



# Discussion Bulletin

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## DRAFT POLITICAL RESOLUTION

[The general line of this resolution was approved by the Political Committee June 15, 1973.]

This resolution is based on the analysis of the evolution of the world situation contained in the international report adopted by the April 1973 plenum of the National Committee. (SWP Discussion Bulletin Vol. 31, No. 12.) Its central purposes are to: (1) describe the domestic strategy of the Nixon administration in this new situation; (2) outline the evolution of the radicalization and the class struggle as a whole since the 1971 party convention; (3) discuss developments among opponent currents in the left in light of the new situation; and (4) present the central tasks for building the Socialist Workers Party in the period immediately ahead.

### I. THE EVOLUTION OF RULING-CLASS STRATEGY

The new world capitalist economic situation is characterized by the following: intensification of international capitalist competition as the productivity gap between U.S. imperialism and Euro-Japanese imperialisms has narrowed; monetary crises that have led to the end of the postwar international monetary system and that have already included three devaluations of the dollar; intensified conflict among the imperialist powers over tariff and trade regulations, over the rules of a new international monetary system, and over allocation among themselves of the costs of policing the world for capitalism; and competition for the new markets opening in the workers states as a result of the détente.

In this situation, the U.S. ruling class has been compelled to bring the weight of the government to bear against the real wages, rights, and working conditions of the American working class, under the banner of "fighting inflation" and "protecting American jobs" from foreign competition. The goal of the boss class is to lower the costs of production relative to those of the other major imperialist powers by raising productivity and depressing wage gains.

Just as on the international level the U.S. ruling class seeks collaboration from the Stalinist bureaucracies in containing the class struggle, at home it seeks the cooperation of the union bureaucracy in carrying out this policy.

During the Johnson administration and the first years of the Nixon administration, the working class refused to sacrifice its living standards for the sake of the war, resulting in successful union struggles for wage increases that at least kept up with price rises. The Nixon administration's fiscal policies facilitated the 1969-70 recession. Its hope was that the rate of unemployment would be high enough to pressure the workers to lower their wage demands. But the rate of unemployment reached in that recession, officially reported to be 6 percent, was insufficient to dampen the willingness of the organized workers to fight for wage increases. The administration pulled back from taking measures that could have deepened the recession further for fear of the political and social

consequences of a much higher rate of unemployment, and fear that this could deepen the recession internationally.

Unable to hold down wage increases in the negotiations between the unions and the individual industries, either through appeals to patriotism or government fiscal policies that helped push the rate of unemployment up, the ruling class—faced with a new world situation—turned to a different weapon. This was the more direct use of the centralized power of the capitalist government in an assault upon the entire working class through an "incomes policy."

Nixon's August 15, 1971, speech signaled this new stage, officially and openly abandoning the convertibility of an already eroded dollar. The postwar international monetary system was declared dead. The speech indicated a tougher stance towards the other imperialist powers and a readiness to utilize government muscle more openly in the class struggle at home.

The freeze on wages announced in Nixon's speech was a calculated blow by the ruling class aimed at all sections of the working class, organized and unorganized. The three-month wage freeze of Phase One was designed to assert the right of the capitalist government to use its power to limit the wages of the working class, under cover of a phony price freeze. Once established, this "right" was further institutionalized in the wage controls of Phase Two and the "voluntary" wage controls of Phase Three.

Under cover of this attack on wages, which brings the club of government interference more openly into collective bargaining sessions, the employers have launched a general offensive on working conditions. Under the slogan of increasing labor productivity they have intensified the rate of work and increasingly introduced new techniques, tools and rationalization of the work force into industry after industry.

While we cannot predict the tempo or the precise forms it will take in the future, direct government interference in the process of collective bargaining as it relates to wages is part of long-range ruling class strategy. Whether through wage freezes, wage guidelines and controls, or "voluntary" controls this tendency is dictated by the international pressures American capitalism faces.

This attack by the capitalist government has hit the unorganized, Blacks and other oppressed nationalities, women, youth, and older people the hardest. Inflation takes its greatest toll on unorganized workers and those with lower and relatively fixed incomes, who do not even have the means to resist that unionized workers have. Pressure on the wages of the entire working class affects these layers the most.

Ruling-class strategy includes appealing to the narrow interests of the labor bureaucracy against the rank and file, and attempting to deepen divisions in the working class by appealing to the better paid and more highly organized against the lower paid and unorganized.

At the same time, the ruling class must find ways to hold down wage increases in basic industry, where the working class is best organized. The ruling class is proceeding carefully in putting the squeeze on the wages and working conditions of the unionized workers, attempting to do this while at the same time avoiding precipitating a massive reaction by the unions.

To accomplish this, the ruling class seeks the collaboration of the labor bureaucracy. The success of this strategy is dependent upon the ability of the ruling class to grant enough selective concessions to the unions to enable the bureaucracy to sell the agreements to the workers. How long and how well this policy can work depends both on the extent of the concessions the employers are willing to give and the expectations of the workers.

### *The Response of the Labor Bureaucracy*

In the face of the new government attack signaled by Nixon's August 15, 1971, speech, the union bureaucracy utterly failed to mobilize the workers to defend themselves. Wedded firmly to a policy of class collaborationism, this petty-bourgeois social layer fastened upon the unions is incapable of adopting the necessary class-struggle approach and policies, on either the trade-union or political level, to counter the government offensive. On the contrary, the bureaucracy has fundamentally gone along with the government attack.

Playing on the deep concern of the workers about inflation and job security, ruling-class propaganda portrays these as problems the "nation" faces, not as evils generated by the capitalist system. The "nation" must sacrifice to slow down inflation and meet foreign competition. The labor bureaucracy goes along with this chauvinism, supporting protective legislation like the Burke-Hartke bill and a "buy American" campaign; supporting "our own" capitalists in the face of foreign competition. It supports the Kennedy-Rodino bill against undocumented Latino workers as the way to "protect" those Chicano and other workers in the Southwest and elsewhere who have citizenship papers.

With the capitalist class utilizing its governmental power in an intensified way against the working class, this raises more immediately and directly the need for a class-struggle political response to fight back against combined economic and political attacks. But, in face of this situation, the bureaucracy remains committed to a policy of political subordination of the union movement to the capitalist parties.

The bureaucracy does not oppose wage controls. To the contrary, it called for them before Nixon imposed them—with the proviso that they be more "equitable," that is, that they be presented in a more palatable form, including a phony freeze on profits and prices.

Fearing that the mobilization of the power of the unions would go beyond the narrow limits of struggle that they can countenance and might even lead to rank-and-file independence on a scale that could threaten their own privileged positions, the bureaucrats shrink back from organizing the workers in struggle against the government.

The failure of the union bureaucracy to fight for the interests of the working class as a whole and all the oppressed, and its acquiescence in the ruling class's attack on the lower paid and disadvantaged, threatens the unions

themselves. This misguided policy fails to enlist the entire working class and oppressed sectors as allies of the labor movement. Instead of fighting for a sliding scale of hours at no reduction in pay to spread the available work, and fighting to organize the unorganized with an industrial, and not a craft perspective, the bureaucrats' policy facilitates the attrition of the work force in industry after industry in face of capitalist rationalization. It means the creation of a situation where greater pressure is placed on union wages and conditions because of the lower wages and worse conditions of the disadvantaged and unorganized workers.

The failure of the bureaucracy to mount any effective counter to the ruling-class attack, indeed its incapacity to do so, has meant that the attack launched by the capitalist class in 1971 has been successful by-and-large in chipping away at real wage gains; at the right to collective bargaining, the right to vote on contracts and the right to strike; and at working conditions of the American working class.

Against these policies of the class-collaborationist bureaucracy, the union movement must have a new leadership that is based on a class-struggle perspective and program; that fights for the interests of the class as a whole; and is internationalist in its outlook, that looks to fellow workers abroad, not the bosses at home, as potential allies in struggle.

### *Nixon's Strategy in the Elections*

Nixon's 1972 electoral victory was virtually assured by the detente with Moscow and Peking. The Soviet summit meeting convinced the masses of Americans that Nixon would be able to end the war in Vietnam and reduce the threat of nuclear holocaust.

Thus able to appear as the peace candidate, Nixon developed his campaign strategy. He promised to reduce the rate of inflation and unemployment through his national and international economic policies. In addition to wage-price controls, Nixon's plan to "fight inflation" included cutting back on spending for social services—while at the same time increasing war spending to new levels. He made scarcely disguised racist appeals to white middle-class and working-class people to justify cutting back social services to the poor, aiming in the process to win much of the pro-Wallace vote. This was coupled with appeals to the "work ethic," implying not very subtly that Blacks and other oppressed and disadvantaged are poorer because they are lazy, and demagogically tapping the resentment against high taxes and prices by attempting to direct it against the poor.

Nixon calculated that the detente and finally the signing of the Paris accords would take the steam out of the antiwar movement, and defuse a key driving force of the radicalization.

He also attempted to utilize patriotism and anticommunism in his campaign. An example of this was the attempt to railroad Daniel Ellsberg to jail. After the elections and the Paris agreement, he staged the POW spectacle, an orgy of self-justification for the years of slaughter Washington had carried out in Indochina. He has consistently defended higher war spending by asserting the necessity to maintain a strong military position against the workers states

as the best method to reach an accommodation with them.

## II. THE EVOLUTION OF THE RADICALIZATION AND THE CLASS STRUGGLE AS A WHOLE

The process of radicalization that began in the 1960s was analyzed in the political resolution adopted by the 1971 convention of the party, *Perspectives and Lessons of the New Radicalization*, and the basic features of the radicalization were outlined. This resolution explained that by radicalization, we mean a situation where "large numbers of people, under the impact of changes in international and national conditions, have begun altering their attitudes about important questions, beliefs, values, customs, relations, and institutions — social, personal, philosophical, political, economic, cultural..."

In the period since the 1971 convention, the process of radicalization has been marked by a contradictory evolution. Before discussing the radicalization as a whole, we will outline the development of the various movements that have developed in the course of the process of radicalization.

### *The Struggle Against the Imperialist War in Indochina*

In the period just after the 1971 party convention, activity of the organized antiwar movement dampened somewhat as Washington continued its gradual withdrawal of U.S. troops, and U.S. casualties lessened. At the same time, antiwar sentiment in the population continued to spread and deepen, as Nixon's promises that the U.S. was disengaging intensified the desire of millions to end the war immediately.

During the spring 1972 offensive by the North Vietnamese and NLF troops, there was an upsurge of antiwar action. The April 22, 1972, antiwar demonstrations were inspired by the advances of the Vietnamese fighters against the Saigon forces and reflected determined opposition to any move by Washington to utilize the offensive to reescalate U.S. involvement. These demonstrations exceeded every expectation in their size and militancy.

Nixon's escalation of the bombing to meet the offensive, and then his mining of the North Vietnamese ports and massive bombing of North Vietnam threatened to virtually destroy North Vietnam, and challenged the Soviet Union to back up Hanoi. The potential rose rapidly for a massive explosion as millions saw Nixon was taking the world toward the nuclear brink. Such an explosion would have dwarfed the most massive antiwar actions of the past. The relationship of forces in Vietnam, in this country, and throughout the world were never more favorable to force the imperialists to back down.

The decision of the Kremlin to go ahead and hold the scheduled summit meeting with Nixon signaled that it would do nothing to counter Nixon's murderous assault on North Vietnam, and would allow him a free hand there. This Stalinist betrayal of the Vietnamese revolution cut the ground from under the antiwar movement. The threat of a nuclear showdown was over. The masses in the U.S. and throughout the world felt that through a deal with Brezhnev and Mao, Nixon would find a solution to the war.

But antiwar sentiment remained high. This was shown

at the inaugural day demonstration on January 20, 1973, in response to the renewal of massive terror-bombing of North Vietnam during the Christmas period, and revealing widespread distrust of Nixon's intentions in the negotiations with the Vietnamese.

The signing of the Paris accords, and the subsequent withdrawal from South Vietnam of most of the remaining U.S. troops, objectively precludes for the time being street actions against the continued U.S. involvement in Indochina of the same massive scope previously possible. The masses of the American people, including many antiwar activists, believe that the war is essentially over as far as U.S. involvement is concerned.

Since the signing of the accords, the U.S. has stepped up its murderous bombing in Cambodia, at a daily rate one and one-half times the rate of the intense bombing of North Vietnam. As long as such bombing or other forms of U.S. involvement continue, there will be the necessity and opportunity to continue to educate about and expose this imperialist intervention, and organize protests against it, although these will necessarily be of a modest character.

In the event that the U.S. again intervenes militarily in Vietnam on a substantial scale or for any sustained period, we can expect massive opposition to be again displayed by the American people.

### *Balance Sheet on the SWP's Role in the Antiwar Movement*

Throughout the whole period of the massive direct military involvement of the U.S. in Vietnam, the SWP played the central role in building opposition to the war through massive street actions. Our line, which we fought for consistently in all the various phases of the antiwar movement, was based on the central goal of building single-issue, nonexclusionary, united-front-type mass street demonstrations. While recognizing that the students were the initial spearhead of these mass demonstrations and provided the bulk of the participants we sought every opportunity to bring the decisive social force—the working class—into action against the war. We fought for the antiwar movement to raise as its central demand the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops, materiel, and "aid" from Indochina.

The fundamental correctness of this line was demonstrated in two ways.

First was the impact the actions had on the masses of the American people. Antiwar sentiment broadened and deepened, penetrating even into the armed forces to a significant extent. It was a central factor in the development of the radicalization. The mass actions gave visible expression to this growing sentiment and were a significant factor in its further development.

Second was the impact of the mass actions on the ruling class. Nixon himself, in speeches defending his cover-up of Watergate, has pointed to these mass mobilizations, and especially the May 1970 giant campus antiwar strike and upsurge, as dangerous for the ruling class. Fear of what these actions could lead to was a potent consideration in the differences among ruling circles over the best war tactics.

The resistance of the Vietnamese was primarily respon-

sible for creating the antiwar sentiment in the U. S., and in preventing the U. S. from militarily crushing the revolution in South Vietnam. The antiwar movement and the threat of social crisis it posed became an important factor in *limiting* the U. S. militarily in Vietnam. For example, U. S. casualties were becoming more and more unacceptable to the American people. A policy of utilizing whatever military force was necessary to crush the Vietnamese ran the risk of producing unacceptable political protest and a social crisis at home. The impact on the ruling class was intensified when the example of the American antiwar movement stimulated massive antiwar actions in countries around the world.

### *Struggle With Opponents*

Throughout the course of the antiwar movement, we had to struggle against virtually every other current calling itself socialist or radical to maintain this mass action perspective. Attempts to derail the movement had to be fought and rejected.

We had to fight continually against those who tried to derail the movement into becoming an appendage of one or another wing or candidate of the capitalist parties. The Communist Party was the strongest organized force in the antiwar movement that opposed the mass action perspective throughout the course of the movement, and often formed a bloc with the ultralefts to do this. It generally had to be forced into supporting mass actions when it did support them. It attempted to graft a liberal "multi-issue" approach upon the movement, to blur its focus against Washington's imperialist aggression. It opposed the demand for "Out Now" in the early years of the movement, putting forward the demand for "negotiations." Later, after most other forces in the movement adopted the "Out Now" demand, they begrudgingly supported it for a time, although they never gave up the "peaceful coexistence" perspective that underlay their "negotiations" position. This was expressed in their support of the demand to "Support the seven point program" of the PRG, and then in support of the "Sign Now" demand. They went so far as to attack and slander the Nov. 18, 1972, demonstrations organized by the National Peace Action Coalition as traitorous to the Vietnamese, because these actions centered on the demand that the U. S. completely withdraw all forces, materiel, etc. from Indochina.

We also had to fight against proposals to substitute individual pacifist protest or "trashing" operations by a handful of ultralefts for mass action. The most extreme example of ultraleft detachment from reality appeared in the terrorist acts of the Weathermen.

Other sectarians and ultralefts proposed that since so many people finally became willing to demonstrate for "Out Now," that "more radical" slogans were needed, with the various groups putting forward different proposals ranging from "Victory to the NLF" to "Build a Labor Party Now." Against all of these schemes, the party fought for the correct perspective of building the antiwar movement on an ever more massive scale, with the aim of reaching the masses of workers and others, around the slogan that expressed both a principled and correct stand in defense of the Vietnamese revolution against U. S. imperialism, and was understandable and supportable by the majority of Americans.

In the period before the signing of the Paris accords, we faced a special problem. The pro-Moscow and pro-Peking Stalinists supported the "Sign the Treaty" demand against the "Out Now" demand, and were supported in this by the ultraleft groups. Confusion over this question was heightened by the support given this demand by the Vietnamese Stalinists, who helped cover up the role played by both Moscow and Peking in forcing them to yield important concessions to Washington in the accords.

The political role played by the SWP and the YSA in the development of the antiwar movement was an indispensable one in spite of our small size. The Trotskyists were the only organized force in the antiwar movement that consistently fought for a mass action perspective, together with independent antiwar activists. The mass actions that were the most important aspect of the antiwar struggle could not have occurred on anywhere near the same scale, if at all, if we had not done this.

The balance sheet on the party's defense of the Indochinese revolution, from our role in building the antiwar movement on a correct line to our role in exposing the Stalinist betrayal of that revolution by Moscow and Peking, indicates that this campaign was one of the proudest accomplishments in the history of our party.

### *The Student Movement*

The largest student mobilization to date in the U. S. was the May 1970 upsurge. After this tremendous explosion, there was a relative decline in student activism. The April 24, 1971, and April 22, 1972, antiwar demonstrations, the beginnings of remobilization of students in response to Nixon's brinkmanship in May 1972, and the inauguration day protest marked high points of struggle within this relative decline.

There have been a number of factors causing this decline in student radical activity. An important one was the general decline in activity in the Black struggle, which, coupled with the granting of some concessions to Black students as a result of the 1969-70 struggles, was reflected in a lessening of activity by Black students on the campuses. The 1969-71 recession also had an effect on campuses as many students felt economic pressure to continue their studies without the disruption of political activity. A diversion of student political activity into the Democratic Party 1972 primary campaign was another factor.

There was also the negative impact of the development of ultraleft and even terrorist trends, especially out of the breakup of SDS. The government was able to utilize the ultraleft actions of a few to discredit and intimidate the movement as a whole after the May 1970 events. The Watergate revelations have strikingly corroborated our view, expressed at the time, that these ultraleft actions played into the hands of the ruling class. Many of them were organized by government agents-provocateurs.

Most important, however, was the general decline of the antiwar movement from its 1969-1970 high point. This has been the central factor in the decline in scope of radical activity on the campuses. Students were the spearhead of the antiwar movement, and the Vietnam war was the single most important factor in the rapid spread of the student radicalization and in cushioning the impact

of the decline in the Black struggle as a whole in the latter 1960s. The decline of the antiwar movement had an immediate effect on the students.

The upsurge in student struggles in the 1968-70 period resulted in winning a number of concessions, including greater student political rights, Black, Chicano and Puerto Rican studies programs, etc. Recently there have been some actions, relatively limited in scope, in opposition to cutbacks in funds for scholarships and special programs, many of which were set up as a result of the student actions of the 1968-70 period, such as programs that enabled more Blacks and members of other oppressed nationalities and students from working-class families to enroll. There has been some increase in activities by Black students in support of struggles in the Black community, around U. S. complicity with white racist regimes in Africa, as well as against the cutbacks of campus programs.

### *Revolutionary Strategy for the Campuses*

The Young Socialist Alliance relates to these struggles along the lines of the red university strategy outlined in the document *The Worldwide Radicalization of Youth and the Tasks of the Fourth International*. That document summarizes this strategy in the following way: "The revolutionary youth vanguard, to be effective, must put forward a program that transcends the campus in its goal, but at the same time includes it; that connects student demands with the broader demands of the class struggle on a national and international scale, that shows students how their own demands relate to these bigger struggles, are an integral part of them, and can help to advance them. The program put forward by the revolutionary youth must tie together the long-range perspectives and daily work of a revolutionist in the school arena. The program put forward by the revolutionary youth is one that mobilizes for struggle around the basic issues of the world class struggle and the needs of the student population itself."

