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OUR "1965" QUESTION --

DOES THE PC POLITICAL RESOLUTION SIGNAL
THE IDEOLOGICAL DECLINE OF THE SWP?

by Hilde Macleod

The PC Political Resolution, "The Next Phase of American Politics" is a reformist, not a revolutionary document, lacking as it does, fundamental analysis of the present juncture in national and international affairs. Lacking also is revolutionary spirit and vision.

Placing the KEY to the next phase of American politics in the fate of the unstable coalition around Johnson is certainly no new political revelation. This situation prevailed in both the Roosevelt and Truman administrations. This is not the central issue today. On the contrary the central issue is the sharp confrontation between counter-revolutionary American imperialism and revolutionary China. Here the resolution fails and thus gives no true guiding line for party activity.

The American big bourgeoisie is more perspicacious. They know where the KEY lies. For instance, Paul H. Nitze, Navy Secretary, addressing the Naval Academy graduation, declared:

"The key political issue of your forty years will be the evolution of Communist China."

Forty years may be an exaggeration of the time element, but his location of the KEY is correct.

It is almost universally recognized that the ultimate target of U.S. imperialism in Southeast Asia is Red China. The war-hawks of the Johnson administration make no secret of it; Hanson Baldwin of the New York Times trumpets its necessity; Senator Morse from his vantage point in the Foreign Relations Committee has often revealed that this is the thinking of numerous congressmen. And Walter Lippman forcefully warns:

"We are now in sight of total war -- war to the bitter end with Red China."

This war in Vietnam is decisive for U.S. imperialism. Washington recognizes that Red China is the catalyst, the promoter and protector of colonial revolution; that "containment" of China is necessary to thwart the threat to the capitalist system from any escalation of world revolution. Washington realizes that the heart of their problem is to discover ways and means -- military means -- of defeating revolutionary war.

Their aim encompasses more than Vietnam. They know that the threat

stemming from the Red China catalyst extends to Africa and Latin America as well as Asia. As Cyrus Sulzberger, foreign affairs analyst of the New York Times, put it:

"The heart of the crisis is not truly in Vietnam. The quintessential problem is how to defeat revolutionary warfare. Elsewhere in Asia and Africa (and Latin America of course) we will continue to face the threat of this technique no matter what happens to the Vietnamese. That is inescapable."

The United States today is an empire of plunder international in its scope whose tentacles extend into every corner of the globe. As Trotsky wrote in his criticism of the Draft Program of the Communist International (in 1928!):

"...it is precisely the international strength of the United States and its unbridled expansion resulting from it that compels it to include powder magazines throughout the world among the foundations of its structure.... transforms United States capitalism into the basic counter-revolutionary force in the present epoch, ... and prepares the ground for a gigantic explosion of this already dominant and still increasing world imperialist power."

Today U.S. imperialism has more than 3000 military bases around the world planted there to keep those powder magazines damped down. The greatest concentration of those military bases is now on the perimeter of Communist China. Washington takes note of the fact that for years now Peking has been the Mecca for leaders of colonial revolt from Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Thus Vietnam is for U.S. imperialism the major testing ground of its ability to crush this ever spreading threat of colonial revolt aided and abetted from Peking.

This is well understood by Hanoi and Peking. North Vietnam's Premier, Pham Van Dong, expressed this in Quan Dio Nham Dan on June 2, 1964:

"With rudimentary equipment the population of the South is victoriously fighting U.S. imperialists armed with the most modern weapons. The experience of our compatriots in South Vietnam is attracting the attention of the world, especially of the peoples in South America. Our southern citizens are teaching other peoples that they can defeat the U.S. imperialists and can rely on their own strength to liberate themselves. The struggle of our southern patriots is as great a contribution to the Peoples Revolution in the world as was the battle of Dien Bien Phu."

General Giap, on July 19, wrote in the same paper:

"South Vietnam is the model for the national liberation movements in our time. If the special warfare that the U.S. imperialists are testing in South Vietnam is overcome, this means that it can be defeated everywhere in the world."

And from Hoc Tap in July 1964:

"The peoples' war is the greatest invention of military science in the present age. The peoples' war is absolutely superior to nuclear war."

This firm conviction in both Hanoi and Peking that their Peoples' war will be victorious -- that U.S. imperialism will in the end in Vietnam be displayed as a "paper tiger" -- accounts for their calm, careful and confident direction of their strategy in cooperation with their equally confident brothers in arms -- the National Liberation Front in South Vietnam. No panic among their peoples -- just a strong, steady determination to win.

I repeat -- the confrontation of the greatest counter-revolutionary force in the world -- United States imperialism -- and the strongest powerhouse of world revolution -- Communist China - contains the KEY on which hinges the next stage of world politics which will decide the fate not only of America but of the world.

Speaking of that fate, Huberman and Sweezy in their analysis of the situation in the April issue of Monthly Review, with keen Marxist foresight, concluded:

"The implication that there are some different kinds of weapons and training which would enable the United States to defeat revolutionary warfare is of course merely one of those myths which the American ruling class likes to interpose between itself and reality. The truth is that it cannot be done. All the myths are wearing thin, and the time is approaching when the would-be gods of Washington will find reality staring them in the face. In Vietnam they sense it even if they do not understand it. Hence the seeming paradox which is really no paradox at all that the richest and most heavily armed nation in world history is striking out like a desperate cornered rat.

"If it takes, according to Hanson Baldwin, from two hundred thousand to a million men to fight in little Vietnam, how many will it take when the rest of Asia, Africa and Latin America join in the insurrection against imperialist rule, as sooner or later they must.

"We leave it to the Hanson Baldwins to make their own grizzly calculations. In the meantime, one thing is as certain as anything can be in this

uncertain world: the road on which our leaders are now traveling in Vietnam leads not only, as Walter Lippman so rightly says, to bitter tears. Its destination is national exhaustion and ruin. The course of the Decline and Fall of the American Empire is now charted for all to see."

It is evident that in this vital matter of the struggle of U.S. imperialism in Vietnam, the majority leaders of our party have been tail-ending not only the Monthly Review but the National Guardian as well.

Why is it that they are so seemingly blind to the gigantic reality of this juncture in world affairs?

They fear to face the question of Red China.

Their position of political revolution in China as adopted at the 1963 convention of our party, their demand for the overthrow of the Chinese CP regime that made the revolution and is now marching from victory to victory in the building of a new socialist society, blocks their vision. If the spectre of their wrong position on China does not yet haunt them, it will in the momentous events ahead.

Just as American imperialism today is an international empire of plunder, so is the class struggle international in its scope. The AFL-CIO bureaucrats serve as international labor lieutenants of imperialism, working particularly in under-developed countries to corrupt in their own image the young labor leaders there. On the other hand, witness the militant young Negroes here, the vanguard of the U.S. working class struggle, groping for the revolutionary road. They identify with the world-wide revolutionary movement which radiates from its center in Peking. This international aspect that now dominates the class struggle touches a vital spot in all working class organizations and parties.

For a working class revolutionary party to survive as a viable force in this international struggle it must be a part of that mainstream of world revolution stemming from Peking.

All Trotskyist parties or tendencies claiming the Trotskyist banner are outside that mainstream principally because of their wrong position on Communist China. How many of them are there now? There are four in the United States, four or five in Britain, at least four in France and so on around the world with the once largest one in Ceylon now a shambles. And what of their world image? One sad facet of that image is cut by the running feud between Joe Hansen in World Outlook and Healy's boys in the SLL Newsletter, hurling verbal stones at each other, sometimes over such trivialities as how much lineage the Newsletter should carry on Vietnam. A rather repulsive spectacle, certainly not enhancing the Trotskyist image.

Just as the failure of the majority leadership of the SWP to recognize and deal with the international character of the class struggle is at least partially caused by their fear of facing the question of Communist China, so does their failure to view correctly the question of Progressive Labor.

The Progressive Labor Party is in the mainstream of world revolution -- it is the American expression of that reorientation and regroupment initiated by the Chinese.

That makes the question of PL one of overwhelming importance to us.

The attitude to PL of the PC Political Resolution, now before us, is that of a union bureaucrat who fears a threat to his job trust; or the fury of a petty bourgeois little business man whose competitors are luring away his customers.

Comrades who read for themselves the Progressive Labor Party convention documents -- the constitution and resolutions adopted -- can see that many of the charges made in the PC Resolution against PL are not the truth. Nowhere in these convention documents is Stalin mentioned, nor Foster; nor is there any reference to "counter-revolutionary" Trotskyism.

We know that some members of Progressive Labor consider Trotskyists to be counter-revolutionary because of the SWP position of overthrow of the Mao regime in China. (And certainly that SWP position is not a revolutionary one.)

We know some have a deplorable opinion of Stalin. But it must be admitted that they also have criticized Stalin in this fashion: "This is not to state that Stalin's errors were not serious and without severe consequences. A heavy price is being paid within the Soviet Union and in the international working class for errors contrary to socialist principles."

And as for the proscription of factions, charged by the PC Resolution, the PL plank in their constitution reads:

"Groups having discipline outside the party -- factions and cliques -- will not be tolerated. Persons engaged in such activities may be criticized, suspended, or expelled by a club or an appropriate higher body."

What is wrong with that? Would the SWP tolerate members having discipline outside the party?

The PC Resolution charges the PL Convention with failure to analyze the issues in the Sino-Soviet dispute.

What Milt Rosen had to say on this important question in his Main Report,

was right to the point -- what was most needed to be said in a party program:

"We have a large stake in the outcome of the ideological battle in the international movement. Obviously the opportunist position of the Soviet leaders, and other "leaders" of other movements, has been a serious setback to revolution all over the world. It is true that Marxism-Leninism is triumphing over revisionism, but look how far ahead the working class of the world would be if the whole movement were united around the revolutionary line. We can see that the betrayal of revolutionary principles has been an enormous drawback to the development of revolutionary activity in our country. What a catastrophe it would have been if the entire, or most, of the international movement had succumbed to revisionism! Would this not make it more difficult for the working class of our country to move ahead? The ideological defeat of revolutionary socialism, by a combination of internal contradictions and external forces, would be the greatest victory for the U.S. ruling class.

"One could easily imagine the difference in the Vietnamese situation if the Soviet Union were playing a revolutionary role. United States imperialism would never dare to be so cocky."

Does not this hit at the real heart of the situation -- point directly to what the Sino-Soviet dispute is all about? And Why?

In addition Rosen's emphasis on the overwhelming importance of ideological struggle could well be heeded by the SWP majority:

"To develop our theory and activity further we need the sharpest constructive debate in our party around all of our ideas and work. Ideological struggle, debate, and examination is the life-blood of our party. Without it we cannot enrich our thinking or enhance our practice. Without this debate we would quickly become a sterile sect."

In ideological struggle "Criticism and Self-criticism" plays a significant part. But the PC Resolution dismisses it as "Stalinist garbage", thus revealing the author's ignorance on two counts. 1. That criticism and self-criticism was a Bolshevik concept -- a Leninist concept. True, it was perverted by Stalin. But, 2. it has now been restored to its original purpose by the Mao regime in China and by the Cubans; that purpose being the elimination of bourgeois ideology and the instillation of Socialist ideology.

A political party must be judged by its program. The program adopted by the Progressive Labor Party at its recent convention is, for the most part, good Marxist thinking. And it is alive with revolutionary spirit.

Many accusations have been hurled at PL about the undesirable quality of its members. No doubt a number of undesirable characters have been

attracted to it. In its young days the SWP had its share of such elements. It has been reported that 75% to 90% of PL's members are under thirty years of age. A very young movement. Would it not be inevitable that such a young movement would make mistakes? On this score the modesty of PL's leaders is commendable. They are not bragging that they know all the answers. They admit making mistakes -- even mistakes of "adventurism." But they express determination to learn from the mistakes. In this respect the SWP could be of great assistance.

That PL is learning from their experiences is evident to any one who has followed the development of their publications. Their New York weekly Challenge has become a real workers' paper. It has some talented journalists. Particularly outstanding are two women writers, Selma Sparks - a Negro dynamo - and Lisa Armand. Challenge is well geared to its chosen audience in Harlem and the Lower East Side, helping PL to build a firm base there.

The Progressive Labor Party is not such an insignificant "splitlet" (!) as the PC Resolution tries to make out. It is widely recognized as a viable, fast-growing party of the "New Left." PL speakers have been chosen to represent that "New Left" in radio and TV programs such as the Susskind TV program. Magazines and newspapers have singled them out for lengthy coverage in their "New Left" stories. Take for instance, the Newsweek story on May 24, "New Look on the Left."

Under the heading "The Splinters" it gives us two lines along with others as follows: "The remains of the Trotskyites are divided between the Socialist Workers Party and a race-minded outfit called Workers World..." YSA is not mentioned. In contrast Progressive Labor is given a special heading, two columns of space including the photograph of four leaders of the party. It calls PL "audacious young revolutionaries," further declaring "they are young, often gifted, and fully committed to their own revolution."

