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DECLARATION OF INTERNATIONALIST TENDENCY

Chicago, Illinois  
May 27, 1973

The Political Committee  
Socialist Workers Party  
14 Charles Lane  
New York, N. Y. 10014

Dear Comrades:

We submit this Declaration of the Internationalist Tendency for publication in both the International Discussion Bulletins and the Discussion Bulletin of the Socialist Workers Party.

The below listed comrades announce the formation of the Internationalist Tendency in the Socialist Workers Party. This tendency reflects the political and organizational evolution, growth and maturing of the tendency formed by Massey, Shaffer and Smith on January 19, 1973.

The Internationalist Tendency, in the interest of the building of a "Leninist-Trotskyist" Fourth International not only in words but in deeds, expresses its basic agreement with the general line of the December 3, 1972, Statement of the 19 IEC Members, and addendum; the Draft Thesis "The Building of Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe" adopted by the IEC; and the further elaboration and clarification of this line contained in the document "In Defence of Leninism: In Defence of the Fourth International."

In addition, the Internationalist Tendency will submit a counterresolution on the international questions in opposition to the line of the present leadership of the Socialist Workers Party, as well as a political resolution extending the method of the Draft Thesis "The Building of Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe" to the United States.

The Minority Tendency reflects a right opportunist danger to the development of the Fourth International because of its abandonment of the methodology of the Transitional Program in practice and its abstention from involvement in the struggles of the working class, and counterposes an abstract and sterile conception of party building. This conception sees a growth of the party taking place as a result of socialist propaganda for recruitment, on the one hand, and calls to action on a minimal basis,

on the other. It fails to advance a transitional approach and tactical solutions for the more advanced layers in struggle. It presents party building as separate or apart from the needs of the living class struggle including the methods of armed struggle under specific circumstances. This is a repudiation of the Leninist strategy for the seizure of state power and the smashing of the bourgeois state, which requires the party leading the masses in the military as well as the political arena.

We call on all SWP members to support the general line of the International Majority Tendency and to reject the counterline of the SWP and the International Minority Tendency.

Comradely,  
The Internationalist Tendency  
Bill Massey — National Co-Ordinator  
(Chicago)

For:

Bruce Clark — Boston  
John Montello — Boston

John Barzman — Chicago  
Don Smith — Chicago

David Rossi — Houston  
John Shaffer — Houston  
Ted Stacy — Houston

Hedda Garza — Lower Manhattan

Patrick Quinn — Madison

Jeff Meissner — Minneapolis

John Chairet — Oakland-Berkeley

Robin Block — Philadelphia

Chris Marat — Washington, D. C.

Copy to: United Secretariat  
International Majority Tendency

## TOWARDS CLARITY ON THE STRUGGLE FOR GAY LIBERATION

by Arthur Maglin, Upper West Side Branch, New York Local

When I first read the National Committee's "Memorandum on the Gay Liberation Movement" (*Discussion Bulletin*, Vol. 31, No. 3), I thought it was a very ambiguous document and I was looking forward to the report from the plenum in order to get some clarification. However, the branch Executive Committee decided that the memorandum was too controversial to merit a report and most of the members of the branch accepted this reasoning, so my clarification is yet to come.

So I have some questions:

(1) Since the document rejects all prejudice against gay people, how come it doesn't reject the notion that gay is bad?

The document states in one place: "While we reject with contempt all forms of bourgeois prejudice against gay people, including quack psychological 'theories' labelling gays as mentally ill—prejudices echoed by the Stalinists—the party does not and should not take a stand on the nature or value of homosexuality."

Yet in another place it is stated: "The party should take no position on the nature or value of homosexuality, nor try to determine what is 'good' or 'bad' about heterosexuality or homosexuality, and not advocate any specific sexual orientation."

It escapes me how it is possible to reject all prejudices against homosexuality without having determined that gayness is not bad.

(2) What is the difference, from the National Committee's point of view, between rejecting all prejudices against homosexuality and affirming that gay is just as good as straight?

(3) Doesn't the position taken by the memorandum that the gay liberation struggle must take a tertiary place in our activity amount to a revision of our traditional position that we should not attempt to measure one form of oppression against another?

The document states: "It would be a mistake to place equal emphasis upon the struggle of women or Blacks, and that of gay people, for example."

(4) Does the document exclude by implication the participation of our comrades in initiating the formation of gay liberation groups on campus or elsewhere?

(5) Does the document exclude by implication the participation of our comrades in gay liberation organizations

that already exist such as the Gay Activists Alliance in New York or various campus based groups?

(6) Is the document affirming that the parsimonious coverage given to gay liberation by *The Militant*, the *International Socialist Review*, the nonexistent pamphlets and books, etc., has been sufficient and a model for the future?

The document states: "Our support to this movement will be mainly in our propaganda in the next period, as it has been."

(7) Is the document implying that there is some special quality about the gay liberation struggle which mandates our tail-ending this movement rather than trying to provide it with revolutionary leadership?

The document states: "Where such demonstrations, defense cases, etc., occur, the party should support them." This seems to imply that we should not initiate any activities in the gay liberation struggle.

(8) Is the document implying that although all-women's functions and all-Black functions can be organized by the party that all-gay people and all-lesbian functions cannot?

(9) What is meant by the statement "that party units have the responsibility to see to it that individual members do not abuse the party by projecting an exotic image of the party"?

This statement is used to cover a variety of ill-defined activities. It is not made clear how the party units are supposed to carry out this responsibility. The problem is compounded by the use of the word "exotic" in this statement and elsewhere in the document in what I hope is an incorrect fashion. The word "exotic" is defined by *Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary* (G & C. Merriam Co., 1967) as follows: "1: introduced from another country 2 *archaic*: outlandish, alien. 3 a: strikingly or excitingly different. b: strikingly unusual in color or design."

(10) Just what sexual activities are prohibited at party socials?

The document states: "Sexual activities, whether heterosexual or homosexual, have no place at party socials."

I have seen contacts of our movement become quite upset at the sight of two women holding hands. Is holding hands a prohibited sexual activity?

May 28, 1973

## HEROIN

by Arthur Maglin, Upper West Side Branch,  
New York Local

The party has been spending more time on the political question of drugs in the recent period and it seems evident that this trend will continue. As an organization, both our information and our theory is in a state of acute underdevelopment on this question. We must begin to take this subject seriously and begin the discussions from which an intelligent orientation can emerge.

Our ideas will never evolve in an ultimately positive direction unless information is shared and theoretical investigation is undertaken. This discussion article is submitted in the hope that it will act as a stimulus to this process. It makes no pretense to be an exhaustive examination of the topic, but I think that it may be a useful point of entry in the development of a revolutionary program on the political question of drugs.

### *The Scope of Addiction*

I will be concentrating on the question of heroin addiction in society, but it should be stated at the outset that drug addiction is much more widespread in the United States than is indicated by the figures for heroin addiction taken by itself. Alcohol, barbiturate, and amphetamine addictions are also widespread. However, these are not primarily ghetto drugs in the way heroin is. Consequently, they are not sensationalized by the press or repressed and/or trafficked in by the police in the manner applied to heroin.

Alcohol addiction (alcoholism) is the most widespread of the addictions, perhaps because it is legal—a problem we will have to do some thinking about in connection with our call for the legalization of all drugs. In any case, there are about six million alcoholics in the U. S. compared with between 100,000 and 600,000 heroin addicts (depending on whose estimate one chooses to rely on).

Bourgeois propaganda to the contrary notwithstanding, heroin is not the most dangerous of all drugs from a medical point of view. The following is stated in *Dealing with Drug Abuse: A Report to the Ford Foundation* (Praeger, 1973, p. 116):

"In his listing of the hazards of different drugs, Dr. Samuel Irwin makes the following rankings, starting with the most dangerous:

1. Glue sniffing
2. Methamphetamine
3. Alcohol
4. Cigarettes
5. Barbiturates and hypnotics
6. Heroin and related narcotics
7. LSD and other hallucinogens
8. Marijuana"

What makes heroin so dangerous to the user, in its present social context of illegality, is its extremely addictive nature. It has been compared to an artificially induced instinct on the order of the need for food (and much more insistent than the need for sex). Daily use begins, in the normal course of things, after weeks or months of increasingly frequent usage. *Licit and Illicit Drugs: The Consumers Union Report* by Edward M.

