

Bulletin

OF THE WORKERS PARTY

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INFORMATION RELEVANT TO THE NEGRO QUESTION

By Sid Roberts (Detroit)

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During the past period, there have been several developments in the UAW which should be of particular interest to party members - and should certainly be taken into consideration by delegates to the convention during the discussion on the Negro Resolution. The writer apologises for not having brought these facts to the attention of the party in time for the pre-convention discussion, but he had assumed that the national leadership was aware of these developments and would therefore communicate them (or, at least, comment upon them in the Negro Resolution) to the party membership. At this time, it is too late for them to be published in a pre-convention Bulletin, so I am doing the next best thing and putting it at the disposal of the convention delegates.

* * *

The resolution on the Negro problem, adopted by the 1946 convention, in one of its key sections, said, "The white workers must take the lead and the offensive in the struggle for the Negro's democratic rights. This does not mean that the Negroes sit back and wait on the white workers. Already there has been far too much indifference on the part of the Negroes in the matter of leading and pushing white workers into action on behalf of the Negroes." (p. 10, N.I. - Jan. 1945)

The UAW, which is probably more advanced than any other mass union in America in dealing with discrimination against Negroes provides an excellent laboratory for testing the degree to which the above quota is realized.

I

As is well known, the UAW has taken the lead (and has carried the overwhelming part of the financial and organizational load) in fighting against the "caucasian only" clause in the AEC constitution. What is also true (and perhaps not so well known) is that this fight was mainly conducted by the top Rouser leadership, and was not supported to any significant degree by the white bowlers in the union.

While there could be many criticisms of the way in which the leadership conducted the struggle - they did not carry on an intensive educational campaign to prepare the membership (above all, the bowlers) for the fight against AEC. They shied away from the main problem of cracking Jim Crow in the bowling alley; etc. - the fact is that the UAW top leadership did take a truly progressive step but that the local leadership and rank-and-file either abstained from the fight or sabotaged it by bowling in AEC sanctioned leagues under non-union sponsorship. (The writer had an article in LABOR ACTION on the subject in the Spring of 1948)

The UAW -sanctioned leagues in operation were few in number and bowled in Negro alleys with only token white participation (or none at all) This year many of the leagues are defunct - despite

Reuther's threat to form a rival national bowling organization to compete with ABC.

II

Discrimination against Negroes in Detroit restaurants is almost universally true in the city despite the existence of a state Civil Rights law which specifically forbids restaurant discrimination. Up to date, so far as this writer knows, the only attempts made to crack Jim Crow in this field have been by the Stalinists (independently and in several locals they control or have strength in); The SWP in Briggs local 212, some YPSL's and other liberal and radical student elements in Wayne University; by the CORE; and by ourselves in 2 large UAW locals. With the exception of Wayne University, none of these attempts attained a lasting success.

The Fair Practices Dept. of the UAW held a city-wide conference in September 1948. It was intended to be a window-dressing affair with speeches by outside liberals and UAW bureaucrats and a minimum participation by the delegates.

This writer introduced a resolution calling for a restaurant campaign and asking for International Exec. Board endorsement of such a campaign. It also called for the setting up of a rank-and-file committee to lead the campaign. Oliver, the Negro head of the F.P. department, and Matthews, the director of Detroit East Side Region of the UAW, opposed the motion. None of the other delegates took part in the discussion, but the motion carried overwhelmingly. However, to date, it has never been reported in the accounts of the conference. So far as I know, it has never been presented to the Executive Board for endorsement. And there it stands!

III

The only conclusion the writer wishes to draw from the above, are the fairly obvious:

1) the white workers have not shown significant desire to lead or even willingness to follow a struggle for Negro rights (particularly social).

2) the Negro workers have not shown great initiative in starting these struggles or in urging the union leadership or white rank-and-file workers to initiate them.

3) it has fallen to the political elements to make the first move and only then Negro workers have joined the fight - but hardly any white workers.

March 10, 1949

2335

AN AMENDMENT TO THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE,
"THE SITUATION IN THE UNITED STATES AND OUR NEXT TASKS".

