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THE NEXT PHASE OF AMERICAN POLITICS  
(Political Committee Draft Resolution)



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## THE NEXT PHASE OF AMERICAN POLITICS

(Political Committee Draft Resolution)

### I. The Political Conjuncture

The key to the next phase of American politics lies in the fate of the unstable coalition of diverse and basically incompatible social forces gathered around the Johnson administration. Although we can't foretell the pace of disillusionment in Johnson and consequent differentiation from his policies, such disillusionment and differentiation can be expected within the heterogeneous coalition. The trend is already forecasted in the growing dissatisfaction and protests over Johnson's acts of aggression in Vietnam and the Dominican Republic. His failure to deal meaningfully with the deep-seated social tensions and social problems in this country will generate further differentiations along lines of social cleavage. These developments will provide openings for anti-capitalist and anti-Johnson propaganda and activity, for the refutation of lesser-evil politics, and for the counterposing of our socialist alternative to capitalist misrule.

The coalition that elected Johnson to the Presidency extended from the Negro people and the labor movement to a significant segment of monopoly capital. To the mass of voters the choice was largely one of a lesser evil. On the whole the Democratic landslide was more against Goldwater than it was for Johnson. The vote showed that most people are not pulled to the right on national policy. Uneasiness about Goldwater's bomb-rattling proved far weightier than his appeal to white prejudice against the Negro freedom fighters. The union movement was aroused by his anti-labor stance. Old people were scared by his threats to their welfare. The vote indicated what most people don't want. It also implied their desire for a government that will assure them peace, economic security, a chance to live a decent life in an enlightened society; and they will expect Johnson to make good on his promises of a "great society."

The sweep of lesser-evil support to Johnson slowed down the political polarizations manifested at one extreme by Goldwaterism and at the other by the Freedom Now movement. It interposed great obstacles to development of the Freedom Now party and dimmed the immediate prospects of independent Negro

political action. It has further postponed any union trend toward formation of an independent labor party. The scope of the Democratic victory made lesser-evil politics seem to be more firmly entrenched than ever.

Goldwater's crushing defeat at the polls showed that conditions are not ripe in this country for a mass mobilization around a reactionary banner. An immediate consequence of the vote has been a slowing down of ultra-right tendencies and incipient fascist trends within the Republican party and the development of attempts within the party to repair the damage caused by the Goldwater fiasco. Goldwaterism itself is not an incipient fascist phenomenon. It can be defined politically as a reactionary movement with an ideology harking back to laissez faire capitalism. It reflects middle class feelings of insecurity arising from fears of the irrepressible world revolution and dissatisfaction over unstable conditions in this country. Racism constitutes yet another feature of the Goldwater movement. And it received lavish financial backing from wealthy new sectors of Big Business out to challenge the political hegemony of the old-line monopolists.

Although unable to impart a fascist character to the Goldwater movement, the incipient fascist tendencies were quick to latch onto it for their own political ends. In the process they appear to have strengthened their cadres, widened their periphery and increased their financial resources. Together with their ultra-right periphery the incipient fascists have become better entrenched in the capitalist political apparatus and economic structure. Starting from this vantage point they will work toward a new major bid for national influence at a future turn of events.

The growth of incipient fascism in the United States does not signify that the main sections of monopoly capital have already decided to embark on a course toward military dictatorship and fascism. To do so would mean that capitalism is ready to wage civil war against the working class. Such a course entails grave risk of capitalist defeat in the social convulsions that ensue. Therefore, it has been the historic tendency of the capitalist class to turn to fascism only as the last resort in attempting to maintain its rule.

Under the blows of the ascending world revolution and its social impact within this country, American capitalism will turn later on toward the fascist road. It does not follow, even

then, that the prognosis will be one of the swift growth of an all-dominant fascist movement. The coming historic wave in the United States is one of a deepening student trend toward socialist ideas, intensification of the Negro struggle in an anti-capitalist direction and radicalization of the labor movement. Given the leadership of a revolutionary socialist party under those objective conditions the perspective for the United States is one of a maturing workers revolution.

At the present political conjuncture, however, there are neither the premises nor the need for capitalist resort to fascism. The two-party system still serves to keep the exploited masses tied to capitalist politics and subordinated to capitalist rule. The monopolists are assured their super-profits and the desired foreign and domestic policies. They are able to maintain relative social stability within the country on their own terms. Johnson has proven very useful to them because he has been able to move governmental policies further to the right and still maintain a demagogic stance as a friend of the downtrodden.

It is not only Johnson but the whole two-party system that is moving to the right. The trend is reflected in the reactionary foreign alliances forged by American imperialism and in the stepping up of its military interventions against the colonial revolution. Despite the demagogy about a "great society," basic imperialist policy within this country is reflected in the witch hunt, oppressive laws and police repressions, and in the dearth of meaningful social legislation. Impelled by the deepening crisis of capitalism, the trend to the right is bipartisan, embracing both Democrats and Republicans, both liberals and conservatives. The lesser-evil choice is also moving to the right. In 1960 Johnson was held to be a greater evil than Kennedy. By 1964 the same Johnson had become a lesser evil than Goldwater. The greater evil of yesterday becomes the lesser evil of today.

