

VANGUARD newsletter

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INDOCHINA: ONLY AN INTERNATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY OFFENSIVE CAN WIN PEACE!

President Nixon's new escalation of the US imperialist intervention in Indochina--the mining and blockading of ports and the bombing of all rail and land routes in North Vietnam--is a direct military challenge to the Soviet Union and China with the potential for nuclear confrontation.

As the price for halting these measures, Nixon demands a "cease fire," i.e., an immediate end to the struggle of North Vietnam and the NLF against American imperialism which has brought its puppet Thieu regime to the verge of collapse and with it, Nixon's "Vietnamization" policy. In addition, he demands the immediate release of all American war prisoners. In return for unconditional surrender, Nixon promises to withdraw the remaining American troops--as has been his intention in any case with an "honorable" settlement--within four months.

Both the "hard" wing, which Nixon represents, and the "soft" wing of imperialism are concerned to "end" the Indochinese war on "honorable" terms. The "doves" have found the

sell-out of the Vietnamese and Indochinese revolution by international Stalinism to be "honorable" enough. The 1960 ten point NLF program reaffirmed by the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) of South Vietnam in 1969 guaranteed that capitalist property relations will be maintained in a neutralist government of "national concord." The North Vietnamese and NLF negotiators in Paris have also made clear that, on the basis of this program, members of the present Saigon regime, barring only Thieu, are welcome to join the proposed coalition.

For Nixon, "honor" requires the Soviet Union and China to guarantee that capitalist relations in Indochina will be maintained under regimes which American imperialism

will firmly control and in time to enhance his re-election prospects.

The "soft" wing fears that the cost of Nixon's policy of prolonging the Indochinese war, like Johnson's before him, will prove exorbitant-- in an accelerated inflation which impels the workers into struggle to maintain their living standards, destroys US capitalism's competitive position against its European and Japanese rivals, worsens the US balance of trade and payments and undermines the dollar as an international currency and also, in the increased radicalization of youth and the minorities.

Fully aware that the Soviet and Chinese Stalinists are ever ready to sell out, not only the world struggle for socialism, but their fellow bureaucrats, Nixon gambles that they will "knuckle under." The Soviet and Chinese bureaucrats will, in all likelihood, swallow Nixon's "affront"--the May 22nd Nixon visit to the Soviet Union is still scheduled--but continue to provide North Vietnam with the military minimum to fight for the present sell-out terms.

As concerned as the imperialists to disorient the world's masses to prevent a genuine struggle against imperialism through a socialist revolution, the Soviet and Chinese bureaucrats depend, at the same time, on cynical maneuvers to safeguard their bases of power against the continuing danger from imperialism. An even more naked and direct sell-out of the Indochinese masses would expose their pretensions as pillars of strength against imperialism and also threaten their alliances with "third world" Bonapartists balancing on capitalist property relations.

In the new period of world capitalist crisis now emerging, the fundamental contradiction between the collective property relations--the still existing conquest of the October Revolution--and capitalist relations, tends to assert itself even if in a distorted form. The Bonapartists of the underdeveloped countries use the degenerated and deformed workers' states to balance between them and imperialism, to limit its super-exploitation and

even to expropriate "its" property.

In hot pursuit of its "peaceful coexistence" deal with American capitalism, the Soviet Union is trying to reassure Nixon that he can trust it to live up to its counter-revolutionary bargains, that he can confidently proceed to negotiate a "strategic arms limitation treaty" (SALT), cooperation in space and, long term commercial credits for expanded trade which, it would seem, may end the Soviet monopoly on foreign trade and open its markets to imperialist penetration.

The so-called "Trotskyists" in so-called "Fourth Internationals" have, in one or another degree, functioned as "left" servitors to the liberal-Stalinist bloc by refusing to expose the North Vietnamese and NLF program which sells out the Indochinese revolution as a part of international Stalinism's betrayal of the international working class.

Only through VANGUARD NEWSLETTER's program for a coordinated revolutionary struggle led by the international working class, the program of the Permanent Revolution, can the Indochinese masses defeat US imperialism, can the threat of new wars be ended by ending the world capitalist system which engenders them.

We call for a world-wide campaign:

- to boycott American products and blacklist all cargo used against the Indochinese.
- to demand that the Soviet Union and China give the Indochinese sufficient military assistance for defensive and offensive action.
- for a revolutionary struggle in all Indochina; a coordinated military offensive; the overthrow of capitalism, socialization of the means of production and the land by the working class at the head of the peasantry. Workers' power! The "dictatorship of the proletariat!"
- Build a network of rank-and-file caucuses in US trade unions to unite the racially divided working class in the struggle against special oppression and link their daily struggle to the struggle against the war in Indochina and to the socialist revolution.

FUNDAMENTALS OF CAPITALIST CRISES - Part III

The Falling Rate of Profit

The organization of production and distribution of goods and services is the material foundation of human society.

Under capitalism, armies of workers are placed at ever larger, more complex and more costly equipment and machinery by the owners of capital in order to produce commodities, to produce goods for "exchange," for sale on the market at a profit to the owners.

What is capital? To the capitalists and their ideologists, who assume that the capitalist mode of production is eternal, it is a material substance. Accordingly capital is money which "earns" interest as stocks or bonds and which can be "invested" in buildings and machinery, i.e., can become "fixed" capital or can be used as "circulating" capital in payment for "labor" and in transformation into other forms of circulating capital such as energy and raw materials. Capital is also the end product, the stock of commodities.

As Marx pointed out in Volume I of Capital in the chapter, "The Fetishism of Commodities," under capitalism, a "social relation between men" takes on "the fantastic form of a relation between things." Marx made the same point earlier in Wage-Labor and Capital, as follows:

"A Negro is a Negro. Only under certain conditions does he become a slave. A cotton-spinning machine is a machine for spinning cotton. Only under certain conditions does it become capital. Torn away from these conditions, it is as little capital as gold by itself is money, or as sugar is the price of sugar."