Brecher and the Editors of *Consumer Reports* (Consumers Union, 1972, p. 84) uses the following operational definition of addiction with special reference to heroin:

"An *addicting drug* is one that most users continue to take even though they want to stop, decide to stop, and actually succeed in stopping for days, weeks, months, or even years. It is a drug for which men and women will prostitute themselves. It is a drug to which most users return after treatment at Lexington, at the California Rehabilitation Center, at the New York State and City centers, and at Synanon, Daytop, Phoenix House, or Liberty Park Village. It is a drug which most users continue to use despite the threat of long-term imprisonment for its use—and to which they promptly return after experiencing long-term imprisonment."

Rehabilitation from the heroin addict life-style is an extremely difficult task for the addict. Thus far, only methadone maintenance programs have been able to produce convincing statistics in the area of rehabilitation. *Licit and Illicit Drugs* (p. 530) states:

"To date, no program other than methadone maintenance has demonstrated its ability to rehabilitate more than a minute proportion of addicts. Failure rates in non-methadone programs range from 90 to 100 percent, even when entrance is limited to select groups of highly motivated addicts."

Methadone works because it is a synthetic opiate which differs from heroin in one principle way: it is longer acting. It only has to be administered once a day as opposed to several times a day. Methadone patients rarely get high from methadone and heroin addicts rarely get high from heroin. Rather, they get straight. This means that the opiate prevents them from getting sick from withdrawal symptoms.

When an addict becomes detoxified, all opiate traces are removed from his or her body. This does very little good. After a period of time, usually a few days but possibly several years, the addict will resume the addiction. It is thought that this occurs because heroin alters the body chemistry of the addict in a permanent way. Thus, when the addict feels himself or herself under stress, a craving reaction becomes triggered.

Detoxification is a simple process. Decreasing doses of methadone are administered until the addict is drug free. This usually takes about a week. In a few more days there will be no trace of any opiate in the addict's body. This procedure prevents the onset of withdrawal symptoms which occur when the addict withdraws "cold turkey" (suddenly ceasing the use of heroin).

Methadone detoxification differs from methadone maintenance in the following way. Detoxification involves decreasing dosages of methadone for one week to get the addict to the point where he or she is drug free. Maintenance involves increasing dosages of methadone until a stabilization dosage (usually between 80 and 120 milligrams of methadone) is achieved. Thereafter, the addict is expected to take methadone for the rest of his or her life.

Experimentation is now going on with slow detoxifica-

tion over a period of 6-18 months from methadone maintenance. The results of these experiments are not yet in. Preliminary indications are that it may work for some people. Quick detoxification from methadone usually brings about the same result as quick detoxification from heroin—namely, a return to heroin after a short period of time.

Methadone maintenance has been opposed by many Black leaders as an attempt to keep Black people controlled or even to kill Black people. Methadone does have, like heroin, an enormous potential for social control, although this is, as yet, not being utilized in any serious way. Methadone's genocidal potential appears to be about the same as aspirin's (which means that some people—especially non-addicts—can indeed sometimes die from it). But intensive research on methadone's effects is only about a decade old and the long-range effects are not known.

Methadone is no cure. A cure is yet to be found. But a person on methadone can function as normally as anyone. However, many people are detoxifying from methadone in order to avoid having to pick up their methadone several times a month, and many methadone maintenance programs have been moving to act in a supportive way to people choosing to do this.

The majority of all heroin addicts live in New York City. *Dealing with Drug Abuse* (p. 177) states:

"In New York City, for example, the Narcotics Register shows 47 per cent of the addicts to be black, 27 per cent Puerto Rican, and 26 per cent white. During the last two or three years, addiction has been spreading back into the middle class, but this is not a marked trend as yet."

#### *How People Become Addicted*

It is possible to enter into a discussion of the addict's career by discussing the implications of racism and poverty in producing alienation, despair and the subsequent desire for narcotization. However, for revolutionary socialists most of such a discussion would amount to belaboring the obvious.

There is a more interesting way to approach the question of the addict's career, however. More interesting because it is less obvious. It is also more important from an informational point of view to approach the matter from this angle because there is very little material in print that would be of much help and most of that is fairly hard to locate. What I am proposing to do is to examine the addict's career in relation to sex role differences. The stress will be on the female addict because most of the sex-role differences in the addiction cycle add up to extra problems for women.

Most of the literature on heroin addiction speaks of "the addict" as if addicts were exclusively male. The special problems of female addicts have been given relatively little attention over the years and this may have much to do with the frequently stated assertion that women are considerably less amenable to treatment than men are. One of the more acceptable reasons why the special roles played by women addicts have not been given the attention they deserve is the fact that the majority of heroin addicts are male. Since 1945 about 85 percent of all addicts have been male (while the racial composition shifted radically from predominantly white to predominant-Black and Puerto Rican). This overwhelming predominance

of male addicts did not exist in the nineteenth century or in the twentieth before World War I. When the opiates were legal, there were many more addicted women than men. Illegalization changed this:

"After passage of the Harrison Narcotic Act in 1914, the sex ratio in addiction altered drastically. By 1918 a 'Special Committee on Investigation' appointed by the Secretary of the Treasury could report that 'drug addiction is about equally prevalent in both sexes.' Thereafter the sex ratio continued to change." (*Licit and Illicit Drugs*, p. 17.)

When it was legal to buy opiates, it was also quite respectable. One bought alcohol in a saloon where no "proper lady" would ever dare to venture. But patent medicine opiates could be graciously purchased at the local drug store. When the opiates were legal, women became addicted not by way of social defiance but simply as the outgrowth of an activity that was well within the realm of social acceptability—visiting the drug store a little too frequently. That is, they were taking an aspirin for their oppression; the opiates were "medicine." And since the opiates were legal, they were also cheap. The result was that the opiate addict's life was just about as normal as anyone else's.

But all this changed with illegalization of the opiates, leading to our current situation. Why? At this point it is only possible to theorize. It may be that women in high school or later are simply not under the same kinds of pressure to experiment with heroin that men are. For instance, a woman's "manhood" cannot be impugned if she backs down on a dare, but a man's can. Also, young women tend to be more sheltered than young men, who are given more leeway to fend for themselves. Women spend more time at home and less with their peer group than men do (for example, a young man can usually stay out later than a young woman can). Consequently, young women may be less subject to the pressures of their peers.

Beyond that, the threat of addiction is greater to women than it is to men, so the pressures against taking heroin are greater. Given the context of present-day sexist norms, an addicted woman will lose her looks and her reputation. An addicted man is highly unlikely to lose his looks. Again given the sexist norms of this society, scars and needle marks to not look as bad on a man's body as on a woman's. An addicted man can look forward to becoming a thief and an outlaw—an image that is not uncolorful and which can even be quite attractive. A woman can only look forward to becoming a prostitute in the eyes of everyone who knows her (whether she becomes one in fact or not). Needless to say, this is an extremely unpalatable prospect for most women. Even the possibility of having to raise money by theft does not hold the same attractiveness for a woman that it does for a man—it is too aggressive a self-image to match up well with the role training that most women get in this society.

Nevertheless, some women do become addicts and probably for many of the same reasons as men, as well as for some very special reasons of their own. Many men become addicts in an effort to defy a social environment which they perceive as unjust or to escape from social pressures which they perceive as unbearable. The same tendency occurs in women who become addicts except that the rightly felt pressures are actually greater. Most

women addicts are Black or Puerto Rican just as most male addicts are. Thus, female addicts frequently get caught in the triple bind of poverty, racism, and sexism.

Even those addicts who do not suffer the social alienation induced by poverty and racism may still recoil from the pressures induced by sexism or by any number of other social ills. But each time another form of victim role is added on in the case of any individual, the more likely he or she is to react vehemently against the indicated conformity and opt for some form of deviance — not necessarily drug addiction and not necessarily a "bad" form, either. After all, revolutionaries are not exactly conformists and many of the pressures that turn some people to drugs turned us to politics instead.

Prostitution can be another point of entry into drug addiction. Most prostitutes are women, though hardly all. And many prostitutes become heroin addicts and vice versa. It is impossible to say which is the more prevalent life course. An addicted woman may sell her body to raise money for her habit. A non-addicted prostitute may seek in heroin a substitute for her dulled sexual sensibilities, an escape from the alienation permeating her life-style, or a refuge from the underlying guilt of being a "fallen woman." In any case, in the prostitute's world the availability of heroin is no problem at all.