Experience will show that Johnson's "great society" is dedicated to the basic class interests of monopoly capitalism. Although dressed up in pompous phrases his proposals for social reform are meager, in fact miserly, considering the magnitude of peoples' social needs and the resources of this rich country. This is exemplified by his so-called "war on poverty" which offers just enough to raise mass hopes and feed reformist illusions but does precious little to help the poverty stricken. Few of the skimpy dollars appropriated for the "war" have gone to aid the poor. Instead they have been diverted mainly into a

patronage grab bag for capitalist politicians. On the whole Johnson's social reform program adds up to nothing more than token promises and little action at a time when the nation's social problems are becoming increasingly grave.

As the realities of the "great society" hoax become more evident to the masses, Johnson's default on the expectations of his supporters will begin to antagonize them. This will lead him into frictions with the Negro and union movements, with the unemployed and the youth. Passive, expectant moods will give way to outbursts of struggle. Now trends toward class political polarizations can be expected to arise.

## II. Anti-War Movement

Experience makes it ever-plainer for all to see that Johnson's real war is not against poverty but against the poverty stricken colonial masses. Each step he takes in foreign policy shows that at all hazards he is out to stem the tide of revolt against capitalist exploitation and imperialist domination. Johnson's real policy was actually exposed right in the middle of last year's election campaign. Using the Tonkin Gulf incident of August 1964 as a pretext for naked imperialist aggression, he savagely ordered the bombing of North Vietnam. At the same time a bipartisan resolution was rushed through Congress backing Johnson and giving him a free hand for further acts of aggression. Johnson and the Democrats, no less than Goldwater and the Republicans, were proven ready to risk war to serve imperialist ends. Even before the 1964 elections, Johnson's conduct had refuted practitioners of lesser-evil politics who persisted in touting him as a man of peace and the Democrats as a party of peace.

Once elected Johnson lost no time in applying the Goldwater foreign policy line which the voters had rejected at the polls. Within three weeks he intervened militarily in support of the hated imperialist puppet, Tshombe, in the Congo. U.S. planes airlifted Belgian paratroops for an assault on Stanleyville. There the Belgians, aided by U.S.-armed white mercenaries in Tshombe's employ, launched a murderous assault on the Congolese freedom fighters. Subsequent disclosures revealed that the whole thing had been done with a prearranged plan which had obviously been worked out while Johnson was campaigning for election as a man of peace.

Last February Johnson launched what has proven to be a continuing series of bombing assaults on North Vietnam. Use

of American air power against South Vietnamese freedom fighters has simultaneously been stepped up. In both cases death and destruction is being rained upon the civilian population and their possessions. A big new buildup of U.S. ground troops has begun in South Vietnam. All these acts of aggression bring closer the danger of another Korean-type war in Southeast Asia, the possibility of a direct military confrontation with China which now possesses nuclear potential, and the peril of a general nuclear war.

With the whole world already apprehensive over the war danger in Vietnam, Johnson proceeded to order a massive U.S. military intervention in the Dominican Republic. The first excuse of protecting American and foreign lives quickly wore thin. Washington policy makers then shifted toward explanations adding up to the assertion that the United States will not allow another Cuba in Latin America. Taking no chances on another Castro evolving out of a bourgeois-democratic revolution, Johnson has intervened in support of the military dictatorship and against the Dominican constitutionalistas who appear to have widespread popular support. The basic aim is to see that no new government takes power in the Dominican Republic, or anywhere else, without U.S. consent. The intent will be to bend the constitutionalistas to this policy through whatever combination of political maneuvers and military pressures the situation may require. Johnson can afford to be flexible about the exact composition of the Dominican government provided its members pass a CIA-FBI security check. His main aim will be to disarm the insurgent masses and restore firm police rule over them.

The Dominican intervention marks a new stage in the imperialist drive to crush all revolutionary upheavals. Johnson's cynical bypassing of the OAS in his unilateral military action exposes the imperialist hypocrisy concerning inter-American "cooperation." Little pretense remains of supporting an "Alliance for Progress" to bring about needed social reforms. The Dominican intervention shows that any social reform movement undertaken without Washington's authorization faces the threat of direct U.S. attack. It also raises grave new dangers of a counter-revolutionary assault on socialist Cuba with direct U.S. participation. Through the Johnson doctrine, U.S. imperialism is taking a further long stride toward setting itself up as world policeman over the limits to which any social reform will be allowed. In keeping with that perspective the Pentagon is presently reevaluating the draft policy that will be needed to provide a bigger conscript army for the purpose.



