

The logo for the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) is rendered in a stylized, white, outlined font against a dark red background. The letters 'S', 'W', and 'P' are interconnected and elongated.

discussion bulletin

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SOME CONSIDERATIONS ON OUR 1960 ELECTION PLATFORM

By Frank Powers

The 1960 presidential election campaign, in spite of restrictions imposed by election laws and our own size and financial condition, was the most successful we have yet conducted. This will, undoubtedly, be the subject of an N.C. report and it is, therefore, not my intention to go into the positive features of the campaign in this article. The criticisms I make here must be considered only in the context of the campaign's overall success.

The central line of the main publication of the 1960 campaign, the election platform, was quite correctly directed against American foreign policy. Foreign policy was not only the principal political question, but emphasis on this issue corresponded with our orientation toward a politically sophisticated milieu concerned mainly with peace, civil liberties and civil rights. It was, nevertheless, incorrect both politically and tactically for the platform to almost completely ignore the attack upon the labor movement, which was an essential part of Wall Street's electoral policy.

This defect was partly overcome by the publication of Lovell's "What Socialists Want," and by the talks of Comrade Dobbs during the campaign. Yet, they could not fully compensate for our failure to treat the attack upon organized labor as an integral part of American foreign policy in our principal campaign document.

The Attack Upon Organized Labor In The Election

The American ruling class approached the 1960 elections with the clear intent of uniting the entire population behind its foreign policy and gaining acceptance of an austerity program to finance its imperialist ventures. This perspective was not achievable without the capitalist class insuring themselves against an increase in class struggles at home. Hence the attack upon civil rights and political freedom. Hence the attempt to control the insurgent Negro movement. Hence the attack upon the organized labor movement, which in spite of the acquiescence of the labor bureaucracy to the Kennedy campaign, constitutes the greatest threat to class peace in America. It was, therefore, necessary that side by side with the bipartisan foreign policy drummed at the American people day and night throughout the campaign, a more covert, but nevertheless vicious, attack be made upon the unions.

The growing crisis of American capitalism allows little room for the working class to share in imperialist gains. The immense technological improvements of the last decade combine with the restrictions on American markets to produce a growing depression in the midst of a war economy. Threats of a growing class struggle appear, as a consequence, precisely at the time when the ruling class is in need of unquestioned popular support for a hazardous and adventurist foreign policy. Under these conditions, Wall Street cannot tolerate a shred of independence in the labor unions. A changed relationship was therefore necessary between the labor movement and the government, and particularly between the labor bureaucracy and the Democratic party.

Under the Truman Administration and even under the Eisenhower administration the labor bureaucracy was able to maintain a highly profitable alliance with the government. Union support to American foreign policy and the campaign against

political freedom and civil rights was provided in exchange for government protection of the bureaucracy and petty concessions to the organized workers. Though antilabor legislation and policies weakened the unions, they served to strengthen the bureaucratic control of the labor officials over the rank and file. The Taft-Hartley Act, the anticommunist campaigns and the imperialist foreign policy each in its own way helped to rid the unions of any militant opposition, while union membership -- and dues -- were not seriously curtailed and wages of the bureaucrats soared to unheard of heights. With the 1960 election, this profitable alliance was brought to an end.

The 1960 election campaign of both major parties endorsed two vicious anti-labor actions that preceded the election. The first was the Supreme Court endorsement of the Taft-Hartley injunction against the United Steelworkers, which gave the administration unquestioned control over the right to strike. The second was the passage of the Landrum-Griffin Act which gave the administration control over the internal life of the unions. Neither the Republicans nor the Democrats offered the workers a voice of opposition to this bipartisan antilabor program. Unlike Truman, who masqueraded as an opponent of Taft-Hartley and an advocate of a prolabor program, Kennedy appears as an avowed advocate of Big Business control over every phase of union activity.