According to Walter R. Cuskey, T. Premkumar, and Lois Sigel ("Survey of Opiate Addiction Among Females in the United States Between 1850 and 1970," *Public Health Reviews*, Vol. 1, 1972, p. 13), it would appear that women addicts are started on heroin through a male source in most cases:

"Female addiction, like female alcoholism, tends to be either hidden or tied in with male addiction. Robinson listed a number of representative reasons why the female addicts in Lexington had started on drugs. Of the seven sources listed five were male; one was a peer group which might have included males; and only one (older women friends) was female."

Somewhat surprisingly, it appears that most women addicts are married (either legally or by common law) and that a large minority of these married female addicts started using drugs only within their marriages. One of the principle conclusions reached by John A. O'Donnell, Karst J. Besteman, and Judith P. Jones ("Marital History of Narcotics addicts," *The International Journal of the Addictions*, Vol. 2, No. 1, Spring, 1967) is that addicted women tend to marry addicted men, or at least men with severe problems. The marked tendency towards male dependency so often noted in female addicts seems to be more real than apparent.

### *Lesbianism*

Nevertheless, lesbianism is very prevalent among female addicts, including women who are married (Cuskey, Premkumar, and Sigel, p. 25). There is a good deal of homosexuality among addicts of both sexes, but it is generally agreed that homosexuality is proportionately much more widespread among women addicts. There is evidence to indicate that at least a third of all female addicts are either bisexual or exclusively homosexual. Why is this the case? Sigmund Freud, whose work contains, in my opinion, some good insights on the subject of homosexuality mixed in with his Victorian bourgeois prejudices on the subject, says that one of the most power-

ful forces acting to prevent homosexuality is "its authoritative prohibition by society."

"Where inversion is not regarded as a crime it will be found that it answers fully to the sexual inclinations of no small number of people." (*Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, Discus Books, 1971, p.133.)

The female drug addict is involved in a deviant subsection of a male-dominated deviant subculture. That is, while the male addict may be a nonconformist, the female addict is even more of a nonconformist. Since the addict subculture is heavily involved in defiance of the authoritative prohibitions of society, it should hardly be surprising that such a subculture provides fertile ground for the testing out of homosexual inclinations (though certainly not an ideal ground).

Unfortunately, it is not known which usually comes first, addiction or lesbianism. A possibility for some may be that the female addict turns to prostitution to raise money for her habit which makes intimate relations with men into something less appealing. The need for human warmth remains, however, and the female addict seeks her comfort with other women. Another possible schema is that homosexually inclined women and men turn to heroin to either mask their anxiety over their homosexuality and/or to punish themselves for it. (Homosexuality may be a valid life-style from the point of view of a revolutionary socialist, but most members of this society do not share our viewpoint. People who perform homosexual acts are breaking one of the most deeply rooted psychological taboos that this society has to offer.) Another factor might be found in adjustment to prison life. While female addicts are convicted and jailed less often and for shorter sentences than male addicts, they do spend a considerable amount of time in jail, usually for prostitution. And studies of women's prisons have demonstrated that lesbianism, not surprisingly, is a common adjustment to life in prison (Cuskey, Premkumar, and Sigel, p. 25).

### *Problems of Women Addicts*

In any case, once addicted, some special problems arise that bear directly on female biology. Women addicts frequently cease having their menstrual cycles for long periods of time, sometimes for more than a year. There are no known medical consequences of this phenomenon, but this fact is not widely known in the addict street scene where knowledge and pseudo-knowledge are hopelessly intertwined. Anxieties around a woman's ability to have children and a woman's physical well-being are a frequent result. It is not known whether the interruption of the menstrual cycle stems from the direct effects of heroin on the body or from the erratic and strenuous as well as malnourished and unhygienic addict life-style.

This same question mark hangs over the case of the allegedly addicted babies—the littlest junkies. It is not conclusively known whether the babies are actually addicted or whether their symptoms are the resultant of a lack of appropriate prenatal care on the part of the addicted mothers.

Once children are born, they become the addicted mother's burden in a great many cases, despite the rules against releasing infants to addicted mothers. The addiction is not always known. Sometimes the baby is given over to a non-addicted relative "officially" which soon

results in the baby being turned over to the care of the addict mother. Sometimes the babies are not born in the hospital. Whatever the case, child care is almost always the responsibility of an addicted mother and not of an addicted father. This causes problems for female addicts that are rarely found among male addicts. Sophy Burnham ("Junkies in the Nursery," *New York Times*, Jan. 14, 1973) writes:

"They have been known to sell their children for drugs, abuse them, beat them—even inject them with heroin to keep them quiet."

The responsibility of caring for children adds to the female addict's burden of guilt and shame and sometimes acts as a motivation to continue heroin use. Contrarily, sometimes it works in the opposite fashion—as a motivation towards rehabilitation.

### *Drug Rehabilitation*

Female addicts are generally considered to be less accessible to rehabilitation efforts than male addicts. Why is this the case? In the first instance, therapeutic professionals (psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, paraprofessionals, etc.) working with female addicts are not well fortified with a body of knowledge about the special dynamics of the female addict's career. Relatively little research has been done in this area. Even practice articles of the type published in professional journals are few and hard to locate. There is a lot that remains mysterious or, at best, speculative about addiction in general and about the career of the male addict. When it comes to the career of the woman addict, the helping professions have been working virtually in the dark.

Beyond that, it would appear that there are a number of special reasons why women should be less accessible to treatment than men are. Addicts have difficulty in raising money and maintaining a steady income. Men have a very insecure and rather uneven source of income in mugging and burglary. On the other hand, while a woman retains her sexual attractiveness, she has a fairly well guaranteed source of steady income in prostitution. It is for this reason that some male addicts attempt to get their women companions to become prostitutes since it is possible for a hard working prostitute to support more than her own habit.

It is true that some women addicts cannot bring themselves to the point of prostitution and support themselves through theft, just as it is the case that some male addicts support themselves through male prostitution (almost always homosexual). Nevertheless, it appears to be the case that the steady income involved in female prostitution is too tempting for most female addicts to pass up once they find themselves in need of a large, regular income. Male addicts may or may not find homosexual prostitution to be just too much of a taboo to overcome (especially as a steady thing), but the fact is that the market for male prostitutes is just not as big (or safe) as the market for female prostitutes.

Both men and women addicts may sell drugs at one time or another, but the jail penalties involved make this a very insecure profession which most addicts tend to shy away from as a steady source of income. For women addicts selling drugs is especially dangerous because of the constant danger of being ripped off. Thus, all in all, the pressures towards women addicts engaging in pro-

stitution are rather great, while the opposite is the case for male addicts. And once a steady income is established there is less reason to see rehabilitation from the drug world as an attractive alternative, especially since the drug scene as a whole shows that very large numbers of people can, in fact, be desensitized from almost any taboo.

Another reason why women addicts are less interested in rehabilitation is that it is harder for them to resume a more normal existence. How many men want to marry an ex-prostitute? How many men want to maintain a relationship with a woman with a scarred and marked body? Many women addicts shoot up in their hands in order to preserve the attractiveness of their bodies which leaves their hands puffed up and scarred. Thus, they are often easy to identify as having used heroin. What employer wants to hire a person whom he can instantly spot as an addict? How many ex-prostitutes can reestablish ties with their families?

The homosexuality of many women addicts presents another obstacle to their being amenable to drug rehabilitation efforts. Many therapeutic communities either bar homosexuals or throw them out when caught in the act. Homosexual acts are not permitted on the wards of inpatient detoxification units. Moreover, until the recent past a "therapeutic" hostility to homosexuality was practically universal in all programs. This has begun to change with more people in the helping professions coming to the conclusion that homosexuality involves a valid variant in emotional life styles. Still, the dominant theme in most programs places the demand upon homosexuals that they give up sex at the same time that they give up drugs. This, of course, amounts to an impossibly puritanical demand with a built-in high failure rate.