Recently the California Senate Fact-finding subcommittee on Un-American activities published a report in which it stated:

"Much of the 'fiery nature' and 'advocacy of permanent revolution' of the Socialist Workers Party in the past 'has been appropriated by the Progressive Labor Party, with its militant adherence to the Peking-Castro line."

It further declared: "It is already apparent that the new Progressive Labor Party is not only the most militant and aggressive Communist organization in this country, but that it is drawing younger members of the CPUSA out of the ranks, and attracting large numbers of radical youth from all parts of the country." (Published in the L.A. Times, June 20, 1965.)

Whatever one may think of this bourgeois coverage, one thing is clear:

PL has made a big impact which the SWP cannot afford to belittle or ignore, as it has been doing.

The PC Political Resolution states on page 19: "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, (etc.)."

This is a correct attitude. But this is not being translated into life by the majority leadership in one important case.

The Progressive Labor Party now has sixty members under indictment for militant actions in the class struggle, including their activities against the Vietnam war and their brave efforts against police terror in Harlem.

Up to now our majority leaders have not lifted a finger in defense of these class war victims.

All these facts stated above make it imperative that the SWP adopt a rational, revolutionary attitude of friendly collaboration to the Progressive Labor Party. For if our majority leadership continues to treat this movement in the shabby, shameful fashion it has been doing, this will, in the long run, discredit the SWP and in the end isolate us from the Negro struggle here and from the mainstream of world revolution all over the world.

There are signs that the majority leadership is becoming uneasy about their isolated position. The after-thought added to the PC Political Resolution -- the discussion on the anti-war movement -- might suggest that. This in conjunction with Warde's article in the July 12 Militant, "The Evolution of the Monthly Review," leads one to hope that the wrong attitude toward the regroupment process initiated by Peking, is getting some attention.

However, this article of Warde's is significant also for what it omits: any mention of Huberman and Sweezy's position of unqualified support for the Mao regime in China. That is support not limited by the word "critical." In view of the majority's bitter hostility to our pro-Chinese tendency this makes one wonder. (We, of course, would welcome such good "Maoists" in the party.) In addition, Warde praises the editorial in the June issue of Monthly Review for the statement as Warde quotes it:

"We should be as conscious as the Guatemalan guerrillas of belonging to an immense revolutionary movement which embraces the overwhelming majority of mankind," without any intimation of the fact that this "immense revolutionary movement" includes Red China -- in fact is headed by the Mao regime of Red China. Also no mention is made of the fact that the Guatemalan guerrilla fighters identify with the Mao regime and study Peking Review

in their mountain hideouts; and that they condemn neutrality in the Sino-Soviet dispute.

Nevertheless we welcome this Warde article as a step in the right direction. It is marred by a certain smugness of approach (Warde's reference to his own dreary article in the Summer 1963 ISR), which instantly reminded me of a letter to Arne Swabek from a young comrade in Cambridge (not a member of the pro-Chinese tendency) which included this remark:

"Warde's articles on China are disgustingly factional, narrow minded, ignorant and smug. Yours are not."

Of course this "bid" to the Monthly Review is a "safe" one. Huberman and Sweezy have no political organization, their independent status as revolutionary Marxist publishers has a valuable place in the revolutionary movement, not only in the United States but abroad and particularly in Latin America.

In an attempt to advance onto the road that leads to that "immense revolutionary movement which embraces the overwhelming majority of mankind" our majority leadership will carry an enormous handicap in their present position of overthrow of the Mao regime in China. The record they have made, not only in the past, but in the last six months on the question of revolutionary China is so non-revolutionary in its attitude that if it continues along its present line it is in danger of being looked upon in some quarters as a fifth column of American imperialism in the revolutionary movement.

In the making of this record the SWP majority has followed the lead of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International. The position on China was most crassly expressed in the "Manifesto of the 4th International" first published here in the Militant of March 2nd, and again in the April 19 issue which was distributed at the April 17 March on Washington.

This "Manifesto" contains several errors but the following statement sets the tone and reveals the majority's venom against China:

"The government of the People's Republic of China appears at the moment to be most concerned about pinning on Moscow the blame for a possible defeat of the revolution in Vietnam. But unless Peking acts its course can be interpreted as 'keeping hands off' while the Pentagon goes ahead. The shouting at Moscow then would look like nothing but phrasemongering designed to cover up betrayal."

This is a swinish canard, It is a vicious attack on a workers state under attack by American imperialism.

The majority comrades have in the past declared that they would always defend Communist China from imperialist attack, but now that this is a reality -- not an abstract question, what are they doing? Just throwing bricks as usual.

Or have they joined the ranks of the panic stricken who are hysterically wailing: "Our papers talk of sweeping all China with nuclear bombs and making radioactive waste. Do the Chinese understand all this?"

A Chinese spokesman answers:

"The Chinese understand; they are not kept ignorant. They know that U.S. imperialism which Aidit of Indonesia calls the 'World Devil' is the strongest destructive power the world has ever seen with hundreds of bases set up against China in Japan, South Korea, Okinawa and around Thailand and India with missiles trained on China's cities. They know that U.S. submarines cruise the continental shelf with 1,800-mile range Polaris missiles taking positions to lob nuclear fire over China and bragging about it.

"The Chinese know other things too and they do not think it pays to get hysterical. 'Fear is a poor counsellor' they say. I postpone the question of what happens if the greatest destructive power in history meets the greatest collective calmly reasoning manpower in history."

The calm confidence of the Chinese leaders in the mighty revolutionary power of the aroused masses to defeat U.S. imperialism is evidently not shared by the authors of the "Manifesto" and their allies, the SWP majority leadership. Or is it because of their overweening eagerness to smear China that leads them to abandon a cardinal principle -- the duty of a revolutionary to solidarize with a socialist state under attack?

The "Manifesto" displays crass stupidity in the accusation of China's willingness to risk defeat of the Vietnam revolution -- for the sake of scoring a point over Moscow -- when this would place U.S. imperialism securely on their own doorstep!

As for the blatency of their "shouting at Moscow" expression -- more later.

The "Manifesto" accuses China of being "apathetic" about giving Vietnam material support. The evidence of China's massive support to Vietnam is now so easily available that it seems redundant to record it here. But since the majority comrades here and abroad are persisting in this nasty accusation, it is necessary to do so.

To begin with, at the November 1964 Hanoi International Conference

for Solidarity with Vietnam, Anna Louise Strong interviewed the NLF delegates. They told her:

"The South does not need either weapons nor manpower from the North. To bring weapons from the North is difficult and dangerous. It is easier to capture them from the Americans who have very modern weapons."

On July 18, 1965, the Foreign Ministry of China stated:

"The Chinese people have always regarded the struggle of the Vietnamese people as their own struggle and their support for the Vietnamese people as their sacred internationalist duty. The Chinese people unconditionally support the Vietnamese people.... To the best of our capacity we have provided the Vietnamese people with the assistance they need, and we will go on doing so...."

From the May 8 issue of Anna Louise Strong's Letter from China :

"China makes clear that she already gives help to Vietnam.... China makes no secret that she gives such help, but for reasons of mutual security she does not publicize what she gives or how much.

"This silence as to the extent and type of China's aid to Vietnam has permitted the rise of an unprecedented flood of slander in the West, through whispering campaigns of embassies that know better and affecting even progressive writers who should be more careful of what they accept. These are the fantastic inventions of evil minds."

China's aid to the NLF is undoubtedly channeled through Hanoi.

On April 25, 1965, Premier Pham Van Dong (DVR) openly thanked China for "the most powerful, most resolute and most effective assistance."

On July 13, 1965, a visiting delegation from Hanoi spoke at a banquet in Peking of "the socialist rear especially our closest neighbor China, which is giving our people the most resolute, most powerful and most effective support."

Leopoldo Aragon of the Mexican paper El Dia, in Washington, wrote:

"Light, semi-heavy and semi-light weapons destined for the North Vietnam army and the NLF guerrillas are being supplied by China in growing numbers." (National Guardian)

Aragon also reported in detail large support from the USSR now. China's "shouting at Moscow" seems to be paying off!

Even the hint that the NLF is in danger of defeat is unworthy of a revolutionist. For all reports even by the biased bourgeois press admit that is not the case. The authors of the "Manifesto" should listen to Castro on this score.

Castro said: that the "powerful weapons and economic resources" of the imperialists cannot defeat revolutionary movements; to do this they would need to "exterminate the peoples of two-thirds of the world."

Little Vietnam is demonstrating the oft repeated theory of Mao Tse-tung: it is men not weapons that decide the outcome of revolutionary war.

Then there is the demand of the "Manifesto" authors for "unity", a joint declaration by Peking and Moscow. Don't they know that Peking has made this demand many times? One instance: This March 1 statement, "People of all countries of the socialist camp, people of Asia, Africa and Latin America and all peoples of the world who oppose U.S. imperialism; Unite and take all possible effective measures to support the just struggle of the Vietnamese people with concrete actions..." (Peking Review)

In the shouting at China to stop its "shouting" about revisionism and "substituting" byzantine disputes for a united front, one thing should be remembered:

One thing might be worse than disunity in the socialist camp; that would be unity of the socialist camp against the world revolution, the unity the Kremlin is striving for.

The "Manifesto" did report one important item that the Militant completely ignored: the student demonstration before the U.S. embassy in Moscow. It quotes the cry of the students at the Kremlin authorities: "Traitors! You have sold out to the imperialists!" No mention was made, of course, of the fact that Peking came out with an even stronger condemnation with the same accusation.

Contrast the silence of the Militant on this significant event with the superbly worded protest by Lisa Armand in PL's Challenge :

"The tree of revisionism bears strange and bitter fruit. Moscow's current crop of 'creative Marxists' has finally succeeded in producing something 'genuinely new.'

"On the pavements of Moscow, capital of the first and long time best-loved land of socialism, are the blood stains of young Asian, African, Latin American and Russian students who came with banners flying and the blazing anthem of the world's oppressed on their lips to demonstrate against

the savage and wanton bombing of the Vietnamese people by the most depraved imperialism the world has ever known.

"The United States Embassy, symbol of that imperialism was the justified target of their hatred and wrath. For some of the demonstrating students it was their blood brothers, sisters and parents who were being murdered in Vietnam. It was their proletarian international duty to express their opposition to the recently stepped-up U.S. jungle-law bombings and to hurl defiance at the U.S. imperialists -- as the courageous embattled people of Vietnam are doing themselves.

"But so responsive has the Soviet government become to Washington's least demand, and so concerned for bourgeois 'protocol' that it hastened to secure the US Embassy with hundreds of regular police, mounted police and even, to its everlasting shame, men of the Soviet Red Army. And on the streets of revolutionary Moscow barricades appeared -- a 200-yard metal barrier reinforced by mammoth water tank trucks equipped with hoses, linked bumper to bumper and manned by Soviet police -- not to protect the anti-imperialist students but the Embassy of U.S. imperialism."

There is another aspect of the question of China's aid to Vietnam, which demands attention: correct timing and strategy. There is a time for talking and a time for action.

What if China had immediately jumped in with men and arms at the first attack on North Vietnam as the "Manifesto" seemingly demanded? This would have destroyed the extremely important psychological effect produced on world opinion of the picture of the mightiest military power in the world wantonly bombing in such depraved fashion relatively helpless tiny Vietnam.

A graphic picture of how "arrogantly the 'World Devil' sows death on the Earth!"

Would the casualties -- the atrocities -- have been less because of such an early intervention? The answer is self-evident -- they would have been vastly more.

China is responsible for the lives of hundreds of millions of people. She has lived up to that responsibility. China's correct policy has been carried out with flexibility and consummate skill. These last six months have been a time for caution and patience, not recklessness; a time for preparation for a long hard struggle, not a time to broadcast to the enemy what help and how much they give to Vietnam. This would only encourage

the U.S. bandits to do what they have been itching to do -- bomb China's nuclear installations.

The freedom fighters in Vietnam are conscious of that also. They, like the oppressed of other continents, have hailed China's atomic development as a victory for the revolutionary peoples of the world.

It would seem that in the face of all the evidence now available that the "Manifesto" author and the SWP majority would now cease their imprecations against China on this matter of aid to Vietnam. Not so. The latest statement in World Outlook damning China is even more brazen and brutish. This on July 9:

"The Fourth International calls the attention of the workers and revolutionary militants in all countries to the immeasurably grave consequences that can result from this shameful passivity or insufficient reaction of the workers states and the masses of workers." (emphasis in the original)

The workers of Japan, North Korea, of Indonesia, of Cuba, of Australia, of New Zealand as well of those of China -- and the Chinese regime itself, has shown anything but passivity in their gigantic demonstrations.

