limited amount of reports to the branch on youth work, and consequently the New York Local has not had a chance for adequate discussions on the developments in the youth. This may pose a serious problem for comrades, all of whom are interested in youth work, but who have a limited knowledge of the sequence of events pertaining to the youth.

This document therefore will attempt to help clarify and outline the youth developments as they have taken place, in the hopes that some of the confusion can be eliminated and an objective discussion on the youth perspectives can take place.

It is now two years since the YSA has been in existence. It is certainly time for the SWP youth and the party to evaluate our work in these two years and link it up with the objective situation facing us today in the youth arena. We must analyze what our role as revolutionary socialist youth has been in the past to help us determine what our role shall be in the future.

We must evaluate our errors as well as our positive contributions if we are to find the correct road for the building of a Leninist youth movement, which is the only valid form that a revolutionary youth movement can be in this period. We must begin by asking ourselves how best to achieve this goal, what is the objective situation facing us today, and what our perspectives are toward achieving this goal. We cannot just mouth the words, "we are for the building

of a genuine revolutionary socialist youth movement" -- most of us are agreed that this is what we are all working towards. We have to determine now what our line will be, how best to approach the youth, whether they be the campus youth, minority or working class youth -- and on what basis and with what program we go to them.

This document will attempt to analyze the youth developments as they have taken place, beginning three years ago, with the party's decision to enter into the youth arena, and the formation of the AYS -- the American Youth for Socialism in New York.

The Formation and Nature of the AYS

The decision to enter into the youth field was based on the understanding that a number of opportunities were presenting themselves in the Negro and Puerto Rican communities and that the youth on the campus were once again beginning to respond to political ideas after the long period of the witch hunt began to subside.

An important development was also taking place inside the ISL-YSL among the Shachtmanite youth. It was becoming apparent that the ISL was plunging headlong in the direction of the SP-SDF. A faction was developing inside the YSL that later crystallized as the Left-Wing Caucus, fighting against the capitulation to Social Democracy. The party recognized an opportunity to reach these youth by posing a revolutionary alternative and the opportunity to build a genuine revolutionary youth group. The Stalinist youth were also in ferment because of the dissolution of the LYL (Labor Youth League).

The party's decision to organize a youth group was correct and valid. There were many opportunities opening up for us in a number of areas enabling us to attract political and non-political youth and to combat the petty-bourgeois ideas of Stalinism and Social Democracy.

Comrade Weiss in a letter to Comrade Cannon on the youth question wrote the following:

"The most important point you raise is the prospect of a revolutionary youth tendency emerging among the youth and what importance this has for the future of our movement. It is entirely correct to envision that a contest will take place for the allegiance of these youth. Our task in this process is to connect these youth with the rich traditions and ideology of international and American Marxism and to defeat the counterfeits. This task is a current one. It must take place today in the form of ideological preparation of our own ranks and in struggle with other tendencies in the radical movement.

"In this respect, I think we should combat all inclinations to regard our struggles with the revisionists of all forms as a finished chapter belonging to a dead past. We will be badly mistaken if we think we can 'by-pass' even the Shachtmanites as well as the Cochranites in ideological battles. The awakening youth will not take our word for anything. We will have to review and bring up to date all the great faction fights. These fights, after all, were not just

factional brawls. Nor were they concerned over obscure doctrinal fine points of interest only to a sect. They were ever the great programmatic issues of our epoch, and they have burning meaning in the world today.

"This does not mean that we are interested in any fusion or entry maneuvers with these people. Our only interest is how to smash them. But this must be done at every stage anew. And it must be done with ideological weapons." (Internal Bulletin, June, 1955.)

The party understood the problem of confronting our opponents, as Comrade Weiss put it, to "smash them with ideological weapons." Indeed it was time to put a revolutionary socialist youth group in the field to "defeat the counterfeiters" and imbue the consciousness of the youth with revolutionary Marxism.

The formation of the AYS enabled us to collaborate with the youth of the LWC, and at the same time to begin to gain recognition in the youth field as a revolutionary Marxist youth organization. The AYS therefore had a good beginning and a sound basis for doing effective work in combatting Social Democracy and Stalinism on the youth level.

This organization was short-lived, however, and never had a chance to develop organizational independence from the party. This was its biggest limitation. Its strength consisted in its ideological unity with the party's program.

Our perspectives for working among the minority, campus and working-class youth never did see the light of day. The work that we began on the Frank Santana Case, the young Puerto Rican boy who is still in prison, was dropped. (If comrades don't remember this case, I suggest they read the Santana pamphlet by Comrade Joyce Cowley). It was announced to the AYS comrades that this organization was dissolved. It is a fact that to the majority of the youth comrades this came as quite a shock. We never had a chance to discuss why the AYS was being dissolved; whether or not it should have been. We were not consulted on this matter and not consulted on whether it would be re-constituted. Comrade Weiss, who was in charge of youth work, and the PC, decided on the imperativeness of working together with the LWC members in a broader arena.

What was not apparent then, became more and more apparent later -- namely, that the dissolution of the AYS into a "broader grouping" was not just to be able to work more effectively with the youth of the LWC, but reflected the party's policy on regroupment. To a large extent the formation of a broad youth movement (which became known later on as IBM clubs -- Independent-Broad and Militant) was only a mirror of the "broad grouping" and milieu in which the SWP sought to function. This was a parallel development between the SWP youth and the party.

Constitution of the Young Socialist Forum

The re-constitution of another youth formation took the form of the YSF, in which the SWP youth and the LWC youth could participate openly, as joint sponsors. We conducted forum series on controversial political topics and were highly successful. Through this

vehicle, we attracted many political as well as non-political youth, and had as many as 90 to 100 youth at times in our audience.

If this interim development, the YSF, was really a step toward the building of a revolutionary socialist youth movement, then one could say that this writer is just a carping critic. As we go on, I will attempt to prove that this was not so and that far from having any perspective of the building of such a movement, the party was viewing this new formation as one more stage in the regroupment process.

Many youth indicated a strong interest for an organized youth club to develop out of the YSF. They expressed the desire to combine the word with the deed. That is, they wanted an organization that not only held forums for educational purposes, but could also take part in socialist actions as well. Many of the youth who expressed this interest were regular attenders of our forums.