By Scott Byer and Dave Corbin

* * *

THE MOTIVATION FOR THIS AMENDMENT

In reading and studying the resolution adopted by the PC on the American Question it was possible for us to glean from it many points that we agreed with, but for every point that we agreed with we found equally as many that could be agreed to by comrades who are in sharp disagreement with us. In addition, Part III of the PC resolution is written in a form that makes intelligent voting on it impossible and point by point amending of it more impossible.

Orientation Towards Propaganda Rather than Agitational Activity.

The PC document states that the party should engage in propaganda work and drop the illusions of the past. It does not adequately state what the illusions were, and more important, it does not propose a central task that is feasible and not based on illusions.

This illusion was: a grossly exaggerated estimate of the ability of the party to influence the struggles and development of the working class movement as a whole, particularly the trend towards the formation of a labor party. The PC document pays its respects to this illusion by perpetuating it in the proposal to make the chief activity of the party the acceleration of the development of a labor party. This proposal is not only wrong, but the very fact that it can appear in the resolution at all shows that the entire resolution is not wound up as it should be, to exclude precisely such a mistake.

This proposed central task negates whatever emphasis the document lays, on turning to propaganda work and doing away with campaigns in general; it would turn all the energy that we have put into campaigns in the past, into one big campaign for a labor party. With this perspective we cannot achieve the growth that we need or can realistically expect to obtain. We will continue to be essentially an agitational group doing work that will bring us no dividends in the next immediate and crucial period. We are not strong enough today to take advantage of the opportunities that will be afforded us if the labor party movement does obtain a large following. If we accept the PC's perspective, this will continue to be the case in the future. The growth that we need and that can be ours can only come as the result of our building our movement first. We must give up all our illusions about being able to move masses through carrying on extended campaigns, in this period; even though we may be capable of leading sections of the mass for limited periods of time in specific instances where they are already in motion and where we have sufficient forces on the scene. Our membership has learned well that extended campaigns of all types bring us nothing. It is no wonder that the PC document, whose main perspective indicates one big campaign, arouses no enthusiasm in our ranks.

Objective Situation

The document's isolated statement that "serious and significant

recruitment" in the next period must not be excluded, is meaningless in view of the failure of the resolution to show the basis for this growth. Worse, it speaks of the failure of the Trotskyist movement to build "A party", and links this to the objective situation in academic terms; terms which have relevance only if one defines "party" as a mass party. The document skirts the paramount question of the size and influence that the WP or the movement abroad could have achieved and can achieve with the application of a correct line and perspective. It stacks the cards for the reader to conclude that there isn't much that we can do about the growth of the socialist movement in the US and the WP prior to the formation of a labor party. It says that there is "no means of achieving any substantial change in the presently extremely weak state of American socialism" without the development of a third labor-based party. (emphasis ours. It is not jumping to conclusions to say that "no substantial change" in a movement which is "extremely weak" will leave it scarcely stronger than a bed-ridden invalid. And, that waiting any longer - sweating it out - for our one "means" of growth to blossom, will find us in a weaker state than we are today. We also believe that under essentially this same objective situation, continued for a period of time, "the socialist movement" via the WP can make important gains though short of growth to a mass party.

Demoralization

The PC document states that our present position in relation to the class struggle is primarily the result of the world objective situation, that we mademistakes but that they are of secondary importance. Their logic seems to be that, the poor condition of every other socialist movement proves this; that they couldn't all have been that wrong that all of them failed to achieve any substantial success. The result is that the document makes no real attempt to investigate our mistakes or those of the international socialist movements, and that anyone who takes this document seriously could not but conclude that the position the movement is in today is inevitable. And some might even conclude that the same holds true for the future.

The demoralization that exists in our ranks today is the result of the fact that our people do not feel that they can do anything to affect in any way, the objective situation; which is characterized by the low consciousness of the mass of American workers as compared to European workers, the continued though immediate successes of Stalinism and the complete breakdown of the 4th International, and the non-existence of any real mass "Third Force." Our party has never demanded a rosy picture of the objective situation in order to continue to fight, undemoralized. It is true that there is an added pressure of time since the invention and use of the atom bomb, but this is not the decisive factor in our demoralization. The fear of the atom bomb and its consequences affects the mass as well as the marxist vanguard and makes possible more receptivity to the idea of a basic change in society. The decisive, principal factor in our demoralization is that we have failed to grow. And that our people feel that all their work in industry during the war and possibly after, all the tiring mass distributions, campaigns, endless meetings was to no avail and is down the drain. (This has resulted in the feeling that even modest growth in the future, will also be to no avail). This becomes even more exaggerated with the recognition that our line is superior to that of all the other socialist sects and parties in the country.