The YSA relates the struggles on campus against cutbacks in student programs with the issues facing the working class as a whole—unemployment, inflation, and Nixon's general cutback of social services—as one aspect of the concrete application of this strategy.

The limits of the student movement are indicated in the same resolution, and the red university strategy includes a recognition of those limits. The students cannot, by themselves, transform society. Only the working class, in an alliance with other oppressed sectors, can do that.

The relative decline in radical activity on the campuses, however, has not meant that students have become conservative. The fundamental causes of student radicalism and the potential for renewed activity remain. The tempo of future developments on campus depends mainly on the development of the class struggle as a whole in this country and internationally.

### *The Black Struggle*

The crisis of leadership in the Black community remains the central problem of the Black liberation struggle. There have been no significant initiatives toward the formation of an independent Black political party. None of the Black groups that were formed since the Montgomery bus boycott

and the upsurge of the 1960s, nor the older formations like the NAACP, has been able to unite Afro-Americans around a program of struggle. None of them, either singly or together, command authoritative leadership of the Black community.

The ultraleft policies of the Black Panther Party were utilized by the police in a concerted, murderous national campaign that severely hurt the BPP, and which intimidated many militants. The Black caucuses that were formed in the UAW in the later 1960s have not been viable, largely because of ultraleft leadership that attempted to artificially transform them from union caucuses into what they called a Marxist-Leninist organization. No nationwide group has emerged on the campus with authority among Black students.

The first wave of Black struggles in the early sixties won important victories against segregation in the South and the legal trappings of Jim Crow. These victories themselves exposed to view the underlying economic, political, and social roots of the oppression of Black people. To begin to deal with these issues requires a program and leadership that goes beyond the opposition to racist laws and practices that characterized the civil rights phase of the Black struggle.

It was these basic economic, political, and social issues that lay behind the Black rebellions and the rise of Black nationalism among the urban proletarian Black masses.

The rebellions and the general upsurge in the Black struggle in the 1960s won certain concessions from a frightened ruling class and set back racist moves. They changed the image of Black people in the minds of masses of whites from one of docility to that of a people who can fight hard for their rights. However, the rebellions did not result in the creation of a leadership that could move the Black struggle forward. Since the murder of Malcolm X, no leadership has emerged with authority in the Black community that has been equal to the task of grappling with the combined class and national aspects of the Black struggle. The Socialist Workers Party has made an important contribution by developing the outline of a program to do this, in the *Transitional Program for Black Liberation*.

Underscoring the depth of the oppression of Black people has been the stagnation and even reversal of progress for Blacks in many areas. Little progress has been made in closing the economic gap between Blacks and whites. The craft unions remain white job trusts, with only token integration of Blacks. In the South, the formal ending of school segregation, in eliminating all-Black schools, has worked not to improve the quality of education for Black pupils but to push large numbers of Black teachers and principals out of the schools.

### *Black Political Convention*

The capitalist parties, especially the Democratic Party, took note of the rise of Black nationalist sentiments in the mass of Black people. They have begun to run more Black candidates, above all in the cities where Blacks are a sizable minority or majority of the population. At present, there are more Black candidates and officeholders than at any time since Reconstruction.

Given the vacuum of leadership in the Black struggle, the Black Democratic Party officeholders tend to be looked

to by many Black people as realistic and practical leaders who can possibly accomplish something to help alleviate the problems confronting Afro-Americans. A number of major cities have Black mayors, the latest being Los Angeles. The Black Panther Party, reduced by police attacks and its previous ultraleft policies, has turned to maneuvering within the Democratic Party.

The large attendance at the Black Political Convention held in Gary, Indiana, in the spring of 1972 reflected the greater awareness by many Blacks of the need for Black political action. The Gary convention passed the Black Agenda, which was programmatically a step forward in the direction of independent Black political action. But no leadership emerged from Gary capable or willing to begin to act along the lines of the Black Agenda.

The formation of the Black Political Caucus in Congress and the participation by many Black Democrats in the Gary convention indicates a recognition by these capitalist politicians of the depth of Black nationalist attitudes in the Black community and their need to take this into account in order to maintain continued political subordination of the Black movement to the Democratic Party.

An important component of the Gary convention was represented by Imamu Baraka. While voicing support to the Black Agenda, the need for an independent Black political party, and even exposing the role of the Black Democrats, Baraka has not been able to offer an alternative to the Democrats. His asserted tactic of working in the Democratic Party for the time being provides a left cover for the Democrats.

### *New Struggles*

In the recent period, there has been a revival of local struggles in the Black community around various issues. In New York, there have been a number of campaigns centered around Black control of schools in the Black community. Recent school board elections pitted candidates supported by the Shanker bureaucracy of the United Federation of Teachers (UFT), who were opposed to Black control of Black schools, against pro-community control candidates.

The protests and public forums that have exposed the special STRESS assassination squad in Detroit have been the most organized and sustained actions against police brutality in a Black community in the recent period. The successful conclusion of this fight shows that it is possible to organize against police repression. There have been other sizable protests against police brutality, for example large demonstrations in Queens, New York, against the police killing of a Black child.

The protests against the government's cutbacks on various social services including childcare, have often had a large Black component. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), the Chicago-based People United to Save Humanity (PUSH), and the National Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO) have called further protests against the cutbacks.

The revolts in the prisons, the most important of which was the Attica rebellion, indicated a spread of radical ideas to a layer of prisoners as well as the radicalization of Blacks and other oppressed nationalities, who have played a major role in these struggles.

From 1970 through the spring of 1972 there was a

downturn in activity by Black students, reflected in a tendency to turn towards narrow campus issues. Beginning with the African Liberation Day (ALD) protests in 1972, there has been an increase in Black student activity that has continued over the past school year. The African Liberation Day protests last year and again this spring demonstrated a growing awareness among Blacks of the role of U.S. imperialism in Africa and the international character of the Black struggle.

The Youth Organization for Black Unity (YOBU) has played an important role in the ALD actions. The student strike at Louisiana State University in November 1972 mobilized thousands of students, and highlighted an increase in activity among Southern Black students. Some of the struggles outlined above, such as the anti-STRESS campaign in Detroit, have seen Black students taking the lead in organizing in the Black community. There have been a number of struggles by Black and other students against the cutbacks in campus programs that had helped Black and other working-class students. The Antioch College strike this spring was an example of such struggles.

The upturn in activity by Black students has not yet resulted in the creation of a national leadership capable of going beyond the level exemplified by Baraka on domestic politics. There is a tendency among many of those who support African liberation to refrain, thus far, from seeking ways to intervene in the struggle of the Black community on all its fronts. In this regard, a positive example was set by Detroit students who helped build the anti-STRESS campaign, in part in response to our initiative.

Opposition to racism in the armed forces has continued. In the past period this was given visible expression in the Navy, with the formation of Black sailors' groups, and the events on the Constellation and other ships involved in the Indochina war.

The series of strikes by largely unorganized workers in Atlanta became rallying points for the Black community, illustrating in a forceful way the combined character of the Black struggle—i.e. its class and national aspects. At the same time, they also illustrate the crisis of leadership in both the union movement and the Black community.

Largely spontaneous, these strikes for elementary rights on the job and for more and better jobs for Blacks were given no aid or leadership at all by the union officialdom. In the vacuum created by this total default of the union bureaucracy, the SCLC did provide some guidance, but this proved to be sharply limited insofar as it imposed individual civil disobedience tactics on the strikers. While the SCLC has helped link these strikes with the Black community as a whole, it has not formulated a program or strategy for such strikes to win both meaningful immediate gains and some kind of union protection for these workers.

The Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) was established by liberal Black union bureaucrats in September 1972 to support McGovern and to counter Meany's backhanded endorsement of Nixon. It has gained the support of many Black secondary union officials. It has continued beyond the elections, with the professed aim of helping to mobilize Black trade unionists on union issues and broader questions facing Black people. This



formation should be watched closely, for while it cannot be expected to provide adequate leadership, it stands closer to rank-and-file Black workers than most sections of the bureaucracy. The CBTU could become a vehicle for struggles by Black workers.

### *The Chicano Movement*

The most important developments in the Chicano struggle since our last convention have been the evolution of the Raza Unida parties, the rise of the movement to defend the rights of undocumented workers, and the fight of the United Farm Workers Union (UFWU) against the combined assault of the growers and Teamster bureaucrats.

The Raza Unida parties made significant gains in the 1972 elections. Most important of these was that they successfully resisted pressure to endorse Democratic or Republican candidates in the 1972 elections. The national conference of Raza Unida parties held in September 1972 voted overwhelmingly not to endorse either Nixon or McGovern and declared their independence from the capitalist parties. Though small RUP organizing committees were present from a number of states, the only RUPs to run state campaigns were the Texas and Colorado parties. Both emerged from the 1972 elections better known and established.

The Texas and Colorado RUPs have had distinct developments. In the 1972 elections, the Colorado RUP, which is based on the Crusade for Justice centered in Denver, had a firmer principled opposition to the capitalist parties than the Texas RUP and a more realistic appraisal of its own campaign, projecting it mainly as a party-building propaganda effort.

The leadership of the Texas RUP, based in heavily Chicano South Texas, and with an elected RUP administration in Crystal City, spread illusions about being able to elect their candidate for governor. They did garner an impressive 200,000 votes for their gubernatorial candidate, which was enough to give them ballot status in the next election. But the leadership of the Texas RUP was susceptible to pressure to support some Democrats.

Both formations remain nuclei of potential mass Chicano parties. Their example is important not only in the Chicano movement, but also for Blacks and labor.

### *Undocumented Workers*

The capitalists in the Southwest have long used undocumented Mexican and other Latino workers as a source of superexploited labor. Because these workers are subject to government harassment and deportation, they are permanently insecure and often fear demanding the rights "legals" have. Government harassment and the threat of deportation aids the employers in their superexploitation of these workers. The low wages and miserable working conditions such workers are forced to accept are utilized by the employers as a pressure on the wages and conditions of other workers, including Chicanos who have their citizenship papers.

The government works hand in glove with the employers in allowing such workers to enter the country when there is a labor shortage or when the bosses want to use them as strikebreakers. When their services are no longer needed

they are deported. The precarious position of these workers, many of whom have families in the U.S. and have lived here a long time, makes them easy victims for extortion at the hands of corrupt Immigration officials.

In Southern California, these workers have begun to fight back. The CASA-Hermandad has been the main organization leading this struggle. This fight faces not only the racist immigration laws, the corrupt Immigration officials and the employers, but also the liberal capitalist politicians and the AFL-CIO bureaucracy, which favors tougher immigration laws, supposedly to "protect" workers who have their citizenship. This is a dead-end. Such laws do not protect workers who are citizens, do not prevent the employers from utilizing these undocumented workers, and only serve to intensify the harassment and intimidation of these workers.

The only answer to this question is for the unionized and unorganized Chicano workers, those with papers and those without, to unite to fight the employers and government for the betterment of all Chicano workers. The labor movement as a whole must support the fight of the undocumented workers for their full rights and for better conditions. In this case, as in all aspects of the class struggle, the conservative labor bureaucracy in attempting to protect its own narrow immediate interests serves only to weaken the labor movement as a whole. Recently, the United Farm Workers Union has taken an important step forward in partially breaking with the policy of Meany and Co. on this question by opposing the Rodino-Kennedy bill.

### *The Farm Workers Struggle*

The new position of the UFWU opposing the Kennedy-Rodino bill will aid the union in rallying support in the Chicano community against the attempt by the Teamster bureaucracy, acting at the behest of the Nixon administration and the growers, to destroy the UFWU.

The Teamster officials claim that what is involved is merely a jurisdictional dispute. Nothing could be further from the truth. What the Teamster misleaders are attempting to do is virtually destroy any meaningful union organization of the farmworkers. Wherever the Teamsters are successful in pushing out the UFWU the farmworkers will be deprived of a union that will fight for their rights. This has already been made crystal clear in those sweetheart contracts the Teamsters have already signed, which have abolished the union hiring hall won by the UFWU and returned to the hated labor-contractor system.

The creation of the UFWU marked the first time that the farmworkers have been successfully organized in a stable union. This was made possible essentially because of the radicalization. From the beginning, the UFWU organizing drive was not presented or seen as pure and simple trade unionism, but as "La Causa"—i.e., part of the Chicano liberation struggle. This gave it a dynamic and appeal in the awakening Chicano nationality, and among radicalizing young people across the country. Its first organizational victories were registered as a result of the impact of the grape boycott, which was a success because it was taken up by many people throughout the country who began to be affected by the radicalization.

If the Teamster-grower plot to destroy the UFWU is

successful, it will represent a blow to the Chicano movement, to the union movement, and to the radicalization as a whole. It will be a setback to the long process of working to transform the unions into revolutionary instruments of class struggle.

We have seen other instances where labor struggles by Chicano workers have taken on a nationalist aspect. One is the strike at the Farah pants factory in Texas, which has become a rallying point for the Chicano struggle in Texas and New Mexico. Another example is the strike by rubber workers in Sun Valley, California, who have turned to the Chicano community for support.

### *Puerto Rican Struggle*

The SWP has recently become more deeply involved in the Puerto Rican movement in New York in the fight for control of School District No. 1 by predominantly Puerto Rican parents, in alliance with Black, Chinese, and some white parents. While we have not yet made a full analysis of the fight of Puerto Ricans in the U.S., nor the relation of this struggle to the fight for the national liberation of Puerto Rico itself, we have been able to apply some of the concepts developed in relation to other oppressed nationalities to the Puerto Rican struggle.

The District 1 fight involved a sharp confrontation between the pro-community control forces led by Luis Fuentes and the city administration and the Shanker bureaucracy in the UFT. Fuentes, one of the more able and outspoken leaders for community control, was the school administrator in the district, hired by the pro-community control school board. Fuentes became the target of charges of racism and anti-Semitism because of his stand for preferential hiring and upgrading and Puerto Rican control, especially by the UFT officials. The UFT bureaucracy, in cooperation with city officials and organizations like the Jewish Defense League, ran a concerted campaign to defeat the pro-community control candidates in local elections. Most of the pro-community members of this board were recently ousted in these elections stolen by the right wing.

The Shanker bureaucracy is against control by the oppressed nationalities of the schools in their communities and against any quota system or preferential hiring of teachers from the oppressed nationalities. His stand is based on his view of the union as a white job trust.

This narrow and reactionary policy of opposition to the democratic demands of the Blacks, Puerto Ricans, and other oppressed nationalities highlights a key problem facing the teachers union. It not only deprives the struggles of the oppressed nationalities of a powerful ally in the teachers union, it is damaging to the union itself. It stands in the way of building an alliance between the union and these communities against the capitalist government to fight for better education and better working conditions for the teachers. It is a self-defeating policy that can lead to the destruction of the union if not reversed.

In certain cities, notably in Chicago, the American Federation of Teachers has taken a better position on this question than the New York UFT. During the teachers' strike in Chicago last spring the union sought to come to common agreement with the Black community. This issue is bound to continue to be important in the teachers' union nationally as well as among the oppressed nation-

alities.

Another important issue raised in the District 1 struggle is the need for more bilingual teachers and administrators. The demand for bilingualism has also been raised in other struggles in the Puerto Rican community. It is a progressive, democratic demand.

Many of the struggles that are emerging in the Black community are around issues relevant to the Puerto Rican and Chicano communities, and we can expect struggles to emerge in these communities around these issues.

### *Wounded Knee*

The occupation of Wounded Knee dramatized the oppression of Native Americans, and generated considerable sympathy for their struggle, more than found overt expression. This was a factor in holding back the government from an Attica-type assault on occupiers. This is an indication of the spread of radical attitudes to wider layers of the population, as well as of increasing Native American militancy.

### *The Women's Movement*

Part of the general radicalization has been the rapid spread of feminist ideas and attitudes. In the course of four years, these changing attitudes have affected the thinking of tens of millions of people.

### *The Abortion Victory*

This was the background of the Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion. While not a direct response to mass actions, since the protests against the abortion laws were vanguard protest actions, the Supreme Court decision was designed as a real concession to women, to head off the potential for mass struggles on this question. This victory helps legitimize in the minds of masses of women and men the general demands of women, and will embolden women to fight on other fronts to extend their rights. The decision has also helped undermine the moral and legal justifications for the oppression of women, which are ultimately part of the ideological props of class society.

The campaign spearheaded by WONAAC, the Women's National Abortion Action Coalition, played an important role in altering the general political and social climate that made possible the Supreme Court decision. WONAAC's insistence on abortion as a woman's right altered the entire context of the abortion debate, undercutting the population-control/right-to-life framework in which the issue had been deadlocked. This was clearly reflected in the language of the Supreme Court decision.

The role of the SWP in helping build WONAAC was an important element in winning this victory which advanced the struggle for women's liberation and creates a more favorable context for the mobilization of masses of women in revolutionary struggle. The SWP can be proud of the role we played in this struggle.

Significant as the Supreme Court decision is, however, women's right to abortion is not definitively established. We can anticipate further battles with the forces of reaction on this question and must be alert to attempts to chip away at the gains made.

A number of protests around day-care cutbacks developed in the first months of 1973. Many localized struggles continue to occur around issues of equal pay and job opportunities. We can expect that there will be a continuation of demands by women for redress of grievances on many fronts.

### *Equal Rights Amendment*

The fight to pass the Equal Rights Amendment is becoming a major test of strength between proponents of the rights of women and their reactionary opponents. The ERA is in danger of being defeated in the state legislatures. It was not passed in the spring legislative session, and will be before a number of state legislatures in the fall. A broad coalition of women's groups has been formed to fight for passage of the ERA. Its perspective is mainly toward lobbying—supporting legislators who will vote for the ERA, working against those who will not—but it is possible that some actions will be organized by these forces or others to dramatize the issue.

When the ERA first came before Congress in 1971, we were virtually the only tendency of the left that supported its passage. Other radical groupings echoed the position of the AFL-CIO officialdom that the ERA should be opposed on the spurious grounds that it would endanger protective laws for women workers. Many of the so-called protective laws are used to discriminate against women. Those that are valid should be extended to men. In any case, the passage of the ERA will help working women in their fight for equal pay and job opportunities. One measure of the impact of the women's movement is that the UAW, the Teamsters, AFSCME, Communications Workers, Newspaper Guild, Retail Clerks, Meatcutters, and other unions, the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, and groups such as the Cleveland Coalition of Union Women, have come out for the ERA. There has been a shift in the position of some of the radical groups, with the International Socialists and the CP starting to make concessions to the support position under pressure of the women's movement, and embarrassment over taking the same position as the reactionaries who are mobilizing to defeat the ERA.

There is no national organization or group of organizations that encompasses and organizes the growing willingness of women to struggle for their rights. Most of the feminist groups are local formations. Many have become sectarian and utopian "collectives" with little relation to or perspective towards the mass of women.

Campus women's liberation groups continue to exist throughout the country and significant ad-hoc coalitions have been formed on a number of campuses to fight discrimination against women on campus. The campus groups were primarily responsible for the large meetings which took place in commemoration of International Women's Day activities in 1973.

The only nationally organized groups are the National Organization for Women and the related Women's Political Caucus. The latter was formed during the 1972 presidential campaign. It reflected a desire on the part of women to participate in politics, and utilize the political arena to fight for the rights of women. But in the absence of a mass workers' party or large independent Black or Chicano parties, it is oriented toward electing

women and "pro-women" candidates through the capitalist parties.

NOW chapters in certain areas have participated in various activities, and have attracted women seeking an organization through which to express their willingness to struggle. We should find ways to develop contact with such women, and participate in common projects with them where possible.

### *The Development of the Radicalization as a Whole and Its Relation to the Working Class and Unions*

Two events have dealt blows to the strategy Nixon outlined in his election campaign: soaring inflation, which sparked the massive meat boycott, and the Watergate revelations.

#### *Inflation and Meat Boycott*

Inflation did not abate with the withdrawal of the remaining U.S. troops from South Vietnam. To the contrary. The international monetary crisis early in 1973 resulted in a second official devaluation of the dollar. A third de facto devaluation took place as the dollar plummeted on the international exchanges in May. Inflation took a large spurt forward in the first part of the year, intensifying the anger of tens of millions of Americans who see inflation eating away at their paychecks. This anger found visible expression in the meat boycott, a mass protest by the workers as consumers.