In addition to Kennedy's support for the Landrum-Griffin Act, he was associated with his brother in the smear campaign against the unions designed to encourage the passage of Right-to-Work laws, split the labor movement, smash the Teamsters' Union and provide support for a labor control bill. His solution to the Taft-Hartley Injunction was "voluntary" compulsory arbitration and direct government control of major strikes. As presidential candidate, he not only refused to disavow his antilabor position, but publicly rejected the most important demand of the working class in the face of continued technological unemployment -- the shorter work week. The sole concession that he was willing to make was support for some of the watered-down social welfare measures pushed by the unions.

The labor officials were not even allowed a choice or a voice at the Democratic convention. The Negro struggle received a sop in the election platforms of both major parties; the liberals were free to wage a battle for their chief demagogue, Adlai Stevenson, before succumbing to ignominious defeat; but the labor movement did not even have a look-in. Their political helplessness, resulting from years of class collaboration, forced them to accept an avowed antilabor candidate as their presidential choice regardless of which of the major aspirants was selected at the convention.

In short, the unions were forced to accept, as a condition for the right of the labor bureaucracy to remain shareholders in the capitalist state, control of their organizations by an administration pledged to curtailment of the right to strike, continuous investigations and control, and compulsory arbitration. Faced with the utter helplessness of their position, and completely terrified at the idea of independent political action, the union bureaucrats endorsed Kennedy and the campaign against them. They dared not even hope for an alliance. They could only pray that they would find in Kennedy a more benevolent despot than his opponent.

Thus, integrally connected with an essential to the foreign policy of the American ruling class was control of the working class in general and the labor unions in particular. But the entire evaluation contained in the SWP election

platform included the attack upon labor only incidentally, while the 10-point program included points in defense of the unions as subsidiary to the demand for democratic rights! Aside from the fact that it is highly questionable (theoretically) to include defense of the labor movement solely as an issue of democratic rights, this was a serious error in political evaluation.

There was also an error in our tactical approach, which left out of consideration the profound reaction of the working class to the antilabor stand of the Democratic candidates.

Labor Reaction to The Antilabor Attack

The attack upon the labor movement and its political expropriation had had severe repercussions within the labor movement for a year previous to the national election campaign. This dictated a certain shift in our orientation from the more politicalized milieu toward the organized workers.

Throughout 1960, the labor bureaucrats were engaged in a frantic effort to get out of the web so carefully spun for them by the ruling class. When their denunciations and threats availed them nothing, the bureaucrats went along. But to the end of the campaign some few internationals and several local unions refused to make any endorsements of presidential candidates. The rank-and-file unionists and many of the secondary officials balked at the choiceless choice. Among these workers there was an increased receptivity to a program in defense of the labor movement and for independent political action. It was incumbent upon us to take advantage of this sentiment in our election campaign.

By a clear evaluation of the nature and purpose of the attack upon organized labor in our principal campaign document, and by a definite point in our program in defense of the labor movement, we could have moved workers in our direction as the only political party on the ballot defending labor. Moreover, the all-important job of developing opposition to American foreign policy among organized workers would have been facilitated by clearly demonstrating the interconnection between capitalist foreign policy and the attack upon the unions.

This would have required a certain shift in our election orientation, but certainly a necessary one. We should not lose sight of the fact that in the present circumstances, where the unions are so completely controlled by bureaucratism that there is little room for independent political expression from the rank and file and our cadres in the unions so seriously depleted, the election campaigns of the party constitute the best opportunities we have to intervene in the life of the unions. We should take maximum advantage of such opportunities.

Such a shift would not have adversely affected our main orientation toward a more politicalized milieu. It is highly unlikely that a forthright defense of organized labor would have alienated any voters among the pacifists, civil libertarians, ex-Stalinists and socialists who had, after all, nowhere else to turn in the election. On the contrary, it would have had immense propaganda value in making clear our class position, and would have won some votes among those who voted for the SLP from a mistaken notion that it was immaterial which socialist candidates they supported.