Capital is an interrelationship in social production between those who own the means of production and the workers who, because they do not, are required to sell their labor-power. The means of production thus monopolized by a small sector of society represent accumulated labor directed against the

laborers.

Labor alone is the source of value, i.e., of the exchange value of commodities measured in money as distinct from their use value. As we indicated in our last issue, it is the exploitation of the workers, the appropriation by the capitalists of the surplus product--that part of the product beyond that needed to provide the workers with the means of subsistence--subsequently transformed into surplus value in the market which provides the owners of capital with the profit for, not only luxuries, but also with new capital for the greater exploitation of more wage workers and, thereby, the development of modern industry.

It was known even before Marx, however, that the increase in the mass of profit was accompanied by an historic tendency for the rate of profit to fall. But it was Marx who was able to disclose the underlying reason for this phenomenon. It is this tendency which is at the root of the cyclical industrial and commercial crises which, since 1825, have periodically shaken capitalism.

The tendency for the rate of profit to fall is the essential barrier to:

"the drive of capitalist production to develop the productive forces as though only the absolute consuming power of society constituted their limit." (Capital, Vol. III, Foreign Languages, pps. 472-3)

This tendency in turn expresses the fundamental capitalist contradiction between the social nature of production and the capitalist nature of appropriation, "the ultimate reason for all real crises."

Profit is calculated by the capitalist on his total "investment" in "labor" and the means of production. Marx, however, was able to uncover the basis for the tendency for the

rate of profit to fall by dividing capital into two parts: buildings, machinery, equipment and raw materials, he termed constant capital in that their value is simply transmitted in whole or in part, immediately or over a more prolonged period, into the new product; that used for wages, he termed variable capital, as only this part of the total capital provides the capitalist with surplus value, is the only source of capitalist profit and new capital.

The wages which the workers receive, as we have already stated, represent only a portion of the total value which they have created. The rate of exploitation is a proportion of the surplus value and the variable capital or wages paid. In algebraic terms, if s' stands for the rate of exploitation, s for surplus value and v for variable capital, then the rate of exploitation, $s' = s/v$. If constant capital is represented by c , the rate of profit, $p' = s/c+v$.

As we have already stated, the development of industry expresses itself in workers operating larger and more complex machinery and equipment to enable the capitalists to receive the benefits of higher productivity, a lower cost per unit commodity produced, i.e., the proportion of constant to the variable capital, to the worker employed, the organic composition of industry, as Marx termed it, rises. The resistance of the working class, the class struggle, tends to hold the rate of exploitation down. As the equations show, as c increases with respect to v , the rate of profit falls and each capitalist is compelled to try to increase the rate of exploitation in order to raise it and to remain competitive with his "fellow" capitalists who are also striving for the same goal.

In the beginning, capitalism tried to extract additional surplus value by prolonging the working day while paying the same wage. The increase in, what Marx termed, absolute surplus value, not only had its limits, in the first place in the length of the day and also in decreased efficiency, but also the brutal exploi-

tation of men, women and children threatened to wipe out the whole race of workers. It, moreover, provoked increasingly sharp working class struggles such as the Chartist movement in England and for legislation limiting the working day to ten hours. The increase in absolute surplus value had to be confined to increasing the intensity of work, i.e., speed-up through the piece-work system or on the assembly line.

The search for increased profit impels the capitalist, at the same time, to technological improvements to lower the unit cost of production, to improve machinery and organization and thus increase, as Marx termed it, relative surplus value.

As we pointed out in our last installment, commodities tend to be exchanged in accordance with the amount of socially necessary labor time incorporated in them. By being the first to utilize and monopolize a particular "labor saving" device, a capitalist is able, at the beginning, to achieve a less than average socially necessary labor time for the production of a commodity and, therefore, a higher than average rate of profit by selling it at only a slightly lower price than his competitors. They, however, will shortly thereafter catch up and then steal a march on him with other improvements. In this way, a decreasing but still average labor time is maintained.

But different industries are more or less technologically advanced, i.e., differ in organic composition. Does this not result in higher rates of profit for industries with a lower organic composition, using more labor per constant capital? No, it does not because of the action of the market. Capitalists will, of course, rush to invest in the industry paying the highest rate of profit. Capitalist production is anarchic. As a result, too many plants are built; the market is glutted with the particular commodities; prices are slashed as a result of the disproportion between supply and demand and less than the average profit ensues. The capitalists rush elsewhere and repeat the process,

thereby establishing--until the advent of monopoly capitalism--an average rate of profit for industry as a whole. Commodities of varying industries, as Marx determined, tend to sell, therefore, above and below their value, at their cost of production plus an average profit. Not the individual commodity, but the totality of commodities, however, do tend to exchange at their total values. Over a period of time and over the business cycle, total prices tend to equal total values.

The tendency for the rate of profit to fall is counteracted, as Marx indicated, by increasing the rate of exploitation, cheapening the elements of constant capital (by new innovations), depressing wages below their value (below that needed to purchase the historically conditioned means of subsistence), relative overpopulation and, last but by no means least, foreign trade which provides the capitalists with the super-profits extracted from the masses in underdeveloped and less advanced countries.

The rate of profit is the motor and sacred principle of capitalist production--not the needs of society. Only if these needs are backed by enough money to provide the capitalists with a profit at a sufficient rate will production be initiated or allowed to continue. If not, investment in productive facilities declines, workers are laid off and become part of the "industrial reserve army" and "prosperity" turns into "depression."

The big capitalists, with greater

resources and more modern technology, manage to survive and, in the process, devour their smaller and less efficient competitors, achieving a greater concentration and centralization of capital.