The meat boycott demonstrated a number of features of the current stage of the radicalization:

- Called for by a few middle-class women, the boycott spread spontaneously across the country, with estimates in the capitalist press of participation by 50 percent of the population nationwide, and with much higher participation in many cities. This confirms our view that radical attitudes can spread—and quickly under the correct conditions—to a wide layer of the working class, including relatively better-off white workers.

- Picketing and leafletting were organized mainly by women, utilizing all kinds of existing groups, or through ad-hoc formations. The leading role played by housewives in the boycott is another indication of the spread of struggle moods among women, most of whom do not consider themselves feminists or women's liberationists. These women are being affected by the same changes and shifts in attitudes that underlay the rise of the women's movement, as well as by that movement itself.

- Proletarian methods of struggle were employed—boycott, demonstration, and picketing. The boycott thus reflected an important aspect of the radicalization. These fighting methods of labor were popularized by the Black, and later the student and antiwar movements. Other layers then picked them up.

- The first massive expression of opposition to what inflation is doing to the living standards of the workers was expressed not through the unions, but in a protest that took form outside them—although some unions supported it. This has been true of other protests that have characterized the radicalization up to this point, and at bottom reflects the crisis of leadership of the labor movement and the fact that the class-collaborationist union bureaucracy is an obstacle to the radicalization.

● At the same time, there was not a hostile attitude toward the unions on the part of most consumer activists, who in their overwhelming majority solicited and welcomed whatever union support they could get.

● Nixon attempted to head off the boycott with a speech the night before it was to begin, announcing a "ceiling" on meat prices at their highest level in history, and appealing for support to his program of cutbacks of social services as the way to fight inflation. The rejection of Nixon's attempt, indicated by the success of the boycott, was another expression of the depth of distrust of the government that has developed with the radicalization.

● At the same time, the boycott's success also showed that while Nixon's appeals to racism and privilege can get an echo among a certain layer of white workers, as during the elections, this effect has not been sufficient to prevent white workers from taking action in their interests when they see the necessity of it.

### *Our Answer*

The meat boycott was a spontaneous and massive protest. Its thrust was to demand that the government do something to slow down inflation.

But inflation is endemic to capitalism in its death agony. Its causes are to be found in massive war expenditures and the gigantic public debt; the monopolistic price structure derived from the continuing capitalist concentration and centralization under the spur of growing international capitalist competition; and the various governmental financial outlays necessary to protect monopoly profits, boost economic expansion, and underwrite the research and development of the giant corporations. The government cannot simply end inflation or scrap its basic inflationary policies.

Inflation can be ended once and for all only with the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a workers state with a nationalized and planned economy.

There are three aspects to our approach to inflation.

First, we call for an end to all war spending, a key contributing cause of inflation. War spending is not in the interests of the workers, but is designed to defend and extend imperialist interests against the masses of the world. We counterpose this demand to Nixon's program to cut back on social services that are woefully inadequate to begin with.

The second and most basic part of our program on inflation consists of our demands to protect the working class from the effects of inflation and point out its real causes.

Our fundamental transitional demand to fight the effects of inflation is for a sliding scale of wages in all union contracts, and the extension of this concept to social security, veterans, pension, welfare, and unemployment payments. This is connected with the fight for a sliding scale of hours with no reduction in pay to fight unemployment.

Worker and consumer watchdog price committees should set up, to provide accurate indices of prices, profits, and the workings of the capitalist concerns. To do this, these committees should raise the demand to open the books of the corporations to allow the workers and consumers to inspect the business secrets of the bosses.

These and our other transitional demands linked to them are our program to fight the ravaging effects of inflation

on the living standards of the masses of people.

Third, we point out that to win the fight for this program to defend the masses of working people against inflation, the power of the labor movement must be brought to bear. This is the only force that can take action of the character and scope required to do this.

### *Watergate*

If the meat boycott demonstrated that the credibility gap which developed during the Vietnam war still exists, the Watergate scandal is widening that gap to a canyon. With each new revelation of the methods of rule of the capitalist class, distrust of the government intensifies.

As of this writing, the revelations surrounding Watergate are still unfolding. But it is already clear that a crisis of confidence in the methods of bourgeois rule is involved that, while not yet articulated in class terms, will have profound ramifications on the thinking of masses of Americans.

The use of political spies, agents provocateurs, political frame-ups, and clandestine actions against the masses has long been a necessary aspect of the maintenance of capitalist rule. These methods are used primarily against the working masses, their mass organizations, and radical groups. Under the conditions of radicalization and general distrust of the government that has characterized it, the Watergate revelations facilitate our job of exposing the true nature of capitalist rule as a dictatorship of a tiny ruling class over the majority, the working population.

Many people are being given an education in police methods against the left that will aid us in future defense struggles against political frame-ups. The positions we have explained within the protest movements and the socialist left of how ultraleftism and adventurism is utilized by the ruling class and their agents will be much more readily understood. It makes it easier to explain the necessity of constructing a party of the Leninist type to defeat the ruthless and powerful capitalist class that rules this country.

While these methods have always to some extent been utilized by the bourgeoisie, they have become more prominent in the epoch of imperialism which has seen a growth of the state apparatus and growing tendency towards authoritarian rule. This tendency reaches its logical culmination in fascism, when that extreme variant of bourgeois rule becomes the only hope for the capitalist class to preserve its domination.

As the class struggle on a national and international scale intensified; as interimperialist contradictions reached the point of unleashing the holocaust of two world wars; as socialist revolutions were placed on the order of the day; all sorts of capitalist police, espionage, assassination, and provocateur organizations, legal and extra-legal, were created and multiplied. To carry out their nefarious policies both internationally and domestically, the rulers need not only to keep their intentions and actions a secret from the masses, but must even discuss them less openly among themselves.

In the U. S., with the growth of the New Deal bureaucracy, the second imperialist world war and the "cold war" the state apparatus has become qualitatively larger. The number and size of various political police and intelligence organizations has grown. In its role as world

cop for capitalism Washington has utilized international political police agencies to carry out its dirty work on a world scale. These operate closely with the domestic political police, from the FBI to the local red squads.

Designed primarily for use against the world revolution and the rebellious workers, radicals, and oppressed nationalities in this country, these same agencies and methods have been utilized within the bourgeoisie itself.

### *Differences in Ruling Class*

The Watergate spying and break-in originated in the differences that developed in the ruling class over how best to preserve American imperialism's long-term interests in relation to the Vietnam war and the problems it was generating. This division itself is not yet overcome. In the new and changing world situation, the ruling class remains divided on some questions and its policies are still unfolding. Under these circumstances, it is also divided over how to settle its internal differences, what method to utilize among its own representatives in arriving at policy.

Bourgeois democracy and its various institutions have two functions.

One is to give the masses the illusion of real democracy while the reality is the dictatorship of capital.

The other is to have some checks and balances among the bourgeoisie itself.

While lauding the institutions of bourgeois democracy during this crisis to help shore up the sinking confidence of millions of Americans in the government, the ruling class is attempting to find a method of rule that will enable it to better come to grips with its differences. At the same time they cannot eliminate the tendency toward the very authoritarian methods that have been exposed, which are more and more necessary to preserve bourgeois rule in this epoch.

How they will decide to resolve this crisis is not evident at this time. Also, the full impact of the revelations on the masses is not yet clear. Already, however, Nixon has been forced to moderate somewhat his racist campaign to cut back social services for the poor and disadvantaged, as well as his "law-and-order" campaign. Important victories have been won in the Pentagon Papers case and the Camden 28 case as a result of the revelations of ruling-class methods. Both cases indicate that Watergate has given an impetus to the "revolt of the juries," and will make frame-up convictions of radicals more difficult for the government.

The election of Black Democrat Bradley as mayor of Los Angeles was in part a rejection of pro-Nixon Yorty, who has become a Watergate casualty. In a distorted form, the Bradley election also showed the limits of racist appeals. Masses of Los Angeles whites sensed issues that affected them more directly than their racial prejudice.

The total impact of Watergate on the thinking of masses of Americans will be to deepen their distrust of the government. Many will be more open to radical conclusions as a result.

### *General Characteristics of the Radicalization*

The Political Resolution adopted by the SWP in 1971 outlined the general characteristics of the radicalization.

These have been confirmed by developments both in the policies of the ruling class and in the evolution of the radicalization since the convention.

That resolution said that the tempo of the radicalization would be uneven in its various components and as a whole, and we would go through periods of "pauses and partial setbacks" in the development of the radicalization. But the "exacerbation of the fundamental underlying contradictions of American capitalism feeding the radicalization will propel it forward." We have seen this contradictory development in richer concreteness in the past two years.

The central contradiction of the radicalization remains the fact that large sections of the labor movement have yet to take the road of independent political struggles.

The 1971 Political Resolution noted that as long as this central contradiction in the radicalization exists, there can be no revolutionary situation. "A distinction must be made between radicalization and a revolutionary situation," it states. "The current radicalization, in which large numbers of people, under the impact of changes in international and national conditions, have begun altering their attitudes about important questions, beliefs, values, customs, relations and institutions—social, personal, philosophical, political, economic, cultural—is not at the point of becoming a prerevolutionary situation. It is a precondition and preparation for it. The borders of a revolutionary situation can be reached only when the politicalization and radicalization has extended to decisive sectors of the working masses, and when a revolutionary upsurge and mobilization objectively poses the basic question of which class shall wield power."

Thus, as long as this central contradiction exists, there are objective limits on the movements that have developed in the course of the radicalization.

We have already discussed how the Black movement, for example, after achieving victories against segregation in the South and the legal trappings of Jim Crow, came up against the underlying economic, political and social roots of the oppression of Black people. But Black people cannot resolve these problems alone.

This is also true of the women's movement. The underlying cause of the oppression of women is rooted in the family institution created by class society and cannot be overcome by women alone.

Social reforms and concessions can be wrested from the ruling class in the struggles ahead. But reforms on the scale of the social security system won in the 1930s, like socialized medicine for example, can only be won as a result of a massive upsurge of the working class. Inflation, unemployment, the underlying economic, social and political roots of war and of racial, national and sexist oppression—the scope and depth of these problems confronting working people, are becoming apparent to growing numbers in this country. But they do not see a social force in motion which clearly has the power to be able to change the situation.

That force is the labor movement. But the class-collaborationist union bureaucracy does not offer any answers to the problems confronting the masses. This parasitic formation blocks the unions from throwing their power behind the various social movements that have developed in the radicalization, and from launching an effective struggle against the government attack on the unions themselves. No class-struggle left wing that could begin to

challenge the stranglehold of the bureaucracy has yet emerged in the unions.

The fact that significant sections of the labor movement have yet to take the road of independent political struggles not only precludes the radicalization becoming a prerevolutionary situation while this contradiction exists, it weighs on the upsurges of the radicalization itself.

This situation contributes to the downturn after an upsurge. For example, the May 1970 student strikes became so extensive that they posed the next stage of mobilizing large sections of the working class, which would have qualitatively transformed the upsurge and put it on a higher plane, in the way that the May 1968 student upsurge in France led to the mobilization and general strike of the French working class. In May 1970, this did not occur. The masses of students could not sustain the high level of mobilization indefinitely. Unable to go forward, the May 1970 student upsurge in this country could only fall back. This became one of the factors in the downturn in student activity and in radical activity in the country as a whole that has characterized the situation since the May 1970 high point of mobilization.

The downturn in antiwar activity following the May 1970 upsurge was reenforced by the continuation of the withdrawal of U. S. troops, as Nixon maneuvered to buy time to come up with some kind of solution to the war. Antiwar sentiment, however, continued to deepen although there were illusions in Nixon's troop withdrawals. At times this sentiment found expression in renewed action, the largest being the April 1971 massive march on Washington after the fiasco of the Laos invasion. As antiwar sentiment deepened, the potential existed for these illusions to be further swept aside if a major new confirmation of Nixon's aggressive intentions were revealed. The resulting antiwar explosion could have been by far the largest ever. This prognosis was on the verge of realization in the spring of 1972, after the offensive by the Vietnamese liberation fighters was followed by Nixon's precipitous escalation. The effects of the detente—the solution Nixon was aiming for—were not only to cut the mass mobilization short, but to qualitatively increase the demobilization of the antiwar movement.

In addition, there are other reasons we have already discussed that have contributed to the relative downturn in radical activity. A number of significant concessions were wrested from the ruling class, including the lowering of the voting age to 18, the temporary ending of the draft, reforms in the universities, the Supreme Court ruling legalizing abortion, and the pullback from the direct utilization of large numbers of U. S. troops in Indochina. While, in the context of the radicalization, such concessions tend to whet the appetite of the masses for more, and thus prepare the way for future struggles, they have played a role in the temporary subsiding of particular protests.

We have discussed other factors in the relative decline of the student movement since 1970, including the effects of the recession and the effects on students of the relative decline of the Black struggle. The impact of the detente on the antiwar movement has been a central factor in this decline of the student movement. Since the students have been a spearhead of radical activity, this has in turn meant a lessening of radical activity from the high point of 1969-70.

At the same time, new issues are coming to the fore,

reflecting the basic contradictions of capitalism as it enters a new period of crisis on a world scale. The social protest movements that have developed in the course of the radicalization come up against these basic questions and have an impact in radicalizing the working class.

The meat boycott, the reaction to Watergate, and to a lesser extent the protests against Nixon's cutbacks in social services, show that wider layers of the population are raising profound questions about the status quo under capitalism and are showing a willingness to act.

Thus the present stage of the radicalization is a contradictory one, marked by the spread of radical ideas but a temporary decline in the scope of radical activity (although by no means its cessation).

While the tempo cannot be predicted, and retreats in certain areas can deepen, new issues and struggles will emerge, as the new world economic, political, and diplomatic situation unfolds. These struggles will encompass broader layers including sectors of the working people, which in turn can reenergize other layers previously radicalized.

In addition to the objective limits that the central contradiction of the radicalization that we have discussed above places on it, there are also subjective results from this contradiction that can affect the rhythm of the development of the radicalization.

In the Black struggle, for example, the crisis of leadership has been exacerbated. To develop an effective, even if only partial and immediate program of struggle to begin to attack the economic, social and political factors underlying Black oppression, requires greater understanding of the nature of capitalism, of the combined class and national aspects of the oppression of Black people, and of the revolutionary potential of the working class than was true during the civil rights phase of the struggle. The fact that the labor movement is not taking the lead on fighting for the interests of the working class as a whole makes it more difficult for radicalizing people, including radicalizing workers, to accept the Marxist view of the revolutionary role of the working class.

The failure of the union movement thus far to break with the policy of political subordination to capitalist politics leaves the capitalist class a virtual monopoly on the political field. Radicalizing layers that are able to mount independent political actions in the streets are susceptible to being drawn into support of the capitalist parties as a result.

Some radicalizing young people, never having seen the working class reveal its potential in action, revert to liberalism after coming up against the realities of the scope of the struggle. Many reject the role of the working class and the need for a working-class vanguard party, substituting polyvanguardist schemes of seeing the revolution as simply an extension of the struggles of the "movements" rather than the dialectical process of transferring power from one class to another.

Others have gravitated towards Marxism after drawing the correct conclusion that only the working class can take power away from the capitalist class and open the door to the socialist transformation of society. We strive to win the best of these to our movement.

Some, while correctly seeing the historical role the working class will play, attempt to overleap the current objective situation, seeking shortcuts to the radicalization

of the working people. Such elements provide a basis for recruitment to the "workerist" currents. (By "workerism," we mean the rejection of the various social movements that have developed in the course of the radicalization, discounting them as peripheral or as obstacles to the proletarian revolution or workers struggles. It is a modern variant of economism.)

Seeking a shortcut to the radicalization of the working class, our opponents make two interrelated errors.

The first is to attempt to spark the radicalization of the workers in the unions through the actions of a handful. They strut and posture and declaim as if they were organizations with important followings in the unions, and as if their policies would have a direct effect on the relationship of forces in the unions.

The second error is that within the various movements that have developed in the course of the radicalization, they attempt to impose on those movements "advanced" demands, without regard to the objective needs of these struggles or of the level of consciousness of the masses.

We saw examples of this in relation to the antiwar movement and to the Women's National Abortion Action Coalition (WONAAC). Ultraleft and sectarian tendencies attempted to impose "advanced" demands on both these movements.

In the antiwar movement, these ranged from "Victory to the NLF" to "Build a Labor Party Now," under the false conception that this would transform the antiwar movement into a general anti-imperialist movement or into a movement for a labor party, which would continue to struggle "when the war was over."

In WONAAC, opponents raised the notion that if WONAAC had adopted the demand for *free* abortion, it would be able to lead a struggle for socialized medicine.

A related idea in the Black movement was the ultraleft attempt to continue the rebellions through the armed actions of small groups attempting to initiate a civil war.

It is important to keep in mind the reasons why we were able to have the impact we did in the antiwar movement. It was because we put forward a realistic and correct line to build that movement in a situation where the *objective* possibility existed (and continued to exist over time) for such a *mass* movement to develop.

It is not possible to create a *mass* movement by simply putting forward a correct line, although that is necessary. Favorable objective conditions are the prerequisite. At the same time, by putting forward a correct line we can, depending on concrete circumstances, help the objective conditions develop in a favorable direction.

We are always seeking ways to intervene in all aspects of the class struggle, at whatever level it is at, and project the correct line to move the struggle forward. Which struggles open up for us at a given time, what their scope and duration will be, is determined by the overall objective situation, and not our desires.

There are three main negative consequences that arise from attempts to leap over the objective situation by the actions of a dedicated few.

First, since they are not based on what is objectively possible, they can only fail. A handful, no matter how heroic, cannot spark or substitute for the masses.

Second, such attempts dissipate and miseducate potential cadres who could play a part in building the Leninist party necessary to lead the mass upsurge of the work-

ing class to the conquest of power and the construction of socialism, when that is on the agenda.

Third, such attempts to leap over the objective situation place their practitioners in opposition to the real struggles as they develop.

We saw in the antiwar movement, where all the ultraleft and sectarian schemas were counterposed to the real need to build a massive movement against Washington's aggression, based on the principled slogan of "Out Now." Not only did the sectarians and ultralefts fail to build an "anti-imperialist" movement, they became opponents of building a real movement against a real imperialist war in progress. It was because of this real movement, and not the "advanced" demands of the ultralefts, that more people today are receptive to our explanation of the character of imperialism.

The same errors can be seen in relation to the unions. The actions by a relative handful of radicals engaging in quixotic attempts to set up caucuses or lead strikes on their own do not lead to the building of a real class-struggle left wing in the unions. That cannot be done until there is real motion towards it among some section of the rank and file. Such attempts only divert the attention of revolutionists from the real, if modest, new possibilities for work in the unions.

Against such schemas, we base our strategy and tactics on the method of the Transitional Program.

In previous resolutions we have pointed to the fact that the radicalization of sections of Blacks, other oppressed nationalities, women, youth, and students affects the working class in many ways, and is a major factor in the still molecular process of radicalization of the working class:

The 1971 Political Resolution pointed out: "Both our reformist and ultraleft opponents exhibit a tendency towards *economism* in their ultimately pessimistic view of the role of the workers in the radicalization process. They see struggle over wage and job issues, *in isolation* from the political issues and motive forces of the radicalization, as the sole way the workers will be brought into struggle. This error is tied to their misconception—and hope—that independent movements like Black nationalism and feminism will somehow fade away when the 'real' struggle begins.

"The decisive mass of workers will not be politicalized until the underlying international economic crises force American imperialism into a showdown with the labor movement. But issues that have already been raised in the current radicalization are not peripheral to the process of social discontent; they are central to it. And, *in combination with* the workers' struggles over wage and job issues, they will lead to politicalization and radicalization of the working class. The independent and uncompromising demands of the various movements will be an additional aid to the workers' struggles against the efforts of the reformists to channel the burgeoning radicalization into the dead end of class collaboration."

The issues raised by these movements are becoming union issues in a more pronounced way. Examples are the Atlanta strikes, the struggles for Black control of Black schools in relation to the teachers union, and the fight of the United Farm Workers Union in defense of Chicano workers against the combined attack of the growers and the Teamster bureaucrats. Such struggles present new openings for party intervention in the

labor movement.