World Outlook states further:

"The Soviet and Chinese replies to the escalation of American aggression in Southeast Asia amount to very little....

"...as for the People's Republic of China, despite the most firm verbal declarations, it too in reality has granted only negligible aid to the heroic struggle of the Vietnamese people....

"The apologists of the two bureaucracies offer all kinds of arguments and reasons to justify this scandalous passivity in the face of the ever-mounting aggression of American imperialism. (emphasis added)

"...it is not easy to see how the partisans can ever drive out the imperialist forces from some of the beachheads covered by the powerful Seventh Fleet, ... the people of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam are paying ... with heavier and heavier sacrifices, while at the same time a most dangerous precedent has been set -- that of permitting imperialism to attack the territory of a workers state, a state that is part of the anti-capitalist camp, with impunity. (emphasis added)

"In general the only way to stop American imperialism ... is ... with deeds. The only thing that this imperialist power respects is force. Political argument, the irritation (sic) of public opinion, trouble with its allies, Moscow's and Peking's verbal protests - all these are tenth-rate factors

that scarcely influence and most certainly will not stop it." (emphasis added)

So here you have it: no confidence in the success of the revolutionary fighters of Southeast Asia. No confidence in revolutionary politics to influence decisively the outcome of the Vietnam struggle; any attempt to arouse public opinion is only "tenth-rate" (!) stuff.

Then these arm chair generals presume to tell the military leaders of Red China -- what military strategy they should pursue to defeat U.S. imperialism.

Who do these Comrades sitting in Paris think they are that they are competent to dictate to Communist China's military leaders -- those Red generals who fought a revolutionary war for twenty-two years to a successful conquest against the greatest odds -- generals like Chu Teh whom Harold Isaacs (no friend of the Chinese CP!) called "one of the most remarkable military leaders in all history" -- dictate what strategy they should pursue in Southeast Asia?

What would the heroic fighters of the NLF in the South, General Giap's troops in the North, think if they should read the scurrilous attack on their comrades in arms in China?

It is likely they would reply with justified indignation:

"If you want to help us, tell your people the truth about China and the truth about the Mao regime in China and the Ho Chi Minh regime in the DVR. Stop this slander that you have been spewing forth for years against our leaders and comrades! We do not need your advice on how to conduct our war."

They know as China knows, that this war is not for their liberation alone, that it is crucial for the liberation struggles everywhere. They know as China knows that the struggle will be long and hard -- they are prepared for that. They know -- and the United Secretariat and SWP leadership should remember -- that they drove out of their country a half million strong French army and they are confident that the U.S. will fare no better.

Chen Yi, Foreign Minister of China -- and one of the great generals in China's war of liberation -- told a foreign correspondent:

"America's policy is utterly wrong and therefore it will continue to fail. Let them send in two million men; the more troops the bigger the defeat."

Chen Yi means it. China's leaders are confident that sucking more and more legions of counter-revolution into the great revolutionary maw of Southeast Asia will end with a decisive defeat for this "World Devil" of U.S.

imperialism, a defeat that will spur on the revolutionary masses not only in Asia but in Africa and Latin America as well.

They are winning now. Here is testimony to that.

The Wall Street Journal July 15: "The Viet Cong are rapidly gobbling up huge chunks of South Vietnam. In short they are winning the war."

U. S. News and World Report, July 26: "U. S. military bases around the world have been 'cannibalized' of weapons and equipment to meet the rising needs of servicemen in Vietnam.... Experts voice the fear of American officers in Vietnam of the possibility of the Reds taking over large chunks of the puppet army. That fear, privately and not officially expressed is becoming widespread."

UPI July 12: Experts predict that "despite the 2.7 million Americans in uniform around the world a manpower shortage might develop. Since the U. S. is not winning the experts deduce defeat."

L. A. Times Jack Foisie: "Escalation now of any size might be too little and too late."

Contrast the view of the United Secretariat and SWP leaders of the Vietnam situation with that of Huberman and Sweezy quoted above. It will be seen that the view of the former is not the revolutionary one. Again in their eagerness to attempt to discredit Communist China, they lose the revolutionary perspective.

The struggle in Southeast Asia -- revolutionary versus counter-revolutionary war -- is one in which all working class parties and organizations are being tested. Our SWP leadership is being tested as it never before has been. Its present line of brickbats for China instead of revolutionary proletarian solidarity -- their line of overthrow of the revolutionary Chinese regime which heads this revolutionary war, is the road to ashes in the bottom of the barrel of history.

Perhaps the most telling evidence of the deterioration of revolutionary thought in the SWP majority leadership is the editorial in the July 26 issue of The Militant entitled, "Peking's Opportunism."

The hastiness of Peking's recognition of the Boumedienne regime in Algeria might be questioned although this is a state matter and the advantage of having representation on the spot in such a situation is certainly advantageous.

Concerning the charge of Peking's indifference to the "threat" to the Algerian revolution posed by the right wing militarists" I suggest that note

be taken of the advice given by Progressive Labor Party's reporter, Lisa Armand, who wrote from personal observation: "About the changeover in Algeria it is wise to take a long hard deep look before you leap!"

Serious indeed is the scurrilous attack on China in the paragraph: "Apparently more important to Peking than the threat to the Algerian revolution posed by the right-wing militarists, was the Afro-Asian Conference scheduled for Algiers, which China intended to use as a propaganda platform in its polemic with Moscow."

This contemptuous attitude to the Afro-Asian Conference reveals the editorial author's ignorance of the great importance to the colonial and neo-colonial countries of this gathering.

The imperialists are not so blind. "From the United Nations headquarters Reuters reported that the UN General Assembly, due to open in September, might be postponed because of the postponement of the Afro-Asian Conference, since many nations prefer to wait for the decisions of the Conference.

When the first Afro-Asian Conference met in Bandung in 1955, nearly all Africa was under direct colonial rule. In the following ten years, however, no less than 35 Asian and African nations have achieved independence. Bandung has been an inspiration and a force in the world. That Afro-Asian Conference has been a spearhead against imperialism. The imperialists hate the Bandung development and did not conceal their glee when it had to be postponed, considering it a "fiasco" for China. They recognize the fact that China's voice is the clearest and strongest source of anti-imperialist thought today. With China's millions included the Afro-Asian Conference represents more people than the United Nations.

But the most serious breach of Marxist principles is contained in the paragraph of the editorial:

"... if one recalls that China has been engaged in a frenetic public polemic against the Soviet Union for years, and that it was precisely in order to utilize the Bandung Conference in Algiers as a platform for attacking the Kremlin that Peking rushed to recognize Col. Boumedienne."

This whole paragraph is the cheapest sort of distortion and presumption of reading Peking's mind.

But "frenetic public polemic" !

This phrase, "frenetic public polemic" reveals not merely ignorance, a repulsive attitude to the Sino-Soviet dispute, but a light minded and contemptible attitude to theory, to Marxist ideology.

Or is this editorial writer too abysmally ignorant of revolutionary Marxist thought that he does not know of the vital importance to the world revolutionary movement of the fight the Chinese are making for their revolutionary line against the reformism of the Kremlin?

The Chinese CP -- and PLM with them! -- do not view ideology solightly.

Anna Louise Strong tells of when in 1963 she expressed to a Chinese government leader her lack of concern about the ideological differences in the Sino-Soviet dispute, but said:

"If Krushchev had any regard for the strength of the Socialist Camp he would pour money and machines and experts into China. . . . But he tries to ruin you. And injures the Socialist Camp thereby, I am much upset by such an action by a Communist."

"My friend replied, almost sternly: 'We do not thus regard it. An atomic setback can be relatively soon overcome. A mistaken 'Line' could curse our children's children. The Second International disintegrated because of a mistaken line, with grave results for the world. The results would be wider now.'"

This is the rank the Chinese give to ideology. This is the reason they do not heed the voices of those criticizing them for "the substitution of 'byzantine' disputes for a united front action."

Those who sneer at this firm adherence of China to revolutionary ideology do not understand that China subordinates "national interests" to questions of basic theory. In this the final goal is an attempt to chart Man's way.

What can one think of this contempt for ideology so blatantly displayed in this Militant editorial? The only conclusion one can draw is that the author is not a revolutionist. But what of our Political Committee? Did they or did they not approve this editorial?

If it was published with their approval the lack of revolutionary content in the PC Draft Political Resolution is explained. This non-revolutionary spirit is a malaise that goes deep.

* * *

CHINA!

It was startling to read in Comrade Breitman's Militant article (March 22, 1965) his urging young comrades to read Felix Greene's A Curtain of Ignorance. Breitman told them:

"What it does is compare the facts about China with what the American press has been writing about China for the past 15 years. The result is devastating." (emphasis added)

His advice to the youth was good and he was correct in saying the result is devastating.

But did Breitman realize what he was saying? If he would make a like comparison with Greene's books and lectures concerning the facts about China and what the SWP press has been writing about China the last 25 years, the result would be no less devastating -- to the SWP. Our press has been no less guilty of maintaining that Curtain of Ignorance about China than the American capitalist press. In some important respects, even more so, for there have been many honest bourgeois writers other than Greene who have given much of the facts about China and its CCP leadership.

I think it would be most salutary for the majority leadership of the SWP to make just such a comparison. I predict that it would have for them many moments of painful discomfort.

In my own such research on the subject I found the SWP record an incredible piece of history, devastating to the SWP. It convinced me without a shadow of doubt in my mind that at least 80% of what I learned in the SWP about the Third Chinese Revolution is not the truth.

Not that I believe that anyone deliberately falsified history. No matter who wrote the material, this was the thinking of the whole party until 1959 when the pro-Chinese tendency began to probe for the truth after the arise of the Communes.

The majority leadership clings to and promulgates the old fictions, but now adds another one -- that they have from the first defended the Third Chinese Revolution. It is a fact of public record that the truth is otherwise. The proof of it lies in our own publications, particularly in the years 1946 to 1950 when we vilified, at times even more vilely than the bourgeois press, the CCP and the character of its revolution as "A military bureaucratic shift of political power -- and not a social revolution. . . . The new rules of China are preserving fundamentally the same, rotten, social and economic foundation as Chiang Kai-shek's regime did." (The Militant, June 13, 1949)

For six years after the CCP won power we did not deign to recognize Red China as a workers state. And then how grudgingly it was done! The 1955 resolution, "The Third Chinese Revolution and Its Aftermath" is an utterly incredible document in the light of history. Yet it was not repudiated, but reaffirmed in the resolution on China adopted at our 1963 convention.

This record, I repeat, is a public record, open to verification by anyone who investigates.

How can a revolutionary party grow and prosper with this black record on its banner? The least the majority could do is to tell publicly the facts about China today. Instead China's great advancement is ignored -- unless there seems an opportunity in some news item to throw some guttersniping at China.

Here are some of these facts that need to be acknowledged: The many wrong analyses made of the Communes and the Great Leap Forward, condemning them as cruel adventurism and a failure with dire consequences for the country.

I offer here the testimony of a few competent observers on these points:

Sir Herbert Read, an authority on Asiatic questions in Eastern Horizon wrote that the well being of the peasants deserved to receive more attention than production statistics. But if the statistics are insisted upon, "it can be demonstrated that the Chinese peasants' standard of living has increased fourfold since the Liberation."

Anna Louise Strong: "The Big Leap and the Communes with it broke the old ways of farming forever. A new type of peasant awoke to life, conscious of collective power.

"The 'Big Leap' that began in 1958 transformed China. . . . Nobody who lived through this period 'Big Leap' forgets it. The greatest thing we learned was the power that lies in the Chinese people."

How China's officials regard the "Great Leap":

"The Big Leap is a process and we are in it still. It is a way of advancing by great drives of the people. After each drive there may be pauses for adjustment and filling in, but we think that, taken over ten, twenty of thirty years, China's progress will certainly be considered a 'Big Leap' perhaps the biggest leap the world has known."

Charles Bettelheim, professor of economics at the Sorbonne, Paris, in Monthly Review June 1965:

"self reliance has become. . . particularly important since the withdrawal of Soviet aid in 1960, because from that time on China has been obliged to develop its economy without outside assistance of any kind, technical, financial or commercial. China has not only done so, it has even

repaid and at an increasing rate loans received in previous years. It is thus the first country which, starting from such a low level of economic development has continued to develop by its own powers and has been able in addition to repay its previous obligations."

Joan Robinson, eminent British economist: "I think it is a more remarkable achievement than any Great Leap to have come through this period of severe shortages without inflation."

The three years, after the withdrawal of Soviet aid and the infliction of unprecedented natural calamities at the same time, subjected China to terrific hardships and handicaps. Then how was it possible for China to weather these conditions and at the same time defeat inflation, and without large public debt to move ahead constantly? It should give our majority some food for thought.