Prices fall. Capital in the form of commodities cannot be sold. The values of constant capital sharply decline. Credit contracts. The employed workers, feeling the breath of the large army of unemployed, accept drastic wage cuts. As only the more skilled workers are kept and these, through fear of replacement work harder and produce more, in the circumstances, the rate of exploitation rises. With competition for the restricted market sharpened, the capitalists more rapidly replace the existing machinery and equipment with more efficient models.

By lowering the value of constant capital and increasing the rate of exploitation, the capitalists have again managed to increase the rate of profit. The result? Investment in additional productive facilities is "encouraged" and a new period of "prosperity" ensues to be followed by new and more serious crises.

With the transformation of "free" competitive capitalism into monopoly capitalism in the epoch of imperialism with the 20th century, the increasingly violent industrial and commercial convulsions of world capitalism have also been translated into increasingly bloody and destructive predatory wars which now threaten humanity's survival.

(to be continued)

THE IRISH QUESTION: Unite the Irish and English Workers for the Socialist Revolution - Part II

English imperialism in Ireland will only be defeated by the organization of the world proletariat in a struggle to defend Ireland's right of self-determination.

This organization cannot simply be one of demonstrating the world working class's solidarity and sympathy with the aspirations of the Irish masses. Such an abstract, moralistic way of "supporting" Ireland cannot rally the world working class to its defense, let alone

insure the defeat of imperialism.

The struggle against imperialism must be linked with the concrete needs and objectives of the proletariat in each country. It is only when the working class--especially in the advanced countries--understands that the fight against imperi-

alism is directly connected to their own day to day interests that they can be organized independently for an effective struggle against imperialism.

The present anti-Vietnam war movement in the US and elsewhere is the best contemporary example of the futility of the abstract, moralistic approach--the Socialist Workers Party and United Secretariat notwithstanding. In the USA, the anti-war movement is built on the concept that the Vietnam war is "illegal, immoral, and unjust," and not on the basis that the Vietnam war is part of the world-wide class struggle and directly linked with that of American workers.

This abstract, supra-class way of analyzing the Vietnam war is the essence of idealism. Absolute and universal legality, morality and justice devoid the war of its real foundation in the class struggle, prevent the proletariat from being organized against imperialism on a class basis and lay the groundwork for class collaboration with a section of the imperialist bourgeoisie to "end the war."

Elsewhere in the world, sections of the United Secretariat--the international federation politically supported by the SWP--"struggle" similarly against American imperialism in Vietnam, and also against the British domination of Ireland. They essentially parallel--as in the United States--the classless approach of the Stalinist Communist parties. In France, for example, super-revolutionary demonstrations have been organized by the Ligue Communiste (LC) to protest the Vietnam war, but they are directed only against the American and not the French bourgeoisie, and are, therefore, separated from the class struggle of the French proletariat. These demonstrations are, as a result, like the antiwar demonstrations in the USA, essentially petty bourgeois in composition.

The French Communist party likewise holds periodic demonstrations against the Vietnam war which in spite of the fairly large working class participation, remain unlinked to the day to day struggles

of the French workers. Neither the super-revolutionary and false rhetoric of the LC--"Victory to the NLF"--nor the outright pacifist slogans of the CP--"Peace in Vietnam"--can cover over the fundamental agreement of these two political orientations. Both remain abstract and in no way threaten the French bourgeoisie's own apple cart. In fact, they complement, to a certain degree, the anti-Americanism of the French bourgeoisie's own nationalism.

The congruency, however, does not stop there. In fact, the above agreement is only one side of the coin. The participants and supporters of the United Secretariat, and the Stalinist Communist parties (including Maoist) support the National Liberation Front (NLF) in Vietnam uncritically. The NLF is one of "the most malignant and perfidious variety of all possible People's Fronts." It is what Trotsky called an "emigre" popular front. The Stalinists who control the NLF lock, stock and barrel, make sure that its demands do not go beyond the Menshevik program of national-democratic revolution. Their platform stands as an open invitation for collaboration to any and all the national-bourgeois elements who, very early, openly sided with the colonial and imperialist interests. This does not bother the political fraternity of the SWP. On the contrary, the SWP et al have extolled the national-bourgeois liberation struggles as being revolutionary in their own right--in places such as Algeria, the Middle East, Bangla Desh, and Ireland--and as a first stage of the revolution that will automatically grow over into a healthy workers state, in a similar fashion to their conception of the Cuban transformation. Therefore, they not only support uncritically, but advocate blocs with the bourgeois-democratic movements. Such a position for the under-developed countries is a concomitant development of, and consistent with, the class-collaborationist blocs--explicit or implicit--with sections of the imperialist bourgeoisie in their own advanced countries.

The creation of a revolutionary leadership in those countries fighting against imperialism as in Ireland is a major factor in un-masking the nature of the struggle and linking it concretely to the interest of the workers in the imperialist countries.

The class collaborationist policies of the Communist parties and the so-called Trotskyists of both the United Secretariat and the International Committee on Vietnam must not be the model which revolutionaries follow in defending the Irish masses against imperialism.

An Irish revolutionary leadership would organize the proletariat independently of the national-democratic elements on a program for the dictatorship of the proletariat, i.e., socialist revolution, and would struggle against every nationalist tendency including both wings

of the IRA for the leadership of the fight against British imperialism. Such a struggle would not only make it mandatory but also possible to expose to the British workers the class nature of the imperialist venture, thereby relating it directly to the class struggle of these workers, and allowing a revolutionary party to organize them on a class basis against their own bourgeoisie in class solidarity with the workers in Ireland. This would pose the necessity of a coordinated struggle by the workers of both countries against their bourgeoisie.