Parallel with Johnson's new long stride toward the nuclear brink, Washington propagandists have been resorting more and more to McCarthy-type charges of an "international communist conspiracy." That tune is being played in all keys in the Dominican Republic, as it has been in Vietnam, the Congo, and as it will be wherever freedom fighters revolt against the puppet regimes of imperialism in their countries. Use of the hateful McCarthyite technique in matters of foreign policy implies parallel attempts to employ it within this country in an effort to gag critics of the bipartisan imperialist foreign policy. Similarly, it is not accidental that the Supreme Court's decision upholding the ban on travel to Cuba coincided with Washington's military intervention in the Dominican Republic. The Johnson administration's present gestures toward public discussion of its Vietnam policy with critics at home does not mark any departure from the long-established policy of witch-hunting critics of foreign policy. It simply reflects differences within the ruling class over Johnson's tactics in opposing the colonial revolution. It also reflects empirical resort to a temporary expedient which they hope will blunt swelling criticism. The ruling powers have no intention of setting foreign policy through public discussion.

Growth of internal opposition to the bipartisan foreign policy reflects the mounting impact of the colonial revolution upon the people of the United States. From its inception, the Cuban revolution has aroused considerable sympathy within this country, especially among students. A number of young people were thereby drawn into general opposition to Washington's policies, some moving all the way to acceptance of socialist ideas. Today an even-larger new wave of opposition to the anti-democratic foreign and domestic policies of imperialism is coming into being around the Vietnam issue, its forces composed of a broad layer of activists in the student movement itself. Centering on the campuses, the protest movement over Vietnam is attracting greater numbers of students than in the case of Cuba in the early Sixties, and there is a marked rise in faculty support as well. The brutal application of the Johnson doctrine now unfolding in the Caribbean is bound to broaden and intensify the movement even further. It lends cogency to the central issue brought to the fore by the teach-in movement, namely, the right of the American people to decide questions of war and peace. No thinking person would take seriously the old argument that "there wouldn't be time" for a vote about military intervention in Vietnam and U.S. occupation of Santo Domingo.

Development of the teach-ins over the Vietnam issue offers a vehicle which, despite its amorphous nature, can be used to help build a genuine opposition to imperialist war. Originating out of sentiments against imperialist policy in Vietnam, the teach-ins are essentially an integral part of the anti-war movement. They are not to be viewed as substitutes for, but rather as catalysts leading toward, various actions of an avowedly anti-imperialist nature. Assemblies like the teach-ins serve primarily as a forum where a meaningful anti-imperialist policy can be argued out, provided that all viewpoints have the right to be heard. Our task in such forums is to refute fake peace advocates who call upon the imperialists to be more "democratic," who exonerate the imperialist aggressors by blaming "both sides," who seek to keep the peace movement mired down in the swamp of capitalist politics.

As against such peace fakers our task is to explain that U.S. imperialist policy, and that policy alone, obstructs peace. There can be no peace until all U.S. troops are withdrawn from abroad and the peoples of other lands are allowed to settle their own affairs without U.S. intervention. Such a peaceful policy cannot be attained through either a Democratic or Republican administration. Both parties are capitalist parties and are therefore irrevocably tied to the imperialist policies inherent in the capitalist system. Peace can be won only by breaking definitively with capitalist politics and taking the road of independent, anti-capitalist political action.

We fully support demonstrations which are explicitly against imperialist foreign policy, no matter how limited the specific demands may be. As in the case of the student March On Washington, a flat demand that Johnson end the war in Vietnam affords a principled basis for united action toward specific anti-imperialist ends. The March also set a further good example through its non-exclusionist policy toward all who supported its central demand and through recognition of the right of all participating groups to distribute their own literature. Such insistence on a non-exclusionist policy is tending to become the norm in the committees and organizations which make up the movement, and it is precipitating a healthy differentiation between serious anti-war militants, on one hand, and social democrats and right wing peaceniks, on the other. Our aim must be to take advantage of such opportunities to broaden the protest actions against imperialist policy and in the process to deepen the political consciousness of anti-war militants.



As in the case of student youth, the colonial revolution is making an impact upon the Freedom Now movement. An example is support from SNCC to the student March On Washington demanding an end to the war in Vietnam. Awareness of issues in the colonial revolution and acts of solidarity with the colonial freedom fighters will bring the Negro vanguard to a higher level of political consciousness. Through observation and experience they will perceive more clearly the interrelation between imperialist resistance to liberation movements abroad and the parallel resistance in this country to Negro demands for Freedom Now. Our task is to help develop that perception all the way to the indicated anti-capitalist and pro-socialist conclusions. Those efforts will lend impetus to the present incipient revolt against Negro misleaders who acquiesce in the capitalist government's criminal acts abroad and who preach reliance on that same government in the civil rights struggle here at home.

### III. Trade Union Trends

Of all the misleaders in whatever sector of the mass movement none are more treacherous than the trade union bureaucrats. Their lickspittle support of imperialism has reached a new low as they go out of their way to defend Johnson against criticism of his criminal policies in Vietnam and the Dominican Republic. They have shamefully defaulted on labor's responsibilities toward the Freedom Now movement. They go along with the whole capitalist assault on the Bill of Rights, using it as a cover for their own witch hunt against union militants. Within the unions they function as a corrupt bureaucracy characterized by its sell-out bargaining with the employers.

Under bureaucratic misleadership hard-won union standards have been eroded on the job, union control over production speeds has been torn down, and the backlog of worker grievances over contract violations piles higher and higher. Control over strike policy has been snatched from the rank and file along with the general destruction of union democracy. Bureaucrats step in as strikebreakers against so-called "wild cat" strikes and often link up with the bosses to victimize worker militants.

Politically labor is kept tied to the Democratic party in forlorn hope that the capitalist government can thus be made a "friend" of the unions, helping out against the bosses in collective bargaining and doing something about the general social needs of the workers. The policy persists despite the fact that labor has won no significant new social legislation since the Thirties. It continues despite the increasingly harsh governmental restriction of labor's rights and the mounting trend toward governmental intervention in union affairs.

The whole bureaucratic policy has become more and more costly to the class interests of the union rank and file. The unions themselves are declining in strength proportionate to the total labor force of which less than one-fourth is presently organized. In general the existing unions are achieving relatively little growth and some are suffering a decline in membership. Bureaucratic contamination has prevented organized labor from playing its normal role as a vanguard social force, reduced it to a self-defeating posture of subservience to the capitalist ruling class, and alienated from it the sympathies of student rebels and Negro freedom fighters.

Since being determines consciousness, the policies of the trade union bureaucrats flow logically, for them, from the material conditions under which they function. They draw fantastically high salaries compared to wages received by the workers and also have lavish expense accounts at their disposal. Handsome pensions, medical benefits and other "fringe allowances" are assured for their declining years, usually even to those who get voted out of office. So far as their personal security is concerned they find life good under the capitalist status quo. In office they manage union funds that run way up into the millions and preoccupy themselves with investment matters that cause them to think like bankers, not like union leaders. Having it made for themselves, the bureaucrats look to the more privileged layers of workers as their allies in maintaining their hegemony over the unions. Less privileged union members, not to mention the unorganized workers, are left substantially to their own devices in the capitalist jungle. In short, the trade union bureaucrats, who live a middle class existence and have developed a middle class outlook, are incapable of any real sense of class solidarity with the workers they pretend to represent. They constitute an alien class formation exercising dictatorial rule over the unions.

The widening gap between the policies of the bureaucracy and the needs of the rank and file forecasts the development of significant new trends within the unions. Union members sympathetic to the growing public criticism of Johnson's foreign policies can only resent the bureaucrats' unconditional support of his brutal tactics abroad. Failure of the bureaucrats to combat white supremacist efforts to split the working class over racial issues can only antagonize both Negro unionists and white workers who understand, at least at the union level, the importance of class solidarity. Attrition of rising prices and high taxes on take-home pay, intensification of the speed-up, existing unemployment trends and growing fears of coming job losses -- all these are bound to generate mounting unrest within the unions. (Analysis of the general economic situation will be presented in separate form.)

A sense of frustration already developing in the union ranks finds its expression in angry, defensive moods. Two recent instances of membership resistance to concessions by the top leadership in contract negotiations illustrate the point. One was the ILA strike in which the workers stubbornly held out against a reduction in the size of work gangs and related concessions to the waterfront employers. They were finally forced back to work substantially on the bosses' terms but only after long resistance to the combined pressures of the bureaucrats, the bosses, the kept press and the capitalist government. A second instance was the UAW strike against General Motors. Faced by membership pressures on one side and corporation resistance on the other, Reuther had to go to a strike over the national contract. During the strike he forced through union acceptance of a weak settlement covering national contract terms, but he had to leave the locals free to continue the walkout in various plants over issues such as the speed-up and unsettled grievances.

Actually, Reuther's seeming liberality in allowing local strikes to continue meant that he was leaving the embattled locals on their own, depriving them of national union backing in the fight for their just demands. Still the very fact that he didn't try to force every local back to work immediately upon settlement of the national contract, as he has done before, showed that Reuther felt that he had to make some form of concession to the angry mood developing among the frustrated workers. Both of the foregoing examples also indicate a decline in leadership authority as the ranks become more and more distrustful of the union officials. This trend toward the negation of existing leader-

ship authority in the unions also heralds the rise of positive sentiment for change to a new leadership capable of shaping and carrying out more meaningful union policies.