The Peace Program and the Transitional Program

There has always been a certain contradiction in our election platforms resulting from the use of transitional demands as a basis for a party platform. Our transitional demands are essentially demands placed upon the capitalist class. But a presidential election platform is not considered by the voters to be a set of demands upon the opposing candidates or the ruling parties, but to be the program the candidate and his party intend to introduce if political power is granted them.

This contradiction is generally resolved by selecting those points of our transitional program that are directly applicable to an election platform of a socialist presidential candidate; that is, demands which we not only put upon the ruling class, but which we ourselves are prepared to institute. But when these transitional demands, which are not realizable without upsetting completely the class stability and economic foundation of capitalism, are combined with purely reformist demands, which are completely capable of realization under capitalist rule and pacifist demands that are completely utopian, our platform becomes completely confused. An impression results that lends validity to the SLP accusation that the SWP program is nothing but a glorified reformist platform.

The problem of combining transitional and reformist demands is one that faces us in every national election campaign. This problem, however, was particularly aggravated in the 1960 election campaign by the incorporation of purely pacifist demands which introduced definite contradictions in the platform.

For example: Point 1 of the program states, "Let Congress and the White House pledge to the world that America will never resort to war under any circumstances." In the same section, however, we add, "support all colonial struggles against imperialism and the right of all peoples to a government of their own choice."

Unless we add that we will support all colonial struggles unless they lead to war, the two points are contradictory. The first point is really the demand we raise to the capitalist state, the second is our program. The statement, "Let Congress and the White House pledge..." notwithstanding, both points appear as the program of the socialist candidate. Yet a socialist America would have no principled objection to supporting the revolutionists in Algeria or in the Congo even to the point of having to "resort to war." A socialist America would not have hesitated to use military might against the Nazi juggernaut in defense of the Soviet Union. Such actions would probably not be necessary if this great bastion of world capitalism were overthrown by the working class, but we have no principled objection to them. We demand of the capitalist state that it not go to war under any circumstances, but this is not our program for our government.

I anticipate the objection that what we are presenting is not the program for a workers state but for a Workers and Farmers government. This is an important theoretical point, but nobody will understand it but us. The voter votes for the candidate and his program, in order to establish government control by his party. It is certainly valid for a candidate in a gubernatorial or mayoralty race to place demands on the capitalist government, as national political control is not even implied in the campaign. But a candidate for

president makes no sense to the voter unless he runs on the program that he will institute.

A similar contradiction is involved in the second point, "Against Capitalist Militarism." The first paragraph states, "Turn the armaments budget into a peace budget for homes...etc." This is certainly a valid demand in itself, but the same paragraph ends with a demand for democratic rights in the armed forces. You cannot have your cake and eat it too. If we are not going to "resort to war under any circumstances" and if we are going to "turn the armaments budget into a peace budget," what is the sense in a democratically controlled army? Certainly an army with the right to collective bargaining will demand, at the very least, that it be paid.

In short, we cannot for the sake of an orientation, simply graft on to the election platform of our revolutionary socialist party, all demands raised in all milieus, without running into a contradiction between our revolutionary program and our valid support to reformist and pacifist demands directed against the capitalist state. The interconnection between slogans must be carefully thought out with the clear recognition that what we are offering is a socialist government with the working class in the driver's seat. The problem of our essentially propagandistic campaign is, after all, not to adapt our revolutionary program to the pacifists, but to win the pacifists to a revolutionary program.

The Farm Program

There is a third problem that appears almost endemic in our election platforms; the lack of a well thought out farm program.

Slogans like "crops to those who grow them" and other bourgeois demands, still have validity among share croppers, tenant farmers and farmers on marginal and sub-marginal land. But the worst victims of the crisis in capitalist agriculture, are not the small farmers but the agricultural laborers, who constitute the most exploited section of the American working class today.

