

Discussion Bulletin

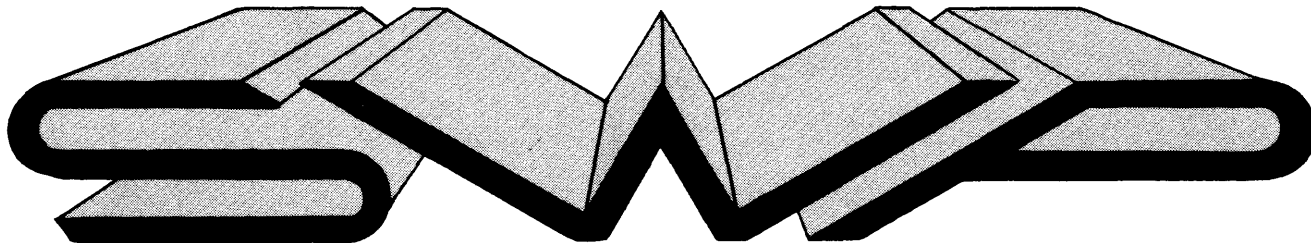
Published by
SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY
873 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10003

Vol. 26, No. 9
October, 1967

CONTENTS

REMARKS ON THE ANTIWAR MOVEMENT

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A few remarks about the pre-convention discussion in the YSA on the antiwar movement are more than in order for discussion in the party. In my opinion some party members' contributions in the discussion left much to be desired both organizationally and theoretically, and it, therefore, is necessary for the party to clarify its views on several very important questions.

The first question I would like to deal with is the organizational one, that is, how should party members function as members of another organization? As many comrades already know party comrades put forward two different political positions at the last YSA national convention. This was, of course, not in accordance with the established principles and traditions of our movement in regard to how party members should act in an outside organization. First, there was the "Antiwar Resolution (NEC Draft)" which presented the position of the national leadership of the YSA. This was followed by "The Chase, Meseke, Sherrill and Barzman Antiwar Resolution," which was presented as a counter-resolution to the NEC draft, and finally, there came the rebuttal to this counter-resolution written on behalf of the NEC by Lew Jones, defending the NEC Draft. These three documents outlined sharp political differences among party comrades in an organization outside the party. Such procedure of discussing different political lines in an outside organization can only place the party in a most impossible situation, and can in no way be tolerated by it. While party members have a right to offer their criticisms, they do not have a right to present a different political line in the way comrades Chase, Meseke, Sherrill, and Barzman did. If they felt they had a political position different from that of other party comrades, they should be raising their differences and fighting for them in the present party discussion. However, if they felt they only had criticism to offer, then they should have acted accordingly, and not have constituted themselves as a political tendency with a substitute political position.

In his remarks on the YSA convention to the New York branch, Tom Kerry called attention to the problem I have outlined above, but said that the party comrades had not, in his opinion, committed the error out of any maliciousness, but rather out of ignorance of the party's organizational procedures. My talks with comrades gave me the same impression. Such a conclusion should lead party comrades to raise the question as to the party's education of the young members on this organizational problem, for this is not the first time that there have been two different political lines put forward by party members in the YSA -- but the fourth! Both the Robertsonites and Wolforthites as well as Fox advanced different political lines in the YSA, and I cannot remember

the party's raising this organizational principle in regard to them. It seems that the party had the responsibility of at least raising the question, if for no other reason than making the record for educational purposes of the party's young members. Should the party have done so, the error committed by the authors of the counter-resolution document might have been avoided. The above facts show that the party should state in writing the correct procedure for party YSAers to follow, or any party member working in an outside organization. This should be a necessary task for the party at the coming convention.

The second question is more complicated, and concerns the theoretical positions outlined in the YSA pre-convention discussion. My first reaction to the opposition document written by Chase, Meseke, Sherrill and Barzman (CMBS resolution) was that it was "mis-named. It is a criticism of the NEC draft resolution and a criticism of past actions, but it cannot be considered as a substitute resolution." (From a brief letter I wrote to the YSA NC March 20, 1967, setting forth some of my criticisms of the NEC draft resolution.) At that time I could see no real basic political differences between the NEC Draft and the opposition document. I personally, however, sympathized with some of the opposition's criticisms since they paralleled some of my own criticisms of the NEC Draft. I felt that "any resolution we write must be as clear and as precise as possible. The NEC draft resolutions do not meet these two minimum requirements. The English is atrocious in places, and there are numerous ambiguities.

"Politically, I have found small errors, such as referring to Indonesia as only a conjunctural defeat -- this can be easily corrected of course by merely saying ' . . . and the more serious defeat in Indonesia has emboldened . . . ' -- to much more serious things. For example, it seems to me that there is a contradiction in the section on the draft. If the 'draft issue can be an important bridge for bringing people into the antiwar and radical movements,' then why can't 'a campaign against the draft . . . open [up] an avenue of effective action'? The whole section on the draft itself is, in my opinion, completely inadequate for our future work taking into consideration that our position should be extremely clear on this point since it will undoubtedly be one of the main questions our opponents will continue to try to use against us. Without a clear position our opponents will be able to make inroads into our effectiveness, and now is the proper time to work out such a position so that we can be ready for them."

I also felt that, "In general, the draft resolutions are a bit superficial, especially in regard to the experiences in the last period, and they offer no real overall perspective nor the possibilities for our work in the coming period.