It is only in this way that the Irish and English working class and the working class in the imperialist and underdeveloped countries in general can be united in the struggle against imperialism and for the world socialist revolution.

THE SPARTACIST LEAGUE: The "Memorandum on the Negro Struggle" - Part III

The petty-bourgeois nature of the Spartacist League (SL) has been amply demonstrated by its practice over the years, by its predominant focus on the student-radical milieu and related myopia toward the workers, as its opposition to the Committee for Rank and File Caucuses again exemplified.

The 1968 SL internal struggle over the implementation of Turner's "Memorandum on the Negro Struggle" was particularly illuminating.

As we stated in March, the "Memorandum" is, in SL practice, a "dead letter" today, although it is still acknowledged in words as its perspective. Unable to provide the SL with a perspective for the construction of a Leninist working class vanguard party, James Robertson, the SL's National Chairman, had eagerly seized upon the "Memorandum" to shore up the demoralized and rapidly deteriorating organization.

Submitted in September 1967, the "Memorandum" had understood the sharp increase in militant strikes and rank-and-file activity and the radicalization of the Black masses and the youth to be expressions of a growing crisis for American and world capitalism.

It proposed the construction of a "transitional organization...at the point of production," i.e., a network of "rank-and-file caucuses"

on a program of transitional demands in which the struggle against special oppression would be raised in the immediate and fundamental interests of all workers. Not only white chauvinism, but also Black nationalism would be combated on this basis. The road to the Black masses would begin in the class consciousness achieved in the workplace by Black workers who had been able to experience class solidarity with white workers in struggle.

With the intensification of the class struggle, the more radicalized workers from the Black and other especially oppressed minorities, in particular, and also an increasing number of white workers would be more readily won to a revolutionary Marxist program and party.

The network of caucuses projected by the "Memorandum" would not only provide an alternative leadership for the organized workers, but would also give leadership to the unorganized and unemployed workers. Moreover, and developed later as the

logical extension of the "Memorandum," the rank-and-file caucus network had the potential for becoming, at a revolutionary moment, the factory committees, the "Socialist Industrial Union," in De Leonist terms, the workers' councils, the "Soviets." The "Memorandum" had, in other words, projected, in embryo, a road to the taking of power by the working class.

Scarcely three months after its implementation in a campaign directed toward hospital workers, Robertson called a halt! Black workers, according to him, did not possess a "Weltanschauung," a world-view, and could not, therefore, be won to a "splinter propagandist group," whose political basis was, after all, not activity, primarily, but rather "what happened in Germany in 1923." It was incumbent upon the SL, therefore, to put its energy into unions whose members were "more like us."

Robertson's real intention was more crudely disclosed later on in the faction fight by Joseph Seymour, the chief spokesman for Robertson's majority. The SL, he said, would become "an effective...propaganda group on the road to a mass revolutionary party" by recruiting:

"radicals, including radical workers,...within the radical movement, in this period, rather than devoting our major forces to work within the trade unions." (Seymour's emphasis, "Super-exploitation and All That," Spartacist League Split)

Seymour's protective camouflage about "radical workers" was a typical example of the dishonest word juggling which the Robertson majority used to becloud the issues in the faction fight.

Until Robertson's scarcely disguised elitist and chauvinist rationalization for abandoning the hospital concentration--which he also sought to justify on the grounds of the defection of the two hospital union SL members--the issue had only been posed in the guise of a necessary reallocation of forces.

It was after the clear disclosure of the class basis of the dispute, of two opposed perspectives, one

petty-bourgeois and the other working class, that factional lines were drawn. The Turner-Ellens bloc was then formed on the principled basis of a struggle to achieve a working class orientation for the SL, and only on this basis, despite the insistence of the SL that it had been formed as an unprincipled bloc. Turner and his supporters had clearly differentiated themselves during the faction fight from Ellens' mechanical borrowing of political and organizational methods from the French "Voix Ouvriere," now "Lutte Ouvriere." The premature departure of Ellens ensured that Robertson would be able to force the remaining minority out of the organization.

The majority's lack of scruple, of contempt for the historical record, which only expressed its political and theoretical bankruptcy, was also demonstrated in its refusal to circulate two of Turner's documents, "The Internal Struggle Continues" and "Ideology and Practice" (Spartacist League Split), both of which had been submitted to the SL national office before his forced resignation. And in fact, a major purpose in the hasty suspension of Turner and insistence that he sign a tendentious and unalterable statement which Robertson would dictate was to prevent both documents from being circulated to the SL membership.

The logic of its decision to retain the SL's traditional orientation toward the student milieu also forced the majority to take up a struggle against the Marxist position which Turner upheld that the special oppression of the Black and Spanish-speaking people was expressed at the point of production and in the work-place in the form of super-exploitation.

As quoted in the pamphlet Spartacist League Split, Marx had the following to say about super-exploitation:

"In the chapters on the production of surplus-value it was constantly presupposed that wages are at least equal to the value of labour-power. Forcible reduction of wages below this value

plays, however, in practice too important a part, for us not to pause upon it for a moment. It in fact, transforms, within certain limits, the labourer's necessary consumption-fund into a fund for the accumulation of capital. ...But if the labourers could live on air they could not be bought at any price. The zero of their cost is, therefore, a limit in a mathematical sense, always beyond their reach...the constant tendency of capital is to force the cost of labour back towards this zero." (Capital, Vol. I, p. 599-600)

The pamphlet also quoted Engels's letter to Schluter, March 30, 1892, about the working class in the US:

"Now a working class has developed and has also to a great extent organized itself on trade-union lines. But it still takes up an aristocratic attitude...leaves the ordinary badly paid occupations to the immigrants, of whom only a small section enter the aristocratic

NEW VANGUARD NEWSLETTER COMMITTEES

∟The "program... strategic, tactical and organizational methods," in Trotsky's words, of all organizations which declare themselves to be "revolutionary Marxist" have been tested in the intervening period in which these contradictions have been manifested in a rapid succession of national and international political crises.