Our program must take into consideration the plight of these workers who are ignored by state and national standards of wages and conditions, and who, by and large, do not even have the right to vote. We need, at least, a set of minimum demands recognizing the right of the farm proletariat to trade-union organization, minimum wages, safety conditions, hospitalization, housing, free transportation, etc.

I make no claims whatsoever to being an expert on agricultural problems, but it is certainly obvious that the agricultural crisis cannot even be touched by purely bourgeois slogans. The concentration of capital in agriculture, the constant growth of the marginal farms, the stock market manipulation of farm prices, the domination of the canneries and the agricultural corporations (not only of the farms but of American national and foreign policy) all indicate that socialist solutions are necessary.

We need a program pointing to the nationalization of the "factories in the fields," that takes a positive approach to the agricultural cooperatives and toward farmer-consumer cooperation in the control of farm prices. We need a program that recognizes the significant role of the farm proletariat and the "braceros" in the revolutionary solution to the farm crisis.

Conclusions

(1) We should not become so involved in a single orientation in our election campaigns that we become slipshod in our political evaluations or lose sight of opportunities available in other directions. This latter problem could be resolved, in part, by requesting suggestions from the branches (through the National Committee members) prior to the drafting of a national election platform in order to get a complete picture of the issues that are considered of paramount importance in the field.

(2) We should work out more carefully the interconnection between pacifist demands, reformist demands and our transitional program before incorporating them in a national platform.

(3) We should assign a committee, or an individual, to work out a more adequate farm program.

June 2, 1961
Seattle

COMMENTS ON THE CUBAN DISCUSSION

By Daniel Roberts

The two basic issues pertaining to the Cuban discussion that are immediately vital for our work and must therefore be clearly resolved by the party convention are (1) the nature of the Cuban state and (2) the character of the Castro regime. On (1) the National Committee states that Cuba is a workers' state, "although one lacking as yet the forms of democratic proletarian rule." (It would be more correct, in my opinion, to say that the workers' state lacked as yet certain of the most decisive forms of democratic proletarian rule.) On (2) the NC plenum last February did not speak explicitly, but it implied support to the Castro regime as a revolutionary government in evolution to the left. In the proposed addendum to the NC plenum theses, the Political Committee has now made explicit the NC's implied support for the Castro regime.

These two interrelated positions on the state and the regime are correct, in my opinion, and should be endorsed by the convention. It should be clearly noted that, in one very important respect, we put Cuba in a different category than we do the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, Yugoslavia, and the satellite countries of Eastern Europe. We have designated these countries as either degenerated or deformed workers' states. We defend all of them against attempts at capitalist restoration, internal or external, just as we defend the Cuban state against such attempts. But we are opposed to all their regimes. We favor the creation of revolutionary parties in opposition to their present ruling groups and we advocate political revolution as a means of establishing workers' democracy and proletarian internationalism. To put the matter in another way, we favor maintaining our split from the Khrushchevites, Titoites, Maoites and Gomulkaitees, but we believe the Trotskyist movement should seek to collaborate with the Fidelistas. Both policies are highly realistic and flow from the concrete experiences of the international working-class movement with the various offshoots of Stalinism on the one hand, and with the Castro tendency on the other.

The Wohlforth-Shane-Robertson grouping in the SWP seeks to counterpose to this concrete experience a set of bare definitions. Thus they contend that, lacking government through workers' councils and lacking a full-fledged revolutionary party possessed of an avowed Trotskyist ideology, the Cuban state cannot have become a workers' state at any time in the last two and a half years. But the organization of armed workers' and farmers' militias; the dis-

arming and political suppression of the bourgeoisie, which deserted the national-liberationist struggle; the nationalization of all basic industries, banking and the main centers of retail trade; the monopoly of foreign trade; the nationalization of about half the land and the distribution of the rest in small freeholds; the introduction of a planned economy and finally the vigorous promotion of an international socialist consciousness -- all these measures override the two criteria put forward by the Wohlforth-Shane-Robertson group for determining that Cuba is not a workers' state. Workers' councils and a revolutionary socialist party remain norms to be realized by the Cuban revolutionaries. But this fact does not negate their already magnificent achievements, which include the overthrow of capitalism and the creation of a workers' republic.