The spread of radical ideas has provided a wider audience among workers for our program for the unions, and we have increased propaganda opportunities to reach them with our ideas.

There are some further generalizations we can make:

1. The roots of the Watergate crisis lie in a division in the ruling class over what tactics to use in relation to the war, given the potential of the antiwar movement. During the May 1970 events, this division reached right into Nixon's cabinet. It was because of these events combined with the struggles in the Black ghettos, that Nixon set in motion the police operations that finally led to Watergate.

The Watergate revelations show how much the administration feared the antiwar movement, which had begun to affect the capitalist parties and government bureaucracy. The distrust extended so far as to cause Kissinger to bug members of the National Security Council. The release of the Pentagon Papers by Ellsberg was the most dramatic example of division within the government bureaucracy itself. The police operations set up by Nixon were directed not only at the radicals and antiwar movement, but also at sections of the capitalist class's own state bureaucracy and political parties. They were in defense not of "national security" but the growing necessity of the capitalist government to prosecute its wars and carry out the seamier aspects of imperialist foreign and domestic policy with minimal criticism or exposure—even from broad sections of its own class.

The Watergate revelations could not have grown into this kind of crisis ten years ago. In addition to the factors discussed above, the impact of Watergate is directly related to a developing new consciousness in the American masses: distrust of the government, a crumbling of the authority of the government and of the capitalist parties. This makes the coverup of such things much more difficult, and faces the ruling class with the problem that a certain portion of the truth must come out if a semblance of confidence in government is to be restored.

The Watergate crisis itself is having a powerful effect on the thinking of the masses. The distrust of the government will reach new proportions and help deepen the radicalization.

2. The appeals to racism and chauvinism by Nixon in his election campaign and after, in his appeals for support to cut back services for the poor, in the staged POW extravaganzas, has had some effect on the most politically backward sections of the population. But these devices have failed to intimidate Blacks and other oppressed nationalities or to halt the spread of the radicalization. On the contrary they have resulted in protest, and if the government continues to pursue this course, especially in light of the context of the Watergate crisis, it can precipitate a new upsurge of the Black struggle. At present, the administration has been forced to moderate its course at least temporarily.

The meat boycott and the Bradley election in Los Angeles both indicate that appeals to racism will not be able in all cases to prevent white workers from acting in defense of what they regard to be their interests. In the long run, class interests will outweigh racial, national, and sexual prejudices in the vast majority of the working class.

Nixon's "national security" alibi for Watergate has flopped. This and the lukewarm reception for his POW campaign are further indications of the erosion of the power of anticommunism as a political weapon of the ruling class. The Vietnam war dealt severe blows to anticommunism. Nixon's own policies of pursuing a detente with the Soviet Union and China further undercut this weapon. It is difficult for Nixon to whip up anticommunist hysteria while reaching an accommodation with Brezhnev and Mao.

The development of the radicalization has changed the relation of class forces. The fact that the masses of workers did not accept any lowering of their standard of living on the basis of sacrificing for the Vietnam war showed the limits of anticommunism as a weapon in the class struggle today. The weakening of the authority of the government, the fact that racism, sexism and anticommunism are not as potent weapons of the ruling class as they used to be, limits the capitalist class in its struggle with the working class on all fronts.

3. The meat boycott reflected a fundamental fact of the American revolution: the high standard of living of the American workers relative to workers in other countries can become a powerful revolutionary force when it is threatened. The high standard of living of the American workers has come to be considered by them as a right. They will fight to defend it. While the demand for "Bread!" may not be part of the coming revolution, the demand for "Meat!" may well be.

4. Substantial social reforms and concessions on the scale of the Social Security system won in the 1930s can be wrested from the ruling class only as a result of a massive upsurge of the working class. And, while other lesser concessions can be won in the struggles that lie ahead, the intensification of competition on an international scale coupled with the continued costs to the U. S. of helping police the world for capitalism, prevents American capitalism from granting long-term social reforms large enough to decisively reverse the radicalization of increasing sections of the American people set in motion by the social struggles of the last decade.

Rather, we see the necessity of the ruling class to assault the wages and working conditions of American labor, an assault that will be deeply felt by those layers that have been affected most by the radicalization—the youth, Blacks and other oppressed nationalities, and women. At the same time they have begun to chip away at the rights, wages and conditions of the unionized workers. This points to a reinforcement of a long-term trend of continuing radicalization, regardless of ebbs and flows, that will sooner or later impel decisive sectors of the working class into massive struggles and a transformation of the labor movement.

It is possible that the development of the Eastern market as the detente unfolds will result in an easing of the economic situation for the ruling class, and that this will enable it to grant a few more concessions to the working class. The policy of the ruling class is to attempt if possible to avoid a direct showdown with the unions, through securing the collaboration of the union bureaucracy in carrying out its basic policies. But the success of this approach depends upon the ability of the ruling class to grant concessions, and on the ability of the union bureaucracy to restrain the expectations of the working



class.

### III. OPPONENT CURRENTS

The unfolding of Washington's detente with Moscow and Peking sets the framework of the policies of both the pro-Moscow and pro-Peking Stalinist currents. As apologists for either the Soviet or Chinese leaderships, these Stalinist currents have adapted their positions to the changing diplomatic needs of the respective bureaucracies.

Both currents have attempted to attack the other's mentor for selling out to Washington. However, they cannot do this consistently without exposing their own class collaborationism. Both have intensified their attacks on Trotskyism, which, as the continuation of the revolutionary socialist internationalism of Marxism, implacably opposes the policy of socialism in one country on which the policies of both the Soviet and Chinese bureaucracies are based. Both currents have had to wage a campaign among their members and followers to defend the most recent betrayals of the world revolution perpetrated by Moscow and Peking, especially the betrayal of the Vietnamese revolution. As the detente unfolds, new twists and turns can be expected from both currents as they attempt to explain away new crimes, and as crimes already committed, as in the case of Vietnam, become more clearly exposed.

These developments will provide new opportunities for us to explain the counterrevolutionary nature of Stalinism. We can expect fissures to develop in these currents, opening up possibilities for us to influence young people initially attracted to them thus limiting their ability to win radicalizing people to their organizations.

#### *The American Communist Party*

The pro-Moscow Communist Party is our most important competitor among those organizations claiming to be socialist. Since our past convention, the CP has made gains, especially in building the Young Workers Liberation League (YWLL). The YWLL is only slightly smaller than the YSA, although it does not have as developed a cadre nor as committed a membership. According to CP internal publications, the most important sources of recruitment for them in the past period were the Angela Davis defense campaign and their presidential election campaign. Their campaign around the Angela Davis case facilitated the CP's and YWLL's success in recruiting a number of Afro-Americans.

The same publications indicate that the CP has launched an internal campaign to suppress any questioning of the Kremlin's policies by its members. This has included a public denunciation of a section of the CP based in California that remains opposed to the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. CP internal education includes whipping up blatantly racist anti-Chinese hysteria. This campaign against signs of dissidence in the CP includes attacks against Black nationalists, feminists, and others in the CP. In part, this reflects the impact on the CP of the radicalization, and also the difficulties the CP is having in integrating some of its new recruits.

The professed turn made by the CP that is reflected in the Gus Hall December 1972 speech to the CP national committee is not a turn away from class-collaborationist politics or of CP support to the Democratic Party. Instead it in-

dicates a decision by the CP to operate more openly, run more candidates in its own name, and give the appearance of greater independence from the Democratic Party.

There were two aspects to Gus Hall's speech.

One was the need of the CP leaders to better explain the Kremlin's pro-Nixon stance to its members and supporters, many of whom are deeply buried in the Democratic Party. This was explained on the basis of Nixon's policy of detente, presented by Hall, as more realistic than McGovern's foreign policy.

But while Hall was critical of McGovern, the CP will support "Black, liberal, working-class" Democrats, as the speech itself made clear. This has continued to be CP policy, for example in the Bradley campaign in Los Angeles and the Badillo campaign in New York.

Secondly, the CP intends to attempt to counter the image it has had among radicals of being relatively conservative. The new CP image will be more openly socialist, as it attempts to compete with the Trotskyist movement to reach radicalizing youth developing socialist ideas. The Stalinists have noted the gains the SWP and the YSA have made through building a socialist youth group and conducting vigorous socialist election campaigns.

We must step up our polemics against Moscow's counter-revolutionary policies on a world scale, and against the CP's class collaborationism domestically. At the same time, we should seek united front activities with the CP and YWLL, when these will objectively further the class struggle. This will also provide more contact with their members and periphery. We have found that when we are able to work with YWLL and CP members on united front projects, we are able to have an impact on them with our criticism of Stalinist policies and practice, especially in the recent period in relation to Moscow's betrayal of the Vietnamese. As the detente unfolds, there will be new Stalinist crimes that young YWLL and CP members will find difficult to swallow.

#### *Maoism*

The detente between Washington and Peking has clearly exposed the basic policy of the Maoists as practicing "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism while building "socialism in one country." It has punctured the illusion that Peking is to the left of Moscow.

Since the Progressive Labor Party denounced Peking, Maoism has been represented by a scattering of sects and by vague pro-Mao sentiments among generally unorganized ultralefts. The *Guardian* newspaper has decided to become the voice of Maoism in the U.S., and is attempting to regroup these sects and individuals. The *Guardian* claims it has the perspective of building a pro-Peking Stalinist party. They have discussed this perspective at public forums, one of which in New York attracted upwards of a thousand people.

However, there is a built-in contradiction in this project. Many of those initially attracted to the *Guardian* on the prospectus of building a new party are in fact not really interested in doing that. They want a looser formation, more like the old SDS. But such a loose formation, even if based on a vague general pro-Maoism, could only be rent by division and factionalism if an attempt were made to take positions on the major issues of national and international politics. Whether such groups and group-

lets can unite around the *Guardian* to form a party remains to be seen. A further complication they face is that Peking itself has not been interested in building parties loyal to it in the capitalist countries, and has not yet given the *Guardian* or any of the American Maoist groups the franchise.

Nevertheless, Maoism, as a variant of Stalinism based on the bureaucracy of a workers state in the world's most populous country, is not to be underrated internationally. The new Maoist regroupment is providing a larger forum for the Maoist version of Stalinist ideology, including a systematic attack on revolutionary internationalist socialism, Trotskyism. We must pay careful attention to this development, and counter the *Guardian's* apologies for the betrayals of the Peking bureaucracy, and refute its attacks on Trotskyism.

### *The Social Democrats*

Although they have moved so far to the right that they do no compete with us for most radicalizing elements, we should take note of the positions and evolution of the Social Democrats, U. S. A., and refute their claim to represent socialism in the United States.

The Social Democrats espouse their own particular brand of "workerism." The Social Democrats are conscious and open opponents of almost every manifestation of the radicalization, from the antiwar movement, to Black nationalism, to feminism.

In the past few years they have succeeded in aligning themselves with the Meany wing of the labor bureaucracy, providing a "left" cover for Meany, and ideological support to his reactionary politics. Prominent Social Democrats, like Bayard Rustin of the A. Philip Randolph Institute, even help cover for the racist policies of Meany's building-trades bureaucracy. Others serve on Meany's staff, helping to write speeches, for example. Meany, in turn, writes a column printed in the Social Democrats' newspaper, *New America*, and helps give them a "labor" coloration.

The Social Democrats also work in close association with the Shanker bureaucracy of the teachers union in New York. They have helped Shanker in his campaign against the Black and Puerto Rican communities, by providing arguments against community control of their schools by the oppressed nationalities, and against preferential hiring of the oppressed nationalities.

Rabidly anticommunist, the Social Democrats stand to the right of bourgeois figures who favor the detente with Moscow and Peking. In the Democratic Party this had led them to work for figures like Senator Jackson, and to oppose from the right liberals like Congresswoman Abzug.

The Social Democrats are the only major grouping calling itself socialist that is 100 percent for Zionism and Israel. They are rabidly anti-Arab. Recently they launched a campaign against the SWP and YSA, setting up a committee for this purpose, falsely charging the Trotskyist movement with anti-Semitism because of our opposition to Israel and our unconditional defense of the Arab revolution.

Countering this slander campaign against us, and countering their reactionary politics generally, will help educate radicalizing layers about the nature of the labor

bureaucracy as well as the Social Democracy.

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The Political Resolution adopted by the 1971 convention of the party noted that all of our opponents had failed to come to grips with the dynamic of the current radicalization as it has unfolded, failed to see it as part of the class struggle, and failed to present a revolutionary program for it. That resolution analyzed the "workerist" positions taken by all our opponents, including the pseudo-Trotskyist sects. It outlined their sectarian or opportunist nostrums for the labor movement and their denigration of the various currents of the radicalization, including the movements of the oppressed nationalities, the antiwar movement, and the women's movement. This general analysis of the positions of our opponents still holds.

The reaction of the Communist Party to recent events is a good example of its incapacity to present a clear class-struggle answer to the major problems facing the American workers. Concerning the Watergate revelations, the CP leaders have shown crass opportunism. They have echoed the liberals in calling for the country to return to the ideas of the "founding fathers" who never intended the executive branch to have so much power, and in calling for a stronger Congress to again achieve a true "separation of powers." They have not utilized the Watergate revelations to expose the nature of capitalist rule, and have helped bolster the campaign of the liberal bourgeoisie to show that the institutions of capitalist democracy in this country are basically sound.

The CP's slogan of impeaching Nixon puts it in an awkward position in relation to the Kremlin's thesis that Nixon is the victim of a right-wing conspiracy to discredit the detente. Both theses are fundamentally wrong in avoiding the real issue—the system of capitalist class rule.

On the other hand, the sectarian groups are putting forward their own special nostrums concerning Watergate, or downplaying the importance of the revelations.

The reaction of the CP to the meat boycott protest over the soaring cost of living was simply to echo the current level of consciousness of many who participated in the boycott. They supported proposals by some liberal capitalist politicians for legislation to roll back prices. They failed to expose the real sources of inflation, implying that it is fundamentally a result of mistaken government policy. The rollback proposal reinforces the idea of government controls on prices, which can only result in controls on wages while prices continue to rise.

This failure to present an adequate class struggle program to fight against the ravages of inflation follows from the CP's lack of revolutionary program or outlook, its lack of a transitional program to connect the day-to-day struggles of the workers and their allies with the fight for socialism. Thus they can only repeat liberal nostrums for the fundamental problems facing the American workers.

The CP, and most of the sectarian groups with the exception of Workers World, did not attempt to intervene in this protest. The Workers World group, while it did intervene, did so in a completely sectarian fashion, seeking to set up a front group under its control. Most of the other sectarian groups opposed the meat boycott, viewing

it at worst as a vast plot by Nixon, or at best, a petty-bourgeois diversion. Pointing to the obvious fact that the boycott would not be an effective way to combat inflation, the sectarian grouplets failed to see that the boycott expressed the protest and anger of tens of millions of workers and their families. The task before revolutionists is not to berate these masses for not yet understanding how to effectively protect themselves from inflation, but to note their readiness to go into action, to identify with their protest, and to educate and propagandize to win the best elements to a class-struggle program that will be effective.

The CP failed to correctly or effectively counter the gangster-like attacks by the National Caucus of Labor Committees. Originally aimed to "destroy" the CP, the NCLC's physical assaults were broadened to include the SWP, and other groups. The NCLC, in launching this campaign, became a staging ground for police and rightists. Guilty themselves of utilizing violence against their opponents on the left, the CP did not try to mobilize socialist, Black, women's, workers', and radical youth organizations in a united front to repudiate and stop the NCLC. While certain of the sectarian groups joined united defense efforts against the NCLC, it was the SWP and the YSA that took the lead in attempting to mobilize the left. In some areas, this resulted in the local CP or YWLL joining such efforts with us, in opposition to the national CP decision not to do so.

The struggle for hegemony on the left is not yet settled, especially in relation to the Communist Party and the Young Workers Liberation League. There have been several major tests in this struggle since our last convention.

The SWP 1972 presidential election campaign was the biggest and most effective the party has ever run. It was larger and better organized than that of the Communist Party or any of the other radical groupings or parties that participated in the elections. This campaign and the fights against undemocratic election laws that accompanied it helped project the party as the most important force on the left.

In the period up through the January 20, 1973, demonstration, the party continued to play the central role in building the antiwar movement, far outdistancing any other tendency in this regard. Since the signing of the accords, we continued to play this role, in maintaining the structure of the movement and building antiwar protests where possible.

Recently, through our response to the Watergate revelations, our participation in the inflation protests, and other struggles discussed below, the SWP has been more alert to struggle openings and has played a more central role in them than any of our opponents.

#### IV. GUIDELINES FOR BUILDING THE SWP IN THE PERIOD IMMEDIATELY AHEAD

The SWP, unlike all opponent currents, has correctly analyzed the current radicalization as it has emerged. As a result we have participated in the various actions that have developed in the course of the radicalization more than any other tendency, and have been more able to influence them in a class-struggle direction and play

a leadership role in them. The SWP's leading role in the antiwar movement, the women's liberation movement, and other struggles indicates our growing capacity in this regard, and helps prepare the SWP for the new phases of the class struggle that will unfold. In this new situation we can expect to have a similar impact.

Complementing such activity and integrated with it, the SWP will launch a propaganda offensive composed of campaigns designed to reach as wide an audience as possible with our revolutionary program offering solutions to the major problems facing the workers and all the oppressed. There will be three major campaigns in this propaganda offensive: (1) Sales of *The Militant*; (2) socialist election campaigns; and (3) a campaign growing out of the Watergate revelations in defense of the democratic rights of radical political parties.

#### *SWP Participation in Unfolding Struggles*

In recent months, the SWP has been active in the anti-STRESS protests in Detroit, the strikes by predominantly Black workers in Atlanta, the struggle by Puerto Rican and other oppressed nationalities for control of the schools in New York's District One, the inflation protests including the May 5 actions and the April 28 action in San Francisco, protests against the Nixon administration's cutbacks in social services, the June 16 antiwar actions against the bombing in Cambodia, the African Liberation Day demonstrations, protests by undocumented Chicano and Latino workers against massive deportations they have been recently subjected to, campus protests against cutbacks, the grape and lettuce boycott in defense of the United Farm Workers Union.

Many of these protests have been concerned with Blacks or other oppressed nationalities, reflecting the modest upturn in activity in this sector. We must continue to pay careful attention to opportunities to intervene in the Black, Chicano, and Puerto Rican struggles.

Some of these actions have been nationwide or have occurred in several cities. Many, while stemming from national government policies and issues rooted in the contradictions of capitalism, have been limited to one locality, and our participation has been mainly through the branch in that area. Our press can draw the general lessons for the entire country from our experience in these struggles.

The nature of many of these struggles indicates that the branches should be "looking in their own backyard," continue to be alert to local opportunities to initiate and participate in such actions.

Participation in such struggles will bring us into contact with new layers of militants, including in the unions, and can attract them to our campaigns and political methods. These contacts are important in broadening the scope of party contact, and will help us in the future as other struggles develop.

At present, there is no issue raised by the women's movement that has the same immediate potential for the organization of a national campaign as the abortion question had. Important struggles in which we should participate will continue. Some of these are the fight to pass the Equal Rights Amendment; actions demanding childcare facilities which can involve working-class and

Black women; all kinds of local struggles for equal pay and opportunities on the job; and continuation of the fight for the right of abortion against reactionaries attempting to maintain or reintroduce various restrictions on abortions.

Some of these struggles will have significant support from working women, especially the childcare fight. At the present time, however, it is likely that the campus women's liberation groups will be the most consistent base for organizing participation in and support for a wide range of women's liberation activities.

U.S. imperialism is still intervening in the Indochinese war. It is currently engaged in a massive bombing campaign in Cambodia. It is providing the military and economic aid to the Saigon regime and the other puppet regimes to keep them in power. It holds the threat of renewed military intervention over the heads of Hanoi and the NLF. We have an important task in exposing this continued intervention and educating workers on its causes. We must continue to work with other antiwar forces to organize protest demonstrations against the continued reactionary role of U.S. imperialism in Indochina and its continued military intervention.

We have been involved in a number of other areas of work. Among these, defense of Iranian students threatened with deportation, resulted in an important victory for the rights of foreign students in this country. Defense work for Latin American political prisoners through support to the U.S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners, and work in defense of the Irish struggle against British imperialism are two other areas in which we have done and will continue to do important work.

The African Liberation Day protests and similar protests reflect growing consciousness especially on the part of Black students, but not limited to them, about U.S. imperialism's role in propping up the white settler-colonialist regimes in Southern Africa. This is part of generally higher consciousness among radicalized youth about U.S. imperialism and the colonial revolution, resulting from the Vietnam war. We should be alert to developments in the colonial world that can find an echo among such layers, above all if the U.S. is involved. The Arab struggle and the struggles in Southern Africa are two areas of the colonial revolution we must pay special attention to at present. Work with foreign students, for example in support of the struggles of Iranian students against the dictatorial regime of the Shah and against harassment by the U.S. government, is an aspect of our defense of the colonial revolution against imperialism.

There are other issues we should take note of, including the ecology issue. Such issues raise problems affecting the whole population that cannot be solved short of socialist planning on a world scale. They provide us with an opportunity for basic socialist education.

Another important area of defense work we must pay attention to is cases involving radicals, or victimized Blacks, Chicanos, and Puerto Ricans. There are a number of such cases at present that we are supporting. Such work is a significant part of our work relating to oppressed nationalities.

We should continue to support the struggle of gay people for their rights, along the line of the memorandum on the

gay liberation movement adopted by the April 1973 plenum of the National Committee.

### *The Unions*

While there is no discernible motion toward the formation of a class-struggle left wing in the unions, there are new openings for party activity. Our primary job is explaining the program which can become the basis for forming a class-struggle left wing. This program has been outlined in past resolutions, including the 1971 Political Resolution.

Stress on one or another aspect of this program is determined by each specific situation. There are no tactical prescriptions generally valid for all unions. Because of the continued power and grip of the bureaucracy, we still have to use flanking tactics in the unions that make the immediate target of our demands the class enemy, and that avoid the premature precipitation of power struggles in the unions. Our basic task remains one of propaganda and education aimed at explaining our program.

Some of the key issues and demands before the union movement that we should at present be concentrating on in face of continued inflation, continued high unemployment in spite of the current boom, and the government attack on the unions and the working class as a whole include fighting for the sliding scale of hours and wages, opposing the speedup and the productivity campaign of the bosses, insisting upon the right to vote on contracts in unions where this right has been infringed, resisting government interference in the unions and the collective bargaining process, pressing the need to break with the capitalist parties and form a labor party, opposing the craft union and business union mentality for example the resistance to organizing the unorganized on an industry-wide basis.

An important part of our class-struggle program to transform the unions into fighting instruments of the whole class relates to the need for the unions to take up and champion the struggles of the oppressed nationalities, of women, and of youth, as well as issues of the national and international class struggle such as the Indochina war. Part of our propaganda effort in the unions will be to raise these issues, and when and where possible, to raise concretely within the unions support to protests and action originating outside the labor movement. Examples are proposals to support antiwar actions, the inflation protests, the anti-STRESS campaign, and ratification of the ERA.

An issue like the fight of the United Farm Workers Union, originating in one section of the labor movement that has close ties with the Chicano struggle, can be raised throughout the labor movement. The increasing opportunities to raise such issues in the unions, while still modest, present us with new openings.

Any actions, even of a limited character, like the April 28 demonstration in San Francisco, endorsed by a section of the labor bureaucracy, provide an important opportunity for the SWP to reach out to workers with our ideas and help establish our party as part of the labor movement in the eyes of more workers. In the case of the UFWU struggle, the fact that the AFL-CIO has given its sanction and support will likewise be valuable in aid-

ing us and all supporters of the farmworkers to raise this issue in the unions, and engage in other support activities.

We have been able to participate in strike support activities in certain cases, for example in the Atlanta strikes, and in support of the striking oil workers in Houston. In the Houston strike, the formation of a strike-support group by strikers' wives provided additional possibilities to tie the strike with other issues, such as the inflation protests. The willingness of the union to seek support of groups concerned about ecology also provided opportunities to link the strike with this issue, and thus extend the strike support.

### *Presenting Our Ideas*

The most important tools for our propaganda efforts aimed at the unions and workers generally are the press and the election campaigns. We should seek ways to utilize these tools in reaching workers, paying special attention to industries where there are contract negotiations, strikes, or where we have comrades working or in contact in some way. Should there be major showdowns in any of this year's contract negotiations, coverage of them in our press will be a key opportunity to explain our program.

Comrades on the job should seek to find ways to present our ideas to fellow workers. In general, our working comrades should be known as socialists, as supporters of Socialist Workers Party election campaigns, and as workers who are uncompromising supporters of the struggles of the oppressed nationalities, of women, and of the protests that have characterized the radicalization in general. They should also be experts on the conditions of their industry and workplace, and be able to discuss these questions in light of the major issues of the economy and class struggle as a whole. Comrades in unions should keep well-informed on the politics of their unions.

There are no general openings in the labor movement at this time that would justify a policy of colonization of our members into the unions. Our best method of reaching radicalizing workers in the unions at this time is through our general propaganda efforts.

At the same time, branches should strive to maintain comrades in industries that are important to the political life of the city where the branch is located.

### *Recruitment*

The recruitment and training of a cadre, thoroughly imbued with the program of Marxism, deeply involved in the mass movement and all the forms of the class struggle as they emerge, steeled through the struggle to construct a Leninist combat party here and internationally, is the most important task we must accomplish in preparation for building a mass revolutionary socialist party.

In the Black, Chicano, and Puerto Rican movements a layer of young militants who have gone through many experiences are more open than before to a socialist analysis, and have greater understanding that their struggles are related to the struggle for socialism. While this layer is relatively small, its existence indicates that opportunities for recruitment among the oppressed nationalities are improving. We must pay special attention to this re-

cruitment in the next period.

A similar layer of women who have been radicalized by the feminist movement are interested in the relation between feminism and socialism, and can be won to our movement.

While most of the recruits to the Trotskyist movement can still be expected to come from the campuses, including high schools and community colleges, there is a layer of young workers that have been affected by the radicalization. Young workers are more receptive to our ideas than older workers. Many were radicalized as students before they went to work. Others were affected in a radical direction by their experience in the army during the Vietnam war. Young Blacks, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, and women workers have been affected by the protests and movements of these sectors of the population.

We should pay special attention to reaching these young workers with our ideas and recruiting them to our movement.

### *Propaganda Offensive*

The 1972 SWP presidential election campaign registered an important advance for the party. The local campaigns we have entered in 1973, while naturally not of the same scope as the presidential campaign, succeeded in carrying forward the momentum of the 1972 campaign. These local campaigns have resulted in more publicity, more meetings, and have had more impact than most previous local campaigns. In large measure this is a result of the presidential campaign, which helped further establish the party as a serious political organization.

In 1974, there will be congressional as well as state and municipal offices up for election. Every branch will be able to run an election campaign, and we can utilize these campaigns to build upon the gains of the presidential campaign and the local campaigns run this year. These campaigns will enable us to reach out with our ideas, making wider layers aware of the party and its revolutionary socialist program, help recruit to the party, further establish the party, and thrust us forward in relation to our opponents.

We are not yet a mass party, but we give answers to the major issues of the class struggle as if we were the mass revolutionary party of class struggle we intend to build. Election campaigns are one of the best current avenues for this. In the 1974 campaigns we will concentrate on the main issues of the class struggle, presenting our transitional program and emphasizing the appropriate immediate, democratic and transitional demands that put forward our answers to those issues.

During the 1972 campaign fights were waged by the Committee for Democratic Election Laws (CoDEL) against laws designed to keep parties such as ours off the ballot. These fights resulted in successfully removing some of these restrictions. The SWP has been in the forefront among all organizations on the left in aiding this fight for democratic rights for the working class. Continuing to oppose the undemocratic election laws will be an important aspect of the 1974 campaigns.

### *A Fight for the Rights of Revolutionists*

The Watergate revelations created a climate of deeper

distrust of the government and greater opposition to its secret-police activities. This has enabled the SWP to launch a campaign against such secret-police activities of the government against the left in general and the SWP in particular. The practices we are challenging include tapping of telephones, spying on mail, infiltration of police agents, attempts by FBI and other federal officials to harass and intimidate SWP members and supporters, burglaries and break-ins of our campaign headquarters by government agencies, and physical attacks on our headquarters and cadres organized by such agencies.

The secret political police operations are directed mainly at the left. By taking the initiative in this campaign, on a civil liberties basis, uniting as many people and organizations on the left and in the mass movements who support this struggle for the SWP's democratic rights regardless of their agreement or disagreement with the program of the SWP, the party will again be setting an example for the entire working class. This campaign can win wide support among all radicalizing layers, and reach out to those who have been disturbed by the Watergate revelations and are open to an initiative to fight back against the secret-police operations of the government.

This campaign, while organizationally independent from the SWP's election campaigns, will complement them. The fact that we are a political party that engages in election campaigns favors our struggle against the undemocratic secret-police operations used against us, and our election campaigns can build support for this effort in defense of democratic rights. Interest in the ideas of the SWP which the capitalist government finds dangerous will be heightened. This campaign will help us explain our revolutionary program to more people.

The fight to establish our democratic rights and extend the civil liberties of working-class organizations is a fight to create the most favorable conditions for the development of the class struggle. Democracy does not eliminate the exploitation of the working class. It only creates conditions in which the class struggle is more direct, more open, more pronounced. The more democratic the system, the clearer the workers and other oppressed sectors of

the population will see that the fundamental problem is capitalism, not simply the lack of rights.

As Lenin explained, under capitalism all democratic rights, without exception, are "conditional, restricted, formal, narrow and extremely difficult of realization. . . . All 'democracy' consists in the proclamation and realization of 'rights' which under capitalism are realisable only to a very small degree and only relatively. But without the proclamation of these rights, without a struggle to introduce them now, immediately, without training the masses in the spirit of this struggle, socialism is *impossible*." ("A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism," *Collected Works*. Vol. 23, p. 74.)

### *Sales of the Press*

Sales of the weekly press are the third major aspect of the propaganda offensive. The press is the most important weekly vehicle we have for explaining our program. The success of the spring 1973 campaign to raise the level of individual sales must be a springboard for more conscious organization of sales in the branches to raise the number regularly sold. Regular selling of the press must become the norm for most members.

Sales on the campuses in cooperation with the YSA will continue to be important, as the greatest number of immediate potential recruits are still on the campus. But sales efforts must be extended to reach out to the wider layers being affected by the radicalization. We have found sales in the Black community to be generally good and improving. Special consideration should be given to regular sales in the Black community, to Black students, and at workplaces with a high percentage of Black workers. Regular sales should also be organized at plant gates and other areas where large numbers of workers can be reached.

The election campaigns and sales campaign will help tie together and complement our work in the mass movement by presenting our program on all the major issues before the masses of people. They should be integrated with this work.

"For convenience, this resolution has been reprinted directly from the November 1971 issue of the *International Socialist Review*."

# Perspectives and Lessons of the New Radicalization

"As one radicalizing area goes through a period of relative quiescence, others can leap ahead. . . . Throughout the uneven, sometimes explosive rhythm of the radicalization, the general trend has been constant. It continues to deepen."

The purposes of this resolution are: (1) on the basis of the political resolution and report adopted by the 1969 convention of the Socialist Workers Party and the political report adopted by the 1970 plenum of its National Committee,\* to evaluate the evolution of the radicalization and of the objective political and economic factors underlying it; (2) to evaluate the progress we have made vis-a-vis our opponents on the left towards our objective of gaining hegemony in the socialist movement, and state the key differences we have at present with them on how to advance the radicalization and build a revolutionary-socialist leadership; and (3) to define how these factors affect the key task of constructing the Socialist Workers Party.

## Part I

### A. American imperialism's basic contradictions: the evolution of the war and the economy

The February 1971 invasion of Laos reconfirmed that the basic strategy of the Nixon administration in Indochina remains the same as that followed by Johnson: to attempt to win a military victory of such scope as to decisively crush the will of the

Vietnamese revolutionary forces. No alternative, including a compromise with the Vietnamese, would avoid the deleterious effects to American imperialism of the victory of the Vietnamese revolutionary forces in South Vietnam. Nixon is driven in this direction because the basic relationship of forces in Indochina faced by the previous occupant of the White House remains unchanged.

The depth, extent, and independence of the mass upsurge in Vietnam are so great that neither Moscow, Peking, nor even Hanoi (if it so desired) have been able to turn the Vietnamese revolution into a mere pawn to be bargained away in a broader diplomatic deal with imperialism, as in 1954. Because of its class character, no Saigon regime—coalition or not—acceptable to Washington, could grant the substantive and large-scale economic, social, and political concessions to the Vietnamese masses necessary to maintain itself in power in face of this revolutionary upsurge. Only the presence of American military power prevents the triumph of the Vietnamese national liberation struggle.

The massive growth of antiwar sentiment in the United States forced Johnson to halt the bombing of North Vietnam and initiate the Paris talks. Johnson's objective was to temporize by making concessions to antiwar

\* These documents are reprinted in *Towards an American Socialist Revolution*, 207 pp., \$1.95, Pathfinder Press, 410 West Street, New York, N. Y. 10014. — *ISR*

sentiment while continuing the fighting, in the hope that, given time, American military power could crush the revolutionary upsurge and force the Vietnamese to accept the kind of regime in South Vietnam desired by imperialism. Nixon inherited this situation. To gain support and buy more time he had to promise the American people that he had a plan to end the war. His plan turned out to be "Vietnamization," i.e., the stabilization of the Thieu-Ky regime and the establishment of the South Vietnamese army (ARVN) as a replacement for U. S. troops.

In the period of massive buildup of American troops, Johnson promised that increasing American military power would quickly lead to "pacification" of the Vietnamese. This did not gain credence; but Nixon's professed perspective has led many Americans to believe that he is trying to end the war. Thus, Nixon's time-buying promises can finally prove more explosive than Johnson's as the American people demand fulfillment of this pledge.

"Vietnamization" has not worked. The time bought by Nixon's demagogic maneuvers has not enabled the U. S. military machine and its puppet ally to break the resistance of the Vietnamese masses. It was this failure that led Nixon to decide on the plunge into Cambodia in May 1970. The unparalleled outburst of antiwar sentiment in the U. S. forced Washington to pull back its troops from Cambodia; but the war, through increasing U. S. air bombardment and periodic ARVN invasions, had now been extended into Cambodia. This only broadened the scope of U. S. involvement in Indochina to include underwriting the Lon Nol regime. It did not succeed in compelling the Vietnamese to knuckle under in the least.

With his troop withdrawal timetable pressing upon him, Nixon decided on a new plunge in February 1971, this time into Laos. But the military fiasco of the "crack" ARVN units drove home to millions of Americans what an illusion and fraud "Vietnamization" was. The reality that the war with all its dangers was being extended, not shortened, became clearer than ever. The logic of "Vietnamization" has not been withdrawal but the expansion of the war to Cambodia and Laos. This expansion in turn broadened the Indochinese revolution, and created in Cambodia and Laos many of the same problems for the U. S. that it has faced for years in Vietnam. Each expansion of the war and each new plunge heightens the possibility of increasing the military pressure to such a degree as to bring China into the conflict, as happened in Korea in 1951.

U. S. imperialism faces a harsh dilemma. Today, it is still no closer to forcing capitulation of the insurgent forces, let alone establishing the ARVN as an instrument capable of doing this, than it was before "Vietnamization" began. Yet Washington has promised the American people the steady withdrawal of American forces. If this withdrawal were actually carried out in a large-scale way with the Vietnamese revolution still unsubdued, it would constitute the biggest defeat for U. S. imperialism in its history, and would

give the world revolution a powerful additional impetus.

Thus a dangerous mood is to be seen in Washington, with Nixon casting about in desperation for a fast military solution through some combination of U. S. and Saigon military forays while he stalls off any large-scale withdrawals of U. S. forces. Whichever tactical course Washington follows in the next period can only increase antiwar sentiment among the GIs involved and spur a massive antiwar response at home.

For all of the above reasons, the Vietnamese revolution and the effort of U. S. imperialism to crush it remain the central issue in American and world politics.

## Making the workers pay for the war

The evolution of the world capitalist economy over the last year demonstrates that U. S. imperialism cannot afford an extended, unending war in Southeast Asia without attempting to make the working class pay for it. The best variant from the capitalist point of view would be the acquiescence of a prowar labor movement in imposing "emergency" austerity measures and controls, allegedly justified by the needs of the war. But the attitude of the working class toward the war precludes any such direct attack on the living standards of the masses without precipitating gigantic social struggles that could extend the radicalization to broad layers of workers.

The main way in which imperialism has put the squeeze on the living standards of the working class has been through inflation. A characteristic of capitalism in its death agony, inflation in the U. S. has been exacerbated by the war expenditures. But two problems for the ruling class are built into this method of lowering the standard of living of the masses.

One is the recognition by the workers of what inflation is doing to their pay checks and living conditions, and the consequent resistance evidenced in the 1970 wave of strikes in which a major issue was wage increases to catch up with the rising cost of living.

The second and longer-term problem is the deterioration of the relative competitive advantage of U. S. imperialism in the world market and the increasing shakiness that spiraling inflation introduces into the stability of the capitalist world monetary system.

Thus there are both internal and external pressures to bring inflation under control. From an immediate, solely economic, point of view, the fastest way to slow down the rate of inflation would be to end the war in Vietnam. But this is precluded by the Nixon administration for the reasons outlined above.

At the same time the ruling class and its spokesmen in the mass media and universities carry out a large-scale propaganda campaign to convince the American people of the fallacious notion that the workers' attempts to defend their standard of living against the effects of capitalist inflation are the cause of the inflation. To the contrary this cause is to be found in massive war expenditures and the gigantic public debt; the mo-



nopolistic price structure derived from the continuing capitalist concentration and centralization, under the spur of growing international competition; and the various government financial outlays necessary to protect monopoly profits and underwrite the research and development of the giant corporations.

Only two basic options are left to the ruling class if inflation is to be a successful tool to hold down the American working class's real share of the national product: move toward a national "incomes policy," that is, a national wage-control scheme that would give the government authority to hold down wage gains aimed at catching up with the inflationary bite; or precipitate

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**"Only two basic options are left to the ruling class . . . : move toward a national 'incomes policy,' that is, a national wage-control scheme . . . or precipitate a recession. . . ."**

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a recession deep enough to result in a large enough increase in the industrial reserve army to drive down these wage demands.

Both of these alternatives contain major dangers for the ruling class.

An attempt to impose an "incomes policy" could provoke a major reaction by the working class, one taking place in the framework of the general political radicalization that has been developing in the country.

A policy of fostering a recession of sufficient depth to increase unemployment enough to put effective pressure on wages contains two dangers. First, it could precipitate or coincide with recessions in the other major capitalist countries. These could then snowball into an uncontrolled world recession. Second, it could provoke a sharp political reaction by the working class against the threat of massive unemployment.

The Nixon administration at the outset leaned toward the second course, adopting fiscal and monetary measures that facilitated the 1970 recession. This policy resulted in the highest unemployment rate in a decade, officially more than six percent. The first recession in a decade featured *both* increasing unemployment and continued inflation.

But the strength of the unions and the combativity of the working class demonstrated that higher levels of unemployment than this are necessary to effectively dampen the workers' willingness to fight for wage increases to try to keep up with the rise in the cost of living. In spite of the rise in unemployment, workers intensified their struggles to defend their standard of living, as was seen in the General Electric and auto strikes, in the Teamsters' negotiations and wildcat strikes, in the combativity of the railroad workers, in the postal workers' struggles, and in the demands now being put forward by the steelworkers. The UAW reasserted its demand for an escalator clause, which the bureaucrats had allowed to be gutted in past negotia-

tions, and won back part of the escalator clause protection they had bargained away in 1967.

The anxiety about rising unemployment and the resistance to any broad wage-price controls indicate the political obstacles standing in the way of another move contemplated by the ruling class: that of opening a legislative and administrative attack on the power of the unions themselves. Although the ruling class knows this will be necessary at some point, it hesitates from resorting to it now because it could lead to a political showdown with the union movement and touch off an explosion beyond the power of the labor bureaucracy to control.

The foundation of American capitalism's economic supremacy is being undermined by the growing capacity of European and Japanese imperialism to narrow the differential in labor productivity between their economies and the U. S. It was this differential, established as a result of the large-scale destruction of German and Japanese capitalism in the Second World War, the exhaustion of British imperialism, and the extraordinary extension of the postwar boom, that made the wide wage gap between American and Euro-Japanese labor tolerable for American corporations and helped to provide the resources the U. S. rulers could use for social reform.

Under the new conditions, the threat of trade wars, international monetary crises, and concurrent recessions in the major capitalist countries has increased. Regardless of the timing or the scope of such events, which are unpredictable, the intensification of interimperialist competition on the world market means that the American monopolists must find a way to narrow this wage differential. This can be done only by attacks on the wage gains, standard of living, organizations, and rights of the American workers. In the current turbulent political atmosphere such attacks can result in immense struggles and rapid radicalization of a decisive section of the American workers.

Substantial social reforms and concessions can be wrested from the ruling class in the struggles that lie ahead. But the intensification of competition on an international scale, coupled with the costs of maintaining Washington's role of world policeman for imperialism, closes the door to American capitalism granting any long-term series of social reforms large enough to decisively reverse the radicalization of increasing sections of the American people set in motion by the social struggles of the last decade.

## **B. The continuing development of the radicalization**

**S**ince the 1969 convention of the Socialist Workers Party, the process of radicalization has continued to deepen. Following the Moratorium and March on Washington in October and November 1969, the antiwar movement achieved its broadest mobilization

to date and most clearly demonstrated its potential in the May 1970 antiwar upsurge. During the same year two powerful new contingents entered the radicalization in a massive way, the movement for Chicano self-determination and the women's liberation movement.

This period also saw the emergence of the gay liberation movement; organized revolts in the prisons from New York to California demanding prison and judicial reform, inspired by the nationalist radicalization; increased radicalization inside the Catholic Church led by a militant layer of nuns and priests; deepening revulsion against capitalism's destruction of our environment and the ecological system on which humanity depends; the continued formation of radical caucuses in all types of professional organizations; and intensified Black nationalist sentiment and organization and further antiwar radicalization within the army. Neither in the Debsian radicalization nor in the thirties were there comparable upheavals in these sectors of American life.

These new developments, coming on top of the initial waves of the radicalization—the rise of the Black liberation, the student, and antiwar movements—constitute further indications of the depth and scope of the radicalization, and its speed of development.

## The May 1970 antiwar upsurge

The central feature of the May 1970 antiwar upsurge was the most massive nationwide mobilization of students in history. This response to the Cambodian invasion and the murder of the Kent State and Jackson State students demonstrated in action the unprecedented social weight and power of the American student movement. It also reconfirmed the capacity of the student movement, seen elsewhere in the world, to act as a detonator of larger social forces, by sparking the mobilization of hundreds of thousands across the country in antiwar street demonstrations.

The May events provide striking confirmation of our strategy of the "red university"—in this case in the form of the antiwar university. The red university strategy embraces the occupation and utilization of the resources of the university around a transitional program designed both to link student struggles to broader social struggles and to draw broader forces into mass actions around political issues.

Under the politicizing influence of the May events, the student strike was converted on thousands of campuses into mobilizations to occupy and utilize some component of the university facilities. On a number of key campuses this culminated in an almost unchallenged de facto control of the university by the student antiwar movement, turning the university into an antiwar university, both as an organizing center for the antiwar movement and as a vehicle for reaching out to mobilize and draw other sectors of the population into the struggle. Even where we had no influence this tended to be the logic of the mass struggles.

Another gain of the May events was the organization

of broad and democratic strike councils on the campuses that set an example of democratic executive bodies working around the clock as the authentic leadership of a mass upsurge. The May events created a new consciousness among students of their potential power and responsibilities and pointed to the most effective organizational forms for future struggles. The struggles around the May events exposed the colleges as instruments vital to capitalist rule which the ruling class will fight to maintain basic control of.

The May events were another confirmation of the central role the Vietnam war plays in American politics, and the extent to which this war has bred mass antiwar sentiment. Under the impact of the student strike and occupation, the first large demonstration against the war called and organized by a sector of the labor movement took place in New York City, sym-

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**"Another gain of the May events was the organization of broad and democratic strike councils on the campuses . . . as the authentic leadership of a mass upsurge."**

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bolizing the potential of the war issue as a politicizing and radicalizing agent in the working class.

The May events brought home to the ruling class the fact that the repercussions of the Vietnam war go well beyond the military, diplomatic, and strategic problems of Asian and international politics. The evolution of the war has led not only to the growth of antiwar sentiment, the antiwar movement, and a deepening radicalization; it has also brought into deep question the credibility and moral authority of the ruling class itself. Millions now doubt the capacity of the powers-that-be to solve the major social problems facing the American people or even to present them honestly to the public.

The May events confirmed our line of building the antiwar movement as a single-issue, nonexclusionary united-front-type movement centered on mobilizing mass street demonstrations, the central demand of which is the immediate withdrawal of all U. S. troops from Indochina. The effectiveness and potential power of independent mass mobilizations around a burning social issue was clearly demonstrated. The successes dealt a blow to the ultraleftists who attempt to substitute themselves for mass action, to the sectarians who sit on the sidelines scolding the mass movement, and to the reformists who always seek to subordinate the mass movement to their class-collaborationist schemes.

The student actions of May 1970 provided an important objective test and confirmation in action of the red university strategy and the ability of the Young Socialist Alliance to apply it. It presented the biggest test thus far of the organizational capacities of the YSA as against our opponents in a key sector of the

developing radicalization. The opposition of the ultra-leftists to the development of the antiwar university was a most striking example of sterility in a mass upsurge.

## Growth of the feminist movement

The year 1970 saw the beginning of the transformation of the new feminist movement into a mass movement with appeal to the broadest layers of American women. It has already had a deep impact on the political consciousness of the country, as reflected in the mass media and in the spread of the women's liberation movement to every nook and cranny of the nation. Women in all kinds of situations—in Black and Chicano organizations, unions, educational institutions, churches, professional organizations, in work places—have raised and struggled for feminist demands. The potential power of this movement exists in virtually every organization and institution of American society.

The August 26 marches, commemorating the right to vote victory achieved by the first mass mobilization of feminism in the U. S., were the first nationwide mass action of the new women's liberation movement. The publicity around these actions popularized the movement and its demands to millions of Americans. They demonstrated the power and potential of mobilizing women around democratic and transitional demands that both attack the pressing manifestations of the oppression millions of women suffer and that lead in the direction of the complete liberation of women.

This mass mobilization approach, confirmed in action on August 26, points the way forward for the movement. It is the revolutionary alternative to any tendencies to turn inward and stagnate in a small-circle existence; or to reject feminist demands under the guise of adopting an "anti-imperialist" or "workers" orientation, which have been evident in ultraleft currents of the women's movement; or to depend on the liberals, as proposed by the reformists.

The three basic demands of the women's liberation movement form a starting point for the development of a transitional program for women's liberation.

The first of these, free abortion on demand, coupled with opposition to forced sterilization, is based upon the elementary and democratic right of women to control their own bodies. This right is of direct and immediate concern to most women, and a life-and-death question for hundreds of thousands of women every year. The thrust of this demand cuts sharply into basic and deep-going cultural, social, and religious prejudices against women and is aimed at the subordinate and dependent role women have been subjected to since the rise of class society. The part of this demand that calls for free abortion on demand goes beyond democratic demands, raises the concept of socialization of medical care, and answers a need of the most oppressed and exploited.

Reactionary forces, mobilizing against the women's

movement in opposition to this demand, are attempting to reverse the partial victories the movement has already scored concerning abortion. The political struggles around abortion will be one of the important battles of the entire next stage of the women's liberation movement.

The second major demand of the movement, for free, community-controlled twenty-four-hour child-care centers available to all, answers a pressing need of millions of women, especially working women. At the same time it highlights the importance of and society's responsibility for the rearing of the young.

The third demand centers on pay, educational and job opportunities, and legal rights for women equal to those of men. These democratic demands challenge capitalism's economic and political institutionalization of the subordinate and dependent status of women which has its roots in the historical rise of the patriarchal family system. They put forward a concept indispensable for inspiring and mobilizing a powerful movement for women's liberation; that is, the full and complete worth and dignity of women.

The women's liberation movement has already had a profound impact on the current radicalization, not only by adding another sector of militants to the struggle, but also through the implications of its critical analysis of the historical role of the institution of the nuclear family. This institution, which has its origins in the rise of class society, and which in one form or another has been a necessary feature of all class societies, plays the central role in implanting in infants and children the ideology and character structure necessary to maintain the hierarchical, exploitative, and alienated social relations intrinsic to capitalism.

The women's liberation movement thus brings to light and helps counter some of the deepest prejudices and attitudes among the ideological and moral props of class rule. It raises problems of the alienation of humanity whose solution lies in the establishment of a workers state and the building of socialism. It deepens the struggle to expose the moral bankruptcy of the ruling class and to heighten the moral authority of the fighting mass movements.

By participating in this movement, women are transforming their view of themselves, affirming the essential dignity and worth that has been denied them through the entire period of class society. An integral part of the fight against capitalism is the fight against the racism and sexism built into the ideology of capitalism. This discovery and rethinking by women of their history and worth has paralleled the same phenomenon among the oppressed nationalities. It has spurred a reawakened demand for knowledge and understanding of their oppression—its history, causes, and the road to its elimination. It previews a similar process that will take place in the workers' radicalization.

The responsiveness of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance to the rise of the new feminism has been another important test of our move-

ment. Our ability to embrace this movement as our own, to participate in it and learn from it, and to help lead it in the direction of the mass independent mobilization of women around democratic and transitional demands stands in sharp contrast to the default of all our opponents who claim to be socialist or communist.

## Nationalism on the rise

Nationalism continues to deepen not only among Afro-Americans but among Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, Native Americans, and Asian-Americans. This has been expressed in increasing opposition to the war among the oppressed nationalities, in the character of the prison revolts, and in the expansion of nationalist consciousness and organization inside the army and the high schools. The recession, which has hit the oppressed nationalities the hardest, has spurred on this process. The effects of the recession, the failure of the highly publicized token integration of the building trades, the continued fiasco of "Black capitalism," and the government's use of "desegregation" of schools, especially in the South, to fire Black teachers and administrators, have dealt further blows to the image of the ruling class's ability to meet the needs of the oppressed nationalities through reform.

The development of Black nationalist attitudes, solidarity, and organization in the army has brought the explosive national question to a new point of tension inside this key instrument of imperialist policy.

While antiwar sentiment in the Black community has been high from the beginning of the war, there are signs that for the first time this antiwar sentiment is going to be expressed in an organized way. The Black Moratoriums held in some cities and campuses present new models for independent organization of antiwar sentiment among Black people. Increasing possibilities for involving Afro-Americans in antiwar actions are also indicated by the willingness of organizations like the NAACP to endorse and build such actions as the April 24 marches.

In the May 1970 events, a number of all-Black universities were the scenes of large-scale antiwar mobili-

zations, among them Jackson State, the scene of the murderous assault upon its students. The organization of Black participation in the April 24 mass marches is the most important opportunity and test of this potential.

On the college campuses struggles have centered around defense and maintenance of Black studies departments, won in the struggles of 1969, against the attempts by university administrations and the government to abolish them. Black high-school explosions often center on the refusal of administrations to allow even symbols of Black pride and nationalist consciousness. The militancy and consciousness of Black workers, highlighted in the Atlanta AFSCME (American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees) strike and the postal workers' strike, as well as the widespread adoption of the nationalist button and salute by Black workers, reflect the continued deepening of nationalist consciousness among Black people. The authorities are having unexpected problems in their nationwide efforts to recruit Black cops—potential candidates say they will be ostracized in the Black community if they become cops. The response to the arrest of Angela Davis showed that the rise of nationalist consciousness has further limited the effect of anti-Communist propaganda among Afro-Americans.

Attempting to head off the development of any independent Black political organization, the two capitalist parties have nominated increasing numbers of Black candidates. While remaining within the confines of bourgeois politics, the election of Black mayors in a number of important cities and of the largest number of Black congresswomen and congressmen since Reconstruction results from the pressure of Black nationalist consciousness.

The crisis of leadership in the Black community has not lessened. There have been no significant initiatives toward the formation of an independent Black political party. No nationwide group has emerged on the campus with authority among Black student militants. Under the hammer blows of victimizations and its own incorrect line of policy, the Black Panther Party continues to decline. At the same time, the feeling of solidarity of the mass of Black people for victimized Black Panthers, Angela Davis, and other militants persecuted by the government, emphasizes the potential that exists for a capable leadership armed with a transitional approach to begin to mobilize the Black community.

Our central task in relation to the Black liberation movement remains that of popularizing the idea of the need to organize around a transitional program centered on the fight to win Black control of the Black community. The struggles of the Cairo, Illinois, Black United Front have been the main positive experience in the Black movement since 1969. Its leadership in the course of struggle has advanced important aspects of such a transitional program.

This transitional approach to Black liberation was outlined by Malcolm X and expanded in the Socialist Workers Party resolution, "A Transitional Program for

Black Liberation."\* This points out the realistic and realizable path to transform a small revolutionary nucleus into a mass organization, and to mobilize growing sectors of the Black people on key issues affecting their lives which at the same time lead them into struggle with the capitalist state over all the fundamental aspects of Black control of the Black community. Such struggles will drive home the necessity of a political break by the Black community with the parties of the ruling class through the formation of an independent Black political party as the indispensable democratic instrument to fight for Black community control.

## Independent La Raza Unida parties

Since the 1969 SWP convention, the expanding struggles of the Chicano movement have constituted the most important political thrust forward of the oppressed nationalities. Organizing around opposition to the war and the special price the Chicano people are forced to pay for the war has been a central feature of and spur to the radicalization of the Chicano people. This reached its high point to date in the August 1970 Chicano Moratorium when a march of 30,000 Chicanos brought out additional tens of thousands in the Los Angeles Chicano community in support before it was murderously attacked by the cops.

The most important advance of the Chicano movement has been the organization and initial experiences of La Raza Unida parties in Texas, Colorado, and California. The first Raza Unida parties developed in Texas out of a series of mass struggles centering on Chicano control of Chicano schools. Some of the key initiators and leaders gained their initial experience in the student movement, especially the Mexican American Youth Organization (MAYO). The Raza Unida parties are still small and face all the problems of any new political party attempting to build a mass organization independent of the capitalist parties and based on the needs of an oppressed and exploited section of the population. Nevertheless, they are the most advanced expression of independent political action to develop among the oppressed nationalities or the labor movement since the radicalization began.

The spread of Raza Unida parties to Colorado, into California, and elsewhere in Aztlan will pose—as long as they remain clearly independent of the capitalist parties—the question of attitude toward the Democratic Party more and more sharply in the Chicano community. A realistic perspective of expansion, the development of a clear program for Chicano liberation built around the fight for Chicano control of the Chicano community and the self-determination of Aztlan, and maintenance of an independent perspective is the next stage and test of this development of independent Chicano political action. And it is around these questions

that the most important debates in the Chicano liberation movement will revolve.

The experience of these efforts to build independent Chicano parties can be utilized to help explain the meaning of independent political action by oppressed nationalities and the labor movement. The Raza Unida parties participate in elections and utilize them to educate and propagandize for their ideas, and have even won certain elections in Texas, which have been utilized to further build a base for Chicano control of the Chicano community. But they project themselves primarily as social movements, not merely electoral machines. They strive to be parties of a new type. They help to direct the Chicano struggle concerning schools, and other social needs, the organization of Chicano workers into unions, and other aspects of the overall Chicano liberation movement.

While there are as yet no signs of incipient movements for independent political action in the Black community or labor movement, the extension and development of the Raza Unida parties can have a major impact in these areas, serving as examples in dealing a blow to the Democratic Party. Most important, the Raza Unida parties have the potential to lead the struggles for self-determination of the Chicano people to new levels of independent mass mobilization.

The nationalism of oppressed nationalities is basically a response to and struggle against their oppression as a people and includes an affirmation of the dignity and humanity denied them through national oppression, and a discovery of their identity through a new understanding of their true history and their unique contributions to human society. Independent organization is necessary to unify and mobilize them in a struggle against all aspects of their oppression.

The rise of Chicano nationalism and the organizational forms it has taken, like the Chicano Moratorium and the Raza Unida parties, reaffirm the validity of Malcolm X's insight that a prerequisite of genuine alliances with other forces, including other oppressed nationalities, is the prior independent organization and unification of each oppressed nationality.

## How the radicalization has affected the working class

The specific major areas of struggle that have characterized the developing radicalization thus far—(1) the Black liberation movement, (2) the youth radicalization, (3) the antiwar movement, (4) the Chicano liberation movement, and (5) the women's liberation movement—have occurred, in the main, outside the framework of the union movement and in no case have been led by any section of organized labor. Nevertheless these movements have already deeply affected the consciousness of the working class. According to government statistics, of the total work force in the United States, 22 percent are under 24 years old; 28 percent of those between 25 and 34 have received some college education, with a higher percentage in the under-

\* Available from Pathfinder Press. — *ISR*

25 age bracket; 40 percent are women; 11 percent are nonwhite, and this percentage is higher for basic industry. Labor Department projections indicate that every one of these percentages will increase in the 1970s. These bare statistics alone indicate the potential these movements have in attracting and influencing the body of American workers.

This has been most significantly shown to date in the deep-going penetration of nationalist consciousness among workers of the oppressed nationalities. This can be observed in many ways: the appeal of all-Black caucuses to the mass of Black workers, even with the ups and downs and in some cases dissipation under ultraleft leadership; the wearing of nationalist symbols and buttons by Black workers; the expressions of nationalist sentiments by Black workers in militant struggles like the 1970 postal workers' strike and the Mahwah, New Jersey, Ford strike; the formation of the Polaroid Revolutionary Workers Movement and its campaign over Polaroid's South African investments; the large number of Black workers who stayed home on Martin Luther King's birthday; the nationalism exhibited by young Blacks, mostly from working-class families, in the army and high schools; the fact that the Chicano workers being organized into the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee insisted that the UFWOC was not just a union, but La Causa; the public threat by the Raza Unida Party in Texas that it would organize its *own* unions if the AFL-CIO didn't do the job; the participation by large numbers of workers in the extended mobilization of the Cairo, Illinois, Black community around Black-control demands; the strike for recognition of the virtually all-Black AFSCME local in Jackson, Mississippi, in which the workers combined economic demands with nationalist demands of the Black struggle.

This continuing spread of nationalist consciousness and struggle moods among Black workers has become a matter of grave concern to the bosses and bureaucrats.

The available evidence shows the depth of antiwar sentiment in the working class. The November 1970 referenda carried against the war in the industrial centers of Dearborn and Detroit, Michigan, in San Francisco, and in Massachusetts, with significant working-class support. The union-organized mobilization of 25,000 in New York during the May events, the overwhelming support given the Los Angeles Chicano Moratorium by the largely proletarian Chicano community, the growing pressure on union officials to endorse antiwar actions and antiwar positions in the city referenda on the war, are additional signs of the antiwar sentiment in the working class.

The rise of the new feminism, too, is already finding a reflection among women workers. Women's caucuses and committees have been formed in several unions. Women, Inc., a caucus in the Association of Western Pulp and Paper Workers, led a fight against "protective" laws used to discriminate against women workers on

the job: a caucus of women teachers at the 1970 convention of the American Federation of Teachers demanded that the union adopt positions in favor of maternity leave with pay, the dissemination of birth control and abortion information in the high schools for both women teachers and students, and the provision of child-care facilities as contract demands.

In concessions to the new militancy among its women members, the UAW April 1970 convention passed resolutions calling on the government to establish child-care centers and guarantee the right to abortion. Federally Employed Women has been formed to fight pay and job classification discrimination against women workers employed by the federal government. The American Newspaper Guild organized a conference of women members on women's rights.

Another index to the growing militancy among women workers is the sharp increase in the number of individual women workers filing complaints against discriminatory practices with the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission.

The impact of the general youth radicalization on working-class youth can be seen in the army, not only in antiwar and Black nationalist sentiment, but also in the fact that the brass has been forced to relax and modify its regulations on discipline, dress, hair styles, etc., because these had become virtually unenforceable. The situation regarding the youth in the plants was summed up from the ruling-class point of view in an article in the July 1970 issue of *Fortune* magazine entitled "Blue Collar Blues on the Assembly Line": "The central fact about the new workers is that they are young and bring into the plants with them the new perspectives of the American youth in 1970."

## Government offensive against the unions

The character of the 1970 strike wave demonstrated that the working class is not willing to sacrifice its standard of living for the sake of Washington's war in Vietnam. This confirmed the decrease in effectiveness of direct or indirect ruling-class appeals to patriotism, anti-Communism and racism against colonial peoples as justification to deny and subordinate labor needs. The 1970 strike wave not only saw the largest number of workers out on strike since 1952, many in long strikes, but the continuation of the tendency to reject inadequate wage-increase settlements negotiated by the union bureaucrats, and to take unauthorized action against them.

One of the central hopes of Nixon in the recession was to weaken, through rising unemployment, the will of the organized working class to defend its real wage rates against inflation. But while unemployment rose, so did prices, and so did the determination of the organized workers to fight to keep their wages abreast of the rising cost of living. The only positive result of

the recession-induced increase in unemployment, from the ruling-class point of view, was the slowdown of unorganized labor's rate of wage increases. It was clear that a figure of 6 percent "officially" unemployed was too low to break the will of the organized workers to fight for wage increases.

A growing sector of the ruling-class believes that the next step must be a wage-control program under the cover of a broader "incomes policy" and the "fight against inflation." But this also contains the danger of triggering struggles by the working class.

Ruling-class timetables for legislative curtailment of union power have suffered a series of setbacks with the continued increase in the unionization of public employees and their strike struggles often in direct defiance of local, state, and federal antistrike laws. The most spectacular of these strikes was the 1970 postal workers' strike, which directly defied the federal government and its unconstitutional antistrike laws.

Either the attempted imposition of wage controls or further legislative and administrative attacks on the

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**“. . . the attempted imposition of wage controls . . . would provoke fresh defensive struggles and accelerate the process of politicalization and radicalization in the working class.”**

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use of union power would provoke fresh defensive struggles and accelerate the process of politicalization and radicalization in the working class. The ruling class is aware of this. But the timing of a serious challenge to the unions is dependent not only on their estimate of the relationship of class forces in the U. S. but also on their evaluation of the international economic situation.

In this overall context, the fight for an escalator clause to counter inflation as a central demand by the UAW in the 1970 strike was important. The Steelworkers' officials have projected initial demands for both an escalator clause and a shorter workweek as targets of the 1971 contract negotiations. At the same time, under the growing pressure of ruling-class propaganda on the need for controls, both Woodcock and Meany have made concessions to the idea of an "independent" wage-price-profits review board. This line of capitulation to the capitalists runs counter to the interests of the working class.

The fight for a sliding scale of hours and wages must be counterposed to all attempts by the capitalist class to "solve" the problems of unemployment and inflation by moving toward wage controls.

The active intervention and threat of intervention by the government on the side of the employers, and against the unions, underscores the fact that key economic issues today are increasingly fought out on a political level.

The labor bureaucracy is a conservative, petty-bourgeois social layer encrusted on the unions. It acts as the central transmission belt for bourgeois politics into

the working class and remains the chief obstacle to transforming the unions into revolutionary instruments independently fighting around the key political and social issues facing the working class and its allies. Far from mobilizing union power behind the important political and social issues of the radicalization, issues that deeply affect their members, the labor officialdom does everything in its power to keep the workers tied to as narrow and reformist a social program as possible.

The impact of the developing radicalization on the union movement and the politicalization of the workers arising from their economic struggles continue to be molecular processes. There has been no major challenge to the bureaucracy as a whole at this stage. There is not yet discernable any organized tendency toward the formation of a left wing in the union movement, the goal of which would be the overthrow of the conservative bureaucracy and its replacement by a leadership based on a class-struggle program aimed at the ruling class.

### **New components of the radicalization**

**A**s the radicalization has deepened, other issues have been raised and new movements have come forward: the revulsion against capitalism's destruction of our environment and the ecological system on which the life of humanity depends, the development of radicalism among the laity and clergy of the Catholic Church, the prison revolts, the increasing radicalization inside the army, the gay liberation movement against the legal and extralegal oppression of homosexuals. The radicalization has likewise had big repercussions in professional, cultural, and artistic circles.

The wave of prison revolts that erupted in 1970 had a different quality from the protests that historically are endemic to prison life. This was to be seen in the conduct of the Black and Puerto Rican leaderships of these revolts. The prisoners who have led and participated in these struggles consciously see themselves as victims of the class and racial bias of American justice. They are inspired by the revolutionary literature they read and the examples set by figures like Malcolm X and George Jackson. The essence of their demands for prison and judicial reforms has been an affirmation of their dignity and humanity. The recognition by most young radicals of the prison struggles as part of the movement and their sympathy and identification with the prisoners' demands is a further gauge of the radicalization.

As with prisoners, bourgeois society views homosexuals as outcasts.

The gay liberation movement has raised a series of demands against the way homosexuals are treated by bourgeois society. These include insistence on equality before the law like other citizens, with full rights in all respects; that their private lives be their own, free

from legal or police restraint; against police entrapment practices; for their acceptance as equals in all spheres of social life.

The gay liberation movement was strongly influenced by the opposition of the women's liberation movement to the commercial exploitation of sex, the reduction of sex to something other than a free human relation, the reactionary and stifling sexual norms of bourgeois society, and the psychological distortions of sexuality and sex roles in a class society based on the nuclear family system. The women's movement began to see that the antagonistic attitudes towards homosexuals are simply another facet of a sick social order.

One characteristic of the radicalization is the growing opposition among very broad layers of young people to sexual oppression of any kind. This has been reinforced by the women's and the gay liberation movements.

The radicalization in the army is being fed by the youth radicalization, the nationalist upsurge, the antiwar movement, and, in the women's branches, the new feminism. Antiwar sentiment in the army appeared several years ago with the rise of the antiwar movement and has continued to deepen and broaden with each new wave of the radicalization. The wearing of peace symbols, love-beads, flouting of army appearance standards, giving Black power salutes and holding meetings, demanding equal rights and prerogatives in the WACS, are overt symbols not only of GI defiance but of the political radicalization affecting GIs. The fight for the rights of GIs as citizen soldiers, which we have supported and publicized as the mainstay of political work within the army, has been strengthened by the victories won by GIs and has been shown to be an effective and key component of the struggle waged for freedom to express their political views.

Another sign of the deepening radicalization is the growing rejection, first by the youth and then by wider circles, of the cultural values and authority of bourgeois society. This is reflected in all the arts, and in many other ways. It includes the proliferation of underground newspapers with a generally radical bent, and a new thirst for and interest in radical books and literature of all kinds. More revolutionary literature is now being published, read by the population as a whole, and assigned in colleges and high schools than in any previous period in American history.

## Strategy of the ruling class

**T**he ruling class was shaken by the May 1970 events. Its divisions and indecision over what to do extended right up into Nixon's cabinet.

The liberal wing of the bourgeoisie tried to project an orientation towards the fall elections last year as a way to demobilize the antiwar upsurge. During the May events, the administration, with the collusion of the reactionary bureaucrats of the building-trades unions in New York, organized a "hard-hat" patriotic

demonstration to attempt to counter the massive antiwar actions and foster the myth that workers support the war. These unions were picked for that purpose because the reactionary policy of the bureaucrats to preserve these unions as white job-trusts helped inculcate prejudices against the radicalizing Blacks and youth among the white, skilled, older members. Even so, the bureaucrats had to use a combination of threats and bribes to get their members to march; and slogans supporting the war were conspicuous by their absence.

The Nixon administration proceeded with a combination of promises on the issue representing the greatest threat, the war, and demagoguery to turn people against the antiwar demonstrators by playing on the prejudices of the most backward layers of the population with the "law-and-order" question. At the same time, the Congress made the concession of granting the vote to eighteen-year-olds.

Part of the "law-and-order" strategy was to single out certain radicals for selective repression, especially those the government felt it could pillory in court as "criminals."

The government's "law-and-order" campaign took advantage of ill-advised actions by ultraleftists, using them in an attempt to smear the radicalization as a whole. But one of the unexpected results of these frame-ups, especially against the Black Panther Party, has been to expose the role and number of police agents and provocateurs—and the way in which the ultraleftists play into the hands of such paid representatives of "law and order." This lesson combined with the power displayed by the mass mobilization in May, has helped weaken the appeal of ultraleftism in the radical movement. It is one of the reasons for the continued decline of the Black Panther Party and the Weatherpeople-type tendencies. When the new school year opened, the government pressured college administrators, through the IRS guidelines and J. Edgar Hoover's speeches and letters to college presidents, to take away some of the gains the students won in May.

In the summer and fall of 1970 there was a general pause in the antiwar and student movements, as people waited to see whether Nixon's promises of "winding down" the war were going to be carried out. The militants were also weighing the lessons of May, particularly the exposure of the sterility of ultraleftism, and seriously grappling with questions of strategy and perspective.

By the time of the 1970 elections, the short-term gains the ruling class had made were beginning to be reversed. Large-scale student participation in the campaigns of the "doves," which had been touted during the May events, failed to materialize. The combination of the continuation of the war, the rise in unemployment, ever-mounting prices, and a backlash against the youth and Black-baiting forays of Nixon and Agnew resulted in a rebuff for Nixon in the elections.

The character of the capitalist two-party electoral system prevents the real attitudes of the voters from being clearly reflected at the ballot box. Even so, it



was apparent that Nixon's red-baiting didn't work as planned.

Antiwar voters saw little choice between the supporters of Nixon's "withdrawal" plans and the "dove" capitalist politicians, who had virtually capitulated to Nixon. But the referenda on the war demonstrated that while there was a temporary dip in antiwar actions, the mass antiwar sentiment had continued to deepen.

While the renewed red-baiting and repressions against the Panthers, the Berrigans, Angela Davis, etc., had some dampening effect, these moves have not intimidated the mood of opposition to the Nixon administration. Even the hard-hat building-trades workers whom the White House brought out in May 1970 have been angered by Nixon's decision to try to lower wage gains in the construction industry.

Clearly, Nixon has big obstacles to overcome in seeking reelection in 1972.

## Part II

### A. General characteristics of the radicalization

The current radicalization began with a new rise in the Afro-American struggle for self-determination in the early 1960s. This developing independent movement, affected by nationalist struggles around the world and especially in Africa and Cuba, sparked by a new layer of Black youth, attracted sympathy and support and precipitated a nationwide student movement. The students then became the spearhead

of the antiwar movement as Washington plunged into Vietnam.

The mass actions of this antiwar movement generalized the radicalization, spreading it both geographically and into layers of the population other than the students. From a credibility gap on the war question, suspicions and doubts about the actions of the government widened into a willingness to challenge the authority of prevailing institutions and to reject more and more of the norms and ideology of capitalist society.

As these movements continued to develop amidst ebbs and flows, new struggles caught on. The most massive have been the Chicano and women's liberation movements. New issues, such as pollution of our environment, have further fueled the radicalization. The ruling class has been unable to prevent the radicalization from making a deep impact on its armed forces. The gay liberation movement against the oppression of homosexuals, the prison revolts, the welfare struggles, the divisions in the Catholic Church demonstrate several key facts:

1. There is no layer too oppressed to struggle, no reactionary prejudice and oppression too sacrosanct and deep-rooted to be challenged.

2. The actions of each new layer of the diversified movement have raised greater doubts about the fundamental values of bourgeois society.

3. Each extends and deepens interest in radical ideas about the reconstruction of social life.

4. Each drives home the conclusion that new issues and independent struggles will continue to emerge as the radicalization deepens.

All of the movements mentioned have interacted and drawn inspiration and tactical lessons from one another. But each has an autonomy and an independent dynamic. They do not develop in unison but irregu-

larly. As one radicalizing area goes through a period of relative quiescence, others can leap ahead; and from these new struggles new lessons are learned that can be absorbed and applied by the others. Throughout the uneven, sometimes explosive rhythm of the radicalization, the general trend has been constant. It continues to deepen.

**F**rom our observation and participation in the different sectors of the unfolding radicalization, the following generalizations can be drawn about its character and meaning for the Socialist Workers Party.

1. Each of these movements has essentially an independent character and course. They are not wings of the Democratic or Republican parties. They are outside the stifling control of the labor bureaucracy. They are not under the leadership of the Communist Party.

While each has been willing to form action alliances with, and learn from, the experiences of other sectors, they have refused to subordinate their demands or wait for the struggles of others before embarking on their own. This independence has been a salient feature of the student, Black, Chicano, and women's movements, and it will be the attitude of others still to come. This self-reliance is one of the best guarantees that the radicalization will continue and not be derailed through dependence on reformist leaders.

The same attitude will tend to mark the radicalization of the working class when the struggle unfolds to break the political dependence of the union movement on its conservative misleaders and the capitalist two-party system.

2. Each of these movements has been, from the first, ready, able, and willing to engage in direct action in the streets and schools, and to organize mass protest demonstrations against the authorities and administrations. The ghetto uprisings and the mass antiwar mobilizations, the August 26, 1970, New York women's march, and the August 1970 Los Angeles Chicano Moratorium have been the most dramatic expressions of this militancy. But it characterizes every one of these social struggles to one or another degree.

3. As was the case in the early 1930s, the process of radicalization began in other areas prior to an extensive upsurge and politicalization of the working class. But the issues raised by the social struggles of the 1960s have begun affecting the thinking of the entire country. And the radicalization already has certain characteristics—the size and weight of the student movement; the extent of antiwar sentiment; the degree of nationalist consciousness and combativity; the depth of feminist consciousness; the challenges to the class, racist, and sexist assumptions that furnish the ideological glue of bourgeois domination—which were not present to anywhere near the same degree during the radicalization of the 1930s.

Today's radicalization is bigger, deeper, and broader than any previous radicalization.

The existence and growth of this radicalization prior to the radicalization of major sections of the working class is of vital importance to the Marxist tendency. Our capacity to recruit and educate a Marxist cadre that is active and influential in the movements as they arise, that fights for leadership against the claims of all our opponents, is decisive in building a mass Leninist workers' party capable of leading the coming struggle for power to a victorious conclusion.

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**“The Leninist party champions the fighting movements of all oppressed social layers and advances . . . their key democratic and transitional demands as part of its own.”**

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4. A distinction must be made between radicalization and a revolutionary situation. The current radicalization, in which large numbers of people, under the impact of changes in international and national conditions, have begun altering their attitudes about important questions, beliefs, values, customs, relations, and institutions—social, personal, philosophical, political, economic, cultural—is not at the point of becoming a pre-revolutionary situation. It is a precondition and preparation for it. The borders of a revolutionary situation can be reached only when the politicalization and radicalization has extended to decisive sectors of the working masses, and when a revolutionary upsurge and mobilization objectively poses the basic question of what class should wield power.

While a radicalization can develop and prevail over a period of many years and even decades, prerevolutionary or revolutionary situations, where the contending class forces directly confront each other, are of short duration. We can predict neither the tempo of a radicalization of the working class nor the appearance of a prerevolutionary situation. But it is clear that the prospects for its favorable outcome will be improved, the deeper, broader, and bigger the prior radicalization has been, the greater is the number of politicalized and revolutionary-minded militants previously developed in the mass movement, and the more receptive the masses have become to radical solutions.

The potential speed with which such a situation can appear was graphically illustrated by the May-June 1968 upsurge in France that suddenly placed the question of power squarely on the agenda. The key question at such a juncture is whether a revolutionary-socialist combat party has been created that is capable of taking the leadership of the workers' upsurge away from the reformists and centrists and of mobilizing the masses in revolutionary struggle for state power.

5. The characteristics of the radicalization so far have made it clear that the American revolution will have a

combined character. It will be a revolution by the oppressed nationalities for self-determination together with a working-class revolution to take power and open the road to the destruction of capitalist exploitation, alienation, oppression, racism, and sexism, and the construction of socialism—the first truly human social order.

The coming American revolution will incorporate the democratic and transitional demands that flow from the various independent movements that have arisen in the course of social struggle as well as those that will arise as the radicalization deepens. It will give an enormous impetus to the further development of these movements until their demands are met in full in the course of the construction of socialism.

6. The fundamental economic and political contradictions of American capitalism that underlie the radicalization have an international basis. The basic dilemma faced by America's rulers today is pointed up by the fact that the very measures required to halt the world revolutionary process and to meet the growing economic competition of their capitalist competitors come into increasing conflict with the maintenance of social stability, ideological authority, and class peace at home. This gives deep international as well as national roots to the radicalization.

The current radicalization takes place in a period of ascending world revolution. In spite of major defeats like that in Indonesia, and setbacks and temporary stalemates like those of the past decade in Latin America, the colonial revolution continues to press forward. The monolithic character of world Stalinism has been shattered. Not only has the political revolution made important advances in Eastern Europe, but its first shoots are becoming visible in the Soviet Union. In the advanced capitalist countries, there is a new wave of struggles and radicalization.

The tendency is increasing for the example and lessons of the struggles in one country or area of the world to spread to others, as has been seen in the international scope of the student radicalization, the rise of the antiwar movement, the acute appearance of the national question in advanced capitalist countries, and as is now occurring with the struggles of the women's liberation movement.

The use of anti-Communism to stop the radicalization, of foreign adventures to inflame war patriotism, of war spending to generate prosperity, of government attacks to silence protesters, of racism to conservatize privileged sectors of the working class, and of sexism to support reactionary prejudices and ideology cannot be relied upon to reverse this radicalization. Quite the contrary, opposition to the material, social, and psychological effects of war, inflation, repression, racism, sexism, and red-baiting are the central motive forces of the radicalization itself. These ruling-class weapons, combined with limited reforms and concessions, can and will bring about pauses and partial setbacks. Yet exacerbation of the fundamental underlying contradictions of American capitalism feeding the radicalization will propel it forward.

7. In all stages of building the mass revolutionary-socialist party its cadres must be alert to, recognize, and embrace the new forms of struggle and the progressive demands of oppressed groupings that appear as the radicalization develops. The Leninist party champions the fighting movements of all oppressed social layers and advances and develops their key democratic and transitional demands as part of its own. The revolutionary vanguard consciously uses its participation in these movements to draw the lessons necessary to bring revolutionary-socialist consciousness to as broad a layer of militants as possible.

In view of the decisiveness of the construction of the revolutionary party, our most important objective in involving ourselves deeply in these mass movements and absorbing their lessons is to recruit the best militants and help them to assimilate the program and traditions of Trotskyism, and gain the political experience necessary to become integrated in the expanding Trotskyist cadre.

8. The changing relationship of forces on the American left, which, while far from settled, is turning in our favor, is of decisive importance in the further development of the radicalization. This could be seen most clearly in the initial stage by the incapacity of the Communist Party to take the leadership of the ascending movements and derail or divert them into class-collaborationist schemes.

The May 1968 events in France did not lead to victory, not because of a lack of consciousness or incorrect tactics by the revolutionary Trotskyist forces, but because of the political domination of the workers' movement by the mass Stalinist party, a domination which could not be reversed by this revolutionary nucleus qualitatively smaller than the CP. The French CP was thus able to divert the revolutionary upsurge into reformist channels. That need not be the case when a comparable opportunity is presented here.

Unlike the beginning of the radicalization of the thirties, the Communist Party does not have a large edge in forces and resources over ours. Our movement has its first opportunity to become the very center of the radical movement in this country.

Since the 1969 convention, the relation of forces among the socialist tendencies and within the larger radical movement has continued to shift in our favor.