The deviant life-orientations of many addicts (aside from those things which are directly related to drugs) presents another obstacle to rehabilitation which is especially acute among female addicts. Once in a treatment program the emphasis is on social conformity more often than not, despite good—but not fully analyzed—intentions to the contrary on the part of staff people. The sexist bias of this society is a very important factor in all of this. For example, the director of the Manhattan Rehabilitation Center stated:

"There seems to be a kind of commitment to the natural cycle of life which is normal for a woman in a way that is not so ingrained in a man. Consequently, when a woman becomes a drug addict, she seems to break through a barrier of restraint. Once that barrier is broken, it is very difficult to draw her back into her first natural commitment to the cycle of life. For this reason, female addicts are less accessible to treatment than male addicts." (Stephen Chinlund, "Drug Addiction: Implications for Illegitimacy," in *Illegitimacy: Changing Services for Changing Times*, edited and published by the National Council on Illegitimacy, 1970, pp. 37-38.)

There you have it. Women are considered less accessible to treatment because it is harder to get them to conform to their "natural" roles. If there is one thing that should be absorbed from the current rise of feminism, it is that women's social roles as laid down traditionally are much more constricted than those of men. It should not be surprising that women who have broken out of the bounds of acceptability, however unconstructively in the case of

the female addict, will be very difficult to coax back into a "natural commitment to the cycle of life."

The example that I just presented is not isolated. Let me present just one more. A laudatory report on Baird House Therapeutic Community Residence for female addicts describes the program's approach in terms such as these:

"Therapy attempts to bring out the feminine instincts of the women—as the mother instinct." (Judith Calof, *A Study of Voluntary Treatment Programs for Narcotic Addicts, Part II: Lifeline to Tomorrow*, published by Dept. of Public Affairs, Community Service Society of New York, 1969.)

Again the vision is limited to the traditional constricted conformity which certainly lacks attractive power and is apparently ineffectual.

Another important, and somewhat related, reason why women addicts are less accessible to treatment is the sexist bias of society in general. The male addict can look forward to the satisfying public image of Hero when he becomes rehabilitated. The female addict is not in a similar position since she was or is thought to have been a prostitute. Thus, the female addict can look forward to the rather distasteful public image of Fallen Woman. There is bound to be a difference so far as motivation towards treatment is concerned.

Another reason why female addicts are not amenable to treatment is that of childcare responsibilities. Many addicted women are currently caring for their children. To go into a therapeutic community would separate them from their children. To go to a 9-to-5 drug-free therapy program might not be possible in terms of the availability of childcare. Some rehabilitation programs have begun to recognize the need for childcare recently, but most programs have yet to take any steps in this direction. They are not likely to get the funds for it in the near future.

So far as methadone maintenance programs are concerned, it is a necessary qualification in most programs that every addicted person with whom an addict lives also be on the program. Many women cannot meet this qualification because their husbands or boyfriends will not agree to go on the program. Arithmetically speaking, this is more frequently a woman's problem than a man's.

#### *Bibliographical Notes*

For anyone seriously interested in getting a working knowledge of the drug question, I have some bibliographical suggestions to make about where to begin. I would suggest that, although this area is unlikely to become a major area for our activity, it will continue to be a persistent one. And as such it is an extremely sensitive question rivaled only by the question of Palestine in terms of the emotions it arouses. As we have learned in the past, it is the sensitive questions which require the most carefully detailed study on our part.

In any case, some bibliography:

*Licit and Illicit Drugs: The Consumers Union Report* by Edward M. Brecher and the Editors of Consumer Reports (Consumers Union, 1972). This is the most important book published on the drug question to date. The book provides comprehensive information on heroin, the amphetamines, the barbiturates, LSD, marijuana, caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol. The book reads well and

is full of startling, well documented information.

*The Politics of Heroin in Southeast Asia* by Alfred W. McCoy with Cathleen B. Read and Leonard P. Adams II (Harper and Row, 1972). This is a well documented, well written account of how the U.S. government has acted to promote the illegal heroin traffic. It documents the fact that during and after the second world war the U.S. government resurrected the Mafia.

*Dealing with Drug Abuse: A Report to the Ford Foundation* (Praeger, 1973). This is a survey of the whole drug scene vaguely similar to *Licit and Illicit Drugs*. It is by no means as good as *L&ID*, but it does contain information, especially statistical information, not covered by the Consumers Union book.

"Survey of Opiate Addiction Among Females in the United States Between 1850 and 1970" by Walter R. Cuskey, T. Premkumar, and Lois Sigel, *Public Health Reviews*, Vol. 1, 1972. This is the most informative and comprehensive article on the history of opiate addiction among women that I have been able to locate.

*The Pleasure Seekers: The Drug Crisis, Youth and Society* by Joel Fort (Grove Press, 1969). A good book to begin with since it is both comprehensive and short. It is slightly out of date in some respects, however.

*Smack!* by The Editors of Ramparts and Frank Browning (Harrow Books, 1972). A collection of articles written before *The Politics of Heroin in Southeast Asia*, the book amounts to a synopsis of the latter. Sol Yurick's article "The Political Economy of Junk" is well worth looking at as an intelligent attempt to figure out how the drug scene has become an integral part of American capitalism.

*Marihuana: A Signal of Misunderstanding*, the Official Report of the National Commission on Marihuana and Drug Abuse (New American Library, 1972). The inside dope.

"Drugs: No Substitute for Struggle," a statement adopted by the Central Committee of the Young Workers Liberation League, *Daily World*, May 19, 1973. Pure extract of Stalinist claptrap. They go so far as to oppose the legalization of marijuana.

"Heroin Addiction on Decline?" by Stephen Torgoff, *Guardian*, May 9, 1973. More Stalinist claptrap. Believes that heroin addiction is on the decline in agreement with the current bourgeois propaganda. Which is probably not the case since it more likely that illegal street methadone is simply easing the addict's need to steal or go into treatment with the result of screwing up the statistical indicators.

#### *Some Suggestions for Party Policy*

While it is necessary to have comprehensive knowledge to explain our position and to expose the depredations of the capitalist system with regard to the drug question, it is also necessary to begin to formulate a set of programmatic demands so that we can sharply counterpose our way of doing things with those of the system. In this light, I have some suggestions. The following list is admittedly incomplete.

The party, it seems to me, should favor:

(1) A crash program of research to find a cure for all of heroin's biological and other effects.

(2) Expansion of methadone maintenance facilities for all who desire them as a means of coping with heroin



addiction.

(3) Maintenance of the strictest observance of the civil liberties of all heroin addicts and methadone patients so that drugs are not used as a means of social control by the government.

(4) Expansion of drug-free therapeutic facilities for those who would like help in their attempt to end the use of any and all drugs (including barbiturates, amphetamines, or whatever).

(5) An end to sexist goals and methods in drug rehabilitation programs that victimize women and gay people.

(6) Adequate childcare facilities for drug rehabilitation programs.

(7) Legalization of all drugs to take the profit out of

drug addiction and to stop forcing addicts to steal and prostitute themselves to support their habits.

(8) Taking money now spent on armaments to provide jobs at union wages, quality education for all, and decent housing for everyone to uproot some of the causes of the social alienation and despair that leads to addiction.

(9) Black, Puerto Rican, and Chicano community control of all drug rehabilitation facilities to prevent government manipulation of addicted persons.

(10) Socialist revolution to uproot all the causes of alienation endemic to capitalism that turn people to dangerous drugs and to other self-destructive modes of behavior.

May 27, 1973

### IT IS TIME TO CALL A HALT

by Milton Alvin, Los Angeles Branch

The foundation document of the Fourth International, entitled "The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International" (see "The Founding Conference of the Fourth International," *Documents of the Fourth International*, Pathfinder Press, New York, 1973), begins with the following statement: "The world political situation as a whole is chiefly characterized by a historical crisis of the leadership of the proletariat."

Further on in the document four specific tendencies within the international proletarian movement who were responsible for this crisis at that time are identified as the reformist Social Democracy, the Stalinized Third International, Anarcho-Syndicalism and various centrist groupings. Since the 1938 Founding Conference of the Fourth International, which adopted the document referred to, the latter two tendencies, that is, Anarcho-Syndicalism and centrism have declined to an extent where neither plays a role of any consequence in working class politics.

The remaining two tendencies, Social Democracy and Stalinism, have been held responsible by the Fourth International for their betrayals in proletarian revolutionary developments and thus have stretched out the historical crisis of leadership over an inordinate number of years.