Aware of how much they flout reality by their refusal to acknowledge that Cuba has become a workers' state certain members of the Wohlforth-Shane-Robertson group have taken this tack: If Cuba is a workers' state, they say, it must be a deformed one. Since the Castro group is a petty-bourgeois tendency, all it can bring into being is a deformed workers' state at best. The absence of workers' councils and of a revolutionary party are proof of this. These comrades thus seek to find a new basis for opposing the Castro regime.

In the first place, their formulation is unprincipled because it evades a clear answer to the question whether Cuba is or is not a workers' state. The appearance of even a new deformed workers' state is a momentous event, and we can hardly treat it with indifference. In the second place, whether Cuba is really a workers' state is an important criteria for evaluating the Fidelista tendency. If Cuba can properly be designated as a workers' state, this means that the Castro people must be credited with the leadership of a socialist overturn. Even this accomplishment may not be enough for us to support the Fidelistas -- we do not support the Mao regime despite the fact that it led the Chinese revolution. But we can hardly fail to acknowledge that leadership of a successful workers' revolution is a positive achievement from a socialist point of view.

Two other questions remain to be asked about the leaders of a socialist overturn to determine whether we will give them political support or not: Who are they and what are their methods. To proclaim as an unflinching equation that "petty-bourgeois grouping equals a deformed workers' state" is worthless. That is not how we came to designate the Chinese state as a deformed workers' state. The 1955 SWP resolution was quite explicit on this point.

It stated that China was a deformed workers' state because the Communist party leaders had deformed the revolution.

The zig-zag bureaucratic course pursued by the Chinese CP from 1945 to 1951-53, which deformed the revolution and gave birth to a deformed workers' state, was explained by us as stemming from the Stalinization of the CP in the late 1920's and from the fact that for years in the Yen-an territory the Mao directing cadres based themselves on peasant-bourgeois layers. The Maoists had separated themselves from the struggles and the outlook of the working class, and they never again became genuine representatives of the workers' class interests.

The 1955 analysis of the Mao regime was concrete. It drew on a mass of factual material about the third Chinese revolution supplied by the Chinese Trotskyists. This material has never been successfully refuted. And all subsequent developments in China have borne out the characterization of the Mao regime as Stalinist-bureaucratic (a petty-bourgeois formation alien to the interests of the workers) and of the Chinese state as a deformed workers' state.

But when and how did the Fidelistas deform the Cuban revolution? The facts, as brought out in the Militant and by numerous comrades in the discussion, indicate that they never did. On the contrary, the Castro regime has systematically drawn on and developed the initiative of the workers and peasants. It has taught the masses that they are the power in the country and encouraged them to use that power. Through the militias, the factory advisory councils, the unions, the co-operatives, the people's granges, the working people have gained an increasing control over their own destinies. They still lack the most comprehensive forms of self-rule such as workers' councils, and the most politically conscious workers lack a democratically-controlled revolutionary party. But the failure to have met these norms of a workers' revolution does not in itself justify an accusation that the Fidelistas have betrayed the Cuban revolution -- for deformation as in the Chinese case is betrayal.

What is the trend? Toward encouraging the participation of the masses or towards bureaucratizing the mass movement? This is the decisive criterion at this time. Let those comrades in the Wohlforth-Shane-Robertson group who are flirting with a deformed-workers' state position answer that question and substantiate their answer with reliable data as the authors of the 1955 resolution did in connection with China.