We have not grown because for too long we have had an incorrect orientation. We directed our politics in an agitational way to the mass of the working class and in so doing failed to work among and recruit the advanced, political and leftward moving people who were capable of and are capable of joining a party like our own. The SWP failed also and for the same reasons we did, plus added self made obstacles due to their line and opportunism. The CP failed mainly because it exposed itself by its sell-out tactics during the war, and by its defense of totalitarian Russia. The SP and the SLP failed not only because of their line, but also because they have not the life to bring their incorrect line to advanced workers.

We are sure that any real investigation of the movement in Europe will show that they failed to grow or to even hold their own because of their politics. This is true in the case of the @CI whose line made it impossible for the French workers to make any real differentiation between them and the CP. Today our people do not have the facts and figures on the potential "Third Force" movements in Europe. They must be obtained so that the entire party can participate in the investigation and discussion of these movements. This would have a therapeutic value in our party today.

Reeducation of the Party

All talk about the reeducation of the party is useless in and of itself, for today there is no stimulus among our people to accomplish this. It can only come as the result of our party directing its activity in the manner we have outlined here. Concentration on work among advanced and political people that demands knock-down drag-out discussions on socialism will provide this stimulus, which the agitation for the transitional program among average people could never do.

The Party's Press

LABOR ACTION has already made some progress in becoming a propaganda press, but this progress will be hardly more than negligible if the solution that LA presents at the end of almost every article is, "Build a Labor Party Now". The socialist point of view must be given on the problems of the day so that the paper becomes a recruiter and socialist educator and shows its readers the need for more than building "IT", and "now".

The latest pamphlet published by our party is not suited for propaganda work. It does not give the case for revolutionary marxism or the case for the socialist position on the labor party adequately. While the style of writing is excellent, it spends its bulk giving the reader the idea that a labor party can solve the problems of society, and the remainder of its pages in telling him that it may take a little more. This pamphlet is directed to the average worker. To function as a propaganda group we must have pamphlets that are directed at the advanced worker.

Youth Work

The section in our amendment on this filed of work must not be interpreted to mean that we are for making the party a "youth party" or adding the ranks of the SYL to fill our own. We must help them take every opportunity for growth because the youth are today one of the most fruitful fields for recruitment to socialism. Their growth

and strength today will pay us dividends tomorrow and the closest relationship should be built between our ranks and theirs. This will facilitate the entrance of large numbers of these energetic young people in to our group at a later date when they have finished their schooling and facilitate their entrance into the labor movement as a whole, as active party crusaders. It may also be through the party members that the SYL will be supplied with the contacts that will give them the basis for off-campus youth groups, in industry, etc.

Note: A more complete discussion of our point of view is to be found in the Convention Bulletin No 6 under the title "A Realistic Propaganda Approach", by Dave Corbin. And in Convention Bulletin No. 10 under the title, "The Situation in the US and our Next Tasks: a Critique and Some Suggestions" by R. Magnus, Scott Byer and M. Rand. (R. Magnus and M. Rand could not be reached at this late date to give this document the adequate consideration needed before signing.)

THE AMENDMENT

Part II: Delete the first sentence in Section (16) which reads as follows: "The goal of a labor party is, now more than ever, the central tasks of American Socialists today."

Part II: Delete the last sentence in Section (17) which reads as follows: "Now more than ever we regard its (the labor party's) acceleration as the activity to which all other is subordinated and to which all other must lead." (Insert ours, SB and DC)

Part II, add the following sections to this part.

(18) The objective situation that we face in America today has many promising points for us to exploit. The dissatisfaction with the inability of the system to increase the standard of living grows each day and is more profound because of the peoples knowledge of what the production machine could do for war. This dissatisfaction is sharper among the veterans who made the greatest sacrifice during the war and who were given the fairest promises about the rosy life that would be theirs after the war.