Food for thought also is Professor Bettelheim's further observations as follows:

"...two points ... appear to me to be particularly significant, namely the great importance placed on the initiative of the masses and the leading role played by ideology." (in China)

"The Chinese are not counting on material incentives to bring about innovations and technical improvements or to stimulate rapid economic progress... For these things they rely chiefly on political consciousness. This is a very important element in the basic approach of the Chinese Communist Party and one that has far-reaching implications... It implies a constant struggle against bureaucracy... It is only under these conditions that the masses can really arrive at a socialist ideology."

Like a tree ideology is known by its fruit. The fruit of the tree of Chinese Communist Party ideology, as Bettelheim describes it, is rich and wholly desirable.

"...what the Chinese are trying to do is not only to develop their productive forces, but at the same time, to create a new man. For that is one of the profound objectives of a socialist revolution.

"...I believe another thing is certain:... judging from the high degree of organization and the style of family life, behavior of a socialist type is being born... There are signs of a profound evolution in this direction.

"... The effort being made to integrate the activity of each individual into a collective creative endeavor... gives to everyday life and especially to work

a significance that goes beyond individual limits. Indeed, in the end it gives to work a new meaning... an activity that has a meaning in itself and subjectively enriches the individualand, above all, to prevent consumption from becoming the almost exclusive end of human activity.

"If China succeeds in developing an industrial society in which man, while seeking a better life, does not see his fundamental activity as consumption, but as creation, the Chinese revolution will have given all countries a perspective of development far more enriching than that offered by the American way of life. I have the impression that China has made a good start along this road." (emphasis added)

From my own constant and careful study of developments in China, I believe Bettelheim's conclusions are correct.

This lends credence to the predictions of those eminent British historians, Arnold Toynbee and C. Northcote Parkinson. Parkinson declares:

"No factor in the modern world -- not even automation -- is as vital as the change taking place in the relationships of East and West. The future historian writing about the twentieth century will entitle his volume The Resurgence of Asia and he will be right. Ours is essentially the period during which leadership has begun to pass from the West.

"How can we be certain of this? First, because it is what we should expect. Second, because the renaissance of Asia has already begun. Third, because the momentum of the West is slackening."

The renaissance of Asia. This means China, now building a new society -- and a new man, on a past which produced the richest and most varied civilization in the world.

August 13, 1965

THE KIRK RECORD AND THE MAJORITY RECORD
ON THE NEGRO STRUGGLE

(excerpts - with improvements - from a letter to a comrade)

by Frank Powers

Dear Comrade,

You propose that we support Black Nationalism, but this is not the issue in dispute. What is in dispute is fundamental principles and not merely questions of tactical orientation.

Breitman recently defined the term "Black Nationalism" as follows: "...a tendency of Negroes to unite as a group, as a people, in organizations that are Negro-led, Negro-controlled and sometimes all-black in order to fight for their freedom." This is a simple organizational and tactical proposition, and except where class lines are obviously crossed, there should be no question of support. (I don't believe anybody in the party endorsed Afro-Americans for Goldwater.) The real disagreement is over our programmatic and theoretical approach to such so-called "nationalist movements" and to the Civil Rights movement. To discuss tactics while there are basic differences in principle violates one of the primary rules of Marxist discussion.

We are most pleased to see you take up the Negro question seriously. The entire Party has suffered for years, I believe, as a result of taking a too light-minded attitude toward the theoretical and programmatic side of the question. Some comrades, for instance, want to accept Nationalism and ignore Separatism. There would be some merit in such an approach were it not for the fact that the whole foundation of the S.W.P. Negro resolution in 1963, as well as the oft-reprinted discussion on the subject with the Old Man, revolve around separatism as a revolutionary perspective. On the other hand, the contention that the discussion of the Negro question at the 1963 convention was diversion from the Chinese question overlooks and under-estimates the deep and pervading crisis the Party has been in - particularly since the S.W.P. capitulation to the reformist King in 1957 - as a result of a false program and orientation towards a central question of the American Revolution.

The Majority Distorts the Issues

There was, indeed a real diversion carried out by the majority in the Negro discussion in 1963: The majority presentation was designed to demagogically divert the membership in general, and the Negro comrades in particular from the obvious fact that Party theory and application on

the Negro struggle had been barren for years. More specifically, the discussion was designed to prevent the comrades from seriously considering the position presented by the Kirk tendency: the one consistent theoretical and tactical approach within the S.W.P. that had stood the test of history and proven valid through the last two decades of Party fiasco.

The tactic of the majority was simple. By bureaucratically limiting the time of the minority and devoting the bulk of their own time at the convention to an open, bald-faced, lying distortion of our viewpoint, Breitman, et al, sought to make us responsible for their failures. The maneuver was reminiscent of the Stalinist left turn, when Stalin took over the criticisms levied against his regime by the left opposition and then beat them with a distorted ultra-leftish interpretation of the Bolshevik-Leninist's program. Thus Breitman and the majority faced by the hostility of the Negro comrades, (see Vernon's attack on the majority: "Why White Radicals,-etc".) decided to switch from their capitulation to the reformist wing of the integration movement (King), to the reactionary wing of the nationalist movement (Elija Mohammed). We, who had consistently demanded of the Party a revolutionary orientation toward the integration movement, were then held responsible for the Party's reformist approach to that movement!

It would be well if you read over some of the theoretical questions in dispute and some of the arguments over tactics and orientation. If you do so, you will notice that the Kirk tendency was criticized for seeing the major impetus of the Negro movement as emanating from the Negroes themselves: that we were called adventuristic for suggesting self-defense and even armed offensive methods as against King's exclusive concern for non-violence; were considered sectarian for not eulogizing King's pacifism; were called ultra-left for opposing the troops slogan - now Rev. King's major demand. You would find it particularly informative to compare the original draft of the 1957 Resolution (since edited and now forgotten) with the Kirk Resolution for the same convention. You would discover, I am sure, that for a whole period the majority has attacked us for orienting towards the left wing of the Negro struggle for integration and towards a developing left wing in the Civil Rights movement.

As regards what is called the "Nationalist" movement, we have been concerned for some time with the Socialist-Internationalist left wing of this movement: a section with which the S.W.P. majority has had difficulty coexisting. (The term Nationalist, although generally accepted, provides a rather distorted view of the most class conscious wing of the movement which is really "Internationalist.")

The difference in our orientation was in great part expressed in the formation of the Freedom Now Party. It was Kirk, as

you may know, who originally broached this idea to Worthy. Worthy's concept at the time of the convention, as was Kirk's, was quite different from that of the Party majority. Worthy and Kirk were oriented towards a split in the Muslims and an inevitable radicalization therefrom, combined with a unification of the Socialist intellectuals among the Negroes in the Nationalist movement. The Freedom Now Party was in an internal conflict from its beginnings after the convention in 1963 because the S.W.P. (in line with the convention resolution) was oriented towards the Black Muslims and towards a fictitious homogeneous black mass which never existed - and never will. Under such circumstances, Worthy's final disaffection with FNP was inevitable.

Nationalism was not exactly new to the N.O. at the 1963 convention. They had been in contact with Nationalists for years - with disastrous results. An entire Party orientation towards Cuban defense collapsed. The most important achievements of our work, our collaboration with the Monroe Movement, the Afro-American supporters of Cuba, the tie-ins developed with the internationalist "nationalists," etc. all went down the drain without any explanation.

The real explanation for this disaster undoubtedly grows in the same soil as the similar failure on the CAMD. The committee to defend the Monroe victims constituted a central activity of the Party for two years and became a principle issue at the 1963 convention. Yet the Committee was split at the beginning by the Nationalists, the defendants eventually dropped from CAMD even in the face of severe prosecution, and even our closest collaborators wound up in the arms of political opponent organizations. Monroe became another experience in disaster.

Harlem, a center of activity - and often a center of support - for the SWP, suddenly became out of bounds when another Nationalist group - the Muslims - literally drove us out. One might blame this on bad luck or fate, were it not for the fact that Progressive Labor has had little difficulty in carrying out propaganda and recruiting in Harlem and many Negroes contacted through regroupment and CAMD work by the S.W.P. have found their way to P.L.M.

Results have been no less disastrous within the Party. An entire Negro cadre of socialists has been wiped out since 1948. (To my knowledge, only two remain from that period.) The simple fact is that socialists and intellectuals with a black skin have not found it possible to live either in or with the SWP for any length of time, for the Party alternated between ignoring the Negro struggle and making a mystique of it.

Vernon's attack upon the Party in 1963 was the logical consequence of unexplained failures on the part of the majority. In words reminiscent of Kirk's attack in 1957, Vernon accused the majority of chauvanism, paternalism,

ignorance and general capitulation to capitalism. The majority, unmoved by Kirk's previous assault, were shaken down to their paternalistic souls and they reacted. Unable to find anything wrong in their own policies, they blamed the white rank and file of the Party! They left the past failures of the leadership unexplained, and without any theoretical reconsideration, dove headlong for the Black Muslims and declared the living Negro struggle henceforth out of bounds for white comrades! Thus, the majority, carefully shifted the target from those responsible for the Party's reformist line - the N.O. - to those of us who wanted to revue the past, determine the responsibility and source of errors, and get the Party to account theoretically for its shabby role.

The discussion of the Negro question was a diversion all right. It was a diversion from a careful consideration of the Negro Question and the Party's role in it. It was a diversion from the task of working out Party orientation and tactics on the basis of sound theoretical groundwork. (The real diversion from the Chinese question occurred in the discussion of China.)

Organizational Degeneration and the Negro Question

The political errors on the Negro question have played a central role in the degeneration of the norms of internal democracy within the Party. The refusal of the Party to account for and explain previous failures, successes and past theories- including the empirical rejection of the '48 and '57 resolution for the '63 resolution - demanded the distortion of opponent viewpoints, because no honest explanation of the separatist line on a Marxist basis was possible and no debate could be tolerated. The majority, sharply divided within itself over a trade-unionist or separatist approach on the Negro question, could only unite around opposition to Kirk's position. Factionalism against minority tendencies in general, began with the hysteria engendered against our minority on the Negro question.

In 1957, the harassed national leadership demanded a "vote of confidence" in order to get their resolution carried, when it became evident that at least one-third of the delegates had reservations on basic points -- an absolutely unprecedented demand in our Party. At the 1963 convention, the leadership not only cut down the time of the minority, but extended their own time in order to dominate the discussion. Breitman flagrantly falsified our ideas: At one point, he even went so far as to take a quote from our resolution - one of the few complimentary of the Muslims - twist its meaning into the exact opposite and then attack us for it. The Stalinist method of misquotes and distortions, has never before been so completely utilized by our national leadership.

The attack did not end with the Convention. It was hardly accidental that Robertson was singled out for expulsion after supporting our resolution on the Negro question. In all other respects, Robertson was closer to the Party than was Wohlforth: His position on Cuba recognized the existence of a workers state; he had no sharp disagreements with the majority on China; he was not in direct collaboration with Healy; and he had committed no overt violation of discipline. His crime, however, of supporting us on the Negro question was unforgivable. Wohlforth's obsequiousness on the question - as others - paid off for a while, and Robertson's group was expelled.

All the maneuvering of the majority, however, could not resolve the question of the Party's false orientation on the Negro question. The majority empiricists had to face the test of history. It is now two years since the 1963 convention, and in the analysis presented by our tendency we have proved correct as against the majority on every major issue.

The Real Issues in Dispute

Let me revue here, quickly, the points that were actually in dispute at the 1963 convention:

1. Black Muslims: We subjected the Black Muslims, which the majority resolution lauded as the most radical section of the Negro community, to a careful analysis. Not a word of this need be altered today. Our characterization was, in fact, thoroughly underwritten by Malcolm X in the months before his murder.

This analysis required no clairvoyance on our part. The majority's error was not a product of lack of information but resulted from their theoretical conviction that separatism is inherently revolutionary. From this it followed that the negative features of the Muslims - religious mysticism, anti-semitism, flirtation with fascists, deals with the Klan, male chauvanism, middle class solutions, hatred of American socialists, acceptance of the racial norm, etc. - were accidental and ephemeral. (Some majority comrades even defended the reactionary features as progressive for Negroes, a leading youth comrade recently on national tour publicly expressed indifference towards Nationalist or Muslim collaboration with the Klan or the Birchites.) Breitman considered that the negative features would disappear as the Muslims developed and broadened their program towards the mass movement for equality.

Such a perspective proved impossible. A separatist movement can do no more than live off the Negro community - or off white racists who are concerned with preserving the Ghetto. It is incompatible with the living Negro movement that seeks to break down the ghetto walls.

2. Afro-American Split: We contended, therefore, that the separatist Afro-American groups, in general, and the Black Muslims, in particular, would split over the question of Civil Rights and the class struggle. The Muslims, propelled by size and pride into the struggle for Civil Rights, come face to face with the blatant fact that discrimination rests on legal and extra-legal segregation--not in the hearts of men or the natural qualities of skin color -- and hence the struggle against discrimination and prejudice involves integration of one form or another into American society. This is not a subjective question but an objective fact.