But isn't it true that the Fidelistas are a petty-bourgeois tendency who represent interests antagonistic to those of the

workers? No, it isn't true. The Castro group began as a radical petty-bourgeois tendency within the broader bourgeois-nationalist movement. But the history of the anti-imperialist struggles in the colonial countries has provided us with several examples of the transformation of similar groupings into proletarian revolutionary tendencies. These transformations have not been frequent to be sure. Not nearly so frequent as the passage of radical petty-bourgeois groupings into the service of imperialism, the colonial bourgeoisie or Stalinism. But development in a revolutionary direction has nevertheless taken place.

Thus the Communist party of China was launched by a group of prominent intellectuals, led by Chen Tu-hsiu, who had previously been prominent spokesmen of the bourgeois-democratic movement. They split this movement, embraced Marxism and oriented towards the working class and began the struggle for a Communist China.

Again, in Ceylon, the Trotskyist movement was created by a group of individuals, several of whom were scions of Ceylon's richest families. These founders of the LSSP began as bourgeois nationalists. They brought the present Ceylonese labor movement into being before they adopted a Marxist ideology. Then a split took place in their ranks, some in the leading group going over to Stalinism, the others to Trotskyism.

Unlike Chen Tu-hsiu and his group, Castro and his adherents did not begin their transformation by changing their ideology. They began it by struggling for political power in the name of democratic and humanistic ideals which they took seriously. This led them step by step to the working class as the most reliable base for their revolutionary struggle. It also led them to the conclusion that their revolutionary objectives could be achieved only through a socialist transformation of Cuban society, with the full mobilization of the working masses against the bourgeoisie as the political means for carrying through the struggle for power. Their ideology changed as their political strategy unfolded. Action molded their thinking. Though their ideological development is not completed, the qualitative point at which they became a proletarian tendency is behind them. Furthermore, the arrow of their ideological development keeps pointing left. This becomes the premise for Trotskyist attempts to work with the Fidelistas and in collaboration with the Cubans to build the revolutionary socialist party throughout Latin America and the rest of the world.

The pro-imperialist drive against the Cuban revolution and its leading cadres bears down heavily on American society, our party included. Not since the Russian revolution have the people of this country been subjected to such a torrent of lies -- not just

half-truths, as in the case of imperialist attacks on Stalinism, but total lies. We are not called upon to cover up for proven fakers, misleaders and bureaucrats no matter how much the imperialists may, from time to time and for their own reasons, rave against them. But we must be careful not to manipulate our labels and our programmatic norms in such a way as to add to the monstrous injustice perpetrated by our ruling class against genuine revolutionaries. Such manipulation is a gross misuse of our analytical tools, which under all conditions, must remain in the service of the truth.

* * *

The comrades of the Wohlforth-Shane-Robertson group have spoken much about the need for building Trotskyist parties in every country of the world. They have accused the SWP leadership of abandoning this key Leninist tenet and of leaning towards liquidationism. This they claim is what is really at the root of the dispute over Cuba. They are dead wrong. What is at issue in the Cuban discussion is not whether revolutionary socialist parties need to be built the world over but how Trotskyists will build them and with whose collaboration. Or isn't revolutionary consciousness supposed to encompass those problems?

The W-S-R group opposes the Castro regime on hopelessly sectarian and ultra-leftist grounds. Their policy, if adopted by the Trotskyist movement, would cut off the most promising new body of revolutionaries that has come to the fore anywhere in a long time. In fact, not since the Titoites moved to the left in 1949-50 has the Trotskyist movement had a comparable opportunity for growth. At that time, motivated by the needs of the struggle against Stalinism on the one hand and determined to preserve the foundations of the workers' state on the other, the Titoist leaders turned for aid to the Yugoslav workers and to the international working-class movement. At home they instituted a number of democratic reforms including factory councils. Simultaneously, they proclaimed the need for reviving Leninist internationalism. They indicated they were ready to explore the possibilities of collaborating with the Trotskyist movement in defense of Yugoslavia and in the building of new Communist parties in other countries in opposition to Stalinism.