The attitude of the American people toward the state has changed during the war and since. Millions have become conscious that the state should be responsible to its citizens and not vice versa. This consciousness has become apparent to the ruling class and is recognized by Truman's plan for a "Welfare State." The people are also alarmed about the attacks that are being made against the trade unions and civil liberties in general. Talk about the "American form of democracy" no longer has the propaganda value for the ruling class that it once had. The fact that Congress openly aids "management" one day, soft pedals its attacks on labor the next day, and cracks down on them again the day after, does not enhance the two party system or parliamentarism.

The existence of the peace time draft and the glib talk of an Atomic War III is alarming to more than just the youth, who constitute the most militant anti-war section of American society, and among whom is to be found the quickest response to radical ideas in America today.

The above are, in the main, the conditions that make it possible for the Wallace movement to count its support in the millions in the early weeks of the election campaign; that created wide response to Reuther's promise to build a third party; that has created the base for the mass formation of a labor party; and that has forced hundreds of thousands of workers into the field of action politics and is keeping hundreds of them there even though the elections are over. It must be concluded from this evidence of a leftward turn in the mass consciousness of the working and middle classes and youth, that there exists in the advanced guard of these millions, people whose consciousness has developed to a point where they are ready and capable of joining a party that offers a more radical solution than does the Wallace or Reuther movement, a socialist party or group.

(19) The line that our party has developed in its nine years of existence outfits us better than any other of the so-called radical parties for the task of attracting and recruiting this advanced element, including many of those who have already been attracted to other groups and parties.

Part III: Delete this entire part and substitute the following :

Part III.

Whereas, there exists today significant political ferment among the working and middle classes to force them to the left and to provide sufficient base for a labor party, and,

Whereas, revolutionary socialist politics is today incapable of attracting masses of working and middle class people, and,

Whereas, while the present limited growth of the movement for a labor party affords us additional opportunities; the large scale development of this movement in the immediate foreseeable future is far from assured, and,

Whereas, we can neither lead in the formation of a labor party, nor achieve significant growth by offering our party as the organization to join in order to struggle most effectively for a labor party, and,

Whereas, the same conditions that created the mass base for a working class reformist movement have also created numbers of political and leftward moving people in the advanced guard of this mass who are ready to go beyond reformist politics and who can be convinced of the necessity of socialism and of joining a revolutionary socialist organization in order to struggle effectively for a new society, and,

Whereas, these people cannot be brought into our party primarily on the basis of our labor party propaganda, or by mass agitational campaigns, and,

Whereas, no other party or organization has a firm hold on these people, and,

Whereas this situation is generally favorable for the steady growth of a revolutionary organization, and,

Whereas, the recruitment of numbers of political and leftward moving people would make possible the expansion and strengthening of our party's cadre's, and,

Whereas, there exists in our party today a demoralization which is the result of the failure of sections of our memberships inability to see that they can do anything, large or small, to affect the objective situation both nationally and internationally, and,

Whereas, this is due primarily to our failure to achieve any growth, large or small, in the last nine years, and,

Whereas, the biggest blow that can be dealt to the demoralization in our ranks is the entrance into our party of numbers of advanced workers and people, and,

Whereas, this must also be accomplished before any effective entrance into mass politics can be made by our party;

Therefore be it resolved that the tasks that must be accomplished by our party in the next period, be the following:

(1) The recruitment of numbers of these advanced workers and leftward moving and political people on the basis of propaganda for our complete set of socialist ideas, and that this be considered, "the activity to which all other is subordinated and to which all other must lead."

(2) That the party recognize that its present size, strength, in relation to the objective situation, suit it for the role of a propaganda group. That we are neither, "a group half way between the propaganda and agitational stage", a campaign party, small mass party, educational society, discussion group; nor, a propaganda group whose basic task is to carry on a campaign-propagandistic or agitational- for a labor party.

(3) That our propaganda must be geared to the task of recruiting and working among advanced elements in the following ways:

(i) It must be on a high political level, taking into account the primary goal of indoctrination in the rounded ideas of the WP.