The AYS members and the youth of the LWC began to hold joint meetings over precisely this question: Whether this was the correct time to form such an organization; and what our perspectives should be.

What was the thinking of the LWC youth while they were in the process of breaking with Social Democracy? What did they mean by a youth organization?

The following excerpts are taken from the LWC Bulletin, April 1957:

"We frankly and openly orient to those youth who are in the process of breaking with Stalinism in the name of real socialism, who are opposed to the pro-capitalist politics of social-democracy as they are to the anti-democratic politics of Stalinism. We believe that it is possible to build a socialist (note well, socialist, not social-democratic) youth movement in America today, and we intend to build such a movement. That is what we mean by 'Unity to the Left.'"

And further in the YSL Left Wing Declaration:

"We are members of the YSL because we want to assist in the formation of a revolutionary democratic socialist youth movement in the U.S. We are not sectarians. We are willing to unite with all socialist minded youth on the basis of the minimum program of genuine socialism: (My emphasis -- AZ.) independent political action of the working class and the oppressed peoples everywhere throughout the world, against both Stalinist and Capitalist oppressors."

This reflected a healthy tendency on the part of the LWC in their movement away from the social-democratic politics of the ISL.

While some of their formulations on Stalinism are questionable, their concept of the kind of the youth movement they proposed to build was far more in keeping with the objective conditions and needs of building a youth movement than the present concept of IBM.

As our joint meetings continued, a sharp division of opinion began to develop. The LWC members were in favor of a minimum program on which to unite the youth, in order to have a cohesive youth organization and give it some meaning. Their approach was to offer an alternative to the youth who up till now had only the perspective of Stalinism or Social Democracy.

Bert Deck and the SWP youth were in opposition to this approach. Their concept was to have some kind of "Loose Federation of Youth," without offering any policy or program. The party line at the time was changing to "the time is not yet ripe for a revolutionary socialist youth movement;" that we can attract youth to some all-inclusive, amorphous club that is loose and broad and doesn't stand for anything.

This was a far cry from the party's original conception of youth work. It certainly had nothing to do with the remarks of Comrade Weiss, who said then:

"I am worried that our student work will not get to first base until we've taken off our coats and done a job on the Shachtmanites. The brutal fact is that they have more on the campus than we do, and much more important, they stand in a position to disorient and demoralize (My emphasis -- AZ) awakening elements that are looking for a radical solution (my emphasis -- AZ).

"I'm in favor of opening a sustained polemical attack against all our opponents. I think the Cochranite-Sweezyite combination should be high on our list. The Shachtmanites a close second, particularly in the student field." (Internal Bulletin, June, 1955.)

It should be obvious that if we don't want the awakening elements to be disoriented and demoralized we must offer them a "radical solution" as Comrade Weiss so aptly put it.

What happened then to change the thinking so fundamentally of the party on the youth question. If there were such rapidly leftward moving forces as the party had evaluated after the 20th Congress of the CP, we should have continued our policy of a "sustained polemical attack" against our opponents. But as the regroupment line of the party developed, so too the concept of an ideological battle began to change. It became apparent that the attitude towards youth work began to change also. Instead of working towards the building of a revolutionary socialist youth movement, the youth club was to become only a tool of regroupment. This limited the youth from penetrating into the areas that had previously opened to us and which motivated the organization of the AYS. Opportunities were still there but the regroupment tactic shifted our attention away from mass youth work to one of adaptation to petty-bourgeois radicals.

Youth struggles were taking place all over New York City. Close to 1,000 youth were expelled from high schools on the grounds that they were juvenile delinquents. Meetings of youth were held city-wide in protest over these expulsions, yet the YSA was never present or ever participated in the action of the student protest.

At the last City Conference of the New York Local, loud declamations were made by Bert Deck on how the YSA would organize and parti-

participate in the Brooklyn Labor Committee to Combat Racial Discrimination. But not one concrete step was taken to carry through this proposal.

The proposal for the youth to participate in the NAACP youth was at best either sporadic and disorganized, and at worst, never materialized. Whatever activities were accomplished was done under the pressure of a few minority youth comrades who were confronted with many obstacles and organizational restrictions.

It is absolutely incorrect to put a youth movement in the field that has no perspectives of becoming anything more than just a regroupment tactic. If the party is really serious about building a youth movement in this country, it must give the youth something more to work with. It must imbue the youth of today with revolutionary socialism and begin by training youth cadres and uniting them on the basis of what we stand for and that is revolutionary Marxism.

How Youth Arrive at Revolutionary Ideas

The following is Comrade Deck's approach on how youth come to socialism:

"We did not present the party to the youth in an ultimatic fashion, i.e. -- We have the program, this is the party, it's the only revolutionary party, if you want to be revolutionists join this party, accept this program; it is already worked out for you. We avoided that pitfall, which could only isolate us from the best of the youth who want to think through on their own all political questions and develop socialism as part and parcel of their beings -- not something handed down to them but something which grows out of their own experience and their own creative thought." (My emphasis -- AZ.) (Comments on the Current Stage of the Youth Movement.)

Comrade Deck has often said that he is quoting Lenin when he says that "we do not tell the youth what to do, and they must independently arrive at their own conclusions toward socialism." This is false! In the "Young Generation" Lenin said, ". . . necessarily, the youth must come to socialism in a different way, by other paths, in other forms, under other circumstances than their fathers. . . ." But Lenin never so much as indicated that the youth should independently arrive at their own conclusions toward socialism. Independent of what? Of history? But history has already been made. And how can we possibly expect the youth to think through on their own all political questions?

Comrade Deck is bowing to the idea of "spontaneity" which Lenin fought against at the turn of the century. ". . . subservience to the spontaneity of the labor movement, the belittling of the role of 'the conscious element,' of the role of Social-Democracy, MEANS, WHETHER ONE LIKES IT OR NOT, GROWTH OF INFLUENCE OF BOURGEOIS IDEOLOGY AMONG THE WORKERS." (Lenin in What Is To Be Done) (Emphasis in original -- AZ.) In developing this concept Lenin quotes Kautsky approvingly who had written at an earlier time that "Socialism and the class struggle arise side by side and not out of the other; each arises out of different premises. Modern socialist consciousness can arise only on the basis of profound scientific knowledge."

