



## WEATHERMAN REPLIES

by Howie Machtinger

It is always insightful to point to all the important political questions that confront us, search for "political principles which are at the base of the struggles within SDS", and then facilely quote Mao about unity-struggle-unity!! All this avoids what it's all about.

Political questions are questions of strategy. Strategy is about winning; about, in this case, smashing US imperialism. The reason white people in this country have to be internationalist is not that it makes us more moral to share our privilege with the people of the world, but it's how we're gonna win, how we will be part of the worldwide resolution of the worldwide contradictions between the oppressed nations and US imperialism. The strategy for winning is "two, three, many Vietnams", more and more wars of national liberation won by the oppressed peoples of the world.

The way Americans will aid the victory of the people of the world is to materially support these wars of national liberation by helping to create a front in support of black and brown liberation here, and by tearing up in the gut of the monster. Destroying the bureaucracy, the pig army, showing initially that the US not only can't hold together an empire, but can't even hold together white people.

So, in America, the central task of the left is the development of a detachment of the international army. Which primarily means winning the people to the side of the NLF, the black liberation struggle, and moving to armed struggle as soon as

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possible. For the world revolution is already happening, and every leap in the development of our struggle hastens incredibly the victory of the people of the world. It is in this light that we must look at questions of adventurism, beating the people, and blah blah blah.

REP's principles and searching questions obscure much of this. What does "we understand that the structure of US imperialist involvement in the world demands that proletarian internationalism be developed within the US working class" mean? Is that Lenin talking about the British workers, or Che speculating about America? It makes a difference. The five Ignatin principles of unity presented in June were more fog than sunshine, and they attempted to turn differences in strategy into agreements on discrete issues, teaching us that politics was a set of "positions" on various questions rather than a strategy for winning. The REP paper is in this tradition.

But as usual the opportunism of "principles" is not enough to hide revisionism, which of course is tied to defeatism. "Finally we understand that the US is at present in a pre-revolutionary stage." But the world is in a revolutionary stage, and that is more important for understanding how US imperialism will come down than any understanding of US revolutionary motion which separates what we do from the motion of the people of the world.

What is even more revealing is that nowhere amongst its weighty questions does REP raise the issue of armed struggle, and specifically how to build an army of white people ready to undertake armed struggle. It is the question of armed struggle against capitalism which separates revisionists from revolutionaries everywhere: Russia from Cuba; all kinds of CPs from some kinds of guerrillas.

This question of any kind of force is raised only in the boring shrill that the Weatherman doesn't love the people because it beats the people. This is, of course, the silly babbling of people who don't think enough of politics and people to tell greasers that they dig the NLF and that they're Commies. Which in white America often means a fight. But REP tells us all this so as to convince us that Mao is a liberal. They desire a higher unity in the movement. Unity of the struggle is important if it brings us closer to revolution, not if it means we must be revisionist to come together. The unity Weathermen seek is around our politics, which we happen to think are "essentially correct".

Not only is REP's political position incorrect, but even more important at this point is that their analysis of SDS completely misses the point of the tasks we face. The problem is not one of identifying "political principles", but one of answering strategic questions. The central question is how is American imperialism being smashed? And from that, where are we now, where do we have to go, how are we going to get there? On the worldwide level it's clear that we are not in a "pre-revolutionary" stage; we are in the middle of a world war, escalating and opening new fronts every day. It is this world war which will smash imperialism for all the peoples of the world, including white Americans.

The last SDS convention was about sketching out the answer to the question "Where do we have to get to?" The answer we gave was an organization of white people who are capable of carrying out armed struggle within the US on the side of the people of the world. This is the role however vague at this point, which white people must play in the world revolution against imperialism. The legitimate questions facing SDS all derive from how we can get closer to this stage.

It is this central strategic question which is the real context of the struggle. Of course a revolutionary organization must consider the questions REP poses, but it's only when they are considered in the process of moving white revolutionary forces toward armed struggle that a meaningful solution can be found.

What REP proposes in place of this strategic discussion is a context which basically says "Let's struggle for unity." As REP would agree, unity in SDS is not always the highest priority for the revolution.