Basing himself on the contradictions inherent in the separatist movement, Kirk declared to an aghast and angry convention that a section of the Muslims or Afro-Americans would become for a while allies of the fascists. The prognosis became evident more quickly than we had expected. Don Warden of the Afro-Americans in San Francisco teamed up with the fascists for a Northwest tour. The tie-in between Mohammed's Muslims and the Klan already existed at the time of the convention but it has now been openly exposed by Malcolm X.

But while the right, separatist, wing of the nationalist movement moved closer to the racists and fascists, Malcolm X, oriented towards the mass movement for equality and sharply influenced by the international revolutionary movement was forced to split with the Muslims on the left. Breitman and the majority had hoped for a Muslim orientation toward the Civil Rights movement, but the fact was, as we contended, that the Muslims could not so orient without splitting. (Shirley, of the Robertson tendency, was even more specific than we were, contending that Malcolm X would split.)

A split in the Muslims was in the offing at the time of the 1963 Convention. This was pretty general knowledge among Negro intellectuals and socialists not in the S.W.P. But the majority, searching for a justification of revolutionary separatism, heard only its own voice in the wind.

3. Freedom Now Movement: We contended that the Northern movement for Freedom Now could not project a mass party on a color basis. In the first place, such a party in the North could only be a cadre party, internationalist and socialist in outlook, and would be engaged immediately in a struggle against the ostensible leadership in the Negro community. (Color alone was hardly sufficient grounds for the formation of a political party.) In the second place, the Negro struggle in the North had already gone beyond elementary demands. It was necessary to raise a socialist program against the reformists, not a minimum program.

This prognosis proved only too true. Wherever Freedom Now groups or parties (?) were organized in the north they proved to be cadre groupings. Such groups were generally disoriented by the SWP, which sought to reduce their political consciousness to racial consciousness and ignored the cadre character of the movement. The weakness of color as a basis for a party was demonstrated in Michigan where the one Freedom Now Party with any mass base, could not even agree on its attitude toward Johnson's election campaign. In Los Angeles, the Freedom Now circle our comrades were working with provided a nucleus for the Afro-Americans for Goldwater.

The fiasco was unnecessary. The concept developed by Kirk and Worthy in projecting a Freedom Now Party had great promise. It should be apparent now that an orientation toward the Afro-American socialist-internationalists and a left wing of the Muslims, would have put the Freedom Now Party and the S.W.P. in the forefront - instead of the ass-end - of the Negro struggle in the North: not, however, as a mass party, but as a socialist cadre with real influence in the Negro community.

The majority oriented the S.W.P. toward a fictitious, homogeneous mass at the lowest level of political consciousness -- that is, towards a group for whom it was only necessary that we point out the black skin and all class divisions would disappear. No such level existed. In the end, the orientation not only lost us the Negro masses, but the Negro socialists as well. Worthy could not live in such an atmosphere, nor could any of the Afro-American and Negro intellectuals who were way ahead of the SWP in their understanding of the Negro question and the tasks involved in obtaining equality.

4. Freedom Now in the South: The more involved development of the class struggle in the north, cuts off all avenues of struggle against discrimination that do not affect the class as a whole. Thus, the northern movement for equality takes on a socialist character, and, at the present time, a largely propagandistic one. This is not so for the Southern movement, where a struggle for elementary Civil Rights against a dictatorial regime takes on a transitional and revolutionary character.

Our minority contended, therefore, that the Southern Civil Rights movement could project a mass party, which, by virtue of its naked class character, would be in essence a labor party capable of leading not only the Negro worker, but also the poor white, in a struggle against the Southern dictatorship. The evaluation quickly proved true. The Freedom Democratic Party in Mississippi

received 100,000 votes running independently of both major parties and, in spite of its name, in direct opposition to the Democratic Party in Mississippi.

The formation of the MFDP is the most important political development in recent American history and the most important political development in the South since the Reconstruction. Moreover, it has thrown the entire political structure of the United States into a frenzy. Yet the majority not only had no concept of the possibility of such a development, but practically ignored it during its development.

Here, again, can be seen how theory colors evaluation: The majority sees the question of the South as if it were a reform instead of a revolutionary question — ignoring, by the way, both the theory of permanent revolution and the SWP 1948 resolution. For that reason, King's demand for "troops to the south" seems progressive to them although nobody at the center advocated federal troops to Harlem. They conceive of the central task of capitalism in the south to be one of forcing the southern dictatorship to conform to northern standards of discrimination, thus federal troops can be an aid to the Southern movement for equality.

For us, the permanent revolution finds its greatest expression in the United States in the incompleting democratic revolution in the south. The system of segregation is so built into the American framework, that neither the south nor the federal government can change the pattern of southern life today without shaking the entire structure of the government itself. The pattern of politics in the U.S., as revealed in the last national elections, is not to make the south conform to the north. Not at all. The difference between Goldwater and Johnson on the racial question was that the former sought to make the entire country conform to the southern system (in this was revealed his essential orientation towards fascism) while Johnson wanted to preserve its structure in the South and keep it there.

5. South Vs. North: Another major point of difference we had with the majority was their refusal to recognize the dynamic of the struggle for civil rights in the South. At the time of the convention in 1963, the SWP majority was already writing off the southern movement, but the fact remains that the highest point in the Negro struggle (since the March on Washington before World War II) is the year long demonstration of the Negro population in Montgomery during the bus boycott; the most important development in independent political action is still the Freedom Democratic Party; and the most important mass movement for civil rights is still SNCC. These latter two developments project themselves into the north providing an impetus for a new radicalization of the Civil Rights movement here.

The above by no means ignores the developments and the obvious potential of the movement in the Ghetto, but the essential problem of the Negro movement today is the separation that exists between the southern movement with its mass base and growing radicalism and the socialist internationalists who constitute the left wing of the Negro movement in the large cities.

All the above, of course, does not exhaust the differences at the convention. Many things we presented are still music for the future. But where there was a clash of opinion over current perspectives and analysis we proved correct in every case. You can do worse than devote some time to a careful reading of old discussions, because any discussion of the Negro question should begin with an understanding of what the real issues and differences are.

Class Struggle and the Negro Question: Kirk's Contribution

At the root of the analytical differences lie theoretical differences. Swabeck is right when he asserts repeatedly that black and white proletarian unity is the cornerstone of any theory on the Negro question. The class struggle is the key to any understanding of the Negro question and the road to its solution. This is ABC's of Marxism, and any orientation towards the struggle for equality that ignores or contradicts this solution is pure opportunism. The need for class unity establishes the framework for any Marxist discussion, but it does not resolve the essential question of the interrelation between the independent Negro struggle and the class struggle as a whole. This requires a careful analysis, and this was Kirk's essential contribution to an understanding of the Negro question.

The starting point of Kirk's analysis was the independent character of the Negro struggle and its integral connection with the working class struggle for socialism. This, of course, was not unique with him but was the basis of the now discarded (by the majority) 1948 resolution. Kirk's essential contribution - a product of careful study by him and Dave D. - was an analysis of the independent character of the Negro struggle: that is, an analysis of racial segregation as a form of oppression.

I do not intend to develop this in this letter as the material is available in bulletins. Suffice it here to say that the study revealed, first of all, that race was essentially a social phenomenon and not a biological phenomenon. (That is, the physiological differences are solely important because of social reasons.) The fundamental form by which racial discrimination is maintained is segregation, from which it follows normally that the independent struggle of the Negro people has been for integration.

Our differences with the majority on the Negro question flow not only from their concept that the struggle is a nationalist type struggle in a classic sense -- many supporters of the majority position do not have a nationalist approach at all, but consider the question simply one of reform. Our differences flow essentially from our assertion that due to the nature of segregation and its integral connection with the entire political and economic character of capitalism in the U.S., the struggle for integration is essentially revolutionary. That is, it can not be achieved without a revolution and revolutionary struggle. The comrades at the center have approached the integration movement as a purely reformist movement.

Our tendency has viewed the Negro movement as a vanguard movement - the Negro socialists as a vanguard in the entire class struggle for socialism. The majority for its part, did not even find space to consider the Negro struggle as important in the evolution of the American revolution - Myra Tanner had to introduce an amendment to the Political Resolution at the 1963 Convention in order to get the N.C. to reluctantly admit the Negro struggle as part of the political perspective for American working class radicalization. In this respect, the nationalists and reformists on the Negro question agree; they consider the Negro struggle something apart from the class struggle.

Our tendency has viewed the recruitment and integration of Negro socialists into the Party as a central task and the failure of the Party to do so as a major fault of the organization. In spite of demagogic statements to the contrary, the majority takes a purely paternalistic attitude toward the Negro movement and considers the failure of the Negro socialists to remain in the Party over the last two decades to be a result of Negro political backwardness.

The Party majority, finally, views the independent Negro struggle as a national struggle, independent of the working class struggle for socialism and only arbitrarily and in the long run connected with it. Thus the schema - Freedom Now Party to Labor Party to Socialist Unity of both - developed at the 1963 convention has meaning to them. Since their theory is not bound at all by the actual evolution of the struggle for equality, but is in reality set against it, any arbitrary schema will do. The concept of a Freedom Now Party that is essentially a Labor Party (as MFDP) or is essentially a Socialist Party (as Worthy observed) is utterly alien to them, because it is a product of life and not wishful thinking. We, for our part, take our orientation from the fact that the most powerful movements of the Negro people - whether all-Negro or not - are not directed at maintaining the Ghetto or the social and political walls created by capitalism, but at breaking them down.

Some Concluding Remarks on Slogans and Demands

You raise the consideration that the direction for an oppressed minority is "towards equality under capitalism and against capitalism and toward integration in a workers state." I do not quite understand how such a concept could be programatically applied.

The slogans and demands of the Negro movement do not have to be invented by us. They already have a century long existence and have been an inherent part of the class struggle in the United States - even shaped it. The Negro nationalists - that is, the left wing radicalized by the international movement - have failed to make inroads into the Negro movement because they have not been able to couple their greater class and socialist consciousness with the demands of the Negro people that rise out of experience at home. They thus limit themselves to propaganda even when they could directly enter the struggle for equality.

"Equality under capitalism" seems to raise an abstraction as an answer to the concrete condition of segregation and discrimination. Equality is only achievable under socialism and only has meaning as a demand for socialism. Such a demand for the Negro movement involves the creation of a socialist cadre in the Negro community, and with this objective I wholly agree; but it does not touch the problem of establishing a foothold in the Negro community.

On the other hand, the demand for integration under socialism seems quite meaningless. A segregated or segregation-oriented working class will not conduct a revolution in the United States - not now or ever. Just as the union movement could not be organized without the Negro,* or the socialist movement organized without the Negro; so, too, the American revolution is doomed to become transformed into a self-defeating race war without the unity of white and black workers. The revolutionary character of the Negro movement is being demonstrated by the fact that it is they who are now establishing the terms for such a revolutionary unity. Why postpone the demand for unity until after the revolution?

However repugnant may be the role of the reformists and tokenists in the Civil Rights movement, the only concrete and real form of struggle under capitalism just plain happens to be - for integration. This is true because the form of racial oppression is segregation. The only demands that can have any meaning at all, outside of an overall political struggle for socialism, are demands for jobs, education, voting rights, political participation, etc., and all such demands are demands for integration, in one form or another, into American society. The argument that

* the Civil War won without the Negro,

Negroes do not want to be integrated into American society would be specious even if it were true. No white socialist can be integrated into American society as it now exists, but this does not stop us from demanding jobs, education, political rights, etc.

The simple fact is that black political power has meaning only in so far as it is able to demonstrate its ability to break down the walls of segregation, the walls of the ghetto, the walls created between the white working class and the Negro. Racial separation, however much it is approved psychologically by some self-contained Negro intellectuals, was not created by nor is it maintained by the Negroes. It is a white man's product and is maintained by capitalism.

Not to recognize the revolutionary role of the struggle for full and unconditional integration is to ignore a fundamental process in the American revolution. To understand this theoretically and politically it is most of all necessary to study the disputes within the Marxist movement as well as the theoretical works of dozens of brilliant Negro scholars. We are not going to suck wisdom out of our thumbs as weasels suck eggs. The Negro question has a long history of disputes and discussion in the Socialist Workers Party and our documents have stood the test of time.

Comradely,

Frank Powers May 21, 1965

WHERE WE STAND

by Rose Jersawitz and Marion Syrek

I. The American Question

We take our stand in this convention period on the document, The Negro Revolution, American Revolution and the SWP, by comrades Miller and Philips (Discussion Bulletin Vol. 25, No. 4.)