If this is true for the adult movement then it is even more true for the young generation. The young generation, only now growing up, does not possess the experience of the class struggle or the revolutionary temperament. It does not explore for itself as did the older generation but falls into an environment of the most powerful government institutions and into an arena of the ideas of the ruling class. The question of the correct orientation of the young generation acquires utmost importance.

The youth of today or of any generation cannot be left to explore for themselves and we cannot wait until "socialism grows out of their own experience, and their own creative thought," as Comrade Bert Deck would have us do. The youth are being told every day what to do and how to do it by the capitalist class. Surely, we as revolutionary Marxists have even more of a right to tell the youth what we would have them do! We have to realize that history has already been made. There are many existing political tendencies in the radical movement who also want to tell the youth what to do and are telling the youth what to do. Shall we therefore leave it up to the young generation to follow in the footsteps of the betrayers of the working class, the Stalinists? Or let them go to the side of the State Department politics of Social Democracy simply because we do not want to antagonize the youth by telling them what to do -- and sitting patiently by while they think things through on their own? It is impossible for the youth of today to think things through on their own. The capitalists and other petty-bourgeois forces are not sitting patiently by and letting the youth determine on the basis of their own experiences which road they should travel. It is our duty as Marxists to tell them that we have the correct program. And this does not mean that we are being "ultimatistic" to do so.

Socialism is not a spontaneous process growing out of the class struggle. Youth as well as adults must be imbued with the ideas, methods and goals of socialism. Socialism, having become a science, must be studied. This advice of Engels retains all its validity today.

We want to educate and elevate the level of consciousness of the young generation -- we want to put them on the road to revolutionary socialism.

What Is IBM?

IBM supposedly stands for Independent-Broad-Militant. It has been subjected to much criticism, confusion and debate over its precise meaning and interpreted many different ways nationally. This alone should serve to indicate that there is something seriously wrong with it. Its meaning, however, will in itself serve this purpose adequately enough.

Since the IBM club in New York, the YSA is considered by the SWP youth nationally to be the best example of how IBM clubs should function, the information in this document will be limited for the most part to how IBM has been applied and has functioned in the YSA.

In a resolution by Comrades Tim Wohlforth and Jim Robertson we can see the real meaning of IBM.

"However, in exactly those aspects which are the main strength and appeal of the IBM clubs, lies their basic weakness. Fundamentally these clubs are a political and organizational meeting ground for revolutionary socialist elements and youth who in one fashion or another hold to Stalinist politics. For this reason these clubs are unable to take positions on a host of important class struggle issues. (My emphasis -- AZ.) To attempt to force these clubs to take stands on such issues would in effect force out exactly those elements we wish to cohabit with (my emphasis -- AZ) at the present time and thus destroy the basic appeal of the IBM clubs. However, it is also true that exactly those aspects of the IBM clubs which make them attractive to Stalinist youth make them repugnant to non-Stalinist youth. This factor limits the ability of these clubs to reach out to new, previously uninvolved elements, in any large scale way. Inevitably this basic contradiction in the nature of the IBM clubs will lead to their disintegration." (My emphasis -- AZ.)

And further:

"Our first and primary task is to build the IBM's as they are. We should definitely not attempt to force these clubs to adopt any position which even a small minority could not fully accept." (Resolution on Tasks and Perspectives for the Building of a Revolutionary Youth Movement -- May 12, 1958.)

These statements are at best self-contradictory. No political grouping, adult, youth or otherwise can be "all things to all people" while at the same time trying to get its ideas across. It simply cannot be done! It is like being on a political merry-go-round and no one is quite clear on which road they are traveling, but continue to travel within the limited circle of IBM and of course get absolutely nowhere.

And secondly, the attempt to attract the leftward-moving youth was not supposed to be one of "cohabitation," (to use the words of Comrades Tim W. and Jim R.) but one of ideological confrontation. There is no similarity between the two.

If Comrades Tim and Jim insist that the "basic contradiction in the nature of the IBM club will inevitably lead to their disintegration" how then can they logically come to the conclusion that "Our first and primary task is to build the IBM's as they are"?

The same is true with Comrade Martha. She expresses it this way: "The youth movement which we have initiated is an unstable centrist formation which cannot last long in its present state." But the conclusions she draws from this are, "don't misunderstand me. The IBM slogan is correct, as far as it goes." (On Building A Revolutionary Youth Movement -- YSF, June, 1958.)

So the lessons we are supposed to draw from this is that despite the fact that IBM will inevitably lead to its own doom, we must continue to build the IBM clubs as they are because obviously this slogan is correct.

IBM or Cohabitation vs. Ideological Confrontation

Let us now compare the party's original concept of youth work, which was to put a revolutionary socialist youth group in the field to "defeat the counterfeiter" and imbue the consciousness of the youth with revolutionary Marxism with the later concept of IBM, as it was applied to the Stalinist youth.

How were we able to recruit the Left-Wing Shachtmanite youth to the party and to the banner of Trotskyism.

The party's approach to the LWC was one of approaching them on an ideological level. We counterposed our ideas and program to those of the Social Democrat Shachtman. The biggest factor in winning them over was because we were there to help guide them and present them with an alternative to Social Democracy, in spite of their fears and suspicions about the SWP. The party played a vital role in winning these youth over to the banner of revolutionary socialism.

When Comrade Weiss spoke at the YSL Convention, he didn't first say, let's see where we can agree and then present his program. He correctly counterposed the real program of Trotsky to that of Shachtman, and then said in effect, this is what we stand for -- now let us see where we can agree on the basis of what I have presented to you.

That the LWC youth wanted to break with Social Democracy was one thing; that their political instincts were correct we knew; but they also had to see an alternative to Social Democracy to push them even further to the left, and closer to the party.

And this the party did very effectively. We helped answer their question of where do we go from here, by giving them that alternative. By showing them the correct road to revolutionary socialism, we were instrumental in inspiring them to continue their struggle against Social Democracy.

IBM in Practice

IBM was a complete reversal of confrontation on an ideological level. In its attempt to be "all things to all people" it has proven to be disastrous not only in alienating the leftward-moving youth of a political background, but in alienating the non-political youth as well, as we shall soon see. It was and remains a slogan for regroupment and nothing more. It does not allow the youth to take positions on important class-struggle issues. How has it worked out in reality?