For example, there was no analysis of why the Newsletter did not become the organ around which 'a broad, militant campus-based national formation' was built. The resolutions only stated that the Student Mobilization Committee now provides that 'opportunity projected by the Newsletter for so long.' And then I was especially astonished by the fact that the Young Socialist is not mentioned in any way in regard to its role in the antiwar movement and the possibilities that exist for it as an instrument to intervene in the movement. Indeed, the YS is not even mentioned in the antiwar resolution!

"My conclusion, then, after reading these two documents, was that they were completely inadequate to prepare our organization for the coming period and that it was necessary to write two new resolutions." (Ibid.)

It was with the above conviction that I read the CMBS document and found it very interesting in the light of some of my own criticisms. Regardless of what one may think of the criticisms in the CMBS resolution, one must at least admit that their method of systematically retracing past actions and involvement in the antiwar movement, in order to iron out a program based on past experiences, is in itself a subtle and enlightening criticism of the almost say-nothing-of-the-past NEC draft resolution. In fact, only with the addition of Lew's document in defense of the NEC Draft did the Draft itself become a more completed analysis and many of its ambiguities clarified, although dozens of new ambiguities were added. Nevertheless, Lew's document made clear to me for the first time that a real difference in political line did exist, not because he clarified the opposition's position -- if he did anything he misunderstood and muddled their position -- but because he clarified the NEC position!

On page 14 of Lew's document, he finally outlined what is obviously not only the NEC, but also the party's fundamental appreciation of the antiwar movement, on which the party has based all if its past actions by both direct and indirect intervention.

Lew starts his odious task of trying to prove that the authors of the CMBS resolution have adopted a sectarian political line, by declaring that the NEC's present position is in agreement and consistent with the past YSA position adopted over the last two years. He continues by pointing out three quotations in the CMBS resolution which he finds especially condemning. "On page 13 they state, 'Bring the Troops Home Now . . . is the only principled basis of opposition to U.S. imperialist war.' On the same page, they say, 'Therefore it is our main task to build an organizational form in the antiwar movement which can adopt this slogan (withdrawal of troops) as its central demand.' And,

on page 10, they say, speaking of the Student Mobilization Committee, 'In reality this formation is not based on the demand for withdrawal. Again, as in the Spring Mobilization Committee, withdrawal is just one of three demands which are subordinated to the central task of building the mobilization.' "

(I said above that if anything, Lew "misunderstood and muddled" the opposition's position. And so as to not be accused of making unsubstantiated statements, I would like to point out at least one of his many distortions. Following the passage just quoted above, Lew added a paragraph in parenthesis, which reads in part:

"(This last statement contains the absurdity that the Student Mobilization Committee is 'not based on the demand for withdrawal,' because 'end the draft' and 'end university complicity' are also slogans the committee supports. This almost defies comment." But the authors of the CMBS resolution did not say this. They said the SMC is not based on withdrawal because the withdrawal slogan as well as the other slogans "are subordinated to the central task of building the mobilization." (my emphasis) Nor does Lew ever deny the charge that the slogans "are subordinated to the central task of building the mobilization." It is Lew's misunderstanding and muddleness that almost defies comment.)

But let us examine the past position of the YSA and see just who is following in the traditions of the past resolutions. In the Political Resolution (adopted at the YSA National Convention, March, 1966,) on page 14 we find the following: "We have entered the antiwar movement not to 'make the record,' but to fight for the line of immediate withdrawal of American imperialism as the cornerstone on which the movement is built, to fight for political leadership and respect from the militants, and to compete with our opponents for the recruitment of the radicalizing forces." (my emphasis) And on page 1 we find: "We have been able to raise the political consciousness of the entire movement by supporting and organizing around the theme, 'Bring the Troops Home Now!'" (my emphasis) The statements that Lew has found so central and condemning in the CMBS resolution sound like nothing more than paraphrases of the very basic ideas advanced in the 1966 resolution. Perhaps it is not the general line of the NEC but rather the CMBS general line that "the YSA has [supposedly] been following for the past two years."

Let us examine Lew's position further. He states, "These three quotations, as well as the thrust of their criticisms in general, indicate that they do not understand the essential character of the antiwar movement.

"The antiwar movement, by which we mean the whole coalition [!] which has been built up around the single issue

of struggle and action against the war, is deeply, profoundly anti-imperialist in character. It is not true that the withdrawal wing is the anti-imperialist wing within the larger movement -- the whole movement is anti-imperialist."

If Lew claims this position to be a continuation of "the line the YSA has been following for the past two years," and if what he has outlined above is "the essential character of the antiwar movement," then why is it that one cannot find anything of this "essential character" in the past documents? Was any mention of the "essential character of the antiwar movement" left out of the previous resolutions? Nor is this "essential character" explicit in the NEC Draft! These are not small oversights. And if only antiwar organization constitutes anti-imperialist organization, one would wonder what was meant by such phrases in the 1966 YSA Political Resolution as "All these events have underscored the deepening role of U.S. imperialism as gendarme for world imperialism, and the importance of antiwar and anti-imperialist organization in the U.S." (my emphasis) Here the antiwar organization and the anti-imperialist organization are clearly separated. Was this separation a slip of the pen? I think not, and I think it is Lew who has introduced a new line conflicting with the one adopted at the 1966 YSA convention, which should have been carried out in practice.

On the other hand, perhaps the theoretical analysis of the 1966 YSA Political Resolution was not correct, and although not recognizing it themselves, the NEC of the YSA has unwittingly stumbled across the correct approach, and it has been summed up in the NEC Draft and Lew's document. Let us look at the new theory on its own merits.

Lew says, "This is why we are for the broadest possible coalition [!] around action against the war, and why we do not make acceptance of the withdrawal slogan a condition for our participation in and leadership of united actions. From this view of the antiwar movement's deeply anti-imperialist character . . ." This is quite a contradiction. The whole antiwar movement is deeply and profoundly anti-imperialist, but we cannot ask it to adopt an anti-imperialist slogan! Lew does not assign to the antiwar movement its anti-imperialist character because of its objectives which are epitomized in the different slogans, but rather, says it is anti-imperialist because it is. "The test of anti-imperialism in a period of war is action against the imperialist war in Vietnam; this is the concrete test of anti-imperialism in the present period." This sounds like we have fallen into the traditional morass of the American radical movement -- action for action's sake.

Would Lew consider any and all antiwar actions to be anti-imperialist? For example, would he consider draft card burning or a "peace" candidate running on a platform against the war to be anti-imperialist actions? We think

he would not. But are not these actions against the war while the war is in process?

Lew might like to qualify his position, then, by saying only certain actions like street demonstrations against the war can be considered anti-imperialist. However, are all street demonstrations against the war anti-imperialist? For example, if SANE or some other right wing organization such as Women's Strike for Peace, organized a street demonstration under the reformist slogan of "Negotiate!", would this be an anti-imperialist demonstration? We assume Lew would reply in the negative. The character of such a demonstration could be changed to one of anti-imperialism, only if the reformist slogan is changed to an anti-imperialist slogan.

It is evident from the above that action alone is not "the concrete test of anti-imperialism in the present period," and that whether the war is in process or not is irrelevant to the question of whether the antiwar movement is anti-imperialist or not. It is also evident that the movement as a whole is not anti-imperialist -- neither objectively nor subjectively -- and that program still remains the principled dividing line between reformism and anti-imperialism. Those forces in the antiwar movement who are struggling for reformist slogans and/or diversionary actions cannot be considered in any way as being anti-imperialist. Only those who project a program of struggling for both anti-imperialist actions and slogans can be considered anti-imperialist. The YSA should reaffirm the position taken by the 1966 YSA Political Resolution which stated, "In its social composition the antiwar movement is petty bourgeois, and as such is dependent on one of the basic classes for its politics. Thus, the question of program becomes dominant, for there is no such thing as non-class 'movement' politics. Whose interests it would be serving would be determined totally by its program."

Lew divides the tasks of struggling for withdrawal and struggling to build an "anti-imperialist" antiwar movement, and relegates the former to a subordinate position. On page 15 he says, "Our primary task is not to 'build an organizational form in the antiwar movement which can adopt' the withdrawal slogan." If it is not "now" our primary task, when will it be our primary task? But then, why should it ever be our primary task, if only be acting the antiwar movement is deeply and profoundly anti-imperialist?

The crux of the problem seems to be Lew's idea that there is a contradiction between struggling for withdrawal and building the mass demonstrations like April 15. He says, "Implicit in this approach and behind this advocacy of verbal radicalism and 'making the record' (what record?) lies the concept of reversing the priorities in our antiwar work.

"Instead of the primary task being to build the widest possible unity in action against this imperialist war, and fighting for our slogans, demands, ideas, etc., within this framework, they would have us open a fight to make withdrawal the central demand and not 'subordinate it to' building mass actions!" This shows that the withdrawal slogan has become for Lew only "verbal radicalism," something that stands in the way of building mass actions. We must remind Lew that withdrawal is not a question of priority that can be shifted back and forth; it is the principled cornerstone of our attempt to build an anti-imperialist antiwar movement. The struggle for withdrawal and the struggle to build an anti-imperialist antiwar movement are one and the same. They are inseparable; to give up or subordinate one means to give up or subordinate both. Even if the withdrawal slogan did stand in the way of building mass actions, then the mass actions would have to be given up and not withdrawal.

But does the withdrawal demand stand in the way of building mass actions? If other participants in the antiwar movement cannot agree with us on the withdrawal slogan -- the absolute minimum upon which we can agree programmatically -- then we should propose only a united front of action against the war in Vietnam. We would demand that there be no official slogans and that each group has the right to build and participate in the demonstration under their own banners. With this agreed -- and this should be the simplest thing to get an agreement on -- we would participate in a committee to coordinate and publicize the action. This would be real non-exclusion, and would offer the best prospects for building the largest demonstration possible. At the same time, it would not contradict the main activity of our antiwar work, that is, building the anti-imperialist wing of the antiwar movement. This would probably take the organizational form of programmatic united front based on withdrawal through which we would work and participate in the antiwar movement as a whole. At the same time, this united front based on withdrawal would initiate and carry out its own independent actions and propaganda work.

Our principled participation is based on program and we never subordinate this program to united action. A united action resulting from such subordination would only be temporary and illusionary, and would in the long run, not only lead the antiwar movement to support the liberal bourgeoisie, but also would destroy the foundations and traditions of our own party.

In the present antiwar movement, the slogans like "Negotiate," "End the War," "Stop the Bombing," "Cease Fire Now," "Negotiate with the NLF," etc., represent the ideology of the liberal bourgeoisie, and any concession to these slogans is crossing class lines.

We must understand that as a tendency in the working class, we can only forge temporary united fronts of action with opposing class forces, because their ultimate aims are diametrically opposed to ours. With other tendencies in the working class, however, we can find points of programmatic agreement, and thereby forge united fronts with them, when it is to our advantage, in order to realize the common objectives with united action.

Following the quotations cited above, Lew continues, "This approach could have only one result and effect, whatever the authors subjectively intend. That effect would be to split the movement against the imperialist war in Vietnam."