∟It is because VANGUARD NEWSLETTER alone has presented a clear and consistent revolutionary Marxist program and practice that it has been able to win adherents from right and left centrist organizations such as the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and the Workers League (WL) and to organize new VANGUARD NEWSLETTER committees.

∟Cde. Ed di Tullio was an independent revolutionary and antiwar militant for several years before joining the SWP. Within it, he conducted a consistent struggle against right centrist politics and its increasing drift toward the politics

trades...And your bourgeoisie knows much better even than the Austrian government how to play off one nationality against the others, Jews, Italians, Bohemians, etc., against Germans and Irish; and each one against the other, so that differences in the standard of life of different workers exist. I believe, in New York to an extent unheard of elsewhere...and to cap it all, John Chinaman stands in the background who far surpasses them all in his ability to live on next to nothing."

(to be continued)

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of outright reformism.

∟Cde. Jim Hays founded the St. Louis branch of the WL and served as its organizer until 1971. In 1970, he began a struggle against its centrist accommodation to the Maoist bureaucracy in China, to its "peaceful coexistence" policies in Indochina, to the NLF program of betrayal, to Chilean popular frontism and to its domestic adaptations. He continued this struggle as an alternate delegate to the WL's national convention. Before joining the WL, he was a member of the Young Socialist Alliance, the SWP's youth organization.

∟As the resignation statements of Cdes. di Tullio and Hays make clear, both the SWP and the WL, which poses itself as the continuator of Trotskyism against the former's revisionism, use organizational measures to prevent political discussion. The WL, following its mentors in the International Committee, descends to the Stalinist-gangster treatment of its

opponents in the workers' movement.

And indeed, in spite of their political differences, both have in common the need to "protect" their members from the "subversive" ideas of VANGUARD NEWSLETTER and revolutionary Marxism that a serious Marxist party must follow a strategy and tactics directed toward the working class which will enable it to root itself in the class and lead it to power at a revolutionary moment.

The SWP abandoned its historic perspective toward the working class at a time of its seeming "passivity" to adopt any and every "going" petty-bourgeois movement and panacea which promised it a pragmatic "success." But the WL, although in words the fervent upholders of "dialectical materialism" and the working class, has also directed its primary activity toward the "more political" "middle class college students," as Cde. Hays points out.

The SWP, the WL and other centrist organizations such as the Spartacist League oppose the construction of a transitional organization in the trade unions, a principled united front of workers' organizations to unite the rank-and-file against the

ruling class, the state and the labor bureaucracy, in defense of its standards and organizations. In and as part of the process of raising the class consciousness of workers the Leninist party would be built.

By their opposition, the centrists express, along with their real indifference to the working class, the fear that their politics will not stand the test of united front competition and the desire to continue to "peddle" their politics from the safety and exclusive possession of their own "stalls" in the student radical milieu. As for the WL, as we pointed out in March, although it has found the "mystique of the IC" and the transformation of "dialectical materialism" into a "cabalistic rite" to be effective with students, it "only serves to repel serious workers."

We believe the formation of new VANGUARD NEWSLETTER Committees to be significant milestones on the road to the construction of an American section of an international Leninist and Trotskyist vanguard party and of a reconstructed Fourth International.]

Oakland-Berkeley--A Resignation from the Socialist Workers Party

Comrades of the Socialist Workers Party:

I resign my membership in the SWP. I am a comrade of VANGUARD NEWSLETTER.

As many of you know, I have had political differences with the SWP almost from the time I first joined the party in 1966. You will remember my solitary criticisms of the party's political positions in the 1967 pre-convention discussion in the Oakland-Berkeley Branch; my opposition and vote against the political resolution in 1969; and the numerous battles we have had on international, national and local questions, touching almost every aspect of the party's practical activity, ending with my irreconcilable opposition as a member of the Communist Tendency during the last discussion. Our tendency defended the positions of revolutionary Marxism. We defined

the SWP as a centrist, not a revolutionary, party. We called for "a return to the proletarian road of Trotskyism."

To the extent that any of us believed that such a return was actually possible for the SWP, as I myself believed, it was a reflection of our own centrist experience inside the party. I doubt that Cde. Fender, who led that tendency, permitted himself any such illusions. My own have been dispelled thoroughly after an exhaustive review of my entire experience in the SWP, by searching out the fundamental question posed by Trotsky: "What is required to create a revolutionary party? I no longer linger to exhort you to do what as a party

you cannot do--though I will not tire of explaining to all but the hardened opportunists among you what it is you must do, if you would be Bolsheviks. I simply get on the proletarian road of Trotskyism myself along with others on that road already, the comrades of VANGUARD NEWSLETTER, and help show the way to those that can come.

I am writing you a longer letter dealing with the main stumbling blocks standing between you comrades and principled revolutionary politics. Here I will say only a few things.

I point out to you once again that there is no chance of a single one of you finding your way to revolutionary politics so long as you bow your necks to the organizational methods lately practiced in the SWP. You will recall that last September I told both the comrades of the Oakland-Berkeley Branch and the Political Committee that I would "not submit to your denial of the right of thought and its open expression, of forthright criticism, of the right of tendency and the existence of factions." I never have. The comrades in the Oakland-Berkeley Branch did not adopt that position, but voted against my motion for the right of organized dissent, with only one abstention. Neither did the Political Committee defend the right of tendency, when I asked them to do so, although they knew very well who was right. For Cde. Dobbs himself said that it was essential that "the right of organized dissent be protected in the party." If the party "can't handle" factions, he said in June, 1970, "it means that something is wrong with the party leadership... don't outlaw factions, don't outlaw tendencies, but change the leadership."