At the same time the Gates wing broke with the CP, the YSA began recruiting the Stalinist youth of the defunct LYL. They were the young followers of Gates and the regroupment elements that the SWP youth were trying so hard to reach. We recruited them on the basis of IBM.

They spent close to a year in the YSA; what was their education in that year? What was our approach to them?

Unlike our policy of ideological confrontation, our only basis for unity was IBM. We consciously and consistently maintained a

policy of catering to their ideas; of giving in to them. We withheld our own ideas and agreed with almost every idea that they put forth. The one aim was to keep them in the organization at all costs. It didn't matter whether the ideas of revolutionary socialism came through to them; or that IBM prevented us from participation in socialist actions -- our only policy was one of not antagonizing them. We practically told the Stalinist youth that "we built this organization; worked hard towards the building of it, but just to show you how really broad we are -- we're going to give the YSA to you." Of course they took full advantage of it and for this they cannot be blamed.

Their tremendous confusion and mistrust of the SWP was to a large degree the fault of our own comrades. The CP youth had a political line and expressed it at every opportunity. Good! But the SWP youth also had a political line, but unlike the CP youth we did not express it!

The Stalinist youth knew we adhered to the ideas of Trotsky -- but their conception of Trotskyism was confused and distorted. We didn't help to clarify their conception of Trotskyism by adapting ourselves to them. We never gave them an alternative to Stalinism, and consequently, didn't give them any incentive to break with their past.

One of these youth was heard to complain while he was still in the YSA that "you people are trying to win me over by dinners instead of political arguments." Unfortunately the food we were feeding him was not necessarily food for thought.

When Comrade Deck and other leading youth comrades were questioned as to why we persisted in following this policy of adapting our ideas to theirs, the answer was that "we have to convince the Stalinist youth that we (the Trotskyists) don't have horns." But surely after close to a year of working with us they could see that we didn't have horns. It was not a question of showing our "horns" but of revealing a revolutionary face! And this was never done. The Stalinist youth could all agree, I'm sure, that we as individuals are nice people. But do they know that we are revolutionary socialists? Did we teach them the meaning of revolutionary socialism? I hardly think so.

Comrade Martha appears to agree with this point in her document "On Building a Revolutionary Youth Movement." She says:

"How are our political ideas getting across in this process? Except for our conception of an IBM youth movement, the importance of which I do not wish to underestimate, our ideas are not receiving full expression. Whether consciously or otherwise, we are not pushing our political differences with the Stalinists. We believe that to initiate an all-out, serious political struggle at this time would prematurely reconstruct the very barriers between us and the Stalinists that it has taken two years and a whole series of world events to break down. Publicly, our politics are limited to IBM and a series of resolutions and statements in the fields of civil liberties and civil rights. The reason is simple: these are the sole areas of agreement in our heterogeneous groupings."

Comrade Martha understands full well that our political ideas did not get across to the Stalinist youth. She would like to see a stronger political content injected into IBM. But she, like others, fails to see that civil liberties and civil rights are the only political content that you can give to IBM. And it is a fact that IBM will continue to exist as long as the party continues its present regroupment line. The two are inseparable -- IBM equals regroupment precisely as it is being carried out in the SWP; if the party continues its present adaptationist line, so too the youth clubs in which the SWP constitute the majority of members will continue to pursue their present course of cohabitation instead of ideological confrontation.

In the same document, Comrade Martha points out that a person breaking from Stalinism can go in many directions. And that there is absolutely no basis for assuming that a person who is attracted to our regroupment line will automatically move in the direction of revolutionary politics. She correctly states that "IBM clubs can offer a temporary haven for confused youth; but they cannot offer a political solution until their whole content is changed."

And she is absolutely right! The IBM club in New York, the YSA did precisely that. It offered a temporary haven for the confused Stalinist youth. But when they left the organization after close to a year of their IBM haven, they were just as confused politically as they were when they entered the YSA.

On May 29, 1958, the Stalinist youth resigned officially from the YSA. Weeks before their resignation it was an open secret that they were holding faction meetings against us. Many non-Stalinist youth in the YSA were invited to their meetings and told our comrades about them. The Stalinist youth were extremely hostile to us -- personally that is. If their hostility could have taken the form of a political debate, they might at least have learned something.

It was a known fact that the Stalinist youth were holding faction meetings and that they were spreading slanders about the SWP youth and the party among non-political youth members as well. This writer asked, then pleaded, then demanded that the SWP youth hold a meeting to discuss this situation and what could be done about it. I was told by leading youth comrades that this was impossible; that we don't want to appear to dominate the IBM club. But the idea of a caucus meeting was not meant for the purpose of dominating or alienating the Stalinist youth. It should have been held (not only one, but many) to discuss our policy in the youth! To discuss what we could do about avoiding a split! After all, there were some elements who may have been impressed with our ideas. (It is interesting to note that these youth left with the belief that the SWP youth had been holding caucus meetings from the very beginning -- and we never could convince them otherwise.)

The YSA -- Is It Organizationally Independent from the Party?

The real answer is simple, and implicit in it is the proof of how much the YSA is organizationally dependent on the party.

Comrades Weiss and Deck seem to think that not having fraction meetings makes you organizationally independent from the party. But do they think that handing down the line from the party to only a select few of the leading youth comrades, without giving all of the party youth the benefit of political discussion, constitutes independence? This has been the practice from the very inception of the YSA. One of the recent examples is in the switch in line from the Gates orientation to the National Guardian milieu.

When the IST began to take shape, the party decided to forget all about its previous orientation to Gates and his followers. This was done with no explanation or evaluation of where they were going or of why the switch from Gates to the National Guardian milieu was made.

The party turned its attention to the National Guardian milieu, but the party youth still had contact with the 11 or so Gates elements. If the party had really been serious about organizational independence for the youth, then the SWP youth should have been allowed to continue to work with these Gates elements, even if the party was locking in other pastures. Since the CP youth were opposed to supporting the IST, we had to get rid of them. And I maintain that that's exactly what we did.

It is true that they resigned from the YSA. Yet the charge is made here that we were instrumental in getting rid of them. The following is an explanation of this charge.