The Political Committee's drafts on the Negro and American questions are fundamentally defective, the former for its abstentionist core, the latter for its superficiality. The two Political Committee draft documents taken together project a perspective devoid of revolutionary content on the part of the SWP Majority leadership.

In the 1963 convention period, our political tendency advanced in an amendment to the Majority's draft American Resolution some proposals for a modest but real effort to involve the Party in the living Negro struggle North and South, as well as to initiate some direct working class links. We were unable to support the American Resolution of the then Philips-Wohlforth group because exaggerated expectations of an immediate and deep-going economic crisis evidently led the authors to project an equally exaggerated set of documents for simultaneous, all-sided Party activity.

In their 1965 presentation, Miller and Philips have stripped away the excesses from Philips' earlier work and have presented an incisive statement of revolutionary perspective and a well-balanced application of the Transitional Program. Meanwhile, the Majority has deteriorated to such an extent that it is unable to even describe correctly an essentially passive American scene.

However, the document by Miller and Philips has several flaws from our standpoint.

BLACK NATIONALISM

Thus the document states: "The Negro movement of the north, despite its advanced organizational and ideological character (the center of Negro nationalism, one million Negro unionists, the ballot) has not kept pace with the south, and has, in fact, been relatively stagnant, experiencing a prolonged crisis of ideology and leadership." What Miller and Philips see as a contradiction between a stagnant movement and Negro nationalism

is in reality an internal weakness in their own position that Negro nationalism possesses an "advanced character." Black Nationalism is nothing other than an ideological reflection and rationalization of stagnation, i.e., of lack of struggle, of passivity and despair brought on by treacherous leadership. At bottom there is symmetry, not opposition, between middle class integration and petty bourgeois Black Nationalism.

We do not wish to belabor this point because despite the apparent theoretical premise of the Negro people as a separate nation, Miller and Philips do not use this position as the Majority does in order to avoid facing up to building the revolutionary workers party, i.e. of Black and White revolutionists. Instead, Miller and Philips go on to characterise very correctly in the concrete (as over the Michigan Freedom Now Party fiasco) the disruptive consequences to the Negro struggle and all class struggle which flow from the SWP's abasement before Nationalism.

TROOP SLOGAN

More serious is Miller's and Philips' statement of Federal troops to the south: "Under the circumstances prevalent in the American south, the slogan of Troops is not one which can be favored or opposed as a matter of principle." ! The authors then spend the next pages on the contrary and completely correct position that "it is our considered opinion that for the SWP to raise the Troop slogan today would do grave harm to our party and to the struggle in the south."

Unless it were true that the American ruling class, acting through its state, is willing or even able to meet the profound social and political needs of the struggling Negroes in the South, then the call for Federal Troops is wrong in principle. Any encouragement of confidence in the American armed forces, necessarily at the expense of both self-defense and of an eventual unity with other proletarian forces, can only have the most deadly consequences. The aims if not the tactics of the American bourgeoisie in the South and the Northern ghettos or abroad, as in Vietnam, are unitary.

THEORETICALLY WEAK

Finally we note that a generally theoretically agnostic quality mars an otherwise excellent document by reducing it to something too much of a "practical" character. This flaw is perhaps related to Miller's and Philips' ability to simultaneously admit in passing the abstract legitimacy of both Black nationalism and the Troop slogan while subjecting both to devastating attack in the concrete.

II. The Organizational Question.

A. We find ourselves in complete agreement with the proposed amendment to the Organizational Resolution, submitted by Dave Miller. (Discussion Bulletin Vol. 25, No. 4.)

Comrade Miller's amendment details the traditional legitimate and necessary rights of tendencies and factions. It thoroughly exposes the intention to ban factions without actually so stating by the authors of the deliberately ambiguous but threatening new Organizational Resolution.

B. Also in connection with the Organizational question, we call upon the party to readmit the expelled comrades now provisionally organized in the Spartacist group.

We therefore place the following motion before the convention: That the use of organizational exclusion as the way of settling internal political differences be discontinued and that all those expelled who reacknowledge their acceptance of discipline be readmitted.

August 15, 1965

BREITMAN'S BALLISTICS
(Comments on the Michigan Freedom Now Party)

Breitman, as everybody knows, is an objective, non-factional, and truthful comrade. Unfortunately, his attempt to "Set the Record Straight" will do nothing to enhance that reputation. His obvious desperation only serves to underline how wrong the SWP line on the Negro question really is.

He begins, inauspiciously enough, by devoting more than a page and a half to proving that "Our people were not inactive sceptics but responsible participants in a new and difficult experience." He tries to make it appear as if we were trying to show that our comrades were inactive and sceptical. But all he does is burst through an open door at full speed. This also demonstrates that "longwindedness" is a relative term. Some comrades can be longwinded in a few pages. Others may have something to say.

If the comrades will reread p. 23 of "The Negro Revolution, The American Revolution, and the SWP" (D.B. Vol. 25, #4), they will see that our point was just the opposite. Our comrades did participate, organizationally that is, as best they could, but in a non-political manner. As a matter of fact it was just this degree of participation which made our political failure all the more direct.

For Breitman, program was never an issue in the FNP, nor from the party analysis of the nature of Black Nationalism, could it be. He sees the struggle which did go on within the organization as caused by anything but a struggle over program. It is caused by "inexperience"; by "impatience"; "by personality clashes"; He tells us that "Try as they did (SWP members) could not find any question of principle or program involved in the fight."

What is also really implied here is that the Negro masses are as yet too backward to be able to throw up elements who are capable of understanding the need for a program. This implication is spelled out a little later when he evaluates the Negro vote for Johnson and the Democratic Party.

The fact, however, is as reported to the branch by the organizer. The anti-Cleage group was trying to develop a program. Part of it called for the nationalization of industry which was sneeringly dismissed as sectarian.

Since the party line held that Independent Black Political Action as such, without a program was all that the movement demands and permits at this stage, our comrades had to either dismiss attempts at a program as sectarian, or make believe that there were no such attempts. If Breitman wants to construct a make believe world, no one can stop him. But that does not give him the right to accuse other comrades of being untruthful.

"It is also untrue that we did not recruit" Breitman tells us. Nobody made such a statement. In his objective, truthful and non-factional manner he again tries to shift from the point at issue and accuse others of lying. What we did say, was that not only was there no recruitment from the FNP, but that we lost our entire FNP fraction.

He nevertheless felt sufficient constraint to go into some detail on one of the Negro comrades involved in FNP work who left the Party. Evidently he feels that the political anatomy of this one instance will make his case stronger, while avoiding a discussion of the others. It doesn't.

It is true that the comrade became completely disoriented. But why? Because she had a poor personality? As a marxist, as a socialist, and as a graduate of Trotsky School, she felt impelled under the circumstances to introduce at least some of the things she had learned in the movement. It was only natural that she should tend toward others in the FNP who were concerned with program. It may very well be that in her inexperience she tended to oversimplify and overstate,

But instead of trying to help work out a transitional program, she was told that program had no place at this time. That is why she felt that to follow SWP discipline meant to abstain from the FNP, and in a political sense she was right. Because the SWP did not play a political role, she felt that it had no role at all in the Negro struggle. That is why she came to the undoubtedly wrong conclusion; that the SWP ought to restrict its role to educating the Whites on the Negro struggle, and leave the Blacks alone.

On the Reverend Cleage: Breitman claims that Cleage "is someone whom Philips is incapable of judging objectively" and that Philips "feels more at home with the secondary UAW Negro bureaucrats."

The good comrade is so completely disoriented that he has forgotten the simplest prerequisite for objective judgement. For marxists it begins with a class analysis. On this, the only objective basis, we would have to say that Cleage represents a highly advanced and militant, but nevertheless petty-bourgeois approach to the Negro struggle. That is why he dencounces socialism as a white man's trap. That is why he increasingly centers his main attack on the labor movement, while he remains at the same time objectively incapable of distinguishing between the rank and file and the bureaucracy. That is why he considers the union movement as a whole as part of the white power structure.

In the abstract, in the most general terms, Breitman will agree that the strategic key to the victory of the Negro struggle lies in its linking up with the working class as a whole. In the concrete, he is both unwilling and unable to apply this conception, because of the erosion of the proletarian method. It is true that it is today difficult to argue with, or to attempt to convince the petty-bourgeois empiric within the Negro movement of the truth of this idea, and of its importance. This makes it more, not less urgent that we seek out, in theory and practice, those elements within the working class movement, and within the Negro struggle which aid and strengthen us in this attempt. And as we have pointed out in detail in our document, the logic of the Negro movement impels it in exactly such a direction. As the revolutionary vanguard, this must be our major political function in the Negro movement.

But Breitman cannot move in this direction. Instead, as we note below, he tail-ends the Cleages, both politically and organizationally. Instead of combating this most fundamental weakness, he actually encourages it.

"It is true" Breitman tells us, "that Cleage is one of those who reject the concept that Black-White unity is the key to victory. Cleage believes (as Malcolm X did) that the first key is Black unity. In our conception this is true too..." What does this mean? The point is that Black unity for Cleage is not "a first key" but an end in itself. We will not be as harsh as R A M which considers this type to be bourgeois Black Nationalist in character. We consider it petty-bourgeois. But because Cleage views Black unity as an end in itself, he cannot achieve it. We insist that the only way to get hold of the "first key" is with a transitional program based on a class approach, which already contains within itself the seeds of the "second key". The undialectical concept of stages formally separated one from the other is a self-defeating concept.

The logic of history, ie, the laws of the class struggle, play strange tricks on those incapable of understanding them and working with them. The Negro movement needs allies. This is an objective fact of life in American society. Denying the need or the possibility of alliances with the working class, or sections of it, Cleage, and he is not the only one, plays around with alliances with the most reactionary elements in the right wing of the bourgeoisie. Cleage did not go as far as the Muslims, but there are strings between him and one called Durant, an extreme, right wing Goldwater Republican in Michigan.

As far as the charge is concerned that we feel more at home with secondary Negro UAW bureaucrats than with the Cleages, this is simply one of those factional distortions. We are not certain whether Breitman uses the term "secondary" bureaucrats as a concession to the true state of affairs as far as our relations with Negro workers in the shop, and shop leaders as well is concerned, or whether he does not believe that there are such things as "primary" Negro bureaucrats in the UAW. In any case Breitman knows full well that our position is that the leadership of the Negro struggle as well as its program, must come out of the Negro working class if it is to be successful. We have also said and written many times that that segment of the Negro working class which is within the union movement, is in the best position to serve as the link between the Negro struggle and the decisive organized section of the class. Those who attempt to equate this attitude with an approach to the union bureaucracy are only demonstrating that they, like the Cleages, have no real confidence in the ability of the rank and file to break with the bureaucracy.

The next question which is raised deals with the demand by the Cleages that Negro teachers cross a picket line if their legitimate demands upon the union were not agreed to beforehand. What was in prospect was an organizing strike by the Detroit Teachers Union to gain recognition as bargaining agent. The Teachers Union has, incidentally, been among the best on its attitude towards civil rights, in its willingness to strike in defiance of law, etc. In Hamtramck recently, the sons of Dodge sitdowners led a successful sitdown strike of teachers.

Breitman says that "Philips wanted us to launch a big attack on the Cleages because of this." There was no such thing as a demand for the launching of a big attack. We urged that Breitman specifically undertake the responsibility for writing a balanced article in which, while giving recognition to the justice of the demands of the Cleages, we would point out their important error. At that time Breitman didn't accuse us of "wanting to launch a big attack." The only comment he made in response to our request is that we don't have to criticize everything with which we don't agree in the Negro struggle.

But for us this is not just any old issue. This problem goes directly to the most crucial issue facing the Negro movement - its ideological and actual relation with the organized and organizing working class. And the article which finally appeared in the Militant, written incidentally by Sell, not Breitman, dared not suggest that there was an error.

We come now to the explanation for the low FNP vote.

No one expected the FNP, as a new party, to come close to electing any candidates. None of our people, that is. There were a few "get rich quick" types who, in the absence of a program, thought they were really going to make it. And to make doubly sure, they handed out Democratic Party material in addition to their candidacy as Independent Blacks.

But in view of the party analysis, and of the campaign which, generally speaking was conducted politically in line with that analysis, comrades had every right to expect a result which, in terms both of vote received and lessons learned, would have resulted in the consolidation, if not the substantial increase, of the vanguard elements involved in the FNP. Instead of a modest increase, the FNP was all but destroyed by the fiasco in Michigan. The Reverend Cleage passed judgement on the results by voting with his feet. He walked out of the FNP. This is not surprising. With all the positive lessons about which Breitman lectures us, we obediently tailed along behind him. This rounds out the picture of our relations with the Cleages, first politically, and now organizationally.

On the one hand Breitman proposes that we stop using the designation of "Trotskyist" because this will give the appearance of a cult. On the other hand, internationally as well as nationally, we concern ourselves with the hero - not the class, not the party, not the program, but the individual.