The Trotskyists in turn were more than ready to engage in the necessary discussions envisaging collaboration with the Titoists. Was it liquidationist to have entertained such a policy? Or, in line with the W-S-R group's prescriptions for Cuba, should the Trotskyists have dismissed the left swing of the Titoist leaders as of no concern to them and opened up a campaign demanding that

the Yugoslavs create full-fledged organs of workers' democracy? Should the Trotskyists have called on the Yugoslav workers to overthrow the Tito regime, build a new party and join the Fourth International? They didn't do any of these things. Instead, they approached the Yugoslav leaders on a friendly basis, pledging them full aid in the struggle against the Kremlin and exploring the possibilities of joint endeavors.

To be sure, these possibilities did not pan out. When the Korean war started, the Titoists came under murderous pressure from U.S. imperialism to line up in the United Nations against the North Koreans and the Chinese or forego American material aid which they needed to ward off a Soviet invasion. The Titoists gave in to the Yankee pressure. This was a betrayal of principle, no matter how great the Yugoslav predicament, and it brought further relations between them and us to a halt.

Will the Fidelistas also capitulate under international pressures similar to those the Titoites were subjected? There are, of course, no guarantees that the Fidelistas will remain forever on the right track, just as there are no guarantees that the SWP cadres will not foresake the revolutionary road. New events will test the Cubans further as they will us. However, even under the worst historical variants, there have been revolutionaries who have remained true to their principles. Who can say in advance that the Fidelistas will not move further to the left under new adversity? The Yugoslav leaders, had they worked with the Trotskyists and had they helped new revolutionary parties to emerge throughout Europe, might have responded to the Korean war in a principled way.

Moreover, the Mage theorem by which all revolutionary developments are supposedly regulated automatically by the law of the pendulum -- swing to the left, then swing to the right -- misses two essential interconnections: (1) that when the "pendulum" swings to the left in one country such as Cuba, a cadre can emerge that attains consciousness adequate for the epoch and for the struggle throughout the world; (2) that this cadre can then be a prime mover in extending the revolution, thus preventing the "pendulum" from swinging to the right for a long time to come. It is our contention that the Fidelistas have the potentials of such a cadre and that the SWP should draw the necessary conclusions from this appraisal.

* * *

In recent weeks, the comrades of the W-S-R tendency have been shifting the ground of the dispute more and more to the single

issue of the party publicly voicing strong criticism of the Castro regime for not having created the forms of workers' democracy. Comrade Wohlforth doesn't mind terribly that we call Cuba some kind of workers' state. What he denounces us for most belligerently is not having called on the Cuban masses to wrest workers' councils from the government. Judy McGill doesn't even mind if we support the Castro regime. (See Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 22, No. 10.) In fact, unlike Comrade Wohlforth, she seems to be for the regime herself and she designates the Cuban leadership as revolutionary. But she, too, wants the party to open up on the Fidelistas right away, and she denounces the party leadership for its public silence in recent months on the question of workers' democracy. Isn't all this just a bit unprincipled? Shouldn't the W-S-R comrades sort things out in their own ranks before attempting to stand on a common platform? Is Cuba a workers' state, yes or no? Should the SWP support the Castro regime, yes or no? Can we have unambiguous answers from the W-S-R group on these two questions? Only when these basic questions are answered does the issue of when, how and where to advocate workers' councils in Cuba come into play. For that issue is derivative. It involves tactical considerations, Comrade McGill to the contrary notwithstanding. The W-S-R group wants the party to criticize the Castro regime at any and all times, virtually as a matter of principle. They even wanted the party to open up on the Cubans in the period when the invasion was being prepared and was launched. It is in this respect, as Comrade Hansen correctly pointed out, that the W-S-R comrades reveal an adaptation to the American imperialist campaign of lies against the Cuban revolution and the Castro regime.

June 5, 1961.