It is indeed true that something is wrong with the SWP leadership, and we have written quite a bit explaining exactly what is wrong. But you should especially keep in mind a point Cde. Dobbs does not raise: what is to be said of a cadre so tame or confused that it submits? The SWP could not match

the words of its National Secretary with deeds. In September, 1971, not just the leadership but every single comrade now remaining in the SWP participated in the de facto abolition of factions, or were so confused they could not fight against it. The self-imposed, self-corrupting, unprincipled policy you substituted for Leninist principles of organization, as I spelled out for you at the time, was that minorities would "submerge their politics out of sight of the party, and play the game of 'unity' in words." If you comrades can overcome this experience, you will be taking a first step towards principled revolutionary politics.

I will also remind you in passing that you comrades have yet to deal openly and forthrightly with the politics elaborated in the documents of the Communist Tendency, substituting organizational measures and expulsions instead, nor do you deal with the same revolutionary politics forcefully presented every month in VANGUARD NEWSLETTER. You can be sure that none will find their way to revolutionary politics who fears to discuss them, or who fears unity in action with revolutionary Marxists in principled united fronts, such as the one being proposed by VANGUARD NEWSLETTER to stop the attack on the workers--that, too, you have ignored up to now.

My attitude, even when I was learning to be a Marxist, has always been the same. "Test me by the yardstick of revolutionary Marxism," I kept saying to you, "show me for example that my views and methods do not square with Lenin's and Trotsky's, for otherwise you will never convince me that I am wrong." That you did not do, that you seldom even attempted to do. I, however, continually tested you by that yardstick--that was the essential meaning of my many fights, and I found you fell far short, finally becoming convinced beyond the shadow of a doubt that revolutionary purpose can only be blunted within your ranks, and realized only outside them.

A truly revolutionary, proletarian

International will be established-- in spite of and against all organizations, including your own, that are unequal to the task of a truly revolutionary party: which is, in Lenin's words, "to remain true to its principles, to its class, to its revolutionary purpose, to its task of paving the way for revolution and educating the mass of the people for victory in the revolution." The comrades of VANGUARD

NEWSLETTER will create such a party: we will find the proletarian revolutionists, those who do not fear to say, as Trotsky taught us to say, "My name is the Fourth International!" Long live Trotskyism, the truly revolutionary proletariat, and the international party of proletarian revolution!

Edmond di Tullio
April 10, 1972

St. Louis--A Resignation from the Workers League

Dear Comrade Howard,

April 25, 1972

Your decision to suspend me from the Workers League because of the intense ideological struggle at last Sunday's Educational Forum is a clear indication that you fear any real political discussion.

The refusal of the Workers League Political Committee to publish internally my contribution to the discussion held in the party around the Fourth Conference of the International Committee of the Fourth International meant that this discussion would inevitably break out in the full view of the working class and youth.

It is no accident that the discussion at Sunday night's meeting was initiated by Cde. N.M., an auto worker and militant trade unionist who is very sensitive to the needs and interests of the working class. As the workers' resistance to the bosses' attacks grows and as the imperialist war in Indochina intensifies, this crisis is reflected by the clash of class forces in and around the Workers League.

Cde. N.M. openly stated that "the formation of working class leadership is being ignored now." He attacked your primary orientation to middle class college students as "reformism." Young Socialist leader Paul Zaferiou's concept that "the students are more political than the rank-and-file workers" is the heart of your revisionism. Your theory that "first we must get 'youth manpower'" before socialists can build rank-and-file caucuses in the unions is based on the same impressionist method that sidetracked the Socialist Workers

Party-Young Socialist Alliance in the early sixties. Cde. N.M.'s statement that "the workers must organize first and then let the youth come in" is a reflection of the fundamental Marxist principle that "the emancipation of the working class is the task of the workers themselves."

You cannot discuss Marxist theory and especially the Transitional Program of the Fourth International without revealing your fundamental unity with the revisionists of the Socialist Workers Party. Like them you reject the relevance of the Transitional Program to the United States today. When I took up its demand for farmer-worker-housewife committees on prices, Cde. Howard denounced this as reformism and "not meant for America in the 1970s."

At Sunday night's meeting the class lines were clearly drawn between proletarians and the middle class academics when Jim L., a young blue collar worker, sided with N.M. and me against the leadership's revision of Marxist theory. He pointed out that "you are underestimating the importance of rank-and-file committees." Although this worker has only been studying Trotsky's writings for a short time, he clearly understands that "the Bolshevik Revolution was based on factory committees, Soviets and not by emphasizing the youth movement."

The attempts of the bureaucratic clique which runs the Socialist Labour League and the Workers League to stifle political discussion are not new. In 1966 this led to the gangster attack on Ernie Tate who was simply selling an International Marxist Group pamphlet outside a Socialist Labour League meeting in England. Your recent decision to bar all political opponents in the Socialist movement from Workers League public meetings is an open confession of political bankruptcy and a return to the methods of Stalinism. It was this that motivated your edict barring my wife Rosemary from Young Socialist meetings and your male chauvinist suggestion that I prohibit her from attending future meetings. It is no wonder that both Rosemary and Dana E. previously quit the Workers League after witnessing a display of Wohlforth's infamous bureaucratic tirades.

Even more serious is the physical threats and intimidation of trade union members of the Committee for Rank and File Caucuses at the recent Young Socialist unemployment demonstration in New York City. Cde. Dan Fried's statement "that it was only a tactical question whether we beat the shit out of them or not" is a

shocking return to Stalinist hooliganism. No! The right to sell and distribute literature inside the workers' movement is a principled question over which much blood has been shed. It is only necessary to recall the dastardly Movimiento Pro Independencia attack on "Bulletin" salesmen last year.