The role the SWP has played in participation in, leadership of, and recruitment from the women's liberation movement is far greater than that of the Communist Party, Socialist Party, or any of our ultraleft opponents. Given our small number of Chicano and Latino members, we have been able to play an important role in the Chicano movement, an arena where the CP has significant strength. In the antiwar movement, we continue to be the best builders and in the strongest position in comparison to all our opponents.

In the student movement, the Young Socialist Alli-

ance is the largest, most cohesive, and influential of all the youth organizations claiming to be socialist, including the Communist Party's Young Workers Liberation League, the Socialist Party's Young People's Socialist League, and the various remnants of SDS. This is the single most important aspect of the current struggle between the SWP and YSA and our opponents because it is still among youth that the greatest immediate potential for recruitment to Trotskyism lies.

In key areas of party building we have made important gains. The party press is now distributed more widely geographically and has a larger distribution in the U. S. than the *Daily World* or the press of any other opponent. We have been able to expand the paper from twelve to twenty-four pages. The YSA has made big advances in spreading its units throughout the country. The SWP has been able to establish new branches and nuclei of branches in several new areas. Our national apparatus in all our departments has grown, in *The Militant* editorial and business offices, the *ISR* editorial staff, in the staff of the national office, and in our printing and publishing efforts. We are publishing many more pamphlets and books than ever before. Sales of Trotskyist literature have greatly expanded.

The struggle for hegemony is not yet settled, especially in relation to our most important opponent, the Communist Party and its Young Workers Liberation League. But while we are not yet the predominant force on the left, we can confidently expect to win this position if we do not make major mistakes in the next period.

## B. Our opponents on the left

The progress the SWP and YSA have made in the struggle for leadership of the left was symbolized by the December 1970 YSA convention. It was the largest youth convention since the founding of American Trotskyism. All of our major and minor opponents were there to present their disagreements with us through leaflets, corridor discussion, and articles on the convention in their press. These included the Communist Party and the Young Workers Liberation League; the Socialist Party and its Young People's Socialist League; Progressive Labor and its fraternal SDS; International Socialism; the Workers League; and Spartacist.

One striking fact about the essential arguments circulated by all of these opponents was that each from its own political vantage point made the identical charge — the politics of the SWP and YSA are petty bourgeois, not working class.

Each advanced its own arguments supporting this contention in criticism of positions the SWP and YSA have taken towards the radicalization. The SP-YPSL, for example, attacked our support of Black nation-

alism, the antiwar movement, the gay liberation movement, the women's liberation movement, and our opposition to Israel, which is "led by a labor party," as being anti-working class. The Communist Party and the YWLL alleged that our support of Black nationalism amounted to racism, that in building the antiwar movement as an independent movement we are racist and divisive and thus are not concerned with "workers' problems," that our petty-bourgeois nature is shown by our lack of a program for the "industrial concentration" of our members, and that the same thing is demonstrated by our call for the overthrow of the "only workers' governments" in the world.

Similar attacks were leveled by the smaller organizations and sects. All these opponents charge that the SWP and YSA constitute a petty-bourgeois tendency. All adduce as proof our support to Black nationalism, feminism, and the other movements that have developed out of the current radicalization. All counterpose their organizations as truly working class, and their orientation as the path to reach the mass of workers.

All these opponents, reformists and ultraleft alike, make three basic errors in their approach to the current radicalization:

1. They cannot recognize the class struggle as it unfolds. They do not understand the nature of the radicalization itself, its chief characteristics and new forms of struggle. Instead of embracing the new forms and progressive demands of these struggles, they tend to be repelled by them. Instead of seeking to extend the independent and revolutionary thrust of these movements, they seek to channel them into reformist directions, to oppose them in a sectarian manner, or to dissipate their potential through ultraleft gimmicks.

2. Partly because of this and partly because of a dogmatic projection of their limited understanding of the radicalization of the 1930s onto the current struggles, they do not understand the dynamics and depth of the radicalization, how it can extend into the working class in the future, and how it can lead to a revo-

lutionary upsurge. They misunderstand or reject all the key aspects of revolutionary strategy based on a transitional program for participation in and acceleration of the radicalization.

3. None of them understand the political and organizational character of the kind of party that must be built to lead the struggle for socialism to victory in the United States. Furthermore, they tend to approach the problem of building a mass party as if they already were that party whose central problem is the disposition of its mass forces. We see ourselves as a Leninist nucleus concentrating on those essential cadre-building steps without which there will be no basis for the construction of a mass revolutionary workers' party.

## 1. They reject the main demands of the mass movements

None of our opponents adopt the central progressive demands of the largest components of the radicalization—the Black nationalist, Chicano, student, antiwar, and women's liberation movements—as part of their own. All, to one degree or another, are repelled by, uncomfortable with, antagonistic toward, and fail to understand the logic and depth of every one of these movements.

One argument both the reformists and ultralefts use against full support to these new manifestations of the class struggle is that they disrupt the unity of the working class. The way our opponents recoil from the independent thrust of these struggles means in practice disregarding the interests of the more oppressed workers and pandering to the prevailing prejudices and narrow interests of privileged layers in the working class and of the trade-union bureaucracy.

Revolutionists call for unity in action of the working class against attacks by the class enemy. But we fight to break up the "unity" that is founded on subordination of the historical interests of the class as a whole to those of the more privileged workers, to the anti-working-class interests of the union bureaucracy, and to the capitalist class.

Revolutionists do not call for unity of the working class based on the narrow parochial interests of the more privileged strata of workers, or on the current level of political consciousness, but for unity on a class-struggle program. This orientation requires full support to the struggles of all the less privileged workers and oppressed sectors of the population, against the special oppression they suffer as a result of the racial, sexual, and generational divisions fostered by the ruling class. In reality, far from threatening the real unity needed by the working class against its class enemies, the struggles of the oppressed nationalities, the women, the youth are all helping to deal powerful blows to the ideological barriers that racism, sexism, and narrow job-trust attitudes erect against the unity of the working class on a class-struggle program.

The reformists and ultralefts alike argue that the struggles that have so far emerged in the current radicalization are basically "petty-bourgeois." Thus the demands and driving forces of the radicalization at this "petty-bourgeois" stage are ephemeral and will be overcome at the next stage when the workers enter the struggle. As the CP defensively puts it, that is why Trotskyism is growing today and will die tomorrow.

They are wrong on all counts.

The demands and struggles of the students pointing toward the struggle for the red university, the demands of the antiwar movement for immediate withdrawal of the American imperialist army from Vietnam, the demand for control of their own communities by the oppressed nationalities in their struggles for self-determination, the social and political demands of women for their liberation, are all directed against the interests and authority of the ruling class and in the interests of the working class.

Far from diminishing the importance of these movements, the radicalization of deeper layers of the working class, which will occur in part around these political issues, will give them tremendous impetus. When this occurs, these movements will have the most powerful and decisive reinforcement of all, the entry of a great majority of the working class into struggle against the common enemy, the ruling class. And each of them will gain powerful new proletarian forces.

Only a leadership applying a transitional program that includes the progressive demands of all the oppressed, and tested by previous struggles, will be capable of leading the working class and its allies in a victorious struggle for the establishment of a workers state.

Both our reformist and ultraleft opponents exhibit a tendency towards *economism* in their ultimately pessimistic view of the role of the workers in the radicalization process. They see struggle over wage and job issues, *in isolation* from the political issues and motive forces of the radicalization, as the sole way the workers will be brought into struggle. This is tied to their misconception—and hope—that independent movements like Black nationalism and feminism will somehow fade away when the "real" struggle begins.

The decisive mass of workers will not be politicalized until the underlying international economic crises of American imperialism forces it into a showdown with the labor movement. But the issues that have already been raised in the current radicalization are not peripheral to the process of social discontent; they are central to it, and, in combination with struggles by the workers over wage and job issues, will lead to the politicalization and radicalization of the working class. And the independent and uncompromising demands of these various movements will be an additional aid to the workers' struggles against the efforts of the reformists to channel the burgeoning radicalization into the dead end of class collaborationism.

In face of the radicalization, the reformists and ultralefts are basically *conservative*. They fear the struggles

of the developing radicalization, the revolts of the least privileged, just as they fear the revolution itself. This is reflected in either their sectarian abstention from the living movements emerging in the process of the radicalization or their participation only to divert, blunt, and in essence oppose the demands of these movements, their uncontrolled initiatives, and their independent political thrust.

At bottom, this conservatism betrays a deep lack of confidence in the revolutionary potential of the working class and an ignorance of the essential nature of social revolution. Our opponents do not think that the young, militant workers who will revolt are capable of ever becoming antiwar, feminist or profeminist, nationalist or pronationalist, and self-reliant. If that were true, the American workers would also be incapable both of mobilizing the oppressed masses to overturn American capitalism and of shouldering the immense task of constructing socialism.

Thus at bottom our opponents are utopians. They really do not believe that the ranks of the American workers can do the job. And in practice they substitute reliance and dependence on other forces—the sectarians their mechanical political fantasies, and the reformists the liberals and progressive bureaucrats.

When the reformists or ultralefts proclaim that the forms and issues of the radicalization are detours, aberrations or obstacles to the working class taking power they mean in actuality that the radicalization threatens to become more and more of an obstacle to their desire to keep the class struggle in reformist channels or to control it according to a preconceived schema. All of the class-collaborationist opponents, including the ultraleft ones, like PL, recoil from the independent struggles of the current radicalization and rail against "single issueism" because they have difficulty imposing their line of class collaboration upon them. The sectarian grouplets like the Workers League do the same because these struggles do not fit into their preconception of what radicalization should be like.

Every one of our opponents without exception adopts opportunist attitudes and positions in practice. In the 1968 New York teachers' union strike against steps taken toward Black control of the Black schools in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville section, most either equivocated or supported the Shanker leadership's reactionary strike against the Black community. All of them opposed the Equal Rights Amendment. None of them understood the May events—the reformists, ultralefts, and sectarians all feared the spontaneous mass mobilizations not under their control, underestimated their social and political importance, opposed the development of democratic strike councils, opposed the struggle for the antiwar university, and lectured those who went ahead. All are opposed to an independent development of La Raza Unida parties, either because it threatens an imaginary "people's" wing of the Democratic Party, or a labor party that doesn't yet exist, or working-class "unity." All have opposed focusing on the mobilization of masses in street actions for the immediate withdrawal of U. S.

forces from Vietnam. They condemn support for these as "Trotskyist."

All the class collaborationists and reformists will recoil from the future spontaneous, audacious, and uncontrolled mobilizations of the working class because they will be frightened by their lack of ability to tightly dominate that movement. But far from abstaining they will do everything they can to keep the workers within reformist channels.

The sectarians (those who have not become the crassest opportunists) will scold the workers, recoiling from the new forms, language, and initiatives of the political radicalization of the working class just as they have done with regard to the current movements.

In the character of their political response and line in the face of the rise of Black nationalism, independent Chicano struggles, the student movement, the women's liberation movement, and the antiwar movement, we have been provided with a preview of how our opponents will react to the radicalization of the working class.

## 2. A dogmatic view of how the workers will radicalize

All of our opponents share in common what might be labeled a dogmatic view of how the working class will become radicalized and how the struggle for the transformation of the union movement will unfold. This dogmatism combines two errors—(1) drawing the wrong lessons from the previous radicalization of the 1930s, and (2) generalizing the concrete forms, tactical steps, and dynamic of this previous radicalization and projecting these generalizations onto the present one.

They do not understand that both the successes (the consolidation of mighty industrial unions) and limitations (the CIO's failure to form an independent party of labor, and the deep incrustation, over decades, of a conservative, privileged bureaucracy on the unions) of the previous radicalization determined that new forms and new tactics would be necessary in the next radicalization.

Our opponents tend to believe that if the unions have not been radicalized, or if the radicalization is not yet reflected in consciously radical union struggles, then there is no real radicalization. This view leaves out of account the fact that the radicalization in the 1930s did not begin with the existing union movement, but outside of it. It did not begin with the radicalization of the industrial workers, but with the intellectuals, the students, the veterans, the unemployed, and the farmers. When the industrial workers joined the struggle the radicalization gathered power, and it did so through a split in the AFL and the development of a new form on a mass scale, the industrial unionism of the CIO.

Neither the reformists nor the sectarians can grasp that today's radicalization is already the biggest, deepest, and broadest in American history—and that it

points toward the radicalization of the only social force that can wrest power from the hands of the rulers, a decisive sector of the working class. Neither can they grasp the optimistic conclusions concerning the American revolution that flow from this fact.

Our opponents view the radicalization of the workers in terms of the 1930s and as an extension, or repetition, of the 1930s—as they understand that period. Thus the Communist Party's strategy—and hope—is to transform the union movement by a re-run of their heyday of an alliance with a "progressive" sector of the union bureaucracy, with themselves as leaders of "progressive" unions, carrying out a "progressive" line of support to "progressive" Democratic Party politicians. The Workers League sect offers as the answer to all questions the immediate construction of a labor party whose program will be counterposed to the demands of the Blacks, women, students, and Chicanos.

In its rise the CIO led the struggles of many oppressed social layers as part of its drive to organize the unorganized workers in the mass-production industries.

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**"The sectarians . . . will scold the workers, recoiling from the new forms . . . and initiatives of the working class just as they have done with regard to the current movements."**

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This ascending industrial-union movement was a vast social movement with the potential of transforming itself into an independent working-class political instrument that could draw all the oppressed layers into political struggle with it, for the first time breaking the grip of capitalist politics on the masses in the U. S.

The failure of the CIO movement to break through onto the political plane greatly facilitated the incrustation of the union movement in the succeeding period of war, prosperity, and witch-hunt with a conservative, class-collaborationist, self-seeking, privileged bureaucratic layer. This bureaucracy steadily narrowed down the scope of the union movement, and politically subordinated it to the Democratic Party. This union bureaucracy became the biggest obstacle to a new radicalization, any break with class-collaborationist political quiescence, any forms of struggle that would threaten class peace or escape their control.

As the *Transitional Program* points out, when masses of workers radicalize, in addition to struggling to transform the unions, they will have to construct and utilize organizational forms like strike or factory committees, councils, or political organizations that are distinct and separate from the official union organizations.

The important question at this stage is not predicting what forms the workers will create in their future struggles; or how many and which unions can be transformed into revolutionary instruments. The key thing to understand is that building the independent move-

ments that have emerged in the new radicalization, and deepening their struggles, is part of the process of the radicalization of the working class and the preparation of its fight for political independence; and that the struggle to transform the unions includes fighting within the unions for support to the central demands of the independent struggles rising in the current radicalization.

**O**ur program for the union movement flows from the concrete situation facing the working class, both the unionized and unorganized sectors, and the forces in rebellion outside the union movement that are allies of the working class.

The demands we raise flow from two historical factors: (1) the failure of the union movement to go beyond the economic organization of the workers to political organization, and the existence of a privileged bureaucratic layer whose interests are alien to those of its members and all the oppressed; and (2) the incapacity of American imperialism to escape basic international contradictions that will impel it, at some stage, to mount a heavy attack on the living standard of the workers and to attempt to reduce the mighty power of the unions.

The following are the outlines of the program we propose:

1. In the face of unemployment, inflation, and the threat of imposition of a government wage-control scheme, our program calls for a sliding scale of wages and hours; full compensation for every jobless worker, including youth unable to find jobs; preferential hiring, upgrading, and training of workers of oppressed nationalities and women workers; and full equal rights for oppressed nationalities and women in the union and on the job.

2. To counter the ruling class's use of the labor bureaucracy to limit and control the unions, more thoroughly integrate them into the capitalist state, and keep the decision-making power out of the hands of the rank and file, our program calls for rank-and-file control over all union affairs; complete union independence from all government controls; and defense of the unconditional right to strike.

3. In face of the ruling-class monopoly of politics through the two capitalist parties, we explain the need for an independent labor party based upon the unions.

4. In view of the need to transform the unions into instruments of struggle around the issues that face the working masses and other oppressed layers as a whole, and to unite in struggle all these allies decisive to the future struggle to defeat the capitalist state, our program calls for full support to the struggles of the oppressed nationalities for self-determination; full support to the struggles of women for their complete liberation; the immediate withdrawal of all U. S. troops from Vietnam.

The above is an outline of the initial program around

which we strive to educate left-wing forces in the unions. Stress on one or another aspect of this program is determined by the concrete situation. There are no tactical prescriptions generally valid for all unions. Because of the continued power and grip of the bureaucracy, we still have to use flanking tactics in the unions, which makes the immediate target of our demands the class enemy, and which avoid the premature precipitation of power struggles in the unions. Our basic task remains one of publicizing and explaining this program.

The crisis of union leadership is part of the crisis of leadership of the working class that characterizes our epoch. Our program for the union movement is a class-struggle program for the formation of a revolutionary leadership in the unions. The outcome of this struggle is crucial; ultimately it will determine the fate of the unions.

Our program is a program of struggle; it is not a listing of promissory notes. We do not predict or promise beforehand how many of the unions will be transformed into instruments of revolutionary struggle, whether a labor party will be formed or what its initial character may be, what other forms of mass organization the workers will create in relationship to other mass organs of struggle outside the union movement as the radicalization deepens. Our union program is part of our general transitional program and is linked organically to the decisive task of building a mass revolutionary-socialist party.

### 3. Construction of a mass revolutionary party is decisive

In the final analysis, the decisive question is the construction of a mass Trotskyist party. We proceed from the recognition that the SWP is not yet that mass party. We are a small but growing nucleus of cadres formed around the revolutionary-socialist program necessary to build such a party. Thus recruiting, training, and assimilating such cadres are the indispensable preconditions for building a mass workers' party. This has been the central task since the formation of the American Trotskyist movement and there are no general rules on the ways and means to be used to accomplish it. These depend upon the objective stage of the class struggle, the forces in motion, the degree of radicalization or conservatism, and the size and experience of our own forces. Many different tactics have been used in the history of our movement: entries, splits, fusions, regroupments, and colonizations of cadres in promising political situations in the various sectors of the mass movement.

Today our immediate goal is the recruitment of more and more of the young militants radicalized in the current political struggles, and the transformation of these recruits through education and experience into Trotskyist cadres.

All our opponents to one degree or another act as if they already were mass parties whose central prob-

lem is the deployment of their forces. Thus the Communist Party has launched a daily newspaper, with a circulation below that of *The Militant*, as if their size and ability to directly influence all areas of the class struggle required a daily paper. Progressive Labor has for several years "colonized" its members into various unions, under the illusion that they are going both to transform themselves into a mass proletarian organization by this and directly influence the course of the unions' development. The Workers League sect, which carries lack of appreciation of reality to the extreme, has formed committees of a few of its members previously "colonized" in the unions to "form a Labor Party now."

A corollary to the pretension of all these propaganda groups that they are affecting social struggles like mass parties, is their sectarian and factional refusal to recognize that united-front-type formations are absolutely necessary to mobilize masses of people and that this cannot be done today by any single socialist organization alone. Thus we are treated to the spectacle of the Workers League calling for a *mass general strike* to stop the war, the ultralefts calling for *mass trashing* to stop the war, the CP calling for *immediate* mass actions to stop the invasion of Laos, PL calling for a *mass* migration to Detroit in support of the GM strikers and to bring down the imperialist warmakers—all as a substitute for building the antiwar movement.

All revolutionary parties at different times selectively colonize members into promising political situations in industry. But the purpose of such colonization cannot be a shortcut in overcoming objective developments and artificially "proletarianizing" the organization by transforming colonized individuals into workers. The key to becoming a mass working-class party, in composition as well as in program, does not lie in such individual transformations. It lies in the recruitment of politicalized workers to a party that has proven itself in the political and social struggles that are occurring, that has geographically spread and grown to a size that it is seen as a revolutionary alternative to the parties of the rulers and the programs of the workers' misleaders.

All of our opponents are wrong about the way a socialist party obtains working-class cadres. Workers become politicalized by the struggles they engage in, and radicalized by the important social and political issues facing the country and at the center of the radicalization. As this occurs they begin to look for an alternative political organization to support. Our own recruitment of politicalized workers in the 1930s and 1940s confirms this.

How many radicalized and politicalized workers will be recruited in the future to a revolutionary program and organization or to a reformist or ultraleft dead end depends on one key factor: the prior development of cadres capable of participating as revolutionary socialists in the struggles as they arise.