(ii) It must, in order to be effective, be in context of what is actually happening in the world today, both the overall picture and the smallest of relevant events, using these to prove the fundamental ideas of the party.

(iii) It must be directed to specific groups of people who we can reach again and again, so that they can follow the party point of view for a period of time.

(iv) It must also take into account the specific political coloration of the individuals, groups, or political tendencies concerned, and what separates them from the ideas of the WP. It must also deal with these differences, by both suitable positive argumentation and polemical material directed towards, rather than at them.

(4) That in order to best meet these advanced people the party members should enter into industrial work so that they can have access to the trade unions, the movement to build a political machine in labor(s) ranks, and the movement to form a labor party; should take

advantage of every favorable opportunity for work among the members and sympathizers of various opponent socialist organizations, the CP, and the Wallace movement, the Independent left, Negro organizations, AVC, Unionist and ACTU movements, and in some cases, discussion groups and forums which "through the discussion of political problems are seeking solutions to the basic problems of society."

(5) That youth work be considered a field of activity for party members where no youth forces are available to start this work; and where our assistance would be valuable in aiding the youth to take advantage of favorable opportunities for growth and /or aiding their educational program.

(6) That the party continue to seek to industrialize the majority of its members and that new concentrations in industry be planned and coordinated on a national as well as local basis, wherever possible.

(7) The party recognize that industrialization, though imperative, may be slow and difficult and that recruitment as the result of this work may be slow; That the ripest material for us today can often be contacted more easily and directly through non trade union channels and that in many cases these people are workers and unionists who if recruited can expand our industrial concentrations; that this constitutes a fruitful field for our members who cannot enter industry, and that working in industry does not necessarily exclude work among politicalized people outside the factories.

(8) That we initiate or participate in agitational campaigns, election campaigns, and demonstrations only for limited periods of time, and only when: (a) It will strengthen our position as a propaganda group. (b) We have the forces to create a division of labor that will make it possible to function without exhausting our membership.

(9) That in the mass organizations our members shall not become unduly involved in the time consuming functioning of these organizations every-day life, but shall seek first to do direct party work, using every opportunity to work openly as members of the WP.

(10) That we enter, build and strengthen the labor party movements where they exist today, for the purpose of:

(a) Doing direct political work, spreading our revolutionary socialist ideas and recruiting from its ranks.

(b) Getting in on the ground floor of this movement with the perspective of becoming known as part of its native left wing and establishing a sound position for future work, so that we will not be looked upon by the rank and file as an alien group, or "johnny come latelys", in the future.

(11) We must continue to indicate to our entire audience that we have every intention and desire of becoming a party, and that we counterpose our politics to that of every other political tendency.

(12) That our party should seek to become increasingly known as the Anti-War Party.

(13) That the party propaganda, especially in LABOR ACTION, make as its central message to its audience the need for a revolutionary socialist party, rather than a labor party.

(14) That the party link its demand for a labor party closely to an anti-capitalist, anti-reformist, conception and program, emphasizing demands for a workers government and workers control of production.

(15) The party should avoid any immediate mechanical, organizational solution to the problems of discipline and morale.

(16) That the party reject the concept of the "cadre" adopted by the last convention and build its cadres in the traditional Leninist manner, of the most responsible, political, active and experienced comrades in the movement, even though there may be disagreement with the party line among them.

(17) That our membership systemically reeducate itself in the fundamental programmatic positions of the movement as related to the political situation in the world today. That it fit itself for recruitment and work among the most politically advanced section of the population, and so that it can defend itself against all comers. That where possible, party members become expert in some field linked to their activity so that they can prepare articles, pamphlets and educational material for the rest of the party on these subjects.

(18) That the party better equip itself for the recruiting of and work among advanced workers, political and leftward moving people by publishing pamphlets designed for this work, rather than agitational material on a lower political level.

SOCIALIST POLICE IN INDONESIA

By Robert Magnus (San Francisco)

- - -

World War II has culminated in a tremendous series of struggles for independence, for national and social freedom, throughout the colonial world. This movement has taken different forms and has had varying political and social content depending on the specific conditions under which it has developed. In India, Burma and Ceylon independence has been attained under the leadership of the colonial bourgeoisie while in Viet Nam, Indonesia, and the Philippines huge struggles and colonial wars have resulted in establishing a precarious status quo.