The changing membership mood has been reflected in recent union elections where top officers were voted out. One among several instances is the dumping of Carey from the presidency of the IUE in the course of which he was caught red-handed trying to steal the election. An even more significant example is Abel's defeat of McDonald in a contest for the presidency of the steel union. In a close vote Abel seemed to have an edge in those localities where McDonald henchmen had control, and McDonald ran stronger in areas under the control of district directors supporting Abel. It would thus appear that the steel workers tended to register their dissatisfaction with bureaucratic misleadership by voting against whichever gang they considered immediately responsible for their bad experiences locally.

Such overturns in top union office do not yet signify the appearance of a more militant leadership. Little more is involved in that sense than a change in the palace guard without any real shift in bureaucratic policy. The palace revolts indicate concern within the bureaucracy about the need to pacify the membership and save the bureaucracy from a genuine rank and file rebellion. Toward that end "insurgents" within the bureaucracy resort to the crudest demagogy. A case in point is Abel's supportable, but from him hypocritical, attack on McDonald's "tuxedo unionism." The object is to raise membership hopes of a policy change for the better without having any intentions of fulfilling that hope.

In the last analysis, however, the intentions of the bureaucrats are secondary. The main thing is that rifts are appearing in the union bureaucracy which weaken its monolithic rule over the ranks. Openings develop for internal union discussion of basic policy questions, and new opportunities arise for the building of a left wing based on a class struggle program. Our task is to be alert to every nuance of this changing union atmosphere and to grasp all realistic chances to intervene with our program.

Left wing tactics at the present stage of internal union developments can be illustrated by the policy our comrades followed in the steel union elections. They gave vigorous support to the groundswell against McDonald who personally

symbolized everything wrong with bureaucratic policy in the union. In this legitimate case of lesser-evil tactics within the labor movement, they did so without counterposing our program to Abel's. This did not mean that they took any responsibility for his policy. On the contrary, by concentrating on what was wrong in the union under McDonald's presidency they opened the way to reach the best militants and to make common cause with them later on against Abel when he defaults on their hopes and expectations. Along these flexible lines our comrades should find themselves in a favorable position to advance our program as the policy disputes deepen within the union.

In dealing with union policy attention must be given to the bureaucracy's preoccupation with so-called "fringe benefits" such as pensions, health and welfare funds, and supplementary unemployment benefits. Speaking with careful sensitivity to the workers' needs for such social benefits, the pitfalls involved in the bureaucratic approach to these questions must be patiently explained. Attempts to confine action on these general social needs of the working class to a matter of bargaining points in union contracts have the effect of splitting the class in that the unorganized workers are left out in the cold. To bargain separately, union by union, on such general issues has the further effect of dividing and weakening the organized workers themselves in a situation where common social needs call for common union demands. The stronger unions undertake only to look out for themselves, leaving the weaker ones to do the best they can. Preoccupation with "fringe benefits" serves to divert attention from the issues of wages, hours, conditions and union control on the job. The heat is taken off the capitalist government instead of bringing union pressure on the government to provide for the social needs of the working class as a whole. It is thereby made that much easier for the bureaucrats to keep the workers tied to capitalist politics.

Equally deceptive is the bureaucracy's approach to repeal of anti-labor legislation, as illustrated in the concentration on a narrow demand for repeal of Section 14(b) of the Taft-Hartley Act. Section 14(b) authorizes state enactment of so-called "Right to Work" laws ostensibly meant to bar compulsory dues collections but actually completely anti-union in their intent and purpose. A demand for repeal of Section 14(b) is, therefore, correct and to be supported. In a deeper sense, however, the narrow concentration on that section alone exposes the bureaucratic fraud. It is no accident, for example, that

opposition is put aside to those parts of the Taft-Hartley Act, and to other anti-labor laws, that abridge the right to strike. The fact is that the bureaucrats welcome such restrictions because they have no stomach for militant struggle in support of working class interests. Their concern is about the obstacles that "Right to Work" laws put in the way of their aspirations to preside over a lucrative dues-paying empire. That's the real reason for their concentration on Section 14(b). As against the bureaucratic line, a meaningful union policy would demand repeal of all restrictions on the right to organize and strike. It would demand that the government cease all intervention in union affairs and act instead to meet the social needs of the working class.

Briefly summarized, a general program for the building of a left wing in the unions should be put forward along the following lines: A 30 hour week, at 40 hours pay. A massive public works program designed to meet general social needs and to help assure full employment under union conditions. Government operation of idle productive facilities under workers control. Unemployment compensation at full union rates for all jobless persons 18 or over, whether or not they have previously been employed. Union organization of the unemployed into their own autonomous units. Rank and file control over all union affairs and union control on the job. A sliding scale of wages and compensation payments to offset rising prices. Unconditional support to the Freedom Now movement. A definitive break with capitalist politics and the establishment of an independent labor party.

Only along such general programmatic lines can a meaningful left wing be created in the unions.