One of the first organizations to defend the Workers League in that attack was VANGUARD NEWSLETTER. I believe that today VANGUARD NEWSLETTER with its program to build rank-and-file caucuses and fight against the special oppression of Blacks and women, represents the continuity of Trotskyism and the Fourth International in the United States today. It is for this reason that I am resigning from the Workers League and that a number of us are moving forward to the formation of a Vanguard Newsletter Committee in St. Louis. Class forces have dictated the discussion inside the Workers League in recent months. Now these same class forces will guarantee a historical victory for socialism to those Trotskyists who base themselves firmly on the fight for Marxist leadership in the working class.

Jim Hays

The International Committee and Left Pabloism by Jim Hays

The first strike in the history of American baseball and the Quang Tri offensive of the NLF demonstrate the enormous fighting will of the international working class for victory in a period of deepening capitalist crisis.

But if this struggle is not to be betrayed, the crisis in the working class leadership must be resolved. Today the question "Socialism or Barbarism" is sharply posed in the crisis of leadership inside the Fourth International.

The Fourth International of Trotsky was largely destroyed by Pabloism at the end of World War II. Today all the groups claiming to represent the continuity of the Fourth International are centrist, whether Left or Right. The IC "majority," led by the Socialist Labour League-Workers League,

despite all the talk of "dialectical method," operates on the basis of an eclectic combination of pragmatic impressionism and metaphysical mechanical materialism. Thus Mrs. Gandhi, George Meany, and Escalante are seen as carrying out struggles in the interests of the working class; the categorical imperative for the Workers League becomes "a daily press by January 1, 1974," and our leaders zigzag every other week on the application of the Leninist tactic of the United Front policy. (NPAC and the anti-internment rally in London.)

The primary strategic task of the Workers League today is the construction of a network of rank-and-file caucuses in the unions on the basis of a fight for the Transitional Program. The party is still largely composed of middle-class elements. This is especially true in the middle west region, the heart of American industry. Trotsky said of the SWP in 1940, which is true of the Workers League today:

"The party has only a minority of genuine factory workers....Our party can be inundated by non-proletarian elements and can even lose its revolutionary character. The task is naturally not to prevent the influx of intellectuals by artificial methods,...but to orientate practically all the organization toward the factories, the strikes, the unions...."
(In Defense of Marxism, p. 108.)

The Workers League leadership has gone over to the Pabloite theory of the "New Youth Radicalization" to the point that Jean Renee states in a speech in St. Louis that "the youth today are truly revolutionary." This, of course, is merely the mirror image of the erroneous statement in the "Bulletin" that the youth are revisionist. Both reflect a total lack of understanding of dialectical development.

Firstly, this analysis rejects the class divisions among youth. True, the crisis of capitalism affects youth more sharply now than some adult workers. But without Trotskyist leadership the situation could push the youth to join the Wallaceites, the JDL, the YSA, Black Nationalists, or Stalinist organizations. There are no "natural Marxists" among the youth--only by directly pointing the youth toward the movement of rank-and-file workers in basic industry can we build a genuine youth movement based on the fight for Marxist theory.

Trotsky wrote the following about the French Socialist youth in 1935:

"The students are occupied too much with themselves, too little

with the workers movement....Salvation for the Seine district lies in mobilizing the students for the hard labor of recruiting workers. Whoever does not want to occupy himself with that has nothing to look for in socialist organization..." (Writings of Leon Trotsky, 1934-35.)

The comrades in the Young Socialists today must help the Workers League organize Revolutionary Workers Conferences, the American All-Trades Union Alliance. Like the SWP-YPSL in 1940, we have many

"boys and girls who are very good and devoted to the party, but who do not fully realize that their duty is not to discuss among themselves, but to penetrate into the fresh milieu of workers."
(In Defense of Marxism, p. 112.)

With the failure of last year's steel offensive, the party began a retreat into the "youth movement." Many trade unionists have been purged or suspended from the party. Steve Cherkoss, leader of the party's steel work, quit the Workers League in disgust. In the Midwest, trade unionists Mark P. (Minneapolis), John Z. (Detroit), Steve S., J. Gallitin (Chicago), and Dana E. (St. Louis) have either been suspended or forced out of the party; Fred Mueller (hospital workers union) and Dan Fried (labor editor) have been purged from the Political Committee.

Together with this movement away from the ranks, there is a growing adaptation to the trade union bureaucracy, viewing it increasingly as being able to be pressured into class struggle policies. Thus the July 12, 1971, "Bulletin" sees the presence of trade union officials at the NPAC Conference as reflecting "the entrance of millions of workers into the antiwar movement." No! The bureaucrats go into the peace movement to support the interests of the liberal bourgeoisie. George Meany walked off the Wage Board in order to better tie the labor movement to the Democratic Party. Harold Gibbons went to Hanoi to betray the

working class, not because he was pressured into the "antinar" movement by the desire of Teamsters for an end to the Vietnam war.

Articles that I have written for the "Bulletin" about the formation of a rank-and-file caucus in Harold Gibbon's Teamster Local 688 and the important strike vote of McDonnell aircraft workers for parity with the West coast, end up in Lucy St. John's wastebasket. The cartoon in the December 13 "Bulletin" clearly adapts to the revisionist idea that the spontaneous movement of the working class (the locomotive) can crush Nixon and the ruling class without building an alternative leadership and junking Meany. For this reason Jeff Sebastian was right at the National Convention in January to be opposed to the Gleason-Bridges sellout talks. Comrade Wohlforth, Jeff and I do have the same method--a Marxist hostility to the labor bureaucracy!