When we come to the Negro masses, we are told that the "main reason that the Negro masses did not vote for the FNP in 1964 was that they did not yet want to break with the Democratic Party.", that it would be truer to find an explanation for the low vote in the fact that the idea of Independent Black Political Action "was so new and so bold that it shocked the mass of the Negro people."

This is indeed one of those "simple" explanations, those common sense observations for which Breitman is known. But it is also somewhat strange since it comes from the very same comrade who, when reporting for the Political Committee to a plenum of the national committee in 1962 (D.B. Vol . 23, #9) saw a completely different mood "spreading fast and far" within the Negro community. He saw this growing mood as one in which the Negroes have "a message for the white world, summed up in the warning that the whites now have a last chance. The implication is that if Negroes are not granted genuine and complete equality through integration soon, very soon, if change in that direction is not undertaken seriously now, then they are going to seek it elsewhere. And the alternative to integration is separation." At that time we were told that the counter trend to integration is "developing real momentum and genuine force."

If the mood to struggle for a separate state was spreading fast and far, if the counter trend to the struggle for integration was developing real momentum and genuine force, how is it possible to explain the Negro vote after 2 more years of frustrating struggle on the basis that they were not ready to break with the Democratic Party? How is it possible to talk of their shock caused by the newness and boldness of the relatively modest idea of Independent Black Political Action, which, except for the South, requires no struggle at all but simply the casting of a ballot?

Breitman blundered in his estimation of the character of the Negro struggle in 1962. He misunderstands and underestimates it equally in 1964. These errors are, however, not just Breitman's. They reflect the acceptance of a wrong political line by the majority.

Breitman was correct when he saw in 1962 a growing impatience among the Negro people, a growth of Black Nationalism, an increasing desire to struggle even if it should cost them their lives. But he mistook the direction of the struggle, and for one obvious, almost self-explanatory reason. Because he could see only stagnation or retreat in the labor movement, because he was incapable of seeing any concrete potentialities for struggle by the rank and file, because, in a word, his confidence in the proletariat was withering away, he could not apply a class approach to the Negro struggle either. He mistook the reactions of a few Black Nationalist, but petty-bourgeois leaders, for the real feelings of the mass of the Negro people, and he made that mistake because he tended to agree with their evaluation of the labor movement. He was unable to understand the political nature of the crisis of the Negro leadership which paralyzed and disoriented the struggle despite the impatience and readiness for struggle of the Negro masses.

He could not see that what was needed was a transitional program of struggle, which could be derived only from a class approach.

Of all the elements within Black Nationalism, he selected the separatist current as the wave of the future precisely because he saw nothing in the labor movement. And then, with the iron logic of politics which cannot escape a class base and class conclusions, the Muslims were chosen, since they espoused separatism as the most dynamic and best organized segment in the Negro community. But we should at least now be able to understand, that the Muslims, because their leadership and program were petty-bourgeois, represented and had to represent abstention from the struggle; represented and had to represent an abstract social future, of no danger to the white power structure, in which the Negroes would be able to deal with whites as equals, from the "first key", of Black Unity. But what the Muslim leadership wanted, and said they wanted, was the opportunity to develop a full scale bourgeoisie, a ruling class which could meet the white ruling class on equal terms. This kind of Black Unity is a fraud, and Malcolm X had to draw these conclusions without any help from us. We, you see, agree with Cleage that Black Unity is the first key.

No Comrade Breitman. It is not true that the Negro leadership is advanced, and the Negro masses are backward. The Negro people were, and remain ready to move far beyond the white, racist, war-mongering, and capitalist Democratic Party. They are not shocked by the idea of Independent Black Political Action. But what their vote for the Democratic Party indicated is that they want action and struggle on class issues, as well as racial issues, and they want a real struggle now, today, within this society. They also indicated by their vote recognition of their need for allies in such a struggle. In the absence of a Negro organization and a Negro leadership which could point the way through a struggle for transitional demands to an ultimate unity of action with white workers, they voted for the Democratic Party.

Of course the Negro masses were afraid of a Goldwater victory. But why? They did not vote for the racist Democratic Party and the racist Johnson on racial issues alone. Foreign policy and economic issues were, if anything, more decisive in their vote, precisely those issues on which the FNP had little or nothing to say. The Negro masses turned from the Republican Party, to which many had adhered because of race issues, to the Democratic Party during the Roosevelt period on the basis of class issues. They turned out to vote in greater numbers, and voted more solidly for the Democratic Party because of their increasing consciousness, their increasing activity, their increasing desire to struggle. What was lacking was the Negro leadership and organization which could provide the class program for Black Nationalism.

Finally, Breitman lectures us about our so-called schematic and mechanical contraposition of independent political action to program. We are told that in the Negro struggle as in the labor movement, independent action is in itself programmatic. The vote of the Negro masses in the last election has already answered that point. They cannot be won simply on a slogan of Independent Black Action, of Blacks to office. Nor can even a cadre be built on this basis alone.

But even aside from the experience, a moment's reflection should be enough to realize the labored falsity of the rationalization with which he is attempting to defend an indefensible line. Such action, when undertaken by the whole organized class immediately sets into motion objective forces which tend to drive the class forward programmatically. In the case of the Negro movement, however, we are dealing with the situation in which the mass has yet to be organized, where even the leadership has yet to be assembled. This is still primarily a task of propaganda and program. The task is further complicated by the fact that within the Negro movement there are also contending class forces.

But even in dealing with the action of the workers as an organized class it is not possible to separate the action from the purpose, or program of the action. Obviously if the class undertook such action, it would be motivated by pressing economic, social, and political problems. In other words, Breitman sets the real situation upside down. The program, ie the proposed answers to the pressing problems would come first, the action would follow. It is a response to unanswered demands which in themselves constitute a program.

We have never made our support of such a move dependent on the existing program or leadership, but we have always understood that our major function would be to introduce and fight for our program because we would expect that the program of the existing leadership would be more or less inadequate. This is so self-evident that it needs no further elaboration.

We are fortunate in that the quick pace of developments in the Negro movement showed the major political error of the Majority in time, and without fatal consequences, so that we can make the necessary correction. But the majority has the responsibility now to openly admit its error and to search out its causes. To attempt to justify an obviously wrong political line, or to simply ignore it, means in this case complete and helpless isolation from the Negro struggle, and, in the real sense, isolation from the coming struggles of the class as a whole.

If we cannot make a meaningful intervention into the Negro struggle, then even the campus orientation of the Majority will, even if fruitful, lose its class importance. But large masses of youth who are seeking to participate in revolutionary action will not be attracted to a party isolated from the real sources of strength and dynamism in the United States today.

A. Philips

A NEW DISCOVERY !
(Lenin's "What Is To Be Done?")

In the course of remarks by R. Himmel Jr. in "The Philips School of Bolshevism" we are informed that he is educating the youth of Detroit in what he calls "leninist" concepts of organization. It is indeed to be feared that the youth of Detroit and elsewhere are being educated in this manner.

After reading "What Is To Be Done" (or parts thereof), R. Himmel Jr. has learned that "leninist" concepts consist of:

- a) that the worker-revolutionist must set as his ideal not "the trade union secretary, but "the tribune of the people."
- b) that the party must consist of professional revolutionists, a category obviously set off from the worker-revolutionist, and one, moreover, which "transcends and obliterates any previous class identifications."

What we are dealing with is not just a case of sloppiness which causes our specialist in organization and trade union work to bypass the description of the class composition necessary for the SWP as contained in the founding resolution in 1938, as well as in part, in the current resolution on organization; it is not just a case of mental laziness which causes our expert on the training of professional revolutionists to mechanically apply a concept advanced for Russia in 1900; it is not just a case of accidental error which causes him to separate political tasks from organizational structure. It is all of these; but it is something more.

What is involved is nothing less than an attack emanating from an alien petty-bourgeois source on the proletarian tradition of the SWP.

The Purpose of the Organizational Resolution

In our document on "Political Organization and Organizational Politics" we have asked what there was in the nature of the period, and in the internal situation in the SWP which necessitated a new organizational resolution, a new tightening up of the party structure.

The resolution itself hinted that ~~the~~ tightening up was necessary "for the work of penetrating into the mass movement", into "civil rights organizations which are becoming radicalized and in which workers predominate; labor organizations within industry and among the unemployed; campuses where an increasing number of students are turning towards socialist ideas."

We are for this move, and we are for it now. We think this, however, requires primarily political measures. But our author typically restricts his comments to the internal situation, as if it were unrelated to our political tasks.

He tells us that it is not true that the resolution is aimed at proletarianizing the youth in preparation for these tasks, as if such talk constituted an attack upon the youth. And yet his concept of the professional revolutionary who transcends class lines is the most extreme example of the organizational substitute for and abstraction from political tasks in the mass movement.

We are further informed that the resolution is not aimed at political minorities as such, only "disloyal" and "windbag" minorities. And yet one of the main differences between the Himmels and the Wohlforth-Robertson minorities is that they wanted to, and in a number of instances did, get into the indicated areas of activity.

For our author, the resolution in the main is directed at weeding out the "book members" who have become demoralized through years of a negative climate. And yet those comrades who cannot be revitalized through normal political means in a changed climate, can be and have been dropped without the need of a resolution.

The real target of our "leninist" however, is another group.

In the longer run, after the Majority has disposed of the insignificant, but irritating groups who have political differences, our "professional revolutionary", our "activist", wants to settle accounts with "The activists of the previous period (who) got a bit older, slowed down physically and in other ways too."

That comrades get older is a biologic fact which no resolution can alter. That "they slow down in other ways too" is a typically gratuitous sneer. AND IT IS DIRECTED IN THE FIRST INSTANCE at those comrades, whether in the leadership or not, -whether presently in the mass movement or not, who are most deeply steeped in the proletarian traditions of our movement.

It is cheap demagogy directed at the weak side of the newer comrades, those for whom our proletarian tradition remains abstract and who naturally tend to react on the basis of their empirical experience within the last year or two. And along these lines we can be assured that as our author interprets "What Is To Be Done" for the youth, he will point to the careful selection which Lenin insisted upon in the choice of the professional revolutionary. But he will not get away with this demagogy.

Russia and the United States

We have been told that bolshevik organizational structure is not immutable, but depends on the concretely given situation. Our athletic mentor nevertheless takes a flying leap over the current resolution; the founding resolution in 1938, and the experiences of the American CP in the early twenties in order to land us smack in the middle of an "organizational principle" relevant to Russia of 1900.

It is not as if this type of problem were new. Lenin and Trotsky intervened to oppose the attempt of a section of the American CP to mechanically apply the illegal structure necessary in Russia, to the United States. The nationality federations in the American CP thought, or claimed, that they were fighting the menshevik-liquidationists when they opposed attempts to establish a legal party. In actuality they were petty-bourgeois romantics who had no connection with or interest in the American working class.

What was the concretely given situation in Russia at the turn of the century, at the time of "What Is To Be Done?"

The Russian Social-Democracy was not a party, as most of us understand the term, even when viewed strictly on the organizational level. The leadership was in exile. Both the party, if it could be called that, and the trade unions were illegal, or at best, semi-legal. Study circles all over that huge country which considered themselves social-democratic would arise, function for 6 months unbeknownst to and unconnected with other groupings, and then vanish without a trace into exile, prison, or back to the homes and schools. There was not even a single all-Russian, ie national, newspaper to tie the political and organizational threads together. As Lenin put it, the study circles were well-meaning but bungling amateurs which could not cope with their immediate opponent, the "professional" secret police. Lenin more than once insisted that his proposals, taken as a whole, for an exclusive and secret cadre of professionals was necessary for Russia because of the autocracy, and not for western Europe.

The real class composition of the Russian social-democracy was no problem. Generally the mass organizations of the workers were brought into being by the social-democracy. So close was this relationship that Lenin had to insist on a clear separation of the political from the economic organs of the class, in part in order to permit the unions to develop their mass potential which of necessity was broader than that of the party. Lenin's concept of the "professional revolutionary" assumed, and correctly, the already established link with the class. That which was already achieved in Russia, is our major goal in the United States. We have what Lenin was trying to achieve, -a central organ, a centralized combat structure. What we don't have is a base among and the closest relationship with the mass organizations of the class.

That is what we must achieve, not nonsensical babbling about professional revolutionaries who transcend class origin.

Political Tasks and Organizational Structure

There was another, and equally important reason for Lenin's insistence on the need for a clear separation between the party and the mass organizations of the working class. Parallel with the development of capitalism in Russia, with the growth of the bourgeoisie, and of the mass organizations of the working class, there developed within the politically and organizationally amorphous body of the Russian social-democracy a tendency which became known as Economist. It was the Russian counterpart of the Bernsteinian reformism of the western european social-democracy.