It is unnecessary to recapitulate the treacherous record of these two tendencies either since the Fourth International was founded in 1938 or prior to that time. This has been done to a degree that permits it to be taken for granted that this record is generally known and quite familiar to the world Trotskyist movement. Also, it is obvious that these two tendencies continue to conduct themselves in ways similar to those described and condemned in the founding document.

What is required now is the necessity of taking into account the fact that a new, third factor must be added to the two which have constituted for many years the prin-

cipal bases for the continuation of the historical crisis. This third factor is made up of the leaderships of certain sections of the Fourth International itself.

It would be completely one-sided and incorrect for world Trotskyism to continue to point the finger at Stalinism and Social Democracy as the only tendencies to be held responsible for the crisis in proletarian leadership. The events of the past few years, and in the case of the majority of the leaders of the LSSP in Ceylon before that, make it clear that a part of the responsibility must be placed at the door of those Trotskyist leaderships that failed and continue to fail to meet the test of revolutionary developments.

This is all the more necessary when it is understood that the relationship of forces between Trotskyism on the one hand, and Stalinism and Social Democracy on the other, has undergone sizable changes. The two latter tendencies could smother small Trotskyist groups in the 1930s, virtually silence them and prevent their growth. This is no longer possible, or at least far more difficult, in many countries today.

In France, the United States, Argentina and perhaps other countries, Trotskyists challenge their traditional Stalinist and Social-Democratic opponents directly for influence over the radical milieu and sometimes over the masses. This represents a considerable change from the 1930s but it also places additional responsibilities upon world Trotskyism. The latter must now accept, wherever it is appropriate, its share of blame for the continuation of the historical crisis of leadership of the world proletariat.

There has been no lack of opportunities to organize successful proletarian revolutions. Marxists have called attention to this fact since the historical crisis of capitalism made itself clearly evident in 1914 at the time the first world war began. In more than a half-century that

has since gone by almost all the lost chances in one country after another and sometimes more than once in some countries can be blamed upon Stalinism or Social Democracy or both. This is entirely in order and in conformance with the facts. Of these events no other tendency in the working class has done the job of analysis, evaluation and criticism that Trotskyism has.

However, it is now time to turn critical attention upon those within the world Trotskyist movement who have not measured up to the tasks before them.

Before making concrete analyses it must be stated as a maxim that a leadership that fails to see changes in objective situations that require changes in activities (tactics) must ultimately founder or, at least, find itself and its organization off the main track of development and without influence. It would seem that this idea is ABC to Trotskyists and that it can be taken for granted that all are guided by it.

Unfortunately, this is not the case. Too many times leaders of parties have kept them in activities that no longer conformed to changed conditions, refusing to acknowledge that any change had taken place, insisting that their previous course should be continued and even approving a false course after some catastrophe or other had severely damaged their organization.

The first error in this respect is in confusing tactics and strategy. This has been done in Latin America. The document adopted at the 1969 congress of the Fourth International calls for armed guerrilla struggle in Latin America as a strategy to be followed on a continentwide scale.

There are two fundamental errors in this concept. First, armed struggle, either of the guerrilla type or any other, is not a strategy but a tactic. Other forms of struggle exist, have been effectively used and will certainly be used in the future. Some of these forms of struggle are strikes, demonstrations, boycotts, electoral contests, propaganda campaigns, united fronts, etc. However, the way the "armed struggle strategy" was carried out in Argentina, for example, excluded almost completely other forms of struggle. The same may be said for Bolivia. The reason for the errors is that a tactic was raised to the level of strategy.

The other mistake consists of trying to use a single tactic, even though crowned with the name of strategy, on a continentwide scale. In the course of several hundred years during which it spread to all parts of the world, capitalism divided up the earth into nations. These nations have not developed in the same way and at the same tempo but rather unevenly, resulting in a wide variety of levels. That is the reason that Marxists have found that *unevenness is the most universal law of historical development* and that this law cannot be defied under any circumstances.

Although the Latin American continent is characterized generally as made up of semicolonial nations, this does not mean that they have all developed in the same way and at the same speed. Nor does it mean that at any given moment the same tactics are correct for all these countries.

On the contrary, even the most cursory glance shows that there are great differences among these countries and that different tactics must be used. For example, Brazil is presently ruled by a ruthless dictatorship that

compels revolutionists to conduct illegal, conspirative, underground activities. On the other hand, Argentina, which had been under the rule of a military dictatorship for some years, recently was compelled to permit a general election in which political parties could run candidates and function openly.

Can anyone demand that similar tactics be used in both Brazil and Argentina? Only politically blind sectarians would take such a stand. Correct tactics demand that the party take into account everything in the most concrete and exact way. This was obviously not done by the official section in Argentina, the PRT (Combatiente), which failed to take advantage of a change that brought with it the possibility to function openly.

Instead, the leaders of this party continued with the false course of urban guerrilla warfare, conducted by small groups trying to substitute themselves for mass movements. Unfortunately, they were encouraged in this direction, if not inspired, by authoritative European Trotskyist leaders who hold high posts in the Fourth International.

By way of contrast, the Verdad group in Argentina, now the Socialist Workers Party, a sympathizing party of the Fourth International, took steps to participate in the recently held elections, succeeded in making itself known to wide circles and recruited a sizable number of new members. The details of these contrasting tactics are fully covered elsewhere in internal documents and our press and need not be repeated here.

The Bolivian section of the Fourth International, POR, was also misled into mixing up strategy and tactics and using continentwide strategy (actually tactics) as called for in the document adopted by the 1969 congress of the Fourth International. The POR was occupied in reviving rural guerrilla warfare at the time the Torres regime was established. This was to be a continuation of the work begun by Che Guevara.

The Torres government, taking power with mass support, was compelled to be far more permissive than its predecessors. Open legal mass work could have been done during its term of office which came to an abrupt end as a result of a coup carried out by reactionary military figures.

The POR largely ignored the "Peoples Assembly," an organization formed at the time Torres was installed in office. This assembly consisted of delegates from various unions, parties and mass organizations. It furnished a field in which revolutionists could have and should have worked energetically for the Trotskyist program. Instead, the POR only participated with the aim of recruiting volunteers for rural guerrilla groups it was trying to establish. In this way, the possibility that the Peoples Assembly could have been converted into an organ of dual power challenging the Torres regime was lost.

The defeat subsequently suffered by the workers as a whole and the POR in Bolivia and the loss of valuable cadres of the Fourth International in both that country and Argentina must be placed at the door of those who made the line of the 1969 Latin America resolution of the Fourth International official policy in those countries.

Worse than that, however, is the fact that the originators of this policy persist in claiming that it was correct in the four years that have passed since it was adopted and also correct for the next period. This position is held despite

the clear evidence of the failure of the policy.

With all proportions guarded, such a view is reminiscent of the one taken by Stalinist leaders in 1933 after Hitler's victory in Germany. The Kremlin bureaucracy then found that the ultraleft sectarian (they did not, of course, call it that) line followed by the Communist Party of Germany had been correct. In a similar way, those who made up the majority on the Latin American question at the 1969 Fourth International congress refuse to admit they were wrong, refuse to take steps to correct their line and that of those in Latin America who are in agreement with them.

For this reason they must take a share of the responsibility for contributing to the historical crisis that has plagued the leadership of the proletariat. What has happened is that a part of this crisis which for many years resided within the Stalinist and Social-Democratic leaderships has now been transferred right into part of the leadership of the Fourth International. This fact, no matter how hard it is to accept, must be recognized and discussed so that it can be completely understood and the problem it poses correctly resolved.

It is axiomatic in politics that mistakes must be paid for. There is no way to get around this. In the present period the Fourth International is paying a heavy price for a false policy carried out in Argentina and Bolivia. It is up to those who are responsible for this to take the necessary steps to correct their errors before more damage is done.

Unfortunately, Latin America is not the only area in which wrong policies are being followed. For example, in France the Communist League was in error in taking a stand in favor of voting for candidates of the left bloc of the CP-SP-Radicals on the second round of the recent elections. This position crossed class lines. It is impermissible for revolutionists or any workers to vote for (give political support to) any capitalist candidates, in this case the Radicals, under any circumstances whatever. The CL should have called for a vote for only CP or SP or any

other working-class candidates on the second round.