#### IV. Freedom Now Struggle

Aroused by the threat they saw in Goldwater, Negroes gave unprecedented support to the Democratic party with 97 percent of their vote going to Johnson as the lesser evil. Johnson now seeks to hold that political advantage through minimal steps to alleviate some of the crassest violations of civil rights. In this he has the help of compliant Negro leaders who share his desire to take the civil rights struggle off the streets or at least to subordinate such activity to reliance on the capitalist government. This effort is further reinforced by widespread illusions among black freedom fighters that they can advance their cause politically by working within the



Democratic party. The result has been a dimming of the immediate prospects for independent black political action.

At the same time the temporary lull in mass action which set in during the latter part of 1964 is beginning to give way to new mass upsurges in the Freedom Now struggle. The events around the recent March On Montgomery forecast mass rejections of any return to tokenism and gradualism. Evidence also mounts that a great many ghetto residents are ready to battle for Freedom Now, not later on. With the masses gaining in self-confidence and self-reliance, the struggle can be expected to intensify throughout the land with a stiffening of Negro demands. Governmental failure to respond to the demands and police repressions against militant struggles will strengthen the present impulses in the ranks to go beyond the policy limits set by the leadership. Illusions about the Democratic party will fade, especially among young militants, and the coalition around Johnson will give way to new political polarizations. Bitter experience will teach the militants, both those now taken in by Johnson and those who thrust aside politics to concentrate on mass action alone, that their struggle requires the combining of mass action with independent political organization.

Experience will also lead the young militants into a search for the basic socio-economic causes of their difficulties. The trend is already reflected in the progressive development of black nationalism as its best representatives grope their way toward a deeper revolutionary understanding. These left wing tendencies within the Freedom Now movement, which have been growing in numbers and influence, have suffered a serious setback through the loss of their foremost figure, Malcolm X. Time will be needed to make up for the grievous loss, but the objective logic of the Freedom Now struggle will sooner or later produce new figures capable of fulfilling Malcolm's destined role which was so tragically cut short by assassins' bullets. Each new phase of the struggle will shake up existing leadership patterns within the movement and accelerate the rise of a left-wing leadership fighting to gain ascendancy over right wing and centrist formations in a contest for mass support.

At this stage in the evolution of black nationalism we are still confined to very slow recruitment of Negroes into the party. Even though hampered in such recruitment by the fact that we are, as yet, a predominantly white revolutionary party, we are winning confidence within the Freedom Now

movement through our uncompromising support of the struggle. As a result we are knitting firm fraternal ties with the best militants in the movement. These developments forecast a growing trend toward black-white unity at the vanguard level and hold forth the prospect of coming successes in our efforts to win black revolutionists to our revolutionary-socialist vanguard.

At the present stage our role in support of the Freedom Now movement remains essentially propagandistic. It follows that one of our big jobs is to increase the circulation of our press and literature in the ghettos where our material generally is gaining increased acceptance. Attention must likewise be given to the promotion of forums and debates involving various militant Negro spokesmen and at which we put forward our socialist views on the Freedom Now struggle.

In the next period we can expect to gain further political benefits from our principled opposition to the lesser-evil swindle in support of Johnson. One important feature of our election campaigns at this time must be to hammer on the need for independent black political action. Our propaganda can be given further impetus through critical support to independent Negro candidates wherever they may chance to run for office in local elections. Through both means we can emphasize our advocacy of independent black political organization on a national scale.

So far as it may be realistic, commensurate with our limited forces and the small number of Negro comrades, practical efforts should be made to participate in Negro actions and organizations. In every instance we should have a flexible and non-sectarian approach toward the various militant tendencies within the movement. The aim should be to help develop a revolutionary left wing within the Freedom Now movement and promote reciprocal collaboration between our party and the left wing on the basis of fraternal equality. In the main, this work should be concentrated in the ghettos of cities where we now have functioning party units. Along with that effort, steps should be taken on a planned and centrally-coordinated basis to further advance our probe for fraternal contact with black freedom fighters in the South.

The central aim of our work in support of the Freedom Now struggle will be to help the most promising black nationalist tendencies develop all the way to anti-capitalist black radicalism. In that way we can expect to win the best Negro

militants to our party and in time achieve a qualitative reinforcement of our present small Negro cadre.

(See draft resolution, "The Freedom Now Movement in 1965: Its Progress, Problems and Prospects.")

#### V. Student Upsurge

Since the latter Fifties there has been a gradual rise of student interest in radical politics. The interest has stemmed from activities around various issues ranging from questions of academic freedom and civil liberties to the Negro struggle and colonial revolution. Students who became partisans of the Cuban revolution have been in the vanguard of those who carried their thinking all the way to acceptance of socialist ideas. On the whole the trend reflects growing alienation of student youth from the capitalist status quo. It has enabled the revolutionary socialist youth movement to develop into a politically solid and organizationally well-knit national formation.

Bright prospects of further revolutionary socialist gains are implicit in the present big upsurge of protest over U.S. intervention in Vietnam and the Dominican Republic. Student youth, who are now joining the anti-war movement in unexpectedly large numbers, enter it with an open mind. They do not accept out-of-hand the line of the pacifists, social democrats, Stalinists, or any other tendency. They are wide open to political argument. They can be shown that our program and party is genuinely revolutionary and that the so-called "old left," which they tend to reject, is not a monolithic whole. Many of these students can be won to our movement if we battle hard enough in the contest for their allegiance.

The task is not one for the youth movement alone. There must be no artificial separation of youth-type and party-type activities. Political work on the campus is a matter of paramount importance to the party and it not only must not be short-circuited, it must be developed in every practical way. With such a collective effort, bringing the full weight of the party and the press to bear in a campaign spirit, much can be accomplished.

Since student youth today constitute the major source of party recruits, new growth can be expected more or less in

proportion to the effort put into the anti-war campaign. Experience has shown that such infusions of new young blood serve as a general stimulant to the party. Those branches where young comrades are playing an increasingly important role have achieved the best development and the party as a whole has registered progress along similar lines. Involvement of able young comrades in leading party roles, especially where they can work in collaboration with older party hands, has further served to bring new vitality. Out of the process as a whole significant potential is developing to assure the continuity of competent and trustworthy leadership in our movement.

Student youth entering the party have shown a marked capacity to wholly identify themselves with proletarian revolutionary perspectives despite the middle class background from which many of them come. This fortunate circumstance stems from a process of selection going on within the student movement itself. It is a big leap from inchoate rebellion against the capitalist status quo to membership in a proletarian revolutionary party. Many students are unable to make the leap when organized labor remains relatively quiescent and their identification with the working class must be made on the basis of its history and the objective promise of its future revolutionary role. Some are as yet unable to advance beyond reformist politics. Others become entrapped in super-activism and reckless adventurism through involvement with tendencies such as the Progressive Labor party. Only the best among the student rebels are able to advance toward genuine revolutionary politics.

Those who come to our party from today's student milieu do so under conditions that test their mettle as revolutionary vanguard fighters. It is not necessarily comfortable for them to take their stand with a small vanguard party generally isolated from the mass movement. In doing so they automatically subject themselves to persecution as "subversives" by the capitalist ruling class and its witch-hunting myrmidons. They cut themselves off from immediate prospects of becoming mass leaders within the broad student movement. People who can stand that gaff are not apt to be dilettantes. Instead, experience has shown these young comrades to be motivated by good will and genuine devotion to the movement. They seek objectively to identify themselves with the working class through our vanguard party and they show an honest desire to learn revolutionary politics. Through student reinforcements of that caliber we can strengthen the party and build a bridge toward other young militants whom we hope to reach within the Freedom Now and trade union movements.

## VI. Party Outlook

We are not yet a party in the full sense of the term; we are a propaganda group striving to become a party of revolutionary action. Our main functions at this stage are, therefore, propagandistic in character. The immediate objectives are to win adherents, extend our influence within the mass movement and work to achieve ultimate leadership of the masses. Wherever practical we participate in spontaneous mass actions, as distinguished from contrived substitutes for the real thing, seeking to bring forward class struggle views along the lines set forth in our transitional program. While probing for individual contacts and recruits in the course of our daily work, we also remain alert for signs of any trend toward our programmatic positions among other groupings. If such a trend should be perceived we would orient toward possible unification with the leftward-moving forces involved in an effort to speed the growth of the revolutionary vanguard.

At the present time, however, none of the existing groupings measure up to our programmatic criteria for a radical regroupment. Instead of moving leftward and showing new viability, other groupings generally are falling into decline. The social democrats become more and more decrepit and are expelling their youth who in turn are splintering into fragments. The ossifying Communist Party which appears to be rife with internal dissension shows no signs of any growth. Various splitlets from the CP have undertaken to set up shop on their own, but none of these, including the Progressive Labor group which makes the biggest pretensions, merits attention as a prospective revolutionary ally.

Although PL appears to have drawn some worthwhile young people into its ranks, that does not determine the character of the group. Its basic features are outlined in the views advanced by the PL leaders at the recent convention where the group proclaimed itself a party. Reflecting an incapacity to surmount their unprincipled training in the CP, the PL leaders presented the convention with a pragmatic admixture of political opportunism and adventurism. They have voiced sympathy with Mao as against Moscow but they failed to present any analysis of the issues in the Sino-Soviet dispute. Repeating the old slander of Trotskyism as "counter-revolutionary," they struck a posture as the legitimate heirs of Stalin and of William Z. Foster, one of Stalin's foremost American lackeys. Organizationally they have undertaken to proscribe the democratic right to form internal factions, they call for

"organized criticism and self-criticism," and they have introduced other aspects of the old Stalinist garbage. Such a group can only be viewed as an opponent tendency and our policy toward it must be shaped accordingly.