The world context has produced a situation where the breakup of the old pattern of French and English imperialism in Asia and the Newar East proceeds apace with the development of the "new imperialism" of the United States and Stalinist Russia in Europe. Thus as opposed to post-World War I, we see the colonial peoples, and at times even the colonial bourgeoisie, taking the lead in the world wide struggle against imperialism. This, unfortunately, has had a seductive effect on certain socialists who identify anti-imperialism with socialism, and thereby sublimate their frustrations about the apparent impotence of the European working class by overemphasizing the significance and overlooking the class content of "Asia in Revolt."

Let us recapitulate, in some detail, the history of the class and national struggles of Indonesia since World War II. In my letter in LABOR ACTION, February 7, 1949, I characterized these struggles as a classical example of the capitulatory character of the colonial bourgeoisie in its struggle for national independence. I see no reason to amend this characterization despite the clumsy polemic of Comrade Jack Brad in the February 14, 1949, issue of LABOR ACTION. I now discover, furthermore, that what I thought was a small mistake in emphasis is turning into a complete betrayal of the workers and peasants of Indonesia. But let the reader judge for himself.

History of the Indonesian Nationalist Struggle since 1945.

The Japanese control of Indonesia during World War II resulted in a greater degree of recognition and control by the bourgeois nationalist movement which used its influence to wrest some concessions from the Japanese military overlords. V-J Day left a political vacuum in Indonesia which was quickly filled by the proclamation of the formation of the Indonesian Republic in August 1945. The Indonesian leaders swiftly drew up a Constitution, formed a government, maintained order, partially demilitarized the Japanese, and began to pass laws and decrees, among which were the expropriation of foreign holdings, the establishment of an educational system, and a liberal labor code.

Several weeks later the British troops began to arrive to take over control of this area in order to "disarm and repatriate the

Japanese military forces." Their landing was unopposed by the Republican sections of the irregular guerrilla forces who wisely saw a return of colonialism in this apparently innocent, purely "military" move. The British stayed for six months but refused to recognize the Republic except as a de-facto power with whom they unofficially negotiated.

Beginning in March 1946 the British made way for the Dutch who began to move into their former power positions. The Republican leadership balked at this, but when Tanmalaka led a huge agrarian movement against the return of the Dutch, the Republican leadership bloodily suppressed these "extremists," jailed Tanmalaka, and began a fundamental reorganization of the army which up to that time had consisted of independent irregulars. The return of the Dutch produced a fundamental split in the nationalist movement. The Republican leaders represented the interests of the land-owners, the intellectuals, and the middle bourgeoisie, while Tanmalaka fought for and was supported by the workers and peasants. The government smashed Tanmalaka and was thereby driven into a more conciliatory position toward the Dutch; it negotiated helplessly all throughout 1946 while the Dutch cynically moved in more and more troops.

The Lingajatti Agreement: The First Betrayal.

Having smashed all popular resistance the government was forced finally in March 1947 to recognize the superior strength of the Dutch military power by signing the humiliating Lingajatti agreement. This yellow-dog agreement restored all foreign holdings to the previous owners and provided for the inclusion of Indonesia within the straitjacket of the Dutch Colonial Union. This agreement was broken by both sides and settled nothing, but it indicated to the Dutch bandits the attitude of the "responsible" nationalist leadership.

The Dutch Attack: The Fruits of Compromise.

Finally, in July 1947, four months after the signing of the Lingajatti agreement, the Dutch butchers launched their first bloody "police action." A full scale military battle went on for six months. But it was only a question of time since the Republican leadership had assured defeat in advance by their previous policies. But once again the government placed its faith in compromise.

The Renville Truce: Betrayal Enthroned.

The Renville Truce which was signed in January 1948 was the most patent admission of the complete bankruptcy of the policies of the Republican government. They were forced to give away everything they had previously won and were not even granted de facto recognition. During all this time -- almost two years -- Tanmalaka was rotting in a Republican prison. An uneasy truce existed during the remainder of the year, broken now and again by clashes between the two armies. The Russian agent, Muso, arrived from Moscow around August 1948, reorganized the C.P. which had heