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CORRECTION

Discussion Bulletin, Volume 29, Number 12, June, 1971
The first paragraph on page eight, second column, should read:

Homosexuality, like heterosexuality, brings joy and it brings sorrows. It is no better and no worse than heterosexuality. It just is.

WHY THE PANTHERS SPLIT
by Arthur Maglin, Upper West Side Branch, New York Local

In his reply to my contribution to Discussion Bulletin No. 7, Comrade Tony Thomas makes so bold as to state that his original article in the April 9 *Militant* evaluated the split in the Black Panther Party as a political rather than organizational question. I am glad that he has finally come to this realization.

However, it is unfortunately not true that this is what he wrote in *The Militant*, in which he very explicitly and unequivocally stated that Newton had recently split with Cleaver on organizational issues. To hoist Comrade Thomas by his own petard I will quote the whole sentence which contains this incorrect notion:

"Newton, who began to disagree with Cleaver on the Davis defense when he recently split with him on organizational issues—has yet to come out for united-front actions in all spheres of defense and struggle, which is the only way to politically answer Cleaver's opposition to the Davis defense."

Thus, despite Comrade Thomas' obfuscatory efforts, anyone who can read can easily discern that what Comrade Thomas originally argued in *The Militant* was that the Panthers' retreat from Black nationalism led them to a political and organizational confusion, but that they finally split on organizational grounds. (Up to the comma, I agree with this thesis.) The relevant quotation from Comrade Thomas' *Militant* article is the following:

"Neither Cleaver's faction nor Newton's faction provides an answer for Black people. None of the criticism of the other by either of these groups goes beyond the political and organizational confusion that has led them to their current situation—a political and organizational confusion that was produced by the united effort of Cleaver, Seale, Newton, Hilliard, and the rest of the Panthers' leaders."

The third sentence following this statement is the previously quoted contention that Newton split with Cleaver on *organizational issues* alone. That is undoubtedly why *The Militant* staff correctly labeled this section of Comrade Thomas' article: "Split Not Based on Politics."

In his reply to my article, Comrade Thomas indicates that I falsely paraphrased Comrade Hansen as stating that the Newton Panthers had turned toward Leninist party-building. Says Comrade Thomas: "He did not say that the Panthers led by Newton had turned toward Leninist party-building—if he had his quality as a leader of our movement would be somewhat dubious—but rather that the Panthers felt the question of guerrilla war was important enough to split about."

It would indeed have been a foolish thing for me to have stated a silly thing like that. Luckily, I didn't. What I did say was this: "Comrade Hansen indicates that the split was precipitated by a dispute over party building versus urban guerrilla warfare." This is a paraphrasing of the following quotation, given in my article, from Comrade Hansen's description of the Panther split:

"Nine of the Black Panthers on trial in New York wrote an open letter in reply to Bernadine Dohrn. The letter, published in the January 19, 1971 issue of the *East Village Other*, cited Che Guevara and Carlos Marighella with approval, and denounced the strategy of party building in the strongest terms.

"The publication of this letter by Eldridge Cleaver's faction was answered by Huey Newton's faction with immediate expulsions, and Eldridge Cleaver responded in kind. The Black Panther Party was split wide open."

Neither Comrade Hansen nor I intimated that the Newton Panther faction "had turned toward Leninist party building." We both merely indicated that the split was based on a dispute over the strategy of urban guerrilla warfare versus the strategy of building any kind of political party. Read without venom in the eye this should have been obvious.

Further, Comrade Thomas is simply wrong when he attempts to paraphrase Comrade Hansen as stating that "the Panthers felt the question of guerrilla war was important enough to split about." Comrade Hansen clearly states that the "guerrilla war" thesis was contending with a "party building" strategy.

Even so, Comrade Thomas' *Militant* article explicitly argues against the contention that the question of guerrilla war had anything to do with the Panther split. He denies the validity of the analysis "that Newton represents a 'right' wing as distinguished from Cleaver, who represents the 'pick up the gun' wing of the BPP."

In short, in attempting to reconcile his April 9 *Militant* article with Comrade Hansen's document, Comrade Thomas, rather than admit his original error, has chosen instead to pretend that he never said what he said. Worse, he projects his own apparent confusion onto me, sowing the seeds of confusion around generally in the process.

I am glad that Comrade Thomas has given up the false contentions of his *Militant* article on the Panther split and has come to agree with me on this matter. But it shows an ill grace, unbefitting a revolutionary, for him to blame me for his own previous confusion.

June 28, 1971

NOTES ON THE MARXIST STUDY OF PRECAPITALIST SOCIETY

by Jan Garrett, Minneapolis Branch

(A few contributions to the discussion bulletin dealing with the same topics as Engels' *Origins of the Family* have prompted me to submit this brief resumé of my thinking on these questions. Points 1-7 are a summary of a much longer article which I do not mean to withhold from interested comrades but, given the modest character of this discussion, I want to spare the publishers of the bulletin.)

The earliest hunting-gathering societies were almost always patrilocal and, *as a result*, patrilineal in descent. (Inheritance of goods here is insignificant.)

2. Horticulture may be defined as agriculture without draft animals. A horticultural stage of productive development was necessary to accumulate a surplus steady enough to maintain animals in addition to humans. This in turn was a precondition of domestication and thus of true agriculture and pastoral life. Prominent anthropologists of the cultural evolution school, like Peter Farb and Elman Service, rightly point out that in "rainfall horticultural" societies, the women are usually the productive backbone of the society. These societies are overwhelmingly matrilineal and matrilocal. Thus, the matrilineal *stage* of human development was a necessary one, although Robert Briffault is wrong to imply that it was the *first* one.

3. A study of the rise of the patriarchy and of class society must take into account: (1) the division of labor along sex lines, as old as the human race itself; (2) the division of labor within sex production groups on age lines, necessitating the passing-down from generation to generation first of the ability to labor (skills) and only later the products of past labor, beginning with the implements of labor; (3) geographic influences on the uneven development of the productive forces; (4) the rise of extra-tribal, inter-tribal bonds through commodity-exchange, the creation of an area of life outside that governed by custom and kinship; (5) the contradiction between the intra-tribal mode of kinship organization and the more objective extra-tribal world ruled increasingly by the laws of commodity-exchange.

4. Today medical advances, greater longevity and other factors have reduced the social necessity of procreation. But ancient women were usually limited by the burdens of pregnancy and nursing to the "internal sphere" of the tribe's activities. This accounts for their predominance in horticultural society. The males specialized in hunting, warfare and, later, trade. The last two practices lead directly to class society.

5. Commodity-exchange requires private property, because—generally speaking—you can't exchange X for Y unless X belongs to you at the start. The men, involved in trade, must thus have been the "activists" in the privatization of property. Since this development led to the growth of the productive forces and rational thought, the resistance to it was doomed in advance. Private property, as Engels explained, meant the breakup of the communal life, especially the production groups of the women. This in turn meant the loss of much of their political power.

6. Ancient city-states like Athens and Rome were formed by the conquest of one or more gentile peoples by another

and the destruction, through chattel slavery, of the kinship structure of the conquered. Rome, the last of these states, more or less completed the process; when it left the scene, no invading tribal structure could reunify the pieces. The ex-slaves of Rome, with the ancient gentile (kinship) structure gone, had to relate to each other on a less particularistic basis. Yet slavery, while it had destroyed the kinship fabric, had also destroyed much of the productive forces. So the new universalism could not flower immediately, but became encrusted with Christian mysticism. Yet this universalistic kernel is the seed of all future development. Private property obtains a qualitatively different content: before, it was valid only *within* the community; feudal property has the universal (Catholic) sanction of the One Church. Bourgeois law will just develop this further, replacing the Church with "natural law."

7. Engels is wrong to attribute romantic love and European feudalism to an *admixture* of post-Roman and German gentile cultures. They derive from the alienated human essence buried within Christendom, after the breakup of gentilism, as it moves by an uneven course towards greater objectification of human relationships and modern culture. How else explain the fact that feudalism and romantic love flourish most after 1000 A.D., after seven centuries of steady disintegration of the gentilism of the invaders of the Roman Empire?

8. Unlike European feudalism, the hierarchical structures and property relations that typified the precapitalist Arab East, North Africa and Far East *rested upon* the traditional communal and tribal social infrastructures. None of these civilizations, from the Sumerians to the Moors in Spain, from the ancient Chinese to the Ottoman Turks, carried through the uprooting of particularistic gentilism with the thoroughness of the Roman slavocracy and, later, its direct cultural descendents, the bourgeoisie. Marx distinguished this mode of production with the name *Asiatic*. Mandel, in his *Evolution of the Economic Thought of Karl Marx* (Maspero), unfortunately not yet available in English, defends this distinction. Without being able to present all the arguments here, let me just say that the use of the term feudal to describe precolonial China (as comrade Theodore Edwards did during the discussion at the 1969 party convention) and the use of the term in a blanket way to apply to the pre-Zionist structures in Palestine (as the Langstons and Rothschild do in their counterresolution) is misleading. Where Langston *et al.* use the term "feudal consciousness," I think that "traditionalist" might be more appropriate, because this includes precapitalist values derived from patriarchal and Islamic communalism. (It is a salient fact that only a minority of the non-Jewish land was *privately* held by the Palestinians before 1947.)

9. History is the process of self-creation of the human race. Thus, we have no need to hide the fact that the challenge to the sexual division of labor—the central thrust, I think, of contemporary feminism around which all the specific demands take on their most profound meaning—is unprecedented in all history, especially in primitive society. How, indeed, could you have social equality in a society where all are so close to nature, where the cultural choices are so limited?

Furthermore, Marx explained in the first part of *Capital*

that commensurability of human labor—which is, after all, the generic human activity—is possible only after the development of the world division of labor. This is why we can speak of human equality today, but not in primitive society. Primitive mankind could not even conceive of social equality. (Nor *generalized* social inequality, either.)

10. The philosophic counterpart to the view of history as human self-creation is the negation of the negation, the central and most general proposition of Hegelian and post-Hegelian dialectic. This states simply that *rational* human culture is built up through successive resyntheses, each one of which eventually proves inadequate (puts

itself in the position of being questioned); this, in turn, causes a reshuffling of the whole, more or less convulsive depending on concrete circumstances; the new totality has then moved closer to the liberation of the rational essence of human nature. (Socialism will signify the transferral of this process to a qualitatively higher level, not the grinding to a halt of the dialectic process.)

George Novack can write a lengthy philosophical article on progress and omit even the mention of the negation of the negation. The fact that "our philosopher" can do this is of a piece with the fact that the Marxist theory of pre-capitalist times has more or less marked time since Engels! One of the fringe benefits of the present radicalization might be to make up for this.

July 1, 1971

QUESTIONS ON OUR ORGANIZATIONAL PRINCIPLES

by Peter Herreshoff, Los Angeles Branch

A couple of speeches by Farrell Dobbs prompt some questions regarding the organizational principles of our party. In the call to the coming convention, Farrell dealt with what was necessary to get the party in shape to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the current radicalization. One paragraph took up party youth relations. It reads as follows:

"Meantime, we had straightened out the youth situation, beginning at an even earlier stage. If memory serves me right, it would have been about '61 — I could be off a year of so — when we first introduced the age criteria. There was nothing abstract about it at all. We had a very good basic motivation. We were after a pair of factional hooligans who had grown old before they reached a stage of maturity on the calendar, and were committing mayhem among the youth, and had to be stopped. We very carefully first found out how old they were, then we set the age. We carried this through to the point that, as a process, across the period in the mid-sixties, we fully restored and clarified the fundamental Leninist concept of the relations between the party and the youth. The youth are organizationally independent. But a Trotskyist youth movement is based on acceptance of the fundamentals of Trotskyism, and there has to be a basic political homogeneity between the party and the youth. . . ."

Now, as I read this section of the convention call, I became somewhat disturbed by the cavalier attitude in which Farrell described the organizational measures taken against the "pair of factional hooligans." Generally speaking, we try to put our politics up front and avoid solving political problems by organizational means. There is a reason for this. To pose the question of party-youth relations in terms of an age limit means that only those in the group who know why the age limit was applied learn anything from it, and even they don't get the benefit of a full discussion. Honesty is essential within the revolutionary party. If the leadership functions on the basis of hidden motivations, the rank and file of the party is deprived of valuable education and is in fact miseducated. Also, as the real motivation for actions on the part of the leadership become apparent to the rest of the party, the leadership will be faced with a loss of confidence which cuts across the party's ability to function. It will lead to suspicion at every move of the leadership, whether it involves a transfer, an assignment, or anything else — whether or not suspicion is warranted. Applying these considerations to the "pair of factional hooligans," it seems to me

that their assignment to the YSA should have been terminated, with the cause for termination (committing mayhem) concretized and spelled out.

Further into the same paragraph, Farrell puts forward the concept of basic political homogeneity as being a key principle in the relationship between the party and the youth. Last year at Oberlin, he expanded on the concept of political homogeneity, saying that within the leadership team there must be objectivity, mutual respect, mutual responsibility, very extensive agreement on program, perspectives, and tactics, and a pool of common experience.

The question arises: What degree of political homogeneity measures up to the standard of being "basic," and does the lack of political homogeneity justify contradicting the organizational norms of the party? My answer is as follows:

Certainly a degree of political homogeneity is required to construct a party capable of making a revolution (as opposed to constructing mush). On the other hand, the Leninist theory of organization is predicated on the inevitability of heterogeneity within the party. In fact, it makes that heterogeneity a strength. The leadership of the Bolshevik party was far from totally homogeneous. Individual leaders had serious political and organizational weaknesses. But taken as a team, their strengths were magnified, and their weaknesses tended to cancel out. The result was a leadership that was capable of leading a revolution.

To take up the question from another angle, should political homogeneity be a criteria for participation in the leadership team? Our traditional concept is that the best way to deal with a minority with principled or tactical differences or a clique with personal differences is to take up its ideas at the appropriate times, but also to integrate those who compose it into the day to day work and leadership of the party — the key being loyalty to the party and loyally carrying out the work of the party. Then there is a possibility for the differences to be worked out in practice and organizational barriers to their resolution can be minimized. It also allows for an atmosphere in which the pressure to maintain a clique is minimized and the clique has the possibility of naturally breaking down. This approach provides the basis to develop greater political homogeneity within the party as well as to develop a pool of common experience. It allows for the development of the most effective leadership team as well as maximum utilization of the party's energy.

In conclusion, it is possible that I have misunderstood or misinterpreted some of Farrell's remarks. I hope that some clarification will be forthcoming.

June 27, 1971

A REPLY TO COMRADES LANGSTON, LANGSTON
AND ROTHSCHILD
by Gus Horowitz

There are now two resolutions before the party on the subject of Israel and the Arab Revolution. As is the case whenever the party must decide between two opposing political lines, the discussion of the disputed questions can bring our analysis into sharper focus. Through a thorough discussion of these questions, the party has an opportunity to clarify and deepen its understanding of the dynamics of the Arab revolution and the national question in general.

This article is a contribution to that discussion, in answer to the counter-resolution submitted by comrades Langston, Langston and Rothschild. I will concentrate only on the central points of political line that are in dispute. These can be enumerated as follows:

1. The National Committee draft resolution expresses unconditional support to the struggle of the oppressed Palestinian people for self-determination and supports the demand for a democratic, secular Palestine as "the currently expressed goal of this struggle." Thus, this demand is incorporated as part of the revolutionary socialist program for the Mideast. Comrades Langston, Langston and Rothschild reject the demand for a democratic, secular Palestine on the grounds that it reflects the interests of the Palestinian national bourgeoisie.

2. The National Committee draft resolution states that "an integral part of our program for the Palestinian revolution and the Arab revolution as a whole is support of full civil, cultural and religious rights for all nationalities in the Mideast, including the Israeli Jews. It rejects the call for the right of self-determination for the Israeli Jews. The Langston, Langston, Rothschild counter-resolution calls instead for the right of self-determination for the Israeli-Jewish nationality—that is, the right to form a separate state. We note that Langston, Langston and Rothschild are opposed to the present Israeli state, and say that this Israeli-Jewish right to self-determination can be recognized only "within the framework of the future workers power in Palestine."

3. A third difference is interrelated with the two above. Comrades Langston, Langston and Rothschild present the party with a new and different evaluation of the role of the national bourgeoisie in the colonial world, and of the revolutionary socialist attitude toward bourgeois democratic demands.

4. Another important difference is methodological. The counter resolution, with all its qualifications, provisos, and contingency analyses, professes to be a model of the dialectical method. It is not. The method of Langston, Langston and Rothschild is schematic and formal.

The political line of the National Committee draft resolution is set forth in clear and concise thesis form in part I of the resolution. Parts II and III of the National Committee resolution deal with some current developments and expand upon a few of the points contained in these line theses.

Unfortunately, the counter draft resolution does not present its line in this clear and concise fashion. It incorporates verbatim much that is contained in the National Committee draft resolution, while appending to these sections a counter-line contradicting them.

This counter line can be most easily picked out beginning with those sections that attempt to summarize the feudal perspective, the bourgeois democratic perspective, and the revolutionary socialist perspective for the future of Palestine.

We may note at the very outset that this division itself conveys a certain political appreciation. One can talk of a "feudal" perspective, if by that is meant a political program in the interests of the Palestinian landowning aristocracy or pre-capitalist remnants. One can talk of a revolutionary socialist perspective, meaning by that a program representing the interests of the working class and its allies among the masses of peasants and refugees. But what is a bourgeois democratic perspective?

It would have been more appropriate to counterpose to the "feudal" and revolutionary socialist perspectives, the *bourgeois* perspective, that is, the program of the Palestinian national bourgeoisie. But, as we shall see later, Comrades Langston, Langston and Rothschild incorrectly identify this class with a program of bourgeois democratic demands.

A discussion of the basic policies of the contending classes among the Palestinian people is both useful and necessary, but only on the condition that it be rooted in reality, that is, in an examination of the material interests of the various social classes in the political situation of the present day. In the counter-resolution, however, this element of reality is lacking.

* * *

Let us first discuss what they call "the feudal perspective." We leave aside the question of the accuracy of the term, "feudalism," to describe present-day social relations on the land, or whether feudalism ever actually existed in the Mideast. (Marx characterized the system there before the penetration of imperialism as the "Asiatic" mode of production.) The more important question is the interests and objectives of the landowning aristocracy.

Langston, Langston and Rothschild maintain that the determining factor behind "feudal consciousness" is that "the national territory appears as the sum of specific parcels of land, each of which is the material base for traditional social relations of privilege and exploitation between a specific landholding family and its peasantry. To this consciousness, the Israeli-Jews constitute simply an invading force occupying—contrary to all traditional rights—these parcels of land." Flowing from this feudal-type outlook, the counter resolution maintains, the goal is the "physical expulsion from Palestine of the Israeli-Jewish people as a whole." (page 14)

Comrades Langston, Langston and Rothschild make a serious methodological error here. They begin by looking at the Palestinian landowners or former landowners as if they were abstract feudalists, with the same basic outlook, and motivated primarily by the same general considerations as the landed nobility in Europe in the age of feudalism centuries ago.

Now, it is true that the landowning aristocracy sees its basic interests bound up with the maintenance of tra-

ditional relations on the land. It is also true that the interests of the landowning aristocracy often conflict with those of Israel. And it is certainly true that this class would view with favor the re-extension of its power throughout all of Palestine.

But it is not true that this class is putting forward a program designed to expel all the Israeli Jews from Palestine. The flaw in the parcels of land theory is that it bears absolutely no relation to the real program of the present-day Palestinian "feudalists."

One of the typical representatives of this social layer is King Hussein of Jordan. And what is his program? Is he determined to struggle against Israel, with the object of expelling all the Israeli Jews from Palestine? Far from it. His program is to recognize Israel and come to terms with it, to crush the Palestinian liberation movement, to keep the Arab masses oppressed and exploited for the benefit of Israel and imperialism — all at the cheap price of a privileged position for himself and the landowning aristocracy and comprador elements in Jordan. Whatever conflicts of interest the big landowners have with Israel and imperialism are in the last analysis subordinate to their basic policy of accommodation and subservience to imperialism and the Zionist state.

This should not surprise us. This approach has been the line of the Palestinian landowning aristocracy throughout the twentieth century. What is more, this is the same basic line followed by all the "feudally conscious" elements in the Arab world.

This is so because, in addition to their general consciousness about social relations on the land, they are also conscious that waging a struggle to overthrow the Israeli state will set social forces in motion that can well lead to their own overthrow. The landed aristocracy is forced to adapt and alter its general "feudal" type outlook to take account of the far more powerful political and social forces at work around them in the world of today.

It is a fatal mistake for a Marxist to confuse rhetoric and abstract desires for a basic line. Hussein and others of his ilk may dream occasionally about extending their control over all of Palestine, and they have talked about "driving the Israeli Jews into the sea," but that is not their real program, that is not their real consciousness, and a fight for that aim is not in their real interests.

What of the slogan of expelling all the Israeli Jews from Palestine? It is simply a nationalist slogan expressing hatred for the oppressor. It is an incorrect slogan, and has been rejected by the Palestinian liberation movement.

* * *

Langston, Langston and Rothschild proceed in a similar abstract manner to discuss the basic program of the Palestinian national bourgeoisie. But here the consequences of their analysis are far more serious, for they are led to reject support for the perspective of a democratic, secular Palestine, the perspective being raised by the Palestinian liberation movement today.

"The consciousness underlying this perspective," they say, "is a bourgeois democratic one for which the national territory does not appear as constituted by particular parcels of land bound up with particular persons, but rather of land as such, land which can be exchanged and is thus indifferent to particular persons; land which

can become capital or can pass into the possession of the nation as a whole." Thus, they contend, as far as this consciousness is concerned, the Israeli-Jews appear merely as a "religious community — possessing privileges." And so, "the central aspect of the sweeping democratization it aims at (the abolition of all privileges and all violent interference with free interaction) is a sweeping secularization. . . ." (page 15)

We see the same method employed as in the section analyzing "feudal consciousness." To discover the present-day political outlook of the Palestinian national bourgeoisie, they attempt to find a parallel with the outlook of a capitalist class in the abstract, for which bourgeois political democracy is a means of promoting free commodity exchange. They then equate the perspective of a democratic secular Palestine with the abstract interests of this abstracted Palestinian national bourgeoisie. We are then left with the impression that the driving force behind the demand for a democratic, secular Palestine is a conflict of interest that the Palestinian national bourgeoisie has with Israel, imperialism, and the landowning aristocracy over disposability of the land and resources of the country.

This point is developed further: "For this [bourgeois democratic] consciousness, the appropriate state power for a liberated Palestine is one that will establish and guarantee absolute equality and access to free interaction among the individuals who will be citizens of the new Palestinian nation." (page 16) This passage attempts to make an analogy with the era of the rising capitalist class in Europe where, as they had explained earlier, ". . . the process of the formation of the new, capitalist national economy tended to appear to the individuals involved not as what it primarily was — the establishment of a new system of exploitation and privilege in which individuals are related to one another through the classes to which they belong — but as the establishment of the conditions of free interaction between citizens endowed with equal rights." (page 12)

Skeptical comrades may wonder if there haven't been any changes to note over the past two centuries which might make this analogy invalid. And, indeed, there have been. But let us continue. There is yet more to come.

The demand for a democratic, secular Palestine, they maintain, reflects false consciousness. "By hiding the reality of antagonistic classes within the Palestinian people, it leaves the Palestinian workers and peasants unprepared with the alliances with imperialism into which the national bourgeoisie will inevitably enter in the course of the national liberation struggle, and it *prepares the way for the seizure and consolidation of power by the national bourgeoisie in Palestine once the Zionist state has been crushed. . . .* This perspective on the national question *reflects the real interests of the Palestinian and other Arab national bourgeoisies*, and not at all those of the Palestinian workers and peasants. . . . Nonrecognition that the Israeli-Jews constitute a modern [class-divided] capitalist nation . . . and nonrecognition of the existence of antagonistic classes within the Palestinian people are aspects of a single bourgeois consciousness. Theoretical denial of both these realities, or their relegation to the sphere of 'secondary contradictions,' and the programmatic, practical expression of that denial in the perspective of a secular, democratic state — the illusory perspective of a 'classless' and internally 'nationless' state — *con-*

stitute in reality a program for a capitalist Palestine. . . ." (page 16, emphasis added)

Let us take the Langston, Langston, Rothschild argument to its logical conclusion. We are really being asked to believe that the Palestinian national bourgeoisie, fearful of mobilizing the masses of Palestinian workers and peasants, opposed to an active anti-Zionist struggle by the Israeli Jews, entering inevitably into alliance with imperialism, is nevertheless putting forward a program by which it intends to crush the Israeli state in order to set up a unitary capitalist Palestine in its place.

The obvious question is posed. Under these circumstances, how could the Palestinian national bourgeoisie hope to defeat the Israeli state?

The truth of the matter is that it does not intend to do so. When we leave behind the realm of the abstract and take a look at the presently existing, real-life Palestinian national bourgeoisie, we will find that it is quite ready to come to an accommodation with Israel as it exists. It is from among this class, for example, as well as from among the large landowners, that the Israeli forces in the newly occupied territory find their main collaborators. This basic line of accommodation with Israel is by-in-large true of the national bourgeoisie, not only in the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip, but also in unoccupied Jordan and in other parts of the Arab world where there is a small layer of Palestinian capitalists. The central demand of the Palestinian national bourgeoisie is for a return to the pre-1967 borders, in which it can try to institute policies somewhat similar to those of Nasser-Sadat in Egypt or the Syrian or Iraqi Baathists. It is within those borders that they still hope seriously to extend their freedom of action as a capitalist class. It is within these limits that they are conscious of the potential "land which can become capital." Other important sectors of the Palestinian national bourgeoisie are among the serious proponents of a West Bank state, and still others support the existing status quo under the Hussein regime.

Not unlike the "feudalists," the Palestinian national bourgeoisie may yearn on occasion for a re-extension of its position throughout all of Palestine. It does have a conflict of interest with the Israeli state, and would certainly look with favor on the establishment of a capitalist state throughout all of Palestine. But there is an unbridgeable gap between these abstract desires and the real program of the Palestinian national bourgeoisie.

The national bourgeoisie will on occasion lend limited support to the Palestinian liberation movement, as a means both of pressuring the Hussein regime on domestic policy, and of pressuring Israel for a return to the pre-1967 borders. But its basic line is to impose strict limits on the power, independence and mass support of the Palestinian liberation movement. It will always back away from and oppose a revolutionary struggle to win a democratic, secular Palestine.

Yet Langston, Langston and Rothschild would have us believe that the goal of a democratic, secular Palestine is the serious perspective of the Palestinian national bourgeoisie.

The basis of their argument is the abstract desire of the Palestinian national bourgeoisie to create a nation-state in which it could be pre-eminent—just as other national bourgeoisies did during the rise of the capitalist system, when democratic demands were championed by the bourgeoisie.

This position goes against the theory of the permanent revolution, with which the counter-resolution claims to agree. Our appreciation of bourgeois democratic demands and the real interests of the national bourgeoisie is quite different.

Just what are bourgeois democratic demands? They are democratic demands which first arose as part of the great bourgeois democratic revolutions in Europe a few centuries ago. They include demands for national sovereignty, secularization of the state apparatus, land reform, and civil liberties, among others. In the period of its rise, when it was a revolutionary class, the bourgeoisie supported struggles around these demands as a means of creating conditions under which capitalism could grow and flourish. But these demands were not in the interests of the capitalist class alone; they were in the pressing interests of the working masses—and they still are.

These democratic demands as a whole have never been fully realized under capitalism. Many of the demands which were won during the rise of European capitalism (and only partially won at that) still remain to be realized in the colonial world. This is the case in Palestine. The struggles around democracy, secularization of the state apparatus, and national sovereignty are central needs of the Palestinian people.

But today, a serious fight for bourgeois democratic demands like these is not in the real interests of the Palestinian national bourgeoisie. It cannot pursue a truly independent policy without regard for the power and needs of imperialism and its agents like the Israeli state; and it is much too weak *vis a vis* the Palestinian masses to think of maintaining control of the situation in the type of revolutionary struggle that is necessary to carry out the unfulfilled democratic tasks. The fundamental line of the Palestinian national bourgeoisie flows primarily from these considerations which far outweigh its abstract desire for a unitary capitalist Palestine, its conflicts of interest with imperialism, with the Palestinian landowning aristocracy, and with the Israeli state. When the chips are down, the Palestinian national bourgeoisie, like the national bourgeoisie everywhere else in the colonial world, will end up opposing a resolute and necessarily revolutionary struggle around democratic demands.

Today, the fight for bourgeois democratic demands does not mesh with the real interests of the national bourgeoisie. In Palestine, the task of winning these bourgeois democratic demands and carrying out the unfulfilled bourgeois democratic tasks to completion rests with the Palestinian masses headed by the working class, in a revolution that will necessarily be directed against all the enemies of this struggle—imperialism, the Israeli state, the Arab feudal remnants, and the Arab national bourgeoisie. It is this dynamic of class forces which gives the Palestinian revolution its permanent, or uninterrupted character. In the age of imperialism, the struggle to fully win these democratic demands and to guarantee their realization merges with the struggle for socialism, not capitalism.

Taking this into account, the National Committee draft resolution states that "the program of this revolution will combine democratic and transitional demands directed towards the creation of a workers state. This proletarian strategy implies unconditional support for carrying out the democratic tasks." (page 6) Bourgeois democratic demands, like that for a democratic, secular Palestine, are a part, in fact a central part, of the revolutionary socialist program.

Langston, Langston and Rothschild are wrong when they contend that the demand for a democratic, secular Palestine is the practical expression of "non-recognition of the existence of antagonistic classes within the Palestinian people." They are wrong when they contend that it is the practical expression of "non-recognition that the Israeli-Jews constitute a modern capitalist nation." They are wrong when they contend that it is the practical expression of the theory of primary and secondary contradictions or the theory of revolution by stages. These false notions, which have been raised in various degrees within the Palestinian liberation movement, are in *contradiction* with a program to establish a democratic, secular Palestine.

The contradiction should not surprise us. The Palestinian liberation organizations are not Leninist parties. None has a consistently revolutionary program. Their programs still reflect influences from diverse sources: the influence of Maoism, Moscow Stalinism, or ultraleft adventurism; the influence of the various bourgeois and petty-bourgeois currents in the Arab world; and they also reflect the influence of revolutionary socialism and the objectively revolutionary thrust of the struggle of the Palestinian masses for self-determination.

The demand for a democratic, secular Palestine, as the current practical expression of the demand for Palestinian self-determination, reflects the revolutionary influences on the Palestinian liberation movement.

By itself, this demand is insufficient. But we do not reject it on that account. To win this self-determination demand, it will be necessary to carry out a revolution culminating in the creation of a workers state, which will be democratic, secular, and more. It will necessitate the creation of a Leninist party to lead the struggle, a party with a consistently revolutionary program, incorporating the demand for a democratic, secular Palestine along with an entire series of democratic and transitional demands.

Langston, Langston and Rothschild, however, gratuitously hand over the demand for a democratic, secular Palestine to the national bourgeoisie. They maintain that supporting this demand will leave the revolutionary party unable to differentiate itself from the national bourgeoisie, that it will leave the Palestinian masses unprepared for the betrayals of the national bourgeoisie. This is totally false. The revolutionary party mobilizes the masses in struggle independently of the national bourgeoisie, not only by raising working class demands, but in large part by its consistent struggle around bourgeois democratic demands. Our opposition to the national bourgeoisie stems not from the fact that it lends occasional support to bourgeois democratic demands, but from the fact that it betrays the struggle for these demands. To make this clear, it is the revolutionary socialist party that must emerge as the champion of the struggle for these democratic demands.

In short, Langston, Langston and Rothschild *counterpose* the creation of a workers state to the creation of a democratic, secular Palestine. The revolutionary socialist approach is to present the creation of a workers state *as the means of achieving and guaranteeing* the goal of a democratic, secular Palestine.

* * *

We come finally to the argument about self-determination for the Israeli Jews. The basic arguments put for-

ward by Comrades Langston, Langston and Rothschild have already been answered in part II of the National Committee resolution. But this can bear some amplification, and some additional points can be made.

The counter resolution employs the same method in its discussion of the revolutionary socialist perspective as in the preceding sections. "For this [revolutionary socialist] consciousness," state Comrades Langston, Langston and Rothschild, "the national territory does not consist of capitalizable land and things; the human beings living on it do not consist of exploitable labor power. Rather, the national territory is a work place for the production of use-values, and the population is a cooperating group of producers and consumers. Thus, while the workers and peasants have every interest in the broadest possible *voluntary* economic and social assimilation of nations, they have no class interest in forcibly retaining the Israeli-Jews within their state." On this basis, they contend that the "Leninist perspective on the solution to the national question can be formulated as follows: A workers state in Palestine governed by the norms of proletarian democracy, including the right of the Israeli-Jewish proletariat to *secede* and form a politically independent workers state." (page 17)

The right of nations to self-determination is thus presented as if it were a universally applicable Marxist principle, flowing from a consideration of conditions within a future workers state, where there will be no objective basis for national oppression. It is presented without regard for the existing relations between nations.

This abstract approach to the national question has nothing in common with long-established Leninist policy. It is true in the abstract that within a healthy workers state there will be a basic harmony of interests between the workers of the former oppressor nationality and the workers of the former oppressed nationality. The interests of the working class throughout the world lie in the greatest possible assimilation of all the world's nationalities and in the abolition of all nation-state boundaries. But, if that were the only factor to take into account, we would not call for universal self-determination, but would reject the demand for self-determination entirely—for oppressed nationalities as well as oppressor nationalities. What possible advantage can there be in having scores of separate states throughout the world?

The revolutionary party cannot treat the national question in this abstract manner. Our program on the national question must be designed to offer a solution to the concrete problem that presently exists: there are two nationalities that live in Palestine, but at present these nationalities stand in relation to each other as oppressed and oppressor. As far as the future relations between these two nationalities are concerned, the task of the revolutionary party is obvious. It is of overriding importance to convince the oppressed nationality that the socialist revolution offers the means of ending its oppression.

We cannot simply say to the oppressed that the objective relations between the two nationalities will be different after a socialist revolution, that the workers of the present oppressor nationality will not need to oppress them. If the revolutionary program is to be meaningful to the present oppressed nationality, if it is to be considered concrete and real, the oppressed nationality must know that it will be able to rely, not only on the future objective relations (which seem abstract at present) and not primarily on the future good intentions of the working class

of the present oppressor nationality, but also on its own power. It must be guaranteed the means it feels are needed to end its oppression.

This is the meaning of our demand for self-determination for oppressed nationalities. It guarantees to the oppressed nationalities the *unconditional* right to decide the state forms that it thinks will be necessary to end its oppression, the state forms in which it will live *vis a vis* the present oppressor nationality. Whether this be through the form of a unitary state or through separate states, it is the oppressed who make this decision, and the oppressor nationality has no say in this particular matter.

Let us consider the situation in the United States. We support the unconditional right of the oppressed Black nationality to self-determination. This means that the Black people in the United States have the unconditional right to decide upon the state forms in which they will live *vis a vis* the whites. It means, on the one hand, that if the Black nationality should decide that the best guarantee of winning its liberation is to secede from the United States and form a separate state, it has the *unilateral* right to do so. On the other hand, the Black nationality may decide that remaining within a unitary United States will provide the best means of insuring its liberation; it has the right to make this decision unilaterally also. The whites will not have the right to decide the state relations *vis a vis* the Black nationality; they will not have the right to decide whether or not to maintain a unitary state or set up separate white and Black states. If the whites had the right to make this decision, it would contradict *self-determination* for Black people.

So, in saying that we support the right of oppressed nationalities to self-determination, we are simply saying that we support the fight to end their oppression by any means necessary.

In Palestine, this fight is directed squarely against imperialism and the Israeli state, and as such it is in the interests, not only of the Palestinian masses, but also of the Israeli Jewish working class. Fighting in unconditional support of this right draws the masses of Palestinian Arabs and Israeli Jews into a common struggle against their common enemy and leads in the direction of a socialist revolution. The Leninist position on self-determination is designed precisely to speed the process of bringing the now-divided nationalities closer together.

The oppressed Palestinian people are demanding a unitary state rather than a separate state. This may seem unusual, at first glance, but there is a good reason why. To see why they are demanding a unitary state, let us look at what is similar and what is different in Palestine as compared with situations of national oppression in most other parts of the world.

National oppression is usually maintained through the *forcible retention* of the oppressed nationality within a unitary state alongside the oppressor nationality (as in northern Ireland) or in a colony (as in Angola). The right of oppressed nationalities to self-determination has therefore usually been posed as the right to end this forced "unity" and secede. Actually, however, it involves a choice between seceding to form a separate state, or continuing to live within a unitary state alongside the former oppressor nationality.

In the case of Palestine, however, national oppression has been carried out through the *forcible eviction* of the Palestinians, and the forcible partition of the country. The right of the Palestinians to self-determination includes

not only their right to continue living in a separate state if they so desire, but also their right to end the forcible division of Palestine, and form a unitary state. Given the concrete conditions of their oppression, is it any wonder that they are demanding a unitary state?

The abstract approach of comrades Langston, Langston and Rothschild leads to denying this choice to the presently oppressed Palestinian nationality. It leads inescapably to the position that the Israeli Jews are entitled to a veto power over the state forms in which the Palestinians wish to realize their right of self-determination. By this method, support to the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination is no longer unconditional; it is made subject to demands imposed on the oppressed nationality by the oppressor nationality. In fact, one of the unstated reasons why Langston, Langston and Rothschild reject the demand for a democratic, secular Palestine—that is, a unitary state—is that this demand is incompatible with what they consider to be the paramount principle of universal self-determination, including "the right of the Israeli-Jewish proletariat to secede and form a politically independent workers state."

Langston, Langston and Rothschild have no way to get around this problem. The demand for self-determination for both nationalities is not *self-determination* at all for the Palestinians.

Their position leads them to present a sort of politics of the absurd.

They maintain that they are for the general Israeli-Jewish right to self-determination, but they support the Palestinian struggle against Israel—"against the existing Israeli-Jewish right to national self-determination" (page 21)—because that means oppression of the Palestinian Arabs.

They maintain that they are for the general Palestinian right to self-determination, but reject the current self-determination demand of Palestinians for a unitary state, because that "would constitute an element of national oppression of the Israeli Jews." (page 21)

So, we are being presented with a rather unusual argument: In general, each nationality is entitled to whatever state forms it wants; and in the concrete, neither is entitled to the state forms it wants now.

Comrades Langston, Langston and Rothschild maintain that after a socialist revolution, the Palestinians will not need a unitary state, and that consequently if the Israeli-Jews form a state of their own, this will not be to the detriment of the Palestinians. Aside from the fact that this argument denies the right of the Palestinians to decide, there are very good reasons why a unitary state is seen as preferable by the Palestinians.

Take the example of preferential treatment for the oppressed nationality. Given the existing situation of inequality, this is one of the key steps that will be necessary to prevent the perpetuation of the existing inequality and to move in the direction of establishing equality between the two nationalities. Steps will have to be taken to insure that there will be sufficient economic and human resources in the country to provide good jobs, housing, education, medical care and all the other necessities of life in which the Palestinian Arabs are unequal in relation to the Israeli Jews. Preferential treatment in areas like these will be one of the key factors leading to the self-advancement of the Palestinian Arabs and the overcoming of the effects of years of oppression and exploita-

tion. During this process, all the skills and resources available in the country, including those of the Israeli-Jewish community, will have to be drawn upon. The Palestinian liberation movement evidently feels that the creation of a unitary state will be the best means by which they can guarantee that steps like these will be taken.

Langston, Langston and Rothschild answer that "the Arab workers and peasants will demand that the class-conscious Israeli-Jewish proletariat assume the primary responsibility for carrying out this policy [of preferential treatment]." (page 19) But the Palestinian Arabs, who have already had some experience with a separate Israeli-Jewish state, can hardly be expected to rely solely on the stated declarations of a class-conscious Israeli-Jewish proletariat. Their presently expressed demand for a unitary state reflects their intention of having a form of direct control over this process. Guaranteeing them that right is one of the key aspects of the demand for self-determination for the Palestinian people.

In these conditions, what are the political implications of saying that the Israeli Jews have the unilateral right to form a new separate state? To the Palestinian Arabs it will inevitably be seen as a step away from utilizing the full resources available in the country to overcome their oppression. To the Palestinian masses, it will be viewed as just a disguised and subtle means of perpetuating the existing conditions of inequality. If the revolutionary party should raise this demand it will seriously damage its credibility among the oppressed nationality. It will undermine the overriding purpose of presenting a program on the national question designed to mobilize the Palestinian masses in a struggle to end their oppression.

A similar problem develops in relation to the demand for the de-Zionization of Israel, which has been raised by the Israeli Socialist Organization in connection with a series of demands against discriminatory Zionist practices. Comrades Langston, Langston and Rothschild state the importance of fighting for democratic demands within Israel, but maintain that "a general program of such democratic demands with a transitional character has been developed by the Israeli Socialist Organization under the call for the de-Zionization of Israel." (page 10)

The problem with the de-Zionization formula is that it is ambiguous. It can be taken to mean opposition to a series of discriminatory features of the present Israeli state—while supporting the state itself. Uri Avnery, for example, calls for an "Israel without Zionists." On the other hand, Langston, Langston and Rothschild say that "this de-Zionization can only be accomplished through the overthrow of the Zionist state." (page 10). Of course, this immediately raises the question: what type of state will replace the present Zionist state?

This question will be posed, at least implicitly, at every point of the revolutionary struggle within Israel. Whenever there is a strike, whenever there is a protest against religious or national discrimination, whenever there is a civil liberties fight, the Zionist politicians will raise the specter of the Arab revolution. They will ask the masses within Israel to subordinate all their demands to the needs of defending Israel against the Arab peoples. This makes it all the more important for the revolutionary party to show the masses of Israeli Jews how their immediate and future interests both are bound up with the success of the Palestinian revolution. The Israeli-Jewish working masses have a basic interest in supporting the

Palestinian struggle for self-determination, not only out of elementary democratic obligations on their part, but also on the basis of their direct interests. One of their key goals must be to forge links with the Palestinian liberation movement. They cannot do this adequately unless they give wholehearted support to the current self-determination demand of the Palestinian liberation movement, the demand for a democratic, secular Palestine. This goal will be undermined by a formula which calls for the de-Zionization of Israel, but which fails to spell out a correct position on the state forms that will replace the Israeli state.

As far as the national question is concerned, the overriding political consideration for the revolutionary party is as follows: its program for ending the presently existing oppression must be expressed in clear and unambiguous demands which can win the confidence of the masses of the oppressed and mobilize them in an effective struggle to end their oppression. Neither the de-Zionization demand, nor the demand for self-determination for the Israeli Jews can fulfill this function.

To the contrary, Comrades Langston, Langston and Rothschild tend to present the central problem of the revolutionary party from a different point of view. They tend to see the main problem as one of giving assurances to the present oppressor nationality against the danger of its being oppressed in the future. It is necessary to give such assurances. But the program of the revolutionary party must be presented in its proper proportions. The central thrust must be directed, not toward schemas to prevent unlikely future dangers, but toward solutions to the reality of the present oppression.

The National Committee resolution is quite clear in its principled approach to the Israeli Jews: "An integral part of our program for the Palestinian revolution and the Arab revolution as a whole is support of full civil, cultural and religious rights for all nationalities in the Middle East, including the Israeli Jews." (page 5) This conforms to the norms of revolutionary socialism and is part of the program that the revolutionary socialist party will fight for.

Langston, Langston and Rothschild maintain, however, that this is not in accordance with democratic norms under socialism: ". . . violent retention of the Israeli-Jewish nation within an Arab state, under conditions in which political independence of the Israeli-Jewish nation would be consistent with the elimination of Israeli-Jewish privilege, would constitute an element of national oppression of the Israeli-Jews." (page 21)

This absurd statement follows logically from the abstract methodology of Comrades Langston, Langston and Rothschild who reason as follows: the right of statehood is a universal, absolute national need; therefore, denial of that right equals national oppression.

In a socialist United States, the whites will not have the right to secede and form a separate white state. Does this in any way mean that the whites will suffer an element of national oppression? Of course not. Oppression is not an abstract phenomenon. Denial to a nationality of the right to secede can be a form of national oppression only if that nationality is oppressed in other ways as well. In such a case, the denial of self-determination is a key means of perpetuating a real oppression; it becomes another part of that oppression. This is the case in northern Ireland, for example.

In a unitary Palestinian workers state, the Israeli Jews

will not be oppressed. They will not lack a state to guarantee that their legitimate rights are upheld. They will have such a state. It just won't be a preponderantly Jewish state.

If the Israeli Jews will not be oppressed within a unitary Palestinian state, why would they need a separate state? Why would they even feel that they would need a separate state? In the Soviet Union sentiment for a separate state exists among several of the oppressed nationalities. But do the Great Russians, the privileged nationality, feel that they need a separate state? Is there any serious sentiment for a separate state among the English-speaking Canadians? Among whites in the United States? Among the English in Great Britain? No, because these nationalities are not oppressed.

To nationalities that are not oppressed, our demand is not for their right to self-determination, but for their assimilation with other nationalities. In Europe, for example, one of our major demands is for a United Socialist States of Europe, for a unitary state.

In raising their self-determination demand for the Israeli Jews, Comrades Langston, Langston and Rothschild are not actually speaking of a demand designed to meet a real problem of oppression within a unitary Palestine. Nor are they talking about a demand that might become appropriate in the future, in the unlikely event that the Israeli Jews were subjected to national oppression. They are actually trying to meet a problem that exists now: the widespread fear among the Israeli Jews of what the Palestinian revolution holds in store for them.

Although this fear is unjustified, it is a real problem today. One of the important revolutionary tasks in the Mideast is to break down this fear and show the masses of Israeli Jews that their interests lie in support of the goals of the Palestinian revolution. This will greatly advance the revolutionary process in the Mideast. This fear will be broken down, not only through the clear presentation of the democratic goals of the Palestinian revolution, but also through the experience of increasingly oppressive measures undertaken within Israel, against Arabs and Jews alike, as the Zionist state apparatus attempts to meet the rising Arab revolution. Intolerable conditions within Israel itself, will eventually lead the Israeli Jewish working class to look for alternatives, and they will see the alternative of a democratic, secular Palestinian workers state in a new light.

It is in the interests of the Palestinian liberation movement to present its democratic goals clearly to the masses of Israeli Jews and facilitate the process of winning the Israeli-Jewish working class as an ally. It is attempting to do this today. But, in doing so, it is not incumbent on the Palestinian liberation movement to give up its own unilateral right to self-determination. We cannot ask the Palestinian liberation movement to give up its own central demand, and thereby cut across its ability to mobilize the Palestinian masses, in order to gain propaganda points among the Israeli Jews.

Comrades Langston, Langston and Rothschild, however, make this demand of the Palestinians. "To the extent that the Palestinian national movement recognizes the reality of Israeli-Jewish nationality and thus, consistently with its general democratic content, raises the perspective of the right of this nationality to self-determination within the framework of the future workers power in Palestine, to this extent it will contribute to undermining the hold

of Zionist ideology over the Israeli-Jewish masses, and consequently their support of the Zionist state. For, to the masses of Israeli-Jews, under the domination of Zionist ideology, the Zionist state apparatus appears not as an instrument of sustaining the economic exploitation of the Israeli-Jewish proletariat, but as the material expression of their nationality and the protector of their democratic rights and material well-being." (pages 17-18)

Langston, Langston and Rothschild consider the two incompatible demands: 1) for a democratic, secular Palestine; and 2) self-determination for the Israeli Jews; and they attempt to evaluate these demands primarily from the point of view of their political effect in splitting the masses of Israeli Jews from Zionism. They fail to give adequate consideration to the negative effect of the latter demanding among the Arab masses, which has been discussed earlier in this article. Their approach is improperly balanced.

Their approach is wrong, moreover, even from the point of view of its effect in splitting the Israeli-Jewish working class away from Zionism.

It is quite true that the masses of Israeli Jews see the Israeli state as the "protector of their democratic rights and material well-being." At present they do feel that they need a state to protect themselves against the Arabs. These unjustified fears are played upon and reinforced every day by the Zionists.

To counter this fear, Langston, Langston and Rothschild say that the Palestinians must promise the Israeli Jews the right to form another state to protect themselves from the Arabs after the Zionist state is destroyed.

This tactical concept is ludicrous. So long as the Israeli Jews fear the Palestinian revolution, the state they will want is not some abstract future state, which the Palestinians (whom they at present fear and distrust) promise them, but the powerful state that they have right now. *The extent to which the masses of Israeli Jews feel they need a separate state is the extent to which they will support Israel against the Palestinians.* The demand raised by Langston, Langston and Rothschild will fail even in its avowed purpose. It cannot split the Israeli Jews from Zionism.

Is it likely, as the Zionists claim, that a victory for the Palestinian revolution will result in the future oppression of the Israeli Jews? Comrades Langston, Langston and Rothschild reject this contention, but on balance they see this possibility as far, far more likely than it really is. In their attempt to answer the Zionist argument on this question, they present a line which would tend to reinforce, rather than dispel these fears.

They grant that a successful revolutionary struggle, culminating in the creation of a healthy workers state, will not pose this danger. But they go on to speculate about a variety of other possible variants which will. These abstract constructions lead us nowhere since they do not reflect reality. It is fruitless to try to spell out a series of models of future development, to try to state categorically what will happen if

Furthermore, even in this speculation, they utilize the same incorrect method of analyzing class interests as they do in their earlier sections of the feudal, bourgeois democratic, and revolutionary socialist perspectives.

The first speculative danger that they foresee for the Israeli Jews will occur "in the unlikely event of a massive

defeat of the Arab revolution [!], a defeat that would leave the Arab masses exhausted and demoralized for a whole epoch [!!] . . . , "in which case, "the Zionist state would lose its value to imperialism.[!!!]" "It is certain [!!!!], under these circumstances, that the U. S. ruling class would dump its client state, and be quite prepared to see it crushed." (pages 21-22) The Israeli Jews, according to Langston, Langston and Rothschild, would then be the object of plunder resulting from pogromist demagoguery.

It is hard to imagine what type of defeat they have in mind. If U. S. imperialism would so easily dump Israel, then why did it play a key role in creating it in the first place? And if the Arab revolution were overwhelmingly defeated, how would Israel be destroyed? The Arab revolution suffered major defeats in 1948, 1956 and 1967 —yet all of these strengthened Israel and U. S. imperialism's support for it. Wouldn't an even more massive defeat strengthen Israel even more? Wouldn't U. S. imperialism still need to maintain Israel to guard against the next upsurge in the Arab revolution? Or do Comrades Langston, Langston and Rothschild foresee the serious possibility, even the unlikely, but serious possibility, of a defeat to the Arab revolution lasting over an entire historical epoch? If so, they had better be prepared to scrap quite a bit of our entire program.

The next, and "far more likely" possible danger to the Israeli Jews, according to Langston, Langston and Rothschild, will occur if the Palestinian revolution succeeds in overthrowing Israel, but stops short of a workers state.

With the national bourgeoisie in power, "it is likely that the Israeli-Jews would be subject to some degree of special national oppression." (page 22) Langston, Langston and Rothschild even maintain that this is more than likely—the national bourgeoisie "would inevitably introduce an element of national privilege and hence national oppression into its own partial struggle against Israeli-Jewish capitalism." (page 22) In fact, they imply that the present program of the Palestinian liberation struggle would lead in this direction. In that section of their resolution where they say that the demand for a democratic, secular Palestine expresses "in reality a program for a capitalist Palestine," they also say that this would "tend to institute a system of national oppression of the Israeli-Jews." (pages 16-17)

Comrades Langston, Langston and Rothschild are wrong here too. In the event that the Arab revolution is temporarily halted, short of a workers state, it is theoretically possible that the Israeli Jews could be oppressed. But even under these conditions we cannot say that this will be a likely, much less inevitable, development.

Their mistake flows from the same methodological and political errors that they make in discussing the role of the national bourgeoisie in the revolution. They continue to see the primary political approach of the Palestinian national bourgeoisie as one of sharp conflicts with the Israeli-Jewish bourgeoisie. They grant the Palestinian national bourgeoisie far too much independent strength and freedom of action.

The fundamental political content of a situation in which the revolution temporarily stops short of a workers state will not be a tremendous rise in the independent strength and freedom of action of the Palestinian national bourgeoisie. To the contrary, it will mean its subordination to foreign imperialism and its opposition to the mobilization of the working class and peasantry. Experience

in cases like these has been that the indigenous national bourgeoisie tends to adapt and accommodate itself to the already privileged layers, in whom it will find an ally against its own working class and peasantry. Although there are exceptions, the experience throughout the colonial world has generally been that the former oppressor nationality, including the European settlers, continues to retain a specially privileged position in situations like these. This is the case in Algeria, for example.

In the event that the Palestinian revolution stops short of a workers state, this will mean that the road to the self-advancement of the Palestinian people will be temporarily blocked. In this case, who will continue to be the skilled workers, the technicians, the professionals, the administrators—with all the special privileges that are implied? Can we not say, and with better justification than Langston, Langston and Rothschild have, that the presently privileged Israeli Jews, and not the Palestinian Arabs, are more likely to remain in a privileged position? At the very least, we must say that there is absolutely no basis for the contention that the Israeli Jews are *likely* to be oppressed, *vis-a-vis* the Palestinian Arabs, in this turn of events.

Langston, Langston and Rothschild make the very same type of error in their speculation about the third possible danger to the Israeli Jews—in the event of the degeneration of a workers state in a liberated Palestine. "Experience has shown," they maintain, "that the ruling bureaucracies of degenerated workers states utilize chauvinist agitation to keep the working class divided along national lines in order to deflect potentially antibureaucratic struggles, and allow some privileges to the dominant-nation working class in an effort to win its support. Thus it is likely that in a degenerated workers state that could emerge following the crushing by the Arab revolution of the Zionist state, Israeli-Jews would be subject to some degree of special national oppression in addition to the general oppression of all workers and peasants by the privileged bureaucracy." (page 23)

Again, there is a possibility that this may occur. But here, too, it is not at all likely, as Langston, Langston and Rothschild contend. Nor does experience back up their argument. The degeneration of a workers state takes place under pressure from the privileged strata of the working class and from alien class forces, including foreign imperialism. It is based upon, and in turn tends to reinforce inequality. It is therefore likely that the degeneration of a workers state would mean the maintenance of inequality between nationalities. But the dominant nation is not defined numerically. It is defined by its materially privileged status *vis-a-vis* the oppressed nationality. The question to ask again is: which nationality is still likely to be privileged *vis-a-vis* the other immediately after a revolution? From which will there be greater tendencies towards bureaucracy? From which will there tend to be a disproportionate number of the higher-paid skilled workers, technicians, and professionals on which a bureaucracy is largely based? From which will there tend to be more skilled administrators drawn into the governing apparatus? These questions are all speculative, and so we cannot answer them. But there is certainly no basis to conclude that the Israeli Jews will likely be the oppressed nationality in a degenerated workers state.

Let us look at the best concrete experience that we have, the experience of the Russian Revolution. The degeneration of the Soviet workers state tended to reinforce all the *old*

special privileges and backwardness in national relations, rather than create entirely new ones. These were enforced politically through a totalitarian dictatorship headed by Stalin. Stalin came from the oppressed Georgian nationality, but his policy was to perpetuate the dominance of the Great Russians to the detriment of Georgians and other oppressed nationalities in the USSR.

Throughout the history of the colonial revolution, where the national question is posed so sharply, the ruling class of the dominant oppressor nationality has always raised the specter of a bloodbath in the event of a successful revolution by the oppressed. They have always tried to portray the oppressed nationality as a horde of backward barbarians out for revenge. This has always been false propaganda designed to cover up their own backward, barbaric and bloody rule. They propagate stories about "Mau Mau savagery," "Viet Cong bloodbaths," "rampaging Chinese hordes," and "Arab jihads." In reality, the rulers of the technologically advanced oppressor nations have been the worst barbarians in history in their relations with other nations.

A victory for the Arab revolution, even if it was only a partial victory that temporarily ended short of a workers state, or a victory that temporarily ended in the creation of a workers state that was deformed or degenerated, would still be a major victory for all peoples concerned. In its overall balance, it would be a major blow to all forms of oppression and barbarism in human relations.

We can give no credence, not the slightest credence at all, to the argument that the Arab revolution poses a likely threat of extending oppression.

* * *

The points that have been discussed in this article comprise the essence of the counter line that has been presented to the party by Comrades Langston, Langston and Rothchild. These are the points that are presented as an alternative to the National Committee draft resolution.

This counter line is wrong. It is wrong in its analysis of the class forces in the Mideast. It is wrong in its discussion of self-determination. It is wrong in its methodology. It should be rejected by the party.

July 1, 1971

DECLARATION OF PROLETARIAN ORIENTATION TENDENCY
by Barbara Gregorich (For the Tendency), Cleveland Branch

The preconvention discussion around the political resolution has revealed that the party has before it two different strategies for building a mass revolutionary party. One strategy is outlined by the NC political resolution and Comrade Barnes' plenum report, and the other by "For a Proletarian Orientation," "In Reply to the Party Leadership's Perspectives," and "The Meaning of a Proletarian Orientation."

Since the strategy we propose is a clear alternative to that contained in the NC political resolution and Comrade Barnes' report on that resolution, we now declare ourselves a tendency around the documents "For a Proletarian Orientation" and "The Meaning of a Proletarian Orientation," by Comrades Gregorich, Massey, McCann, and Passen, and "In Reply to the Party Leadership's Perspectives," by Comrade Charous. We therefore call for a vote *for* these three documents (to be considered as one) and a vote *against* the NC political resolution.

A tendency is described in this manner in the 1965 SWP resolution on "The Organizational Character of the SWP":

A relatively homogenous party should be able to resolve episodic differences without resort to factionalism.

Even when comrades have differences of a serious nature over one or another particular aspect of party policy it does not follow that they should rush to form a faction. Objectivity requires that they do no more than form an ideological tendency which confines its activities to a principled collective effort to argue for a change in the given policy; and the tendency should present its views openly before the whole party in a responsible and disciplined manner. (*SWP Discussion Bulletin*, Vol. 25, # 3, p. 12)

In declaring ourselves a tendency we wish to make one thing very clear: our documents clearly support the positions taken by the SWP on the developing movements: (1) support to the right and the struggle of Blacks, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans and other oppressed nationalities for self-determination, and the building of Black and Raza Unida parties; (2) the building of a non-exclusive, single-issue antiwar movement around immediate withdrawal; (3) the building of the independent women's liberation movement.

Delegates representing the tendency will be elected on the basis of support to the three documents. A meeting for all tendency supporters will be held at the Convention.

July 7, 1971

COMRADES GREGORICH, MASSEY, McCANN AND
PASSEN— YOU CAN NOT BE FOR A
PROLETARIAN ORIENTATION WITHOUT
STANDING ON PROLETARIAN
INTERNATIONALISM

By Tony Thomas, Brooklyn Branch, New York Local

One of the weaknesses of the "For A Proletarian Orientation" (FAPO) document submitted by comrades Massey, Passen, McCann and Gregorich, is that despite the severity of the charges they make on the current direction, composition and leadership of our party, despite the fact that they hold that the abandonment by the party of a proletarian orientation is not a recent event, but a process consummated sometime between 1957 and 1964—these comrades fail to comment on a whole series of programmatic positions adopted by the party at that time. They chiefly restrict themselves to a critique of one aspect of party activity, our tactical orientation to party work in the organized industrial trade unions.

No Comment

In the FAPO document, which they see as a call for a return to Leninist concepts of party building, these comrades do not comment in any way on the central international questions. In their second document, "The Meaning of a Proletarian Orientation" they make a frail attempt at giving international cover to their position by quoting Comrade Peng on orienting toward trade-union work. However in neither of these documents do they demonstrate how our "retreat" from a proletarian orientation is manifest in our political positions on international questions.

They do not comment on the Cuban Revolution, the Chinese Revolution, the Palestinian Revolution, the world crisis of Stalinism, the positions being taken by our party on the discussions in the world Trotskyist movement, the ideas expressed by Trotskyists with differing ideas in other parts of the world. All of these questions are answered with a firm "no comment."

Miseducation and Retrogression

This failure to carry out the Leninist task of international clarification can only serve to miseducate comrades in the party and youth. It seemingly propounds a view that a proletarian orientation is based on the tactical attitude of the party to work in the trade unions in "basic industry" in one's own country rather than an international program for revolutionary struggle on every front. This narrow economist view is alien to our traditions. In the *History of American Trotskyism* and *The First Ten Years of American Communism* Comrade Cannon pointed out how this type of thinking had a devastating effect on the early Socialist and Communist movements in this country. He points out how the foundation of our movement represented a break from this narrow "provincialism" and a turn in the direction of building an international combat party. FAPO's position on this question can only be seen as a retrogression to a point of view our movement has struggled against for over forty years.

Passen Speaks

When Comrade Passen, as a representative of the four authors of this document, came to our branch recently, I raised these questions with him.

I specifically asked Passen to state his stand on China, the Arab Revolution—particularly our support to the demand for a democratic state in Palestine—among other questions.

I asked these questions, not because I thought Passen had something to hide, but because I thought he would honestly clarify his position on these questions, and perhaps make more concrete his view of the process of our degeneration which in his document and report to our branch was all too abstract.

If he had agreed with the current course of the party internationally it would have shown a contradiction: saying that the party has turned away from Leninism but has preserved a proletarian course on the crucial questions of world revolution. Such a statement would have undermined the party's historical position that a proletarian orientation is the *sine qua non* for a correct position on all questions.

Instead Passen chose to duck these questions. He stated that he himself supported the reunification of the Fourth International and the general line of Hansen's document on party-building. He refused to comment on the questions of China and Palestine in the branch discussion. Later after the meeting I raised these questions with him privately, and Passen admitted he differed with the party's assessment of the Chinese Cultural Revolution and rejected the general line of the National Committee Draft resolution on Israel and the Arab Revolution. Although I asked him to clarify the positions of the other authors of his document on these questions, he was unwilling or unable to do so.

The question remains: where do Comrades Massey, Passen, McCann and Gregorich stand on the international questions?

Many Proletarian Orientations

Comrade Passen did state that he agrees with the course of reunification of the Fourth International, but Comrade Cagle (see Discussion Bulletin No. 12) has what can only be called a Wohlforth-Healy line, rejecting the reunification, and vilifying the SWP with Healyite slander and "analysis." Cagle claims to support the FAPO document. One of the things which distinguishes us most from such opponents as the Workers League and Spartacists is our international positions, and on this Gregorich et al have nothing to say. Cagle attacks Hansen's document on Latin America which Passen claimed he supported. Cagle attacks our current attitude to the Cuban Revolution which Passen indicated he agreed with. Now, in Discussion Bulletin No. 15, Alfredo Perez has submitted what

appears to be a resolution, on straight Wohlforth-Healy lines. Where do Gregorich et al stand on Perez's document? What will the party position on these questions be if the FAPO passes at the next party convention? The members of the party and the comrades in the Trotskyist movement around the world deserve to know.

Clarification Needed

The party since 1964 and 1957 has supported many resolutions, written articles, given reports, and contributed to discussions on international questions. What do Passen, Gregorich, McCann and Massey think about all these questions? What do they think about the resolution and report on China passed by the last party convention? What do they think about the Draft National Committee Resolution on Israel and the Arab Revolution? They should write down their views for the whole party to see before we are forced to vote on their "proletarian orientation."

This is especially necessary because a number of rumors are floating around with second-hand, third-hand versions of what Massey, Gregorich, Passen and McCann think on these questions.

Unprincipled Combination: A Petty-Bourgeois Orientation

This gives rise to the question as to whether the authors of FAPO have formed an unprincipled amalgam on the international questions for the sake of winning a majority on their tactics for the U.S. industrial trade unions. If this were true, Massey, Gregorich, McCann and Passen would be "carrying out a petty-bourgeois orientation" similar to that carried out by Abern in 1940 and by Cochran in 1953. The best way for the authors of FAPO to dismiss this charge and repudiate the rumor mongers is by letting us know what they think on the questions of building a worldwide combat party and of the party's position on Cuba, China, Palestine etc.

Hopefully Comrades Passen, McCann, Massey and Gregorich will demonstrate that the questions about their attitude toward internationalism raised in this article, result from an oversight on their part, by declaring their positions on these questions. This is a duty forced upon them by the political level and Marxist character of the party and the world movement. This is a responsibility that cannot be ducked.

July 8, 1971

CALL FOR A SPECIAL DISCUSSION IN THE BRANCHES
by Bob Fink, Lower Manhattan Branch, New York Local

(After I wrote the contribution below, Nixon began the "Bicentennial Era" on TV. On he came with trumpets and medieval pomp, and spoke the glowing hypocrisy he usually speaks. Yet, that he spoke of things never really heard from such leaders on TV before, is already an example of a point below, that we have really won something. He spoke lies too, distortions of our real history when it was at its best, and no word of the worst. The way the capitalists see it was best expressed by Chief Justice Burger when he said "We gave more power to the people than any nation in history." They "gave" it. Not that we took it back.)

I

The bourgeois revolution in this country in 1776 also witnessed the first comprehensive Bill of Rights since the earliest communal period in human history, and these rights were inspired, projected and won by the masses. Under the recent period of mass pressure against injustices in our country, we are today seeing in the Pentagon-Papers-events, the beginning of the mass revival of an almost ancient revolutionary concept—freedom of communication and thought—to be aided for a while, even in lip service, by some of the institutions of the State, however reluctantly. This resurrection, for now, of an old tradition, indicated that the "new feeling" we have today, is an old feeling felt by a portion of humankind in past ages. This is a great period in human history for us to be alive, but the feeling has been known before, and some of our forefathers may possibly have been freer in thought than we. The so called "progress" under capitalism that has been claimed for the masses has been mostly a lie, or we wouldn't be in revolution again. It's not necessarily the *best* time to have lived, in some ways, especially regarding alienation.

This "new feeling" in the air is a social one, a *concrete*, though partial, realization of the ideal of the right to think, write and speak, and what that *feels* like. Before, for all of us, it was abstract "history," and when in school we were told we were "still" living under the same constitution, with the same practices now as then, "more or less," we quietly wondered "what was so wonderful about them? Is *this* what they made a revolution for?" Now we have an inkling of what our class forefathers knew and were fighting for, that we, up to now, knew only in imagination. And we know we aren't the first to know. *That's* what's new. There is a humanity we belong to, few of them famous, from whom we are *not* alienated, who are speaking to us once more from the past, but now in *practice*, not just print. They are teaching us what we lost, so we can know more than they and go further than they. All these words sound like the clichés we read by second-rate text-book philosophers that "history is important, it teaches us to love our neighbor," etc. But they are right—in a way they never dreamed. They "heard about" a freedom, and didn't know they'd lost it. Those who knew it was eroded or lost, themselves had only "heard of it" too. For example, how many of us in this country ever lived in an atmosphere where government secrecy was *not* considered "part" of "freedom"? "The good with the bad, baby-bathwater" stuff. How many of us in this coun-

try ever consciously conceived it could be otherwise? Only a few radicals. There are many thousands, even millions of new radicals beings created today where there were none yesterday. A large section of the ruling class has made a major concession to the masses after many generations. Now we must force the logic of it from them—freedom in the media for *all* points of view, *period*: A public forum. The collectivity of participation in such free expression will soon lead to ideas of collectivity of property, that is, a mass discussion of *communism*.

II

I can only hope that as revolutionaries we ask, too, why of late we haven't all felt the same excitement, visions and sense of the free intercourse that seems coming, when we think of the internal life of our movement? Something's *happened* to us in this country. Why do we speak so much of more "homogeneity" now? The content of democratic centralism is the relative weight we give to centralism (and what kinds of members' activities we centralize, both in and outside of our HQ) vs. the relative weight we give to democracy. Is this content going to have to be identical to Civil War Russia and Lenin's party? Is there some fixed law? Even then, there are doubts about there being very much centralism until Stalin moved up, and the fight between Stalin and Trotsky was forced to greatly revolve around the demand for simple democracy in the movement. Maybe today we should be *more* centralized, more watchful of every act, saying, mistake—or maybe *that's* a mistake greater than any we could prevent? Maybe the circumstances are different; the nature of the present is *concrete* and *unique*, as it must always be, and nothing is fixed. We may be moving in the wrong direction to speak of greater homogeneity. That question, in my opinion, is now justifiably open to debate, and indicates we should institute a special period of discussion and education in the party on the practical content of democratic centralism in relation to the immense implications of these last few days history, we should make the greatest effort to *draw out* a variety of views, views which among many members will otherwise fester and become distorted, especially under the climate of demands for greater "homogeneity." Our internal democracy cannot exist only passively, solely dependent on the mouths of dissenters to mouth dissent. Constructive dissent (or to foster a less rigid notion) an exchange and enriching of our program, can be *led*, too. It can be encouraged actively, to insure its practice and benefits, or it can be discouraged though it exists always in formal terms. The practice of numerous transfers of people, often accompanied by rumors of "Oh, he's coming in to be organizer" certainly puts a damper on any comrade already in town who wanted to serve his party and become organizer. Also, in Detroit, there were a number of transfers-out of comrades who had been oppositional of tactics during certain antiwar plans, leaving greater "homogeneity"—for a while. Whether it was unconscious or not, whether the rumors were true that people are politically "picked" or that locals can't "really" develop their own leadership, or whether the rumors are false; nevertheless the existing climate is a real

thing, and there *is* something wrong. A greater process of exchange of original and individual thinking first supposes that we strive to think individually, and internal exchange will then be varied, will give *depth* to the basic correctness of our program, and greater finesse in correcting the errors and carrying out our ideas, collectively.

The proposal then is to have a special discussion on both the latest external events, and of their relationship to our *content* of democratic centralism.

(Nixon spouted a bunch of beautiful-sounding goals, which recreated in all of us, I hope, not only revulsion with his hypocrisy and half-truths, but also the *real* "spirit of 76." But my goals, as a communist, are far less conservative than even the ones he felt obliged to mouth. He

talked of the "stakes" of the ongoing American revolution (his admission!). I think the stakes are the future of intelligent matter, and the first step in history by this matter into a new consciousness of its very existence. That would be that we can begin to determine our own evolution. The stakes of the American communist revolution are to *reverse* Being determines Consciousness, to enter an epoch of *Consciousness determines Being*; that intelligent matter is going to consciously accommodate the rest of matter into new intelligent *social* wholes, in a way that qualitatively surpasses the invention of the first tools and the extension of our senses, through tools. We are not going to build a "new" world. We are going to build the *first* world, the first social *whole*.)

July 1, 1971

A NEW VIEW OF OBJECTIVE REALITY AND CONSCIOUSNESS

By Bob Fink, Lower Manhattan Branch

What if we were to present a view of the world which in many ways is capable of also explaining all other views of the world, why and how they arise, their causality?—In other words, a whole view which "justifies" that there was truth in every human view, from religious to scientific, *relative* to that view's time, circumstances and level of consciousness—and to the capacities for humans to have thought *otherwise*? Isn't this the claim of materialism?

However, such a view *must be subject to its own law*: It may be encompassed by another view, deriving from the first, but also able to look back at the first as its "parent" and show why it *had* to be.

Such a new view would be a history of intelligent matter, of the chains of patterns and changing interlaced chemical and electrical circuits that exist in the brains of humankind. It would be a history of the patterns of action we made when our bodies and senses responded to these individual and social brain patterns, and *vice versa*: of how the physical brain responded to the order of patterns it received from the body and senses. That is, new words for the history of human thought and actions. All this has obeyed laws, which we call dialectical materialism. Such a view would note, scientifically, that every sensory-perceptor, or measuring instrument, which is all that each citizen of ordinary life and intelligent life is, has measured *its* aspect of reality, really like the old fable of the blind men who measured the elephant, each coming up with a different, yet *true*, view of the elephant-universe it was measuring. All things are the continuous interaction of "natural law," including consciousness, for there are no spirits, Gods, witches and fairies.

Is all this just a semantic, eclectic new terminology for the same reality, changing nothing, or finding nothing new? If so, so was Copernicus' theory just that in relation to Ptolemy's when "all" Copernicus did was to put the Sun at the center and not the Earth; and so was Einstein's when he said that in a different, but very *real* way, both were correct.

All pictures of the universe to date have been of the same order: Subjective, and must sooner or later always fail or change, as our measuring senses continue to feed in new experiences measuring the existence of objective reality. The measuring is not done to find new support for earlier static "this-is-it!" type theories which can't keep up with the new input, but rather, all this measuring is measuring only continuous *change*. The only absolutes we can strive for are the laws of change, so we can see—and affect—the next change coming, for we not only measure the progress of the laws of change, but *we are one of those laws*. We are *doers*; organizers of matter, as the phrase "yesterday's mashed potatoes are tomorrow's brains" indicates. That we are, ourselves, a law of matter, is our necessity and recognition and realization of it is our freedom.

When the "input" gets repetitive, no longer giving us what we require to know in order to see any faults in any current chain of causality (our theories), we want to build extensions to our senses: telescopes, rulers, microscopes, tools and the world of them and the things

they affect and measure. These extensions continue for us a process that, for example, a tree cannot do for itself. A tree measures its immense number of things (such as the years of the sun from the tree's birth) but it never measures a longer chain of patterns than it was able to do to begin with. Functioning intelligent matter seeks always to find, measure and connect longer and longer chains of causalities, to seek the "ultimate" laws of the universe. Perhaps, when our individual chains all begin to overlap, supporting and refining each other, re-reflecting the truth in each chain, we may have come to an ultimate. You see, we all seek "God" but we know more about what this God is: Knowledge of change, human interaction and solidarity.

There is conceivably no absolute law but continuous relative change, perhaps to infinity and from infinity, and the only absolute sub-law is that all change *lawfully derives* from all that comes before it. If we *continue* to extend our senses, and also, socially extend them to all other human life, we can always discover the current stage of lawful changes and ride the head of this great kaleidoscope for knowing its laws.

We are all *in* "Heaven," and would all like to enjoy it, but we have suffered "Hell" in this heaven. Both concepts are true and real, but now redefined. Heaven is to sense and organize matter and life around us, hell is to be prevented from it. Our desire to enjoy extension of our senses has been class-divided, even individually divided, held back by a no longer necessary *poverty*, for us, of the individual and social sense-extensions we have made.

Materialists have seen enough into other social schools of thought (of chains of causality) to see how much these schools limitedly reflected only the sense extensions of the people it organized, and the misuse of these extensions. Many of these schools, and the bourgeoisie is one of them, have refused, and many still do, entry into each of themselves the views of all other society. They have done this because the existing sense-extensions were unable to be made into enough quantity for all, and they protected themselves by trying to close up into a class. Thus they cut off from us, by a struggle for possession, these sense-extensions which are our human technology. The technology is not used for human sensing and functioning, but today, to keep possession and to control the dispossessed.

We are not enlightened by this dispossession. We are *deprived* all the time it has happened. But so are all others deprived of their capacities to use technology, who oppress the rest. This is the only truth we know, and the only one we have been allowed to know, up to now. But by knowing it, we can learn a new truth unavailable to even our highest oppressors. Concerned with survival, we have communed with the real *function* of economics and survival, and are becoming aware of its very nature, and of the nature of ourselves.

We must all *become* conscious, as Marx said, including ourselves, for this is the *moving factor* of masses, and this will result in our taking unto *all of us* the sense-extensions, the technology, the great construct we have built to interconnect us all, and socially turn it to its

real function. I have been *re-naming* technology, with a word that describes its material function in the evolution of matter: this function is surviving in order to be *sensing*. Not only is it true that we must survive to function, but also that we must function *in order* to survive. Using technology for that, and not for the use it has had for keeping the majority of humanity *from* sensing, is then, the material function of technology.

This function has been wholly distorted in our society, even down to the prohibition of scratching in public, and also up to hunger, artificially maintained. We call this "poverty," but poverty in *itself* is not oppression. *It is alienation of each of us from society and each other that is the real frustration and pain of poverty.* That feeling in your empty stomach is the pain of being unable to *continue to sense*, to move outward and make new contacts with all reality and life. (What are the lessons of ecology but the lessons of the interconnection of all matter?) Your "unconscious" body is telling you more than *you* knew. It's not just hunger for food, for that alone being satisfied, without growth, will create new pain; and it's not all just sensory growth, for that alone, without food, *is* tolerable, but not for long. (Trotsky pointed out in the *History of the Russian Revolution* the power of subjective "hope" in the relative endurance, by the masses, of privations.) Neither growth nor economics can exist without the other. Both are part of the other, materially linked. The progress of one is the progress of the other. Our system has turned the mass of technology toward keeping the masses from extending their senses, and this action deprives the system's own defenders and owners themselves from enjoying technology's real function and value. For in building the extensions, we destroyed our own *social* interconnections, as they did theirs. Most of humanity has no control of the matter, but we all know examples of individuals, many famous, who, even with an apparent choice of worlds, have been able to move toward a life of more sensing and knowing over a life of having possession of the means of sensing, for they suspect or know the pain of perhaps not being able to enjoy their real use. These are the ones who pursue causes even above personal survival, defying even the "laws" of self-preservation, but actually obeying them, when the social instinct is recognized as a material need to function, *even* if one is hungry or threatened.

However people's ideas and causes may vary, however they may not reflect the perfect chains of causality and sensation continually being sought, they are a partial satisfaction to continually pursue, even when pursued in an impoverished fashion, than having possession of an enriched set of *means* to sense further, but which means cannot be used, except rarely, but to keep others from sensing.

More and more of the people, including the poor, take the path to social interaction today, as the system reveals that it is negating its own lie, a lie that says supporting the system will not negate human material function. These are the rebels, whose minds had been stolen by that lie, but have reached the material limits of adapting to it. The whole thing has been lawful.

Consciousness of our function, and of our alienation *from* it, will be the consciousness necessary for us to socialize our whole class to each of its members (unity, solidarity), for the purpose of taking, for all humanity,

the means to achieve that function, namely, technology. This is what this contribution is about, and how I think that the truth of our function can be found stringing, more or less hidden, through all human history, from art, sexuality, and science to political struggle. Today, in every way, in virtually every human act, it is being more and more clearly expressed, and openly expressed. It is both the means and goal of the revolution.

In this process we take a class view, but must take no self-righteous, vengeful or violent attitude toward any struggle by any group or individual taking their steps to try to interconnect all of us to each other, who are opening up to us all, each their own chain of human experience and lessons, helping to create a social organic whole, and new, being. We must patiently and tolerantly enter into each other's relative worlds as best we can, that we can then have entered; by combination, *one* world of class consciousness and social understanding of reality. Nor must we take a hostile view to those who leave old classes and roles (i.e., "up against the wall!"), or to those whom we must defeat, once defeated. The need for crime and punishment is reaching the end of its epoch, and is more and more being questioned as neither natural nor necessary.

All levels of consciousness, and the lack of them, are material, therefore lawful and necessary, for matter is always lawfully determined in its change and evolution. "There but for the grace of God go I." But as we *are* matter, as we are *of the stuff of laws and nature*, we can *act* upon it and ourselves, too. To be conscious of this determinism is not to be fatalistic, but to strive to *become* the laws of change themselves.

In all this I hope I have helped to begin to create a constructive and meaningful re-defining and re-evaluation of our ideas; to help us see how amazingly correct we were, yet how alienated from a broader picture we were, and see the errors that flowed from that, internally and collectively. (Some of those errors I tried to indicate in another bulletin.)

I feel that my views are presented inadequately, because I have striven for shortness and that is at the expense of concreteness. I believe that evidence to fill volumes abounds in the new discoveries in many fields, from physics, astronomy, biology, anthropology, to art and culture — all these are coming together, beginning to re-integrate. Comrades should only know of the crisis today in all these fields and the wholesome implications of that crisis. Just one short mention of it: Everywhere in the science crisis we see the discovery by "non-Marxists" of the laws of dialectics, of unities of opposites, quality into quantity and vice versa, right down to the very core of matter and the atom. The movie "Hellstrom Chronicle" documentary should not be missed by any materialist. More poetic than literal, its promoters conceive a plague of locusts as a "single animal," 400 miles long. But they should be more literal and less poetic. The adaptive *re-generations* of the African Driver (Driva?) ants (who are *blind*, programmed to their instinctive function like any differentiated cell in our brain, and who have patrols, soldiers, messengers and military "pincers" movements), appear to be periods (of natural selection) when they "learn," adapting to every external change, including insecticides, leaving us having only poisoned ourselves. When and if these periods of regeneration close in time, reducing the blind instinct time

to a narrow enough gap between the periods of learning and adaptation, then their "learning" would appear *continuous*, and the whole of them will equal more than the sum of their ant-parts: *It* will have begun to perform the rapid frames of learning and adaptation that the whole organ inside our heads already is performing.

In our own evolution, combination of former "wholes" into new parts of new wholes; new qualities from quantities, must continue, but for us it must be social and *conscious*. Social organization with us, too, will create a *whole*—not equal just to the sum of individually free-thinking human intelligent matter, but will be a new *single being*. One difference will be that its "parts" will be *aware* of the whole it has formed. That, I believe, is the meaning of consciousness.

Hopefully this view will be discussed and the correctness or incorrectness of it made plainer. I have repeated and projected the concepts as best as my knowledge and space permit, and that is all I can do. How much can be understood from here is a reflection of our present capacity for

growth of consciousness.

There is lawfulness in change, but change is continuous, a neither purely relativist view, which we are in danger of falling into (and incorrect as Engels and Lenin wrote), nor is it mechanical, as concepts of Social Darwinism and the so-called "scientifically-proved" status-quo theories have been. Let us not keep any forms of value-judgment subjectivity in our analysis (although we must in terms of desiring our freedom). Because, it is also a truth that "a chicken is just an egg's way of making another egg." The same laws of change and evolution apply. There is no "first," no "this, then that," but only a unity of opposites, like the two poles of a magnet can neither exist without the other. But neither do human solidarity and social revolution "precede" one another mechanically. Human solidarity, a continual *practical* ending of alienation, is just the human art for making a whole, revolutionary, social organism *or organization*. At the same time, solidarity is the *social* way to make a single being whole, human and *revolutionary*.

July 5, 1971