The latest IC document describes the auto and steel settlements of 1970-71 as victories for the working class (page 7). Every class-conscious worker knows that the "Bulletin" was right at the time to describe these contracts as "sellouts."

Now we have Stanley Hill, SSEU labor faker, invited to the Workers League Committee for a New Leadership meeting to have a polite discussion about our endorsing him for re-election ("Bulletin", March 27). Contrast this with Dennis Cribben's courageous presidential campaign last election to expose Hill's sell-out policies. We must build a third alternative to the "progressive" bureaucrats in the unions. (See "The SWP and the Rise of the CIO" by Dan Fried.)

Recent articles in the "Bulletin" demonstrate that the leadership is unable to apply the historical materialist method to understand American developments. Like the German Stalinists before Hitler, everybody and his brother is termed "fascist" (Wallace, Joe Colombo, Meir Kahane, and maybe even Baraka). As the crisis deepens, there is a threat of Bonapartism. But Wallace

is merely a duplicate on a higher level of the 1930's Southern racist politician, Huey Long. Alabama is not a totalitarian fascist state like South Africa. Wallace allows the YSA to organize on Black Alabama college campuses, and unions to strike in Birmingham. A true American fascist movement will be much more vicious than Wallace or even Hitler. To aim all our main guns at Wallace in this period is to aid the Democrats, just as the CP helped Johnson in 1964 by calling Goldwater a "fascist." Our main emphasis must be on the positive aspect of building a Labor Party based on the rank and file of the trade unions as a real alternative in '72.

Trotsky stated in 1937 that "fascism in the United States will be directed against Jews and Negroes." The JDL and Leroy Jones are reactionary nationalists, not fascists. In fact, one of the reasons for the SWP's degeneration was its failure to reach minority and women workers, the specially oppressed and super-exploited sections of the US working class. We have recently bent somewhat from our previous sectarian, Luxemburgist position on this question. A return to the 1939 SWP convention resolution (against Black nationalism but for the right to a separate state) is essential.

The Bill of Rights must be defended. But a scientific analysis would show that it was a product of the bourgeois revolution rather than being won by the workers' pressure. No real workers' organizations existed before the Civil War. (See Trotsky on the Labor Party.) The bourgeoisie will only reluctantly give up bourgeois democracy. (The Only Road, p. 16) Jean Renee's statement that "Florida means the ruling class is turning toward fascism" was refuted by Trotsky in this manner:

"The Stalinists adopted the idea that in the contemporary period, finance capital cannot accommodate itself to parliamentary democracy and is obliged to resort to fascism. From this idea, absolutely correct within certain limits,

they draw in a purely deductive, formally logical manner the same conclusions for all the countries and for all stages of development." (Writings of Leon Trotsky, 1934-35, "Bonapartism and Fascism", p. 51.)

The theory of the imminence of fascism is only a new version of Pablo's theory of the imminence of World War III or Lambert's theory of the imminence of revolution. As in the latter cases it leads to a petty-bourgeois hysteria about the need for quantitative growth. Thus a party of a few hundred cadres must bust a gut and burn itself out in order to have a daily paper by January, 1974. Thus hundreds must be brought into the party now on a lax minimum program. New trade union recruits to the party are directed to put youth work over labor organization because we can make a greater quantitative "quick kill" growth among the students.

In England the Young Socialists Right-to-Work March is placed above the real movement of workers for a general strike at the time of the miners' strike. (See the current series in "Informations Ouvrieres" calling for an international discussion of the role of the SLL in calling for the miners to vote to return to work after winning only syndicalist economic gains.) The recent "IC Statement" on Ireland openly drops the demand for a general strike.

The current SLL and Workers League line in the advanced countries is also reflected in our failure to apply the theory of the Permanent Revolution in the colonial world. Under pressure from the Bengali middle class in England, the SLL cheered on the Indian imperialists in the recent war with Pakistan. Only now do we learn in the "Workers Press" that part of that war was an Indian land grab in West Pakistan which created 800,000 homeless and denied the Kashmiris the right of self-determination. Today the Naxalites, who opposed the Indian invasion, are the main forces organizing workers and peasants against the Mujib Bourgeois Nationalists

in Bangla Desh. (See April 1 UPI dispatch from Dacca.) Mrs. Gandhi invaded Bangla Desh only to further the interests of imperialism. Now the "Bulletin" attacks the left Communists and Naxalites of West Bengal for refusing to wallow in her social patriotism, for saying that the "main class enemy is at home," "for turning the imperialist war into a civil war."

In South America the IC leadership (including Healy) kept publicly silent on the role of the FOR in Bolivia despite my warning at the last summer YS camp. The "Bulletin" even called the FOR a section of the IC. Now this same method is applied to Chile where we call on Allende to carry out his promises instead of the overthrow of his bourgeois regime by a workers and peasants government. If we can say "Down with Torres" in Bolivia ("Workers Press", March 30), we must say "Down with Allende in Chile!"

This previous adaptation to petty-bourgeois nationalists and Stalinists is best illustrated by the demand of elements of the Young Socialists to change the YS program on Vietnam. In 1971 the Workers League chanted "Victory to the Viet Cong!" in the streets of Washington and Chicago. But it is clear that the current Viet Cong military offensive avoids the necessity to link up with a workers' rebellion in cities like Dong Hoi, Quang Tri and Hue. Thus, as after the military victory at Dien Bien Phu, the NLF Stalinists will sell out their gains on the battlefield at a Geneva type settlement. The slogan "Victory to the Vietnamese Revolution," fought for by the young workers in the YS poses a socialist permanent revolution to the coalition government advocated by the Viet Cong.

The right turn in the SLL and the Workers League must stop. We must penetrate the working class with the full transitional program. An alternative leadership based on scientific Marxism must be built inside the Fourth International.

St. Louis, Missouri, April 2, 1972