This paragraph is supposed to be a clinching one in Lew's argument. With careful examination, however, one discovers that the effectiveness of what Lew says does not derive from any objective rationality, but rather from one's psychological reaction to the words imperialist and split.

By the use of the word imperialist in the above quote, Lew leads one to believe that the whole movement against the war is anti-imperialist. As we have shown above, the movement as a whole is against the war, but it is not against the imperialist war. This projection of our own class consciousness to the whole petty bourgeois antiwar movement expresses a tendency to adapt ourselves to petty bourgeois currents by obscuring fundamental differences.

Lew cries, "Don't split the movement!" And why shouldn't we split this movement or any other movement? Didn't we and shouldn't we now split the movement on the question of withdrawal vs. negotiations? Don't we now and shouldn't we split the movement on the question as to the forms of action the antiwar movement should take? (If we can subordinate our anti-imperialist slogans to unity, then why couldn't or shouldn't we subordinate our proposals for action to unity? Once you start subordinating, just how far do you go and what index do you use for determining just how far you can go? In reality, our participation is based on a principled program and this is never subordinated. There are only tactical considerations of how best to put this program into effect.)

We not only should but we are obligated to split from the petty bourgeois mouth pieces of bourgeois ideology. We should split the movement programmatically and organizationally -- every day of the week if need be on the principled questions of anti-imperialist slogans vs. reformist slogans and anti-imperialist actions vs. reformist actions, and we should be in the forefront of building the anti-imperialist wing of the antiwar movement and trying to make it the dominant wing. We in no way hold the words split,

minority, faction or any others of this nature sacred either inside the party or outside. What determines our course of action is program -- not fear of splits, of forming factions or of being in a minority.

There are also some far reaching complications involved in Lew's theory. The antiwar movement has been described by us as primarily a middle-class movement. But in this primarily petty bourgeois movement one also finds liberal bourgeois elements as well as representatives of the working class. (Even if the liberal bourgeois elements are not present in person, their ideology is reflected in the movement through many liberal and reformist organizations.)

What Lew in actual fact has to logically admit then is that a section of the greatest imperialist ruling class in the world has gone over to a position of anti-imperialism in regard to Vietnam. If the bourgeois ideology becomes anti-imperialist when it is taken into the street -- who is to say that the liberal bourgeoisie cannot and will not take it into the street -- then we must theoretically gird ourselves for the theoretical possibility of a bourgeois imperialist party in the United States becoming transformed into an anti-imperialist party. If this were true, our task would become a struggle for reforms instead of revolution. The Stalinists or some other working class tendency might even use Lew's theory to justify their class-collaborationist support of a liberal bourgeois ticket à la the Wallace campaign.

There is one more theoretical question I would like to take up before leaving Lew's document. This is the question of the pacifists. On page 7 in the NEC draft one reads, "The position of the left wing pacifists is an unprecedented one for pacifism, at least in the midst of a war, and has laid the basis for fruitful united front work with them." (my emphasis) And on the first page of Lew's document we find, "From the beginning our attitude toward the antiwar movement has been based on the characteristic which makes it unique compared to past pacifist movements." (my emphasis) And why is this pacifist movement "unique"? "The present antiwar movement is distinguished from classical pacifism above all by the fact that it has developed and grown in explicit opposition to the shooting war being waged now against the Vietnamese." Has classical pacifism then gone through a qualitative change, and if so, what is the sociological explanation for such a phenomenon? Or has the classical Marxist attitude toward pacifism always been mistaken? Can the petty bourgeoisie play an independent role? Both the NEC draft and Lew mark this qualitative change from classical pacifism, but they fail to analyze it or give us any reason for it. Such an analysis is definitely called for, in order that we might add it to the arsenal of Marxism and advance our struggle throughout the world movement.

Let us consider the question whether the petty bourgeois pacifist movement has really played an independent role during a war, contrary to "classical" pacifist movements. It is my opinion that they have not and that the NEC has been too narrow in their approach. They have not looked at the problem from an internationalist viewpoint nor taken into consideration the nature of the war.

The war in Vietnam is not a classical war. It is not a struggle with another national bourgeoisie for a redivision of the world's markets as was WWI and WWII. Nor is it a colonial war. Vietnam was never our colony, and although the bourgeoisie at first tried to justify their intervention in Indo-China by declaring its riches vital for the U.S. economic needs, they themselves have discontinued using this excuse. Not even the bourgeoisie can realistically hope to justify spending 30 billion dollars to save or gain a few million dollars of investment.

It is clear that U.S. intervention in Vietnam was and is for political reasons as the NEC Draft correctly pointed out on page 1. The U.S. intervened in Vietnam to stop, not the colonial revolution, but the socialist revolution with an eye towards rolling it back from Hanoi all the way to Moscow. The war in Vietnam represents the focal point of the international class struggle -- the workers states on the one hand and the U.S. capitalist class on the other.

Only by understanding that this war represents class struggle can we begin to understand that the petty bourgeois peace movement in the U.S. and the split in the pacifist ranks are not unique or unprecedented phenomena. These two phenomena are indirect and direct reflections of the heroic and strong resistance of the Vietnamese freedom fighters representing the interest of the working class.

The valiant resistance by the Vietnamese has caused some elements among the capitalist class of the U.S. to begin to have doubts about the overall value of their original aggressive tactics. Some of them have even come to the conclusion that the present tactics are harmful to their interests. This has provoked a split among the capitalist class of which the petty bourgeois peace movement is only a reflection. In fact, the development of the antiwar movement has paralleled the development of the rift in the capitalist class, and will continue to do so until the working class in the U.S. enters the ranks of the antiwar movement.

At the same time the valiant struggle of the Vietnamese has won for them partisans for their just cause and varying degrees of direct support from a few elements among the petty bourgeoisie and even from some of the professional pacifists.

The above analysis shows that the petty bourgeois movement in the U.S. is in no way unique or unprecedented nor plays an independent role. On the contrary, it only reflects indirectly and directly the varying strength between the two basic classes -- the proletariat and the capitalist -- thereby confirming the traditional Marxist analysis.

We should have no illusions about the present petty bourgeois peace movement, either that it is unique or anti-imperialist. Should the ruling class in the U.S. decide to launch a full scale war against China and/or the Soviet Union, or should they decide to negotiate their way out of the war as in Korea and at Geneva, the petty bourgeois pacifists including most of the militant left wing pacifists would not hesitate to fall in step and support to the hilt their bourgeois mentors. To prepare against such a treachery of the future, it is necessary to organize and build immediately an anti-imperialist antiwar faction based on the principle of immediate withdrawal. It is through and only through such an organization that we can educate our friends as to why only the slogan for immediate withdrawal represents principled opposition to the war and recognizes the self-determination of the Vietnamese people. It is only with the withdrawal organization that we will win the best of the petty bourgeois and semi-proletarian elements to revolutionary working class politics as well as help our Vietnamese comrades in their just struggle for socialism.

Before leaving Lew's document, I would like to raise one more issue: what could have been the motive for Lew's document and especially his tone in the document? If it can be argued that Lew introduced a new theory only because he was mistaken theoretically, then what can be the reason for his tone?

When any criticism is offered for the first time, it must be treated as a sincere and honest opinion. All honest criticism should not only be accepted by any revolutionary leadership, but should even be solicited by it. Any revolutionary leadership is above defending their own personal position, and realizes that the most important thing is to hammer out democratically a correct program. If a leadership has made a mistake, it should be only too willing to recognize it, admit it openly and correct it by doing whatever is necessary.

Lew in his document, however seemed to have lost all perspective of hammering out a program. Instead of answering the CMBS resolution's criticisms in a patient tone in order to explain, convince and correct their mistaken view, Lew acted as if they were a long standing and hardened minority, and his tone was more in line with one calculated to evoke hatred, to deepen the differences and to break the ranks. Such action is impermissible and can not but help to miseducate the young cadres.

The above analysis shows that the leadership of the YSA has made, at least theoretically, an adaptation to certain currents among the petty bourgeoisie. This brings into question the past actions of the YSA and calls for an examination by the party of the criticisms made in the CMBS resolution. But Lew's theoretical analysis raises an even more important question: Is Lew's analysis his own or does it reflect a change that has taken place in the party itself? This question is put into deeper relief by the fact that the party has neither recognized any change in its own stated line nor criticized the theoretical analysis introduced by Lew. With this in mind, let us examine the above question in regard to the PC draft resolution, "American Politics and the 1968 Presidential Campaign."

A change in the revolutionary line of a party is usually reflected in a change in its revolutionary terminology. For example, we found in the NEC draft and in Lew's document that the word pacifism had an "unprecedented" and "unique" air about it. Let us now find that same word in the PC draft. On page 12 we find the term, "anti-imperialist pacifism." This is truly unique and most likely unprecedented in Marxist writings. Anti-imperialism is a trait of the working class while pacifism is a trait of the middle class, and to cross the two is to make a mockery of scientific Marxist nomenclature. It is pertinent to note that while Lew added a word to distinguish the old meaning of pacifism, the PC draft added a word to give pacifism a new meaning. While Lew's and the PC's methods are different, the net results are the same -- to justify the foregone conclusion that the petty bourgeois pacifist movement in the U.S. or at least a section of it, has become anti-imperialist.

Let us look at another example. Page 18 of the PC draft contains the sentence: "In this sense the 1968 presidential campaign was off to an early start for the ruling class, the antiwar movement, the mass movement [!] and the radical vanguard." The use of the term radical vanguard in this sentence, is without doubt in reference to ourselves. But on page 18 we find a sentence which reads, "Today the radicalized students and antiwar and black freedom movements are in the vanguard with labor lagging far behind." Here we learn that the radicals are the students, and that not only the "radicalized students" but also "the antiwar and black freedom movements are in the vanguard." We were the only vanguard, and now everyone has become the vanguard without the slightest reference to political program.

Another sentence in the PC draft reads, "The main difference between the union-led militancy of the 1944-46 period and the emerging radicalization will be its tendency to move onto a political level." Who has ever heard of an a-political radical in any political terminology, let alone in Marxist terminology? The students have become radicalized we are to understand, but they have yet "to move onto

a political level." Pray tell, of what are they radicals then if not politics? And if they are not political radicals, just what kind of vanguard is this? All this is similar to climbing into the carriage only to discover that we have hitched up the horse with his backend pointing towards town, and whip in hand we are staring him in the face. To relieve ourselves from this impossible situation, we must turn the horse around. What is taking place on the whole, is not a radicalization but a politicalization. The traditional and even dictionary meaning of a radical, is one who has adopted extreme views, and more specifically in the terminology of our movement, it refers to those who have adopted the idea that the capitalist class must be overthrown. On the other hand, politicalization refers to only an increased interest in politics or in certain political questions. The PC draft confuses these two terms throughout the text, to say nothing of the concept of vanguard.

Lew referred to the alliance(s) of the different participants in the antiwar movement in three different ways -- coalition, united front and bloc -- using them interchangeably without distinction and even combining them -- "broad united front type coalition"(!). The PC draft also uses the concepts of coalition and united front interchangeably. The term coalition has traditionally been used by Marxists to describe governments or political regimes which have representatives of more than one class. This term has traditionally been used by our movement to describe the support given to bourgeois candidates by working class tendencies such as the SP and CP. We have accused them over and over of playing coalition politics. Our traditional use of the term is, therefore, directly related to and in accordance with the traditional Marxist use of the term.

In the PC draft we denounce and correctly so, the bourgeois liberals'* and the CP's treacherous politics of supporting bourgeois candidates as being class-collaborationist but no where in the draft can we find the term coalition used in the sense as described above and used throughout the 1966 YSA Political Resolution. (*It is not explained how the bourgeois liberals can be class-collaborationists by supporting their own class.)

A denunciation of coalition politics just does not exist in the PC draft. The term coalition is now reserved for something entirely different. Nor can any reference be found in the 1966 YSA Political Resolution to the term coalition as it is now used in the PC draft. What does the new concept of coalition mean and how does it differ from the old one? What sociological phenomena has prompted such a change in terminology? Is it still proper for us to denounce coalition politics? In forming alliances the traditional concept used by revolutionary Marxists has been the united front. So why do we now find ourselves involved

in coalitions? Just how do these coalitions differ from united fronts? If there are no differences, then why the use of the term coalition instead of united front, and why the changing of the traditional use of the term coalition? We are at least owed an explanation and a definition for the expense of our support.

What can possibly be the reason for all the confusion in terminology? Could it be that the party itself is making an adaptation to certain currents among the petty bourgeoisie? Could it be that the party is trying to justify such an adaptation by identifying these currents with us and by obscuring the fundamental differences? Is this the meaning of the new term "anti-imperialist pacifism"? Is this the reason for identifying all these young students as "radicals" so that they can be in the "vanguard" just like us? If what we have seen up to now does not indicate a positive yes to the above questions, then it does legitimately raise such questions, and so, we will continue our examination.

We saw in Lew's document that his blanket defense for the NEC's past actions and for the perspective of building the whole antiwar movement was because he considered the antiwar movement as a whole anti-imperialist. Let us see if this same analysis and perspective exist in the PC draft.

On page 12 in the PC draft we read, "While a shift towards political sympathy with the struggles of the workers and peasants around the world is under way, moral indignation remains the central element around which these students mobilize and around which new waves of reinforcements for the antiwar movement can be won. The anti-administration attitude and anti-imperialist pacifism of the students, intellectuals and masses express a wholly progressive sentiment." We should ask, first of all, if this "anti-administration attitude" and/or "anti-imperialist pacifism" of the students and intellectuals is expressed in support for a King-Spock type of "peace" ticket, would we still consider this to be "wholly progressive"? As for the term "anti-imperialist pacifism," how can any type, form, cut or breed of pacifism express "a wholly progressive sentiment"? Since when has program ceased to be our criteria in determining the character of a movement?

We also learn from the above cited paragraph that this "anti-administration and anti-imperialist pacifism" is not politically motivated, but rather, "moral indignation remains the central element around which these students mobilize and around which new waves of reinforcements for the antiwar movement can be won." Therefore, it follows and is definitely inferred that since this moral indignation "expresses a wholly progressive sentiment," it has become our task to moralize and not necessarily radicalize. In other words, building the movement as a whole and not the anti-imperialist wing, seems to have become our central tasks.

(It seems to me this attitude has already been expressed in our press, not only by what has been said, but even more by what has not been said. For example, the word imperialism has become somewhat of a rarity, and it seems that if there are such "wholly progressive" tendencies in the antiwar movement such as the "anti-imperialist pacifists" that the word imperialism should be coming more a part of our daily vocabulary, rather than dropping out of it.)

This is further corroborated by the attitude the PC draft takes towards the mass demonstrations. On page 13 we read, "The mass demonstrations are the principled form of independent political action available to the antiwar movement . . ." And on page 14 we read, "The actions in the streets, which have been carried on by these broad united fronts are wholly progressive and objectively anti-imperialist in character. That is why the issue of mass action has been the central dividing line in the movement." Here we are reminded of Lew's attitude that only action is the concrete test of anti-imperialism during a war. The important thing to note is the criteria used in the PC draft to determine the character of an action. We find no reference to program whatsoever. A certain type of action represents independent political action and is objectively anti-imperialist regardless of its political line. Isn't the political line also a dividing line in the movement? The PC draft informs us on page 13 that, "They [students] played the central role in the fight to win the antiwar movement over to what has become the pivotal political demand: 'Withdraw the U.S. troops.'" What does "pivotal" mean here? Is it synonymous with "cornerstone"? If so and there is no political dividing line in the antiwar movement, then why haven't these mass demonstrations been carried out under the slogan of withdrawal? In reality, the party seems to view the antiwar movement's acceptance -- for the time being -- of the withdrawal slogan on an equal par with the other slogans, as being sufficient -- a pivotal political demand -- and is not concerned in the least with giving the withdrawal demand an organizational form -- making it the cornerstone of our organizational efforts.

On page 13 in the PC draft we find, "Many of the features and resulting tactical problems of the antiwar movement have been unprecedented." As in the NEC draft and Lew's document we learn that this movement has unprecedented features, and therefore, old style tactics will no longer do and unprecedented ones are required. In the next paragraph we are informed as to what some of these unprecedented features are: "The entire antiwar movement has developed and grown prior to a general labor radicalization. It has seen a split in the ranks of the pacifists that resulted in the emergence of a radical wing that has consistently opposed an imperialist war, not only before it broke out but even more militantly while it is being fought." The similarity with

what Lew said needs no comment, and as Lew and the NEC failed to do, the PC draft does not give us any explanation as to why the petty bourgeoisie during a period of labor quiescence in the U.S. have been able to oppose a war "while it is being fought." We are only told that this is "unprecedented," as if a section of the petty bourgeoisie in the bowels of the greatest imperialist monster have defied their historical role as a class, and therefore, unprecedented tactics are called for.

But one finds in the above quote the same mistake Lew made. While it is true that the petty bourgeoisie have opposed the war in Vietnam, it is not true that they have opposed it as an imperialist war. While it may be true that a militant wing of the pacifists have agreed to the withdrawal slogan and to the tactic of mass actions as the best way to struggle against the war, it does not follow that they are "anti-imperialist pacifists," i.e., consciously struggling against imperialism. Lew as well as the PC draft have substituted throughout our consciousness for not only the militant pacifists but also for the movement as a whole. For example, on page 13 of the PC draft we find, "Unlike the left-bourgeois liberals, the students by and large are not inclined to be patient or half-way critics of imperialist policies." Here we find even that the left-bourgeois liberals, although patient or half-way critics, are, nevertheless, critics of imperialist policies. And again on the same page we read, "the students from the first originated and pushed for mass mobilizations as the main mode of action against the imperialist warmakers." On page 12, however, we were told, "This student radicalization [!] has special features and limits. Although it originated in response to events in the class struggle, it has not unfolded along class lines or developed a socialist or Marxist understanding of the world conflicts in progress. It has remained primarily a movement of moral protest in reaction to the hypocrisy and brutality of world capitalism." And these are our same thorough, unpatient critics of "imperialist policies" and organizers of mass actions against the "imperialist war-makers"?

Is or isn't the party trying to build an anti-imperialist antiwar movement? Or does the party think that the antiwar movement is already anti-imperialist? Does the party have illusions about the character of the antiwar movement or at least a section of it? Again, if the above has not already answered these questions, it has at least raised them.

The PC draft is by no small means taken with the students. They are credited with having accomplished everything as one can see from the few quotes cited above. Indeed, they have reached heights unattainable in the history of Marxist writings. On page 5 and 6 we are told, "Due to the mounting

costs of the war, it becomes increasingly difficult for the ruling class to grant concessions to labor. The workers are thereby compelled to put up greater resistance in order to maintain their standards of living, job conditions and basic rights. The same holds even more for the black masses in their struggle for full equality and for the youth in the high schools and colleges who want a society that measures up to their needs and ideals." Here the students are given a place in the struggle against capitalism, not of equal importance to the working class, but "even more" important than the working class and equal to that of the black masses! Have the students become a new class or a super-exploited section of the working class? In the quote cited above that read, "Unlike the left-bourgeois liberals, the students . . ." we note very clearly that the distinction between the left-bourgeois liberals and the students is not a political one, but a class distinction. Are not there left-liberal students?

The students, it seems, are not only considered as a new class, but also as a radical and even more potentially revolutionary class than the working class. We recall the sentence, "The main difference between the union-led militancy of the 1944-46 period and the emerging radicalization [!] will be its tendency to move onto a political level." It seems it was only "militancy" in the 1944-46 period, and there was no tendency on the part of workers "to move onto a political level." At the same time, we learn that in the present period of "radicalization" the petty bourgeois students seem to have a built-in tendency "to move onto a political level." We read on page 13, "The students have strengthened the left wing of the antiwar forces and continually pressured the conservative wing into more radical actions." And, "The students pressed for the united fronts of all tendencies and organizations that was actually constituted around periodic national protests and which has been the main organizational vehicle of the antiwar movement." But who makes up the right wing; for the most part, are not these students also? Don't students make up the greater part of SDS's membership, as well as every other social democratic youth organization who are in the conservative wing? Are not the ranks of the DuBois Clubs and the CP youth made up primarily of students? Who are the draft card burners, draft resisters and conscientious objectors? This is not to mention the great numbers of students who fill the ranks of the far right-wing organizations as well as many others who make up Johnson's most vociferous supporters of the war.

On page 13 we also learn, "The antiwar movement has been the arena of continual struggle between the independent [!] thrust of the student radicals . . ." This only confirms what was questioned above, that the PC draft sees a section

of the petty bourgeoisie playing an independent role. Now more specifically we learn that that section is the students. Nor is the Draft's reference to students really all-inclusive. From the many references to the students' activity in the antiwar movement, we can infer that primarily this reference is in regard to college students, and this is confirmed on page 18. We read, "The weakness of today's student radicals [!] is not due simply to their middle-class background. Actually they are much more numerous than previous generations of students and a far higher percentage come from working-class families."

We should also note that upon reading the entire paragraph in which the quote just cited above is found, one discovers that the word simply has more the meaning of "not because of" than "in addition to." And what is the main reason for the students' political weakness? We are informed, "Their political weakness is primarily [!] due to the fact that they are familiar with only an uncombative labor movement and see in practice no working-class alternative to the ruling-class parties."

The college students have become an independent, radical, vanguard class who because of their needs and ideals as well as high morality have been compelled to fight the imperialists. Although they have one political weakness, it is not really their fault, but the workers'. One does not have to use his imagination after reading the PC draft in order to come up with this absurd conclusion.

The students are in no way unique, nor do they represent an independent force of any kind. For the most part, their reaction represents the typical petty bourgeois attitude. The petty bourgeoisie do not like the war and are among its most vociferous critics. The right wing reflects the more aggressive sector of the capitalist class, and they demand stopping the war by bringing Hanoi, Peking and/or Moscow to their knees by what ever fire power it might take. "Get it all over with, and let me rest in peace," they cry. The petty bourgeois antiwar movement, on the other hand, reflects that section of the capitalist class which is critical of the war, and demands an end to all hostilities. They cry, "We're sick of war; stop the war and let us all live in peace. Flower-power, not fire-power; love, not war." Both of these reactions has the same origin -- the disgruntledness of the petty bourgeoisie. He does not want to send his son to war nor go to die himself. He does not want to pay the higher prices and taxes caused by militarism. Therefore, the petty bourgeoisie is susceptible more than any one else to all gimmicks and solutions which promise him "peace", because above all, he is a pacifist and wants peace. Although the greater part of the petty bourgeoisie in the U.S. remain outside the two extreme tendencies above, they are, nevertheless, fed up with the war, and their attitude is best summed up in the often heard sentence: "I don't

care how they clear that mess up over there, but they got to do something and do it fast." The students on the whole are no different. The petty bourgeoisie, especially the student, does not react because he is "compelled" to defend himself and his needs as the worker or the black man is. There is a qualitative difference. The petty bourgeoisie reacts out of frustration and only because he can afford to react, and then he reacts in the most contradictory ways.

In the PC draft there is much said by what is not said. Where does one find a class analysis of the war in Vietnam? Where does one find a class analysis of the antiwar movement in the U.S.? Where does one find references to program in order to determine whose interests are being served? Where does the PC draft say that the withdrawal slogan is the principled cornerstone on which an anti-imperialist antiwar movement is to be built? Where does one find the idea that an organized anti-imperialist wing based on withdrawal in the antiwar movement will be our most effective weapon in countering the King-Spock type "peace" candidates and winning supporters for our own candidates? Where does one find the necessary clarity, precision and firmness in expression and terminology? Where does one find an analysis of our past intervention in the antiwar movement, its successes and failures, and based on this analysis, a clear perspective for our future work? All this and much more is missing. It is evident by now that these missing parts are not missing by accident. The party has changed its line without formerly recognizing it, and is making an adaptation to certain currents among the petty bourgeoisie in the antiwar movement. Finally this adaptation is no less expressed and epitomized in two of the three slogans advanced by the PC draft -- "Stop the war; abolish the capitalist draft; bring the troops home now!"

"Stop the war," can in no way be considered an anti-imperialist slogan. On the contrary, it is only another way of saying "Cease fire," i.e., another variation of the reformist negotiation theme only not as explicit. To the petty bourgeoisie the slogan means nothing more than a termination of military hostilities. For example, the Geneva Agreements as well as the truce in Korea stopped the war as far as the petty bourgeoisie were concerned. A section of the liberal bourgeoisie might even support a presidential candidate running under this very slogan. We should not only not advance this slogan ourselves, but we should be in the forefront of warning the most advanced elements against the dangers inherent in supporting such a slogan. It is our duty to explain that the imperialists have no right to stop the bombing or to end the war; the only right they have is to get out yesterday if not sooner. There is a qualitative difference between the reformist slogans of "Cease fire," "End the war," or "Stop the war" and the slogan for immediate withdrawal. It is our job to clarify that difference, not confuse it.

The question of military conscription represents a difficult problem for us, since it has been and will even more in the future be one of the major weapons our opponents will use against us both organizationally and politically. Clarity, precision and firmness should then be the guide lines in determining our approach to the problem. The slogan "Abolish the capitalist draft" does not live up to these guide lines, neither in relation to our opponents nor in relation to our position on conscription in general. For example, our opponents might ask, "If you are against the capitalist draft, then why not join in and support actions against the capitalist draft? Why not burn your capitalist draft card?" Nor is the slogan a transitional one. When people reach the consciousness to destroy the capitalist draft, we will be worrying about more things than just the draft. Our slogan should be more on the order of demanding that the people or the unions should control the draft. A demand of this nature fits in with the rest of our propaganda that only the people have the right to determine war -- to vote on any and all conflicts and to control conscription. It also cuts across any and all pacifist misunderstandings.

The slogans, "Stop the war" and "Abolish the capitalist draft," instead of making our position clear, precise and firm, on the contrary, blunt it, and allow our anti-imperialist perspective to become lost in the fog of petty bourgeois pacifism. Even at the expense of some of our friends having temporary misgivings with our position, we must not give the first concession to the petty bourgeois pacifists. To do otherwise, would not only deceive them, but also the working class and even more important, ourselves. This is not to say, of course, that we should not take advantage of the opportunities opened up to us by the present peace movement; it would be preposterous not to. But this in no way can be done by giving up or submerging our principled class demands into the deluge of petty bourgeois pacifism. The petty bourgeois milieu of the antiwar movement, on the contrary, demands clarity, preciseness and firmness in our activity, but first and above all in our own resolutions. The PC draft resolution not only fails in this respect, but does so in the course of justifying an adaptation to certain petty bourgeois currents, and thereby planting the seeds of an alien class ideology in our party. The dangers in such confusion loom even greater in the light that the overwhelming majority of the party's new recruits come themselves from the petty bourgeois milieu.

It is for the above reasons that the party must reject the position of the PC draft as totally unacceptable and must begin to work out a new one. In so doing, there remains one question to be answered: How has a petty bourgeois tendency been able to reflect itself in the party? It is only by answering this question that the party will be able to put itself back on the proletarian revolutionary road.

Sept. 25, 1967