Programmatic firmness in our policy toward opponent tendencies does not preclude fraternal cooperation with them around certain immediate issues. Broadly defined these issues involve common defense of democratic rights as one general aspect and principled cooperation in support of specific mass demands as the other. In no case do we water down our program in a quest for radical allies, nor do we lend ourselves to adventuristic efforts to initiate vanguard activities as a substitute for mass action. While dealing with other radical groups as opponents, we must at the same time remain alert to any possibilities of winning over promising individuals within their ranks.

Even though the whole radical movement remains largely isolated from the mass movement our relative position is steadily improving vis-a-vis opponent groups. Our greatest gain has been the growing youth cadre with its potential for reenergizing the party. Significant recruitment potential is developing out of the close ties we are knitting with the Negro vanguard. In the unions we are entering the early morning of new opportunities. Our party is winning recognition as a potent radical factor as it tends to more and more become a center of initiative on big anti-capitalist issues and protest developments.

Advocacy by opponent groups of lesser-evil support to Johnson, or their abstention from independent socialist political action in the 1964 elections, gave us further advantage in the contest for radical leadership. Our uncompromising opposition to political entrapment of the student, civil rights and labor movements within the Democratic party, spearheaded by our own presidential campaign, has yet to reap its full benefits. We have the inside track among militants becoming disillusioned with Johnson. New gains can be realized from that advantage if we hammer consistently in our propaganda on the need throughout the mass movement for independent, anti-capitalist political action.



Decisive to our further progress is the general contest with opponent tendencies over ideas, programs, ideologies. Our propaganda must be oriented toward, and developed so as to influence and teach, students turning rebel, black militants moving toward revolutionary positions and restive young workers coming into opposition to the trade union bureaucracy. The aim will be to win party recruits and in the process link up with broad leftward trends arising within the mass movement. With effective concentration on the key propaganda tasks of the day we can expect in due course to win leadership roles within the mass movement. It would be a mistake, however, to imagine that we are already in a position to focus on contests for mass leadership. Such a misconception could only divert us from our propaganda tasks and thereby cut across our real chances to make headway.

The prolonged isolation we have experienced is drawing to a close but it has not yet ended. We are now in a contradictory period of political transition which, although gradually changing for the better, is not yet marked by any significant breakthrough into the mass movement. Student rebels, black militants, restive workers who are beginning to respond to us politically represent only a vanguard trend among the masses. They do not in themselves constitute a force capable of mobilizing a broad left wing able to move generally beyond propaganda to agitation and action. Consequently our overall party-building effort must be shaped in consonance with the propaganda tasks of the day and all party activities must be related directly to the propaganda offensive.

Because of the exceptional opportunities open to us within the student movement a top priority must be given to this sphere of party work. So far as possible within the framework of a priority to work among students, party efforts must be directed toward winning black militants to our ranks, especially on the part of our Negro comrades. Attention to the trade union movement must of necessity depend primarily upon worker comrades with the press backing them up.

Without doubt our most potent weapon is the press which plays a primary role in developing contacts, winning recruits and generally influencing leftward moving forces within the mass movement. Efforts to expand circulation of the press -- and of our general literature intended to help win and educate party reinforcements -- must be pushed in all ways. Special

sales and distributions help open the way for the foot troops of the party to penetrate new ground. A subscription today can mean a new member tomorrow. The press helps also to build attendance of forums, symposiums and debates through which we can reach and influence leftward-moving militants. Of all forms of party activity in whatever sphere none is so universally important as the circulation of the press and it must receive concentrated attention accordingly.

As in the case of the press, party election campaigns must be aimed propagandistically toward the student, Negro and union movements. Attention must be focused on the anti-war and anti-administration sentiments of the burgeoning student movement, on the leftward trends developing in the Freedom Now movement, and on the inherent combat potential of the working class given the necessary program and leadership. Emphasis must be placed on the need for every sector of the mass movement to take the road of independent, anti-capitalist political action. The socialist alternative to outlived capitalism must be posed in concrete terms of the burning problems of the day and in language that will be understood by those we seek to influence. In all respects the party must present the image of a vanguard working class organization that means business about ending capitalist misrule and reorganizing the nation on a revolutionary socialist basis.

If we proceed along the foregoing lines, grappling cogently with the immediate issues of the day and at the same time directing attention to our fundamental solution of all the basic social problems; if we remain alert, aggressive and politically abreast of events; if we keep our feet on the ground in our present tactical timing while working consciously to advance our strategic revolutionary aims -- then we can proceed with full confidence that in due course our historic goal will be achieved. Today we can help along the deepening student trend toward socialist ideas. We can serve to speed the intensification of the Negro struggle in an anti-capitalist direction. We can work to prepare for the coming radicalization of the labor movement. The better we carry out those tasks of the present period, the greater the assurance that later on our movement will play a decisive role in the coming American revolution.

May 28, 1965