It should be understood that both the reformist and bolshevik tendencies, excluding Trotsky, were in agreement in form on the social character of the coming transformation, of the next stage of development in Russia. They held the view in common that the immediate political task was the overthrow of the autocracy and the establishment of a republic with an advanced democratic constitution.

The economists maintained that since this was a bourgeois transformation, that these were bourgeois tasks, therefore the bourgeoisie, or at least the liberal section of it, should take the political leadership of the struggle. The task of the workers was restricted to the economic struggle for improved conditions within this political and social framework. There was, therefore, no need for a revolutionary combat party.

Lenin had a different view. He held that only a revolution could overthrow the autocracy, not gradual reform. But for Lenin only the working class could lead the other more or less anti-autocratic strata of Russian society, the peasantry, small businessmen, the intelligentsia, the liberal sections of the bourgeoisie, etc in the revolution.

This is the meaning of the contraposition by Lenin of the worker-revolutionary as "tribune of the people", as political leader of all segments of anti-autocratic Russia, to the narrow economist concept of the trade union secretary. It was a difference which arose out of a different conception, an opposed view of the internal nature of the coming social transformation, and of the role of the working class in that process. (We note parenthetically that for Lenin a homogenous or relatively homogenous party meant one in which there was agreement on the need for a revolutionary overthrow of the autocracy in which the working class of necessity had to play the leading role, and for which, therefore, a revolutionary combat party had to be built.)

Trotsky as we know, saw the revolution differently. He saw the dictatorship of the proletariat as the next stage, emerging inevitably from the leading role of the working class. He held that the major class antagonism, the main driving force of the revolution, arose from the conflict between the bourgeoisie, the bourgeoisified autocracy, nobility and landlords on the one side, and the working class on the other. It was this conception which occasioned the stalinist denunciation of his "underestimation of the peasantry" and a demagogic distortion of his attitude towards the worker as the "tribune" of the whole anti-autocratic people.

We, and most of all the youth, do not today need lectures about the backwardness and bestiality of the American working class. The liberals and the petty-bourgeois in general are experts in that area. What we need is to break out of our isolation from the workers today. They will not gratefully receive instruction "when the right time comes" from our "professional revolutionaries who transcend class origin". With such an education, and without understanding received through experience and activity with the class, they will not last long. Those who do will be completely ineffective in establishing relations with the proletariat at any time.

It should in any case be understood that for marxists, there is a dialectically unbreakable relationship between the political tasks, the program, and the organizational structure of the revolutionary party.

It would not at first glance appear that there is today any fundamental disagreement on whether a revolution is required in the United States, on its social character, and on which class will lead it. There was certainly no disagreement when the SWP was founded in 1938. In the light of the situation which existed then, and which in its fundamental characteristics has not changed, Trotsky developed the transitional program as the political bridge from the existing level of consciousness and the immediate struggles of the working class, to the seizure of power. It was and remains our chief weapon in the struggle to build the party, to break through our isolation from the mass movement.

The political line was reflected in the organizational concepts. We urge the younger comrades to study the following section of the resolution adopted by the SWP in 1938 which spelled out the political-organizational principles underlying the structure and practice of the leninist party in the United States:

"The party must select from its younger members those qualified, talented and promising elements who can be trained for leadership. The road of student youth to the party leadership must not and cannot be from the class room and college directly into the leading committees. They must be sent without high-sounding titles into working class districts for day to day work among the proletariat. The young student must serve an apprenticeship in the workers movement before he can be considered a candidate for the National Committee.

"..To achieve power, the revolutionary party must be deeply rooted among the workers, it must be composed predominantly of workers and enjoy the respect and confidence of workers.

"Without such a composition it is impossible to build a programmatically firm and disciplined organization which can accomplish these grandiose tasks.."

"Above all the student and unemployed youth must be sent into industry and involved in the life and struggles of the workers. Systematic, exceptional, and persistent efforts must be made to assist the integration of our unemployed youth into industry despite the restricted field of employment.

"Lacking connection with the workers movement through failure or inability to get jobs in industry or membership in unions, the student and unemployed youth are subject to terrific pressure from the petty-bourgeois world...

"These students can transform the program of the Fourth International from the pages of books and pamphlets only by integrating themselves in the workers movement and breaking irrevocably from their previous environment."

We say to the youth: In the United States this is the path to becoming a professional revolutionary, not the phrases distorted beyond all class meaning by R. Himmel, Jr. In order to become a programmatically firm and disciplined organization, the SWP must have a working class composition. We urge those comrades among the youth who are not actually students to consider their road carefully. The path urged by our specialist in organization which would "transcend" class composition, which would lead to a cadre composed not of professional revolutionaries, but of professional youth, of permanent students, is in the United States the path to petty-bourgeois dissolution of the leninist party.

We have insisted that organizational structure and practice cannot be separated from political line. Our "educator" tells us that "the American revolution will require a 'chief weapon' far beyond 'understanding and conviction'. This is a good example of the mentality of the petty-bourgeois functionary, of the professional bureaucrat, not of the professional revolutionary.

"Far beyond"—a revealing phrase. Not far beyond, comrade, but based upon and in consonance with its political line and its ability to convince the working class and its allies of the correctness of that line. And a central, though not the only political task of our party is to convince the American working class that democracy and socialism are not incompatible; to convince them that the stalinist crimes are contrary to the nature of socialism; to convince them that the agents of the bourgeoisie are taking advantage of those crimes to smear the name of socialism.

This political line of the Party was reflected in its organizational concepts and practice from the beginning of our movement. And we must also understand that it is not the working class alone which is sensitively concerned with democracy. Many of the youth of this country are reluctant to join with the "old left" because they associate the old left with the political and organizational practices of the social-democracy and the stalinists. We dare not forget that many Negroes as well look upon marxism and socialism as just another form of white thought and white rule, because they are not convinced that they as a minority will have democratic rights.

No comrades, the party cannot be built "far and beyond" its political line. It cannot be composed of professional "revolutionaries" who "transcend" their class. It cannot be maintained as a revolutionary party if we are indifferent to its class composition. We begin with program based on the class struggle and identified with the historic interests of the working class, the only thoroughly and consistently revolutionary class in capitalist society. A mass combat party must be built on the basis of this program. In order to reflect this program in its internal structure, to maintain it against alien class pressures, and to put it into practice, the composition of the party must reflect the class it represents.

Our scholar finished off his polemic with a quotation from Lenin, the relevance of which we must admit, escapes us. We urge the comrades to note with great care the following pertinent remarks by Lenin from "Left Wing Communism; an Infantile Disorder" which, written in 1920 has as its objective "to apply to western Europe whatever is of general application, general significance, and general validity in the history and present tactics of Bolsh-evism."

"Bolshevism, as a trend of political thought and as a political party, has existed since 1903. Only the history of Bolshevism during the whole (emphasis in orig.) period of its existence can satisfactorily explain why it was able to build up and maintain, under most difficult conditions, the iron discipline necessary for the victory of the proletariat.

"And first of all, the question arises: how is the discipline of the revolutionary party of the proletariat maintained? How is it tested? How is it reinforced? First, by the class consciousness of the proletarian vanguard and by its devotion to the revolution, by its firmness, self-sacrifice, and heroism. Secondly, by its ability to link itself with, to keep in close touch with, and to a certain degree, if you will, merge itself with the broadest masses of the toilers—primarily with the proletarian but also with the non-proletarian (Emp. in Orig) toiling masses. Thirdly, by the correctness of the political leadership exercised by this vanguard, and by the correctness of its political strategy and tactic, provided that the broadest masses become convinced of this correctness by their own experience. (.E in O) Without these conditions discipline in a revolutionary party that is really capable of being a party of the advanced class, whose mission it is to overthrow the bourgeoisie and to transform the whole of society, cannot be achieved. Without these conditions all attempts to establish discipline are inevitably transformed into trifling phrase mongering and empty gestures."

An Anticipation

We are only too well aware of the level upon which these comments will be "answered" by the Himmels, junior and senior alike. "Look who is defending the proletarian character of the SWP and its leadership".

As a matter of fact, during the last pre-convention discussion and during this one as well, I have been quoted by R. Himmel Jr. as stating that "the leadership of the SWP is corrupt and degenerate." This is the type of lie which one could expect from a provocateur.

The major difference within the 1962 minority centered about the degree to which the proletarian orientation and tradition of the leadership of the majority had eroded.

The expulsions of the Robertson and Wohlforth minorities in point of fact, not only cut across the normal evolution of such differences, but actually added weight to the contention that the leadership had completely lost its class moorings. But I and those associated with me have contended that there remains in the central core of the older leadership (including those "who have slowed down physically and in other ways") a residual, but still existing element of the proletarian orientation, tradition, and method. We held, throughout the period of the differences within the minority, that the real test of the extent of the erosion still remained ahead-when the mass movement of the working class would actually begin to stir.

As we have elsewhere noted, we are not happy with the reaction of the leadership to the Negro struggle, in itself a living anticipation of the movement of the entire class. And while there are clear evidences of a shift from its previously uncritical attitude towards the separatist and petty-bourgeois elements within Black Nationalism, it has been unable to develop a positive class approach, a transitional program on which to base a deep political and physical entry into the Negro struggle. The decision by the Majority to devote its major attention to the campus, rather than to the proletarian elements within the Negro struggle is further verification of that inability.

These political weaknesses, along with its organizational resolution, has given ample cover to the attack being openly prepared now by alien class elements like the Himmels.

We did not and do not consider the leadership to be corrupt and degenerate, nor, and this is the only point, do we believe that its proletarian core has been completely destroyed. If that point should come, we will need no invitations from the likes of Himmel to leave the SWP. In the meantime we will fight as best we can, and with all the allies we can muster, to preserve and extend the heritage of the SWP from erosion and attack, from without and within.

The Charges

As far as the charges levelled against me are concerned, there are only a few comments which are in place here.

To begin with, never in the history of the Trotskyist movement has a comrade been expelled or threatened with expulsion on the basis of the type of charges here levelled. And it is hardly enough to justify such an action on the basis of vague and unmotivated statements such as "the given stage of the class struggle" or "bolshevik organizational structure is not immutable." Even if the charges were accurate and reflected a "book membership", our movement has always approached the problem in a primarily political manner. In our experience we have always understood that comrades have ups and downs, generally for a combination of objective and subjective reasons. And it is our experience that most generally in a period of upsurge, comrades who have become inactive can be reactivated with patience and a political approach.

We should also remember that in the not too distant future, we hope to be able to recruit from areas other than and in addition to the campus. Many of the younger workers and younger Negroes may well come to us with established family responsibilities. Many will never be able to reach the level of activity which unattached youth can achieve.

We do not for a moment believe, as suggested by Himmel, that our youth are incapable of understanding these things, or that they will be demoralized by them. On the contrary, we think

that the youth will easily accept the notion, if they are not dis-oriented by demagogic nonsense, that the party will and should accept what each comrade has to contribute, while encouraging them by example and political persuasion to do more.

We have to note secondly that members of the Majority faction who are immeasurably less active than myself remain unchallenged as members in good standing.

In the third place, while polemical distortions and exaggerations are almost inevitable in the course of a political struggle, they have no place in a bill of particulars on which a comrade is brought up for disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion. And when our bookkeeper spends so much of his party-building activities in maintaining such detailed records going back over the years, the least one could expect is a little more attention to accuracy;

1. It was brought to the attention of the comrades in charge of the mobilizations during 1963 and 64 that I was working a great deal of overtime, a situation over which I had little control.

2. During one entire campaign which is charged against me I was in the hospital.

3. The charge of "frequent unexcused and unexplained absences from branch meetings (except during pre-convention discussion)" is a carefully calculated lie.

4. I was quoted as requesting an excuse during the last mobilization "because of time problems and responsibility in pre-convention discussion." While for serious political comrades this is not a responsibility to be taken lightly, and while a minority has to spend as much time, or more, on the preparation of documents as does the majority which has a number of people who are assigned full time to that task, this was only part of the stated reason for my request. The other reason was because I was involved in an election campaign in my local union. While one would not expect our accountant to understand what is involved in such a campaign, one would expect that my request and the motivation for it be reported accurately.

It is nevertheless true that "As late as December, 1962, (Philips) was one of the national winners in a competition for new readers. Prior to that time (Philips) was always one of the leading branch activists in subscription campaigns..." But what has to be noted here is that these subscriptions, party civil liberties campaigns, and so on, in which I have been active for many years, long before Himmel was aware of the existence of our movement, all took place within the shop. The fact is that especially in the last 2 years the press, in line with convention decision took a sharp turn not only away from trade union problems, but away from posing other political problems in a manner calculated to appeal to workers. The party had another audience in mind. I cannot, however, simply disengage from this arena .

It remains true, however, that the Himmels do not regard work in the mass movement as party building work. The charge that "my" line in the union is contrary to the party line will be discussed but with those who have some understanding of what this work means.

A. Philips