Although there was no public political motivation given by the Stalinist youth when they resigned from the YSA, our youth comrades will agree that they left over the question of support to the IST. We all knew they were opposed to the YSA giving support, and we also knew that if we pushed for it they would not remain in the organization. Yet this question of supporting the Ticket, was pushed -- and it was obvious that the YSA was going to come out in support of the ticket even if it would mean losing these youth. These very youth with whom we'd compromised with on so many other crucial political issues were suddenly confronted with a hard and unyielding policy.

Up until this time, there had been very few discussions on the question of Stalinism and its betrayals of the working class. The discussions around the IST were very few -- and were hastily organized at that. They were not serious political discussions. What became of primary importance was to get the CP youth out of the YSA fast.

The importance of really teaching these youth the lessons of class-collaborationism and the importance of Independent Political Action became secondary! The party was no longer interested in the Gates elements.

No wonder bitter feelings occurred. Many comrades who were serious about following through with IBM and serious about working with these youth were resentful at the way they were pushed out of the organization.

It is important to recognize that the SWP youth never discussed this action as it pertained to the YSA orientation, or were told why we were pursuing this new course, either in the YSA or in the branch.

The line was handed down to a few of the leading youth comrades and since we had no fraction meetings at which to discuss policy, we took our cue from those youth comrades who had been given the official line of the party!

Why was it so crucial for the YSA to publicly come out in support of the IST? Why did we suddenly, after a whole year of consciously forgetting to mention Trotsky or Trotskyism decide to confront the CP youth with their line of class-collaborationism?

If it was because of a change in the basic attitude of the party and the youth with regard to our policy of being "soft and flexible;" if this policy had been thoroughly analyzed and discussed -- and the political conclusions drawn had been that this policy is no longer valid, then perhaps one could see and understand this action in a different light. But there were no such political evaluations or discussions of that nature. And IBM is continuing and has just recently been reaffirmed!

While the CP youth were in the YSA there was neither an attempt to confront them or to characterize them politically. Yet as soon as the SWP turned its eyes to the National Guardian milieu and the IST, these youth were disregarded and discarded. Even after they left the YSA no political evaluation of them took place. The only comments made were that "they were just rotten elements to begin with" and "it was so deadening while they were in the organization; now we can breathe again."

This is hardly a political characterization of a political tendency and hardly an excuse for rationalizing a switch in line!

But the party had "bigger things in mind" -- namely the IST; and it was not going to let anything stand in the way of this new unity. The Stalinist youth were sacrificed for the IST. Not because of a re-evaluation of our line -- but because the party desperately needed the youth to work for the IST.

Ironically enough, sometime after the Stalinist youth left the YSA, the Chairman of the YSA, a non-SWPer, presented a motion for critical support to the IST. A motion which the party itself rejected as the course for the SWP, but which got a unanimous vote from SWP youth comrades in the YSA. This move did not indicate that the YSA was taking an independent position, but revealed that a maneuver had been worked out between some of the SWP leaders and some of the youth leaders in an attempt to forestall any further resignations from the YSA. Panic, rather than a thought-out political policy motivated this maneuver. This unfortunately reflected an inconsistency on the part of SWP youth who supported this motion for critical support. Many of them had fought for and supported uncritical support to the IST inside the party, and did not indicate that they favored critical support. If they were really serious about the merits of critical support, then they were duty-bound to present this idea in the party too.

After the CP youth resigned, almost all of our youth work was taken up with the IST. The YSA headquarters became a junior headquarters and an adjunct of the IST. Week after week instead of discussing youth work the key issue for the youth became the IST. All other youth projects were dropped or forgotten. A number of active YSA members, who were for supporting the Ticket became very disturbed, nevertheless, over the fact that it was becoming the primary and only function of the YSA. One youth in particular, a long-time active member, was very resentful towards the SWP youth because he felt that the SWP was more interested in its youth members pushing for the IST than in the building of a youth movement, and working in the youth arena around issues agitating youth. He felt that the perspective for building the youth movement had become a secondary task. He consequently resigned for this reason although I believe his official statement of resignation said in part that he was too busy to concentrate on this activity. Actually, this was a formula for not appearing to seem hostile publicly to the party.

Our own youth should and did make every effort to work for the IST. But this should have been done as members of the SWP, as this campaign was considered the primary task of the party. Comrades who are active in youth work have always combined party tasks with their youth work. This action did not constitute "organizational independence" from the party. It only served to show very clearly how much the IBM club is organizationally tied to the SWP.

The YSA should have had organized political discussions on the need for Independent Political Action, of course -- but it should have been organized on a similar basis as it was around the '57 Mayoralty Campaign of the SWP. We did not make it a life and death issue then -- if the CP youth would not have been willing to support the Cowley slate (or the Flynn campaign) the party would not have issued an ultimatum to the YSA, to the effect that if the youth organization does not come out in full support of the SWP slate, it is failing in its revolutionary duties. Why should it have done so with the IST campaign?

The point is that the party cannot, and especially to non-party members in the YSA, shout from the rooftops that the SWP does not want to dominate the youth clubs, and that it wants them to be organizationally independent of all adult tendencies if it means only some of the time -- if it means only when important SWP maneuvers are not involved!

Independence does not mean lack of guidance from the party. But it does mean no bureaucratic imposition!

Here again is the proof of the limitations of the regroupment stigma of IBM. The party does not want the youth clubs to have a "worked-out" program. IBM limits the youth clubs to civil liberties and civil rights. Yet the party insisted as in the case of the IST that the YSA take a definite stand on Independent Political Action, but again IBM will not permit this. This is quite a contradiction, to say the least.

If the YSA had its own program -- a program of revolutionary socialism, these problems would not exist. The youth clubs could

remain organizationally independent from the party, yet permit the ideas of class-struggle action to take place on a youth level. These actions would not have to be artificially induced, as with the IST, and the party would not have to be in a position of imposing itself upon the youth and thereby override the youth policy. Independent Political Action would be part and parcel of a revolutionary youth program and would participate in class-struggle actions as a matter of course.

The Role of the Young Socialist

The conception of the majority that the next step towards the building of a revolutionary socialist youth movement is a substitution of the YS for the program and activities of the youth clubs is false. This idea is contained in part in a "Memorandum on the Building of a Revolutionary Youth Movement," submitted by Comrade Tim Wohlforth and the Editorial Board of the YS. The essence of this resolution was submitted to and accepted by the Detroit Youth Conference:

"The crystallization of the supporters of the YS into more definite organizational form does not signify a change of attitude toward the independent, broad, militant (IBM) groups which have already been formed, are in the process of formation, or which might be formed in the coming period. In fact, stabilization of the YS through such means makes it easier to follow an extremely flexible policy in this respect. (My emphasis -- AZ.)

"At this stage of the development of the revolutionary socialist youth movement in America, the various areas have no choice but to bend with local requirements. The norm on a nation-wide scale should not be to try to impose some general form that in different times and circumstances and with different forces would no doubt be preferable. The norm is to take what exists, including locally preferred forms, and try to link them to the YS, even though the link may be so tenuous as to involve nothing more than a discussion of articles appearing in the paper." (My emphasis -- AZ.)

Comrade Tim and others talk constantly of the "stage of development" that we are in. They would have us move cautiously; quietly; we should not impose upon the so-called slumber of the youth. We must take what exists and not try to change the status quo of the youth clubs. We are asked now, after almost two years of being soft and flexible, to follow an even more extreme flexible policy.

And yet while they speak of IBM, youth struggles are taking place every day before our eyes, in every part of the country. Witness the unemployment situation; the struggle for integration in the schools; the question of militarism, to name but a few.

These are the signs of the times! The youth who are involved in these actions are looking for solutions. This is the stage of the development where a revolutionary socialist youth movement is imperative.

It is not nearly enough to ask these youth to join with us and "discuss articles appearing in the paper." A newspaper cannot be considered a substitute for a revolutionary socialist youth organiza-

tion. Youth want to do more than just subscribe to a paper, no matter how valuable the paper may be.

No one can deny that even from the very beginning of the YSA the youth that we have attracted have wanted to participate in action. Many of them were non-political youth, who had come to socialism for the first time, and unfortunately, we have lost many of these youth. It is our task to participate with them in the class struggle.

Our first and primary task is to really begin to build revolutionary socialist youth clubs. We must give them some meaning with a program of revolutionary socialism. The YS should serve to take these ideas forth; it should be a reflection of the program and views of the clubs. But it should not be a substitute for them!

Campus Orientation

The YSA and the youth clubs nationally have been discussing what our future orientation should be and we have been discussing a campus orientation.

Let me state here that I am not opposed to doing work on campus. It is entirely correct and essential to combat the petty-bourgeois ideology that permeates the campus and from which the student has no escape. It is essential to confront the ideas of Stalinism and Social Democracy with the ideas of revolutionary socialism wherever we can and of course the students on campus have these ideas to contend with also.

I have opposed a campus orientation because we cannot even begin to think seriously about doing campus work unless we are serious about building a youth organization that is capable of participating in the day to day struggles of these youth, and thereby enable us to link up our campus work with the class struggle.

It is impossible to look forward to the building of a revolutionary socialist youth movement, no matter how many times we say we are for it, unless we erase the stigma of IBM. Up till now it has only served to confuse and disorient the many political and non-political youth who are looking for a radical solution to the many problems confronting the youth today.

With the continuation of IBM it is impossible to do any kind of youth work effectively whether we call it a campus orientation or by any other name.

At one of the first meetings of the AYS (SWP youth) and the then LWC of the YSL, Comrade Tim was fighting against a broad youth club which had no program on which to unite the youth. His words then were:

"One of the very reasons that we had to put up such a fight in the YSL was precisely because it was such an amorphous, all-inclusive hodge-podge of people and ideas; and that the irony of this discussion is that the SWP has been criticizing this kind of an organization for years, and rightly so. Do we now want the same kind of an organization, only more amorphous and even looser"?

I sincerely hope that Comrade Tim, who is now one of the leading exponents of IBM, will remember his own words of not so long ago, and begin to heed his own advice.

Since a good part of our campus orientation is to try to build campus clubs let us see what Comrade Martha had to say with regard to IBM and its relation to campus work:

"Nor can IBM clubs, or a national organization formed by adding them together, reach out in any significant degree to the 'masses' -- which in the youth field consist primarily of students, and to an increasing degree young workers. Without a political viewpoint, an organization cannot get anywhere building campus clubs. (My emphasis -- AZ.) Without a clear conception in the group of what socialism is, a group cannot propagate socialism. . . ." (On Building A Revolutionary Youth Movement, YSR, June, 1958.)

Comrade Martha is all for building campus clubs and she is all for working on the campus. Good! But she is also, as of this writing, all for continuing with the IBM clubs. Yet she insists, and correctly so, that "without a political viewpoint, an organization cannot get anywhere building campus clubs."

It is about time that we stop talking IBM! It is about time that we stop trying to take the easy road to socialism by waiting for the masses to spontaneously rise up and shout for socialism. We must not sit patiently by and wait for the right moment -- we must begin to prepare and organize for it now!

In 1957, the line was that "it is not time now for a revolutionary socialist youth movement." In 1958, the line is the same. If we continue with the same "all things to all people" concept of IBM, it never will be the time to build such a movement. Now is the time to build it. It has always been the time. Let us begin to give the awakening youth the answers they are looking for and give them the incentive, the hope and the courage to join with us in the fight for a socialist America.

A Program of Revolutionary Socialism for a Leninist Youth Movement

Up till now, this document has dealt only with the organizational form of the youth movement. But the discussion cannot stop at the form that this organization will take. The form itself is determined by the program.

There has been very little discussion on what the program should be for a revolutionary socialist youth movement in the United States. A number of slogans have been raised in the past, with the primary concern over civil liberties and civil rights. They have been raised empirically around specific issues. That is, there has been no general attempt to unite these slogans and to find a bridge between the consciousness of the American youth and the objective events. A transitional program is imperative if our youth are to play a leading role in winning adherence to the banner of Trotskyism. Such a program dealing with the problems of the young generation was drawn up and adopted in 1938, by the International Conference of the youth of the Fourth International.

It remains basically valid today.

Our task is to use it as a guide, bring it up to date, concretize it, and put it into practice.

Resolution on the Youth (Adopted in 1938 by the International Youth of the Fourth International)

The Capitalist Impasse

1. Capitalism, whether it be authoritarian or liberal, admits the inability to bring the slightest relief to the misery and sufferings of working-class youth. The young want a trade, and when (rarely enough) it consents to give them one, it is only to chain them the better to a machine which tomorrow will stop and let them starve beside the very riches they have produced. The young want to work, to produce with their hands, to use their strength, and capitalism offers them the perspective of unemployment or of "the execution of work in conditions other than the normal conditions of production," according to the excellent hypocritical definition of labor camps by the League of Nations, or of armament production, which engenders destruction rather than improvement. The young want to learn, and the way to culture is barred to them. The young want to live and the only future offered them is that of dying of hunger or of rotting on the barbed wire of a new imperialist war. The young want to create a new world, and they are permitted only to maintain or to consolidate a rotting world that is falling to pieces. The young want to know what tomorrow will be, and capitalism's reply to them is: "Today you've got to tighten your belt another notch; tomorrow, we'll see. . . In any case, perhaps you're not going to have any tomorrow."

Give Youth a Future -- Give the World a Future

2. That is why youth will rally under the flag of those who bring it a future. Only the Fourth International, because it represents the historical interests of the only class which can reorganize the world upon new bases, only the Bolshevik-Leninists can promise youth a future in which it can put its abilities to full use. Only they can say to the youth: "Together with you, we want to make a new world where everyone works and is proud to work well, to know his job down to the smallest details; a world where everyone will eat according to his hunger, for production will be regulated according to the needs of the workers and not those of profit; a world where one must constantly learn, in order the better to subordinate the forces of nature to the will of man; a world where, by ceaselessly extending the domain of the application of science, humanity's theoretic knowledge will be daily increased; a new world; a new man who can make real all the hopes and powers he bears within him." It is under the ensign of a new world and a new humanity that the Fourth International and its youth organizations must go on to win the working-class youth; it is under that ensign that they will win that youth.

The Struggle for a Future -- The Struggle for Bread

3. The promise of a better future would be only demagogy if the Bolshevik-Leninists were not fighting for an immediate improvement

in the situation of working-class youth, if they were not formulating youth's immediate demands, if they were not spreading word of the necessity for working-class youth to fight by class-struggle methods for the satisfaction of these demands, and if, through this struggle and on the basis of the experience gained therein, they were not demonstrating to exploited youth that its demands could be finally satisfied only by establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat, that the struggle for these demands must be transformed into a struggle for power by means of a struggle for the control and management of the economic system.

We Demand the Right to Work!

4. For the young workers engaged in production the Bolsheviki-Leninists put forward slogans with the aim of (a) measuring the work done by the young not according to the desire to drag as much profit as possible out of it, but on the contrary according to their degree of physical development; (b) assuring them of a standard of living equal to that of adults, by that very fact assuring them of economic independence; (c) raising their technical qualifications as far as possible; (d) against the equal opportunity for young and old to be exploited by capitalism, setting up their equal rights.

For the young under 20, they also formulate the following demands:

Reduced working week, with schedules allowing young workers to engage in sports in the open air;

At least one month's paid vacation per year;

The organizing, by factories or groups of factories, of training courses, at the bosses' expense and under workers' control;

Hours of craft training taken out of the working week, and paid for at regular rates;

Application of the principle "for equal work, equal pay," under workers' control;

The fixing of a minimum living wage for young workers; fixing of the wages of young workers under the control of all the workers taken as a whole;

Prohibition of night-work, of over-laborious, unhealthy, or unwholesome tasks; workers' control over the use of young labor.

Equality for Youth in Social Legislation
All Together for the Struggle!

5. In order to take the defense of their demands into their own hands, the young workers should have the right to choose their own delegates, whose task is above all to draw the attention of the adult delegates and of the workers in general to youth's specific demands, to tie up the struggle for these particular demands, to tie up the struggle for these particular demands with the struggle for the general demands of the working class. In the same way, in all

branches of trade-union organization, these must be created, and imposed upon the trade-union bureaucracy, union youth commissions, whose task shall be to study the demands of the youth, and to recruit and educate young workers. The task of the Bolshevik-Leninists is to take the lead in the organization of such commissions.

In order to throw trade-union doors wide open to exploited youth, the Bolshevik-Leninists demand the establishment of reduced dues for young workers.

We Want a Trade!

6. In the fight against unemployment the slogans, raise the school age, organize apprenticeship, make sense only to the extent that the weight of this must be borne, not by the working class, but by the big capitalists. Hence the Bolshevik-Leninists owe it to themselves to formulate the demands of working-class youth in this field as follows:

Prolongation of the school age to 16, with a grant for family support in working-class and small farmer families.

Reorganization of the school in cooperation with the factory; the school should prepare children for life and work; it should weld the youth to the older generations; hence the demand for control by workers' organizations over technical education.

Reduction of the period of apprenticeship to a maximum of two years.

Forbidding of all work not connected with the actual apprenticeship.

The setting up, at the expense of the bosses, in connection with every business or group of businesses engaged in manufacturing, mining, or trade, of apprentice schools, with an attendance of at least 3% of the personnel employed in the business or group of businesses.

Choosing of the instructors by the labor unions.

Control of these schools by a mixed commission of workers' delegates and delegates of the apprentices themselves.

We Demand Our Right to Live!

7. The task of saving the unemployed youth from misery, despair, and fascist demagogy, of working them back into production and thereby binding them closely to the working class is a vital task for the future of the proletariat. Revolutionaries must struggle to force capitalism (a) to undertake to work the unemployed youth back into production through the organization of technical education and guidance; (b) to put the unemployed youth back immediately into productive activity; (c) to organize such work not according to semi-military methods, but on the basis of regular wages: Down with labor camps, either voluntary or obligatory!; (d) to furnish youth, which it is throwing into misery, the wherewithal to live. Hence the Bolshevik-Leninists put forward the following demands:

Unemployment benefits on the adult scale for all young unemployed, manual or intellectual, immediately upon their finishing school:

Forcing the big bosses to open technical reeducation centers under workers' control;

Technical reeducation organized according to the needs of production, under the general control of the trade unions and the congresses of workers' delegates;

Reopening of the shut-down factories;

Commencement of large-scale public works (hospitals, schools, low-cost housing projects, sports fields, stadia, swimming pools, electric power stations), paid at trade-union scales and under workers' control from top to bottom.

For Our Brothers on the Farms!

8. The misery of the farm youth is no less than that of the industrial youth. For farm youth the Bolsheviki-Leninists formulate the following general demands:

Strict application of all the above-named laws and social measures in the country just as in the city;

Suppression of the domestic exploitation of young children;

Particularly strict application of the principle: "For equal work, equal pay."

District organization of technical education at the expense of the big finance-capital farm owners;

Healthy food and lodging for young farm workers living in their bosses' houses;

Cheap credit for small-scale farmers, and especially for small-scale farmers with family responsibilities.

For Our Countryside

9. The industrial and farm youth are the most exploited part of all working-class youth. The youth organizations of the Fourth International must draw particular attention to the following demands: Strict application of principle: "For equal work, equal pay!";

An extra day off per month;

The right to voluntary maternity;

A six-months' leave-of-absence for maternity;

Maternity grants for girl-mothers.

Open the Schools and Universities!

10. One of the necessary conditions for the progress of humanity is that large sections of working-class youth should have access to culture and science. The Bolshevik-Leninists put forward the following slogans:

Open the schools and universities to all the young who are willing to study.

Free education and support for workers' and farmers' sons and daughters.

Bread, Books, and Civil Rights for Coolies!

11. In colonial and semi-colonial countries, laboring youth is the victim of a double exploitation -- capitalist and patriarchal. In these and in imperialist countries the defense of the demands of the young colonial workers and peasants is the first duty in the fight against imperialism. This fight is carried on around the general slogan: The same rights for colonial youth as for the youth of the imperialist capital-city.

Organization of hygiene and similar care in all villages.

Organization of homes for young workers, peasants, and coolies, under the control of labor and nationalist organizations.

Schools for native children; teaching in the native language.

Open the government administration to native language.

Open the government administration to native intellectuals.

Take the necessary financial credits from the war and police budgets and imperialist privileges.

Political Rights of Youth

12. The bourgeoisie recognizes working youth's right to be exploited; but refuses it the right to have anything to say about that exploitation, and deprives it of all political rights; in certain countries it even forbids youth under 18 to have any political activity whatever. The working class replies to these measures by saying: Whoever has the right to be exploited has also the right to struggle against the system which exploits him. Full political rights to young workers and peasants!

The right to vote beginning at 18, just as much in legislative and municipal elections as in the election of delegates.

Abolition of special laws forbidding youth to engage in political activity.

We Demand Our Right to Happiness!

13. Working-class youth's need for relaxation is utilized by the bourgeoisie either to stupefy it or to make it submit to an even

tighter discipline. The duty of the working class is to help create a youth that is strong and capable of throwing all its physical and mental strength into the fight against capitalism; to aid it in using what leisure capitalism gives it to learn to understand the world better, in order to be better able to change it. Hence the Bolshevik-Leninists demand:

Free access to all sports fields, stadia, museums, libraries, theatres, and cinemas, for all young workers and unemployed;

The ordering of their leisure by the young unemployed themselves;

The using of young unemployed intellectuals for the organization of lectures and discussions, etc. on physics, chemistry, mechanics, mathematics, political economy, history of the labor movement, art, literature, etc.;

The establishment of homes open to the working and unemployed youth, where the young will not only have the opportunity to be amused and instructed, but can also study out for themselves the social problems with which they are faced; these homes to be managed by working-class youth itself under the supervision of the local trade-union organizations.

The Revolutionary Program

14. The struggle for these demands cannot be separated from the struggle for the demands of workers as a whole, both employed and unemployed. The final disappearance of unemployment among the youth is closely linked to the disappearance of general unemployment. The struggle for raising the school age and for compulsory technical reeducation is closely linked with the struggle for the sliding scale in wages and in working hours. The struggle to drag out of capitalism those reforms which aim at developing the class consciousness of working youth is closely linked with the struggle for workers' control of industry and factory committees. The struggle for public works is closely linked with the fight for the expropriation of monopolies, for the nationalization of credit, banks, and key industries. The struggle to smash back all efforts to militarize is closely linked to the struggle against the development of authoritarian state tendencies and against fascism, the struggle for the organization of workers' militias. It is within the framework of the transitional programme of the Fourth International that the present programme should be developed and applied. It is under the ensign of the proletariat fighting for power that the Fourth International will win the demands of exploited youth.

Conclusion

Some of the language and demands may be considered out-of-date historically. On the other hand, many of the demands, especially those dealing with the right to work and unemployment, is as burning an issue today as it was when this resolution was adopted.

New events since 1938 on a world scale would necessarily pose new demands, such as solidarity with the colonial youth in their struggle against native and foreign imperialism; solidarity with the courageous youth of Hungary, the Soviet Orbit and the Soviet Union

in their struggles against the Kremlin bureaucracy and for Soviet democracy.

In the United States, the important struggle for Negro equality should find some programmatic expression.

This program, as was stated before, must be brought up to date and concretized. It should be used as a guide in formulating a program for the present youth movement.

What is important is that the Resolution as a whole, in its approach and its method in dealing with the problems of the youth, and linking it up to the struggles of the working class retains the same validity, as does the Transitional Program.

It is not enough for the youth movement to merely formulate demands on issues as they arise. It is not enough to assume that mere participation and intervention into the class struggle arena, can make our youth work revolutionary activity. The Stalinist and Social Democratic youth also intervene in certain actions.

Our intervention must be one of mobilizing the youth around a program of revolutionary demands and around the realistic perspective of the struggle for socialism in our time. This stands in sharp contrast to the Stalinist and Social Democratic method of organizing one-at-a-time actions to resolve the problems of youth under capitalism -- or to tie the youth struggles to the needs of the foreign policy of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Neither the Social Democrats or the Stalinists propose transitional demands because neither tendency has any perspective for the abolition of capitalism.

While we defend the democratic rights and social conquests already won, we do this within the framework of a revolutionary perspective.

Once again in contrast to the Social Democratic and Stalinist youth, we must propose a series of transitional demands, the task of which lies in the systematic mobilization of the young generation together with the workers and Negro people for the proletarian revolution.

New York, N.Y.
January 12, 1959