Lenin would have had some sharp words for this wrong policy. He was fond of the Russian proverb that says, "A spoonful of tar can spoil a barrel of honey." Trotsky would have scorched the wires explaining what was wrong with the excuse used by the CL that there were not many Radicals and that they were really captives of the CP and SP. Some "captives" like these were around in the 1930s and everyone should learn something from the lessons of those years, especially in France and Spain.

At the same time that a slightly masked people's frontism is practiced by the French Communist League, the British International Marxist Group, in the last general elections in that country, refused to give critical support to the Labour Party, having discovered (?) that Lenin(!) believed it to be a capitalist party.

Policies such as these can be traced to that part of the Fourth International leadership which has not taught younger Trotskyists properly and correctly. For the British IMG a study of Lenin's *'Left-Wing' Communism, an Infantile Disorder* is strongly recommended. For the French CL a study of Trotsky's books on France and Spain in the 1930s should be helpful. These works are only mentioned here instead of taking time and space to refute the policies of the IMG and CL.

It is time to call a halt! It is time for the 1969 majority to reverse its course and correct its line from one end to the other!

The damage already done to the international movement is already extensive. Poisonous doses already imbibed threaten to spread to a dangerous extent. If the direction taken is not corrected in time, the life of the International will be endangered.

To repeat Trotsky's words, "The duty of a proletarian revolutionist is not to persist in mistakes, not to place ambition above the interests of the cause but to call a halt in time. . . . Otherwise the scratch which has already developed into an ulcer can lead to gangrene." (*In Defense of Marxism*)

May 27, 1973

## A SOCIALIST POSITION ON DRUG LAWS

by Sudie, Los Angeles Branch; and Geb,  
San Francisco Branch

### Introduction

The original draft of this article was written in April '72, and sent to the Political Committee with the request that the May '72 National Committee plenum consider the question of the SWP position on heroin and heroin laws, which had never been seriously worked out. The '72 plenum did take a stand in favor of legalization of marijuana, some SWP candidates had personally advocated legalization in the past, but apparently this was the first time the SWP nationally took a position on the question (comrades will remember from the '71 convention discussion that we had argued in favor of this). But it was reported that the '72 plenum decided that the party would not at this time take any position on the legalization of any other illegal drugs.

We later heard that the question would be dealt with by the '73 plenum. Unfortunately, the reports we have gotten are that there was no mention at the plenum about the heroin issue (or about the movement for legalizing marijuana, either).

We hope that all comrades can agree that the heroin issue is an important issue which we need to discuss and take a position on.

This article will deal mainly with two pieces of party literature: one is a lengthy piece in the "In Brief" column in *The Militant* (March 10, '72); the other is a section of the Jenness-Pulley campaign brochure—*The Black Community and the '72 Elections* (p. 12).

\* \* \*

*The piece in The Militant:* This was a very long passage in the "In Brief" column, about six inches long. The title was "Heroin Kills." There was a thirteen-line article, almost all of which was a direct quote from the capitalist press. Below this was a cartoon with the headline "No Deposit—No Return," which showed the coffin of a GI, with an oversize hypodermic needle instead of a rifle, symbolizing death through overdose of heroin. The main article reads:

"HEROIN KILLS: Facts revealing the magnitude of the drug problem continue to appear. The Feb. 29 *New York Post* reports, 'The addict-casualty lists for New York City alone have already exceeded the body counts of Vietnam. Between January, 1961, and March, 1970, there were 3565 battlefield deaths of soldiers and Marines from New York State. During the same period in New York City alone, heroin killed 4254 addicts. More than 100 New Yorkers perished as a result of heroin poisoning last year. And the casualty lists don't stop there. Nearly 500 babies were born addicted. Half the prisoners in our jails were junkies. Addicts accounted for 20,000 felonies—muggings, burglaries, rapes, murders.'"

Below the cartoon, the following was printed:

"In an article in the Jan. 2 *Houston Post* dealing with heroin use by GIs in Vietnam, John T. Wheeler predicted that 'deaths from confirmed and clinically diagnosed drug abuse may soon overtake military casualties.'"

The analysis by the *Post* and the rest of the capitalist

press, has some pretty obvious faults, which are worth discussion.

(1) *The Post can't explain why the problem exists, and so they can't explain how to solve it.* Ultimately, the problem is the capitalist system, which can't even make serious attempts to deal with the problems of the masses. For instance, there is the obvious role of extreme poverty, and the strain of surviving in the ghetto, or anywhere else under capitalism. For the *Post*, heroin is the problem, and things like poverty are not, since widespread use of heroin is more of an immediate threat to bourgeois order.

(2) *The Post's analysis is racist.* The capitalist press portrays heroin users as inhuman monsters, in order to justify the brutalization of users by the police—the largest proportion of users being Third World people. This is especially obvious where the *Post*, in the last sentence, calls users rapists (because of the particular effects of the drug, heroin users would actually be *less* likely than others to rape anyone, since heroin is a very powerful tranquilizer). This utter myth is put forward by the liberal *Post*, because of their view of Afro-American men as rapists. The blame for rape is not heroin or Blacks, but the sexual repression of capitalism, which teaches men to treat women as objects, and which teaches women not to defend themselves.

(3) *"Half the prisoners in our jails were junkies. Addicts accounted for 20,000 felonies [in NYC in '71]."* Using heroin is illegal, and so of course heroin users will be outlaws, even if they never break other laws. When junkies break other laws, it is generally because the laws against heroin drive the price up, from maybe 30 cents a day, to maybe \$30 or more for a day's supply; so addicts are forced by their addiction to obtain constant, large incomes, which for most of them means either prostitution, pimping, stealing, or dealing drugs to others (which often means getting someone else hooked in order to be able to sell them more). Theft gets multiplied even further, since an individual might have to steal well over \$100 in goods, to be able to sell them for maybe \$20 or \$30, to buy a day's supply of heroin (and for many, the daily need can be several times greater). In England—where heroin is provided free to addicts—junkies don't have to resort to such desperate activity. The *Post* is lying; it is not addicts, but *governmental repression*, which "accounted for 20,000 felonies."

(4) *"Heroin killed 4254 addicts"* in New York City in the last decade. When abortion was illegal, thousands of women in the U.S. died every year from abortions which were performed in unsafe ways by the underground; now that abortion is more-or-less legal, abortion deaths are relatively rare. Likewise, heroin deaths in England are very unusual, and would be rare here, too, if it was legal. Underground heroin comes in very unreliable dosages; an individual often takes much more than he or she realizes and suffers overdose. Infection, and other forms of heroin-related poisoning, also come mainly from the lack of sensible medical supervision in production

and distribution. If the *Post* had any care for the welfare of addicts, it would at least advocate some sort of reform along the British lines.

How many alcohol addicts were killed as a result of using *that* drug in New York in the past decade? Many times more! One of the main causes of death in the U.S. is alcohol damage over the years (causing cirrhosis of the liver, heart disease, extreme malnutrition, and many, many other killers). Still more people die in alcohol-caused accidents—most automobile deaths and injuries involve at least one driver who had been drinking. Even government commissions have agreed that alcohol is far worse a problem in the U.S. today than heroin.

But the *Post* doesn't crusade against alcohol—it even makes money from ads for booze. There are a whole number of bourgeois-approved pain-killers which are often also people-killers): alcohol, aspirin, religion, etc. The capitalists approve of these, as ways of keeping the oppressed tranquilized, or at least as being socially acceptable money makers. They oppose heroin, not out of any concern for the user, but out of fear that a heroin epidemic would do too much damage to bourgeois culture and values, not to mention the economy. This is based in the founding ideology of capitalism—Puritanism.

*What does the ruling class have against heroin?* To the extent that heroin use makes people docile and apathetic, the ruling class is quite satisfied—they spend lots of time trying to keep people apathetic. They don't care about the unpleasant effects heroin has for its users (otherwise they would at least make some sort of reform along the British model, to eliminate the worst of these effects).

The Puritanism or work-ethic of capitalism considers pleasure to be a bad thing, and considers "excessive," "unearned" pleasure to be intolerable (this is why a section of the ruling class wants to substitute methadone addiction for heroin addiction—methadone may be equally addictive, but it's presumably less pleasurable, so it's better in the eyes of the ruling class).

It shouldn't be too hard to imagine why the capitalists push the work-ethic—especially when they push it for those who are supposed to do their work for them.

Since the *Post's* analysis was printed in *The Militant* without any comment to suggest that *The Militant* disagrees in any way—it even titled the section "Heroin Kills," which repeats the *Post's* view—this must have given the reader the impression that *The Militant* agreed with the liberal position on heroin. At other times comrades have at least blamed the system, poverty, etc., for the problem, but this still isn't enough: we have to blame the laws, too.

\* \* \*

*The passage in the campaign brochure, the section titled "Black community control" amongst a whole number of other concrete demands on other subjects, we find:*

"End the traffic in drugs in the Black community. Repeal all laws governing drugs that penalize the drug user. Make free, high-quality medical care under community control available to all—including free abortions and a comprehensive drug rehabilitation program for African-American addicts."

(1) "*drugs*": This term, which is used as a scare-word by the ruling class, is so unscientific that it is totally use-

less. If taken seriously, it would include Vitamin C and penicillin; were Jenness and Pulley promising to end the traffic in *those* drugs?

If this were changed to "*illegal drugs*," it would still be wrong. The bourgeois state cannot be trusted to decide which drugs should be illegal (for instance, the research of the government itself shows far more evidence against alcohol or nicotine, than marijuana).

"End the traffic in drugs" means marijuana as well as heroin, in almost anyone's mind. The '72 campaign came out for legalization of marijuana, but the brochure gives the opposite impression, thanks to the unscientific, uncritical use of the term "drugs." What did the campaign brochure really mean? Heroin? Opium derivatives in general? Addictive drugs in general? Do we include cocaine? Do we include LSD? Speed? Alcohol?

(2) "*end the traffic*" how? The brochure says only that we oppose any laws that penalize the user. But do we continue to make heroin illegal? Will it be illegal to sell, or to possess a large amount or, even though legal to have a small amount, to use? Isn't "end the traffic" just a bit too vague?

(3) "*a comprehensive drug rehabilitation program*"—but will it be *voluntary*, or *required*? Will addicts and other users be allowed to continue using heroin, if they so choose? Or will we make their personal decision for them? Do we favor legal access like in Britain? Or something more radical? Or something closer to what exists now in the U.S.?

#### *A Socialist Position on the Drug-Law Crisis*

The U.S. today is faced with a drug-law crisis. It is a drug-law crisis, rather than a drug crisis. There is not so much of a controversy and struggle over the most commonly abused drugs, such as nicotine, alcohol, or caffeine. These drugs may kill millions of people, but at present there are few laws being passed about them, and few people going to jail for long periods of time.

But because of the laws against a number of widely used drugs (marijuana, heroin, speed, cocaine, LSD, peyote, etc.), there is a drug-law crisis. It is one of the important issues of the decade. It is much too important for us to ignore, or for us to take vague positions on. Thousands of people die because of drug laws. Many tens of thousands of people go to jail, often for long terms. Millions of people in the U.S. live in perpetual fear of being busted. People are forced to pay prices which are inflated a hundred times over because they can't get their drugs legally, meaning that billions of dollars have to be raised through theft, prostitution, etc. In the cities, the masses have to live in constant fear of being robbed to finance someone's habit.

As a result of this, bourgeois politicians compete with each other to see who can whip up the most racism towards junkies. Front-page headlines in the bourgeois press constantly push the bourgeois view—which is used to feed a racist law-and-order mentality. To consciously refuse to take a revolutionary position—because the issue is too controversial, because the masses support the bourgeois position, etc.—would be opportunism. To simply overlook the issue and not take it seriously, would be a default of leadership.

(1) Drugs are a scientific question, not a moral question. Scientific evidence shows that some illegal drugs

may actually be potentially desirable, and certainly aren't proven harmful (marijuana especially, as well as all the psychedelics under favorable conditions). Regardless of any laws, masses will continue to deal with the pain of living in a painful society, by using pain-killers (heroin, alcohol, religion, aspirin), all of which have harmful effects. In a depressing society, masses will deal with their depression by using harmful stimulants (speed, tobacco, coffee, sugar). The problem of harmful drugs also includes the various additives that are put in almost all our food. We need massive scientific research to establish the effects of the drugs of our society, and massive education about existing knowledge, not moral condemnations.

(2) The bourgeois press thinks the drug-abuse problem is the result of laws being too lenient. But drug abuse is a direct result of mass misery. The only way to end drug abuse is to end mass misery: poverty, alienation, unemployment, etc. The ruling class wants to cover up the sickness of our society by repressing the symptom of drug abuse. Prohibition didn't work with alcohol, and it won't work with any other drug with mass appeal.

(3) The decision whether to use any given drug should be made on the basis of knowing the effects of the drug, but it is a democratic right for any individual to decide. You have the right to kill yourself with tobacco if you want to, and you have the democratic right to abuse any other drug as well. Such a decision depends on a decision of personal values: how much importance do you attach to your health? Do you want to deal with your pain, through using a pain-killer? No one has the right to make such a decision for you but yourself. Concretely, this means every person should have the right to access to marijuana, heroin, tobacco, alcohol, speed, LSD, or whatever—and access to them under the best possible

conditions, in the cheapest, purest, most desirable forms scientifically possible. This very clearly means *legalization*.

(4) No one should be allowed to grow rich by poisoning others. No commercial advertisements should be allowed anywhere which attempt to sell people things which doctors would advise them against. But people grow rich selling heroin in the U. S., where strong laws prohibit it—while heroin isn't big business in England, because it's provided free to addicts.

(5) We don't make policy decisions in order to file them away and forget them. There is not now much of an active movement to legalize heroin, so there is not much more we can do than explain our position in our press (if and when we take a position). But where such active movements rise up, if we really support them we support them actively. The marijuana legalization movement is an example. To abstain from such a movement while formally endorsing it, can easily begin to look hypocritical. We should stop abstaining from this movement.

\* \* \*

When individual SWP candidates began calling for legalization of marijuana a couple of years ago, it was a valuable step forward, and it was another step forward when the '72 National Committee plenum made this an official national policy. We have heard that Linda Jenness as SWP presidential candidate in '72 advocated legalizing heroin on several occasions, and if so this is also a forward move. But there is still a ways to go, before the party has a policy on the drug laws, let alone a correct and adequate policy.

May 25, 1973

## A CONTRIBUTION AND SOME PROPOSALS

by Ninure Saunders, Chicago Branch

(In any principled discussion one should avoid as much as possible the introduction of hearsay evidence into the discussion, i.e., comments made on a branch floor, or the activities of a particular comrade or group of comrades in a particular branch.

(However, sometimes it is necessary to introduce such "hearsay" evidence to the party membership as a whole, for example, when the "leaders" of a particular tendency reside in a particular branch, and/or where there is a significant number of tendency comrades.

(In Chicago, many of the comrades who were either sympathetic to the FAPO (For A Proletarian Orientation) Tendency, or who were members of that tendency, are now members of the American Minority Tendency,

which is in political agreement with the International Majority Tendency. Because of this, during a recent branch discussion these comrades were asked the following: "The International Majority politically supports the SWP position on Black and Chicano nationalism. Where do you stand now? Do you now also support Black and Chicano nationalism?" Comrade Don Smith, a former FAPO supporter, speaking for the AMT said in no uncertain terms "No!"

(This contribution then, is an attempt to defend the SWP's, and now also that of the world Trotskyist movement, position on Black nationalism, not only against the AMT, but against all comrades who have difficulty understanding our position on Black nationalism, the

position of revolutionary Marxists.

(I would ask that comrades would bear with me, as this contribution consists mainly of excerpts from various sources.)

#### *Are American Blacks a Race, a Nation, or a Nationality?*

One of the major reasons why comrades have such difficulty understanding Black nationalism revolves around the question: "Are American Blacks a race, a nation, or a nationality?" (This is important question, for the answer to this question, wrong or right, has been used as a basis for many on the left to deny American Blacks the right of self-determination.)

In 1933 this question was posed during discussion with Trotsky on the Negro question: "Swabeck — I admit that you have advanced powerful arguments but I am not entirely convinced. The existence of a special Negro language is possible, but in general all Negroes speak English. They are fully assimilated. Their religion is American Baptist and their language in their churches is likewise English. . . . We do not look upon the Negroes as being under national oppression in the same sense as the oppressed colonial peoples." (*L. Trotsky On Black Nationalism and Self-Determination*, Pathfinder Press, pp. 15-16.)

Even today we can still hear those same arguments inside and outside our movement as to why American Blacks are not a nation. However Trotsky saw the shallowness of those arguments.

"Trotsky — . . . According to the American comrades one could say that also Belgium has no rights as a 'nation.' The Belgians are Catholics and a large section of them speak French. What if France were to annex them with such an argument? Also the Swiss people, through their historical connection, feel themselves, despite different languages and religion, as one nation. An abstract criterion is not decisive in this question, but much more decisive is their historical consciousness, their feelings and their impulses. But that is not determined accidentally but rather by the general conditions." (*Ibid.*, p. 16.)

Trotsky correctly saw then that Blacks were not yet a nation: "The Negroes are a race not a nation; nations grow out of the racial material. . . . The fact that they are not a majority in any state does not matter. . . . In any case the suppression of the Negroes pushes them toward a political and national unity." (*Ibid.*, p. 17.)

Not yet a nation. That was Trotsky's analysis. But he saw that American Blacks due to their oppression would be forced to head towards a "national and political unity." Did that process ever truly begin? Obviously so, for in 1963 the SWP had to say the following about American Blacks: "But the American Negro people are in a situation with some unique aspects. They are an oppressed racial minority without a clearly defined geographical, language or cultural basis of differentiation from their oppressors. Negro nationalism is at this point a broad medium for 'self-identification' a method of differentiating a racially oppressed minority from its oppressors, and of unifying it ideologically and organizationally, to free itself from oppression. . . . (SWP Discussion Bulletin Vol. 24 No. 13, May 1963, p. 6.)

This process is still continuing. I think that if you were to go into the Black community, and stop any Black American and ask if he felt himself to be a part of the

United States' nation or part of the "Black nation," that person would tell you in no uncertain terms that he was part of the Black nation. Now that doesn't prove that Blacks are a nation, but that kind of feeling, that consciousness pushes American Blacks into the realm of national minority. Still not yet a nation, but a national minority, an oppressed nationality.

#### *Is the Demand For Self-Determination For Oppressed Nations Only?*

Many comrades operate under the mistaken assumption that no group but an oppressed nation has any just claim to the right of self-determination. (These comrades also have trouble making the distinction between a "nation-state" and a nation.)

Trotsky made it clear that the right of self-determination was the right of all oppressed peoples, and that in this particular case it definitely applied to American Blacks. First of all, said Trotsky, "Self-determination is a democratic demand." (*Op. cit.*, p. 19) And further, "The Bolsheviks fought for Russia always for the self-determination of national minorities *including the right of complete separation.*" (*L. Trotsky on Black Nationalism and Self-Determination*, p. 19. Emphasis added.)

#### *Raising the Slogan of Self-Determination Divides the Working Class, and Besides, Blacks Don't Want It*

We hear it from all sides: "The struggle of American Blacks as Blacks, the nationalism of American Blacks is reactionary. Raising the question of self-determination leads away from the class struggle, and divides the working class."

Once again Trotsky gave a clear answer in no uncertain terms to such banal arguments. "The argument that the slogan for self-determination leads away from the working class basis is an adaptation to the ideology of the white workers." (*Ibid.*, p. 19.) And further: "If the situation was such that the class fraternization had already become a fact, then perhaps the arguments of our comrades would have a basis—I do not say they would be correct—then perhaps we would separate the colored workers from the white if we commence with the slogan 'self-determination.'

"The petty bourgeoisie will take up the demand for 'social, political, and economic equality,' for 'self-determination,' but prove absolutely incapable in the struggle; the Negro proletariat will march over the petty bourgeoisie in the direction towards the proletarian revolution. That is perhaps for them the most important road. I can therefore see no reason why we should not advance the slogan for self-determination." (*Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.)

Trotsky saw that then as now " . . . the white workers in relation to the Negroes are the oppressors, scoundrels, who persecute the black and the yellow, hold them in contempt and lynch them." (*Ibid.*, p. 14.) (Any comrade who doubts that this is still the case should take his head out of the clouds and try regularly reading the Black press.) That situation, and not the nationalism of the oppressed is the real class divider. Instead of attacking the Black American's desire to control his own destiny, revolutionary Marxists use their energies in carrying out educational and defense campaigns against the chauvinism of the white worker.

And finally, on the question of whether or not Black

Americans want self-determination, once again Trotsky provides us with an answer. "When today the Negroes do not demand self-determination that is naturally for the same reason that the white workers do not yet advance the slogan of proletarian dictatorship. The Negro has not yet got it into his poor black head that he dares to carve out for himself a piece of these great and mighty states." (Ibid., p. 17. Emphasis added.)

Since then, the party noticed the following in the development of Black nationalist sentiment: "There has been a noticeable decline of separatist sentiment, mostly manifested in Malcolm X's evolution. This has been paradoxically attended by a heightening of racial consciousness. This two-sided development confirms that point that Black nationalism based upon an acceptance of self-reliance, racial pride and dignity, identification with Africa, and an assertion of independence is not necessarily bound up with separatism. *In all its manifestations, however, it is bound up with the demand for Black unity, autonomy, and power.*" (SWP Discussion Bulletin Vol. 25 No. 1, June 4, 1965, p. 6. Emphasis added.)

*Conclusion: What Program for Struggle? (And Some Proposals)*

" . . . the adaptation of our Transitional Program to the Negro problems in the states, a very carefully elaborated program with genuine civil rights, political rights, cultural interests, economic interests and so on. *It should be done.*" (Op. cit., p. 37. Emphasis added.)

This was not fully done until 1969, thirty years after it was suggested. But today the Transitional Program stands out in its correct strategy for mobilizing the masses of Blacks in this country for revolutionary struggle. All those who attack the party's strategy of advancing the Black liberation struggle through the development of transitional demands, i. e., *The Transitional Program for Black Liberation*, have yet to offer any other strategy for consideration of revolutionary Marxists, let alone the Black masses.

Those people who attack our program for Black Liberation struggles enjoy pointing to our small number of Black cadre as verification of their arguments. But the party's difficulty in recruiting more Blacks to revolutionary Marxism does not lie in the party's program.

The party defines this problem as being primarily a "crisis of leadership in the Black community" which makes intervention in the Black struggles more than difficult. (However that situation is changing, as the last two African Liberation demonstrations have shown, along with the 1971 Gary convention, the rise of YOBU [Youth Orga-

nization for Black Unity], and the militant strikes of Black workers in Atlanta.)

The party has been learning that it is a myth that only Black comrades can do Black work. It is beginning to learn that it is possible for us to intervene in Black struggles in areas other than those on the campuses, such as the STRESS struggles in Detroit, African Liberation activities, defense campaigns, and strikes by Black workers.

This shows that if the party is not recruiting, it is not solely due to the "crisis in leadership in the Black community," and it is certainly not because the party does not want to recruit.

In the last convention of the SWP, supporters of the FAPO tendency put some proposals forward which they felt would help the party carry out Black work more effectively. I would like to reintroduce some of those proposals along with some of my own for consideration of the convention, and as possible amendments to the Political Committee's perspectives for Black work.

I feel that these proposals will enhance our Black work and help us to answer the question of why we are not recruiting more Black cadre, and what we can do about it.

1) That the party make a complete and more thorough analysis of the present political level of the Black community.

2) That the party analyze more thoroughly the different political tendencies within the Black liberation movement.

3) That the party make an indepth analysis of the uneven political development between the Black masses, and its present leadership, or lack of leadership.

4) That the party publish the results of these studies in a special internal information bulletin which would be available to all comrades.

5) That the party undertake a special educational program on the basis of these studies for all party comrades as well as inviting party contacts and the Young Socialist Alliance.

6) That the party seriously consider calling for a special Black convention on the question of a Black party.

7) That all party branches be encouraged to set up permanent Black work fractions, which will have as one of its duties the reading of all local Black press in addition to national Black press, with regular weekly reports being sent into the national office. This will enable the N. O. to have a clear picture of what is happening in the Black community all over the country.

8) That the national office have these reports published and made available to all organizers, and *all* fraction heads, so that our Black work can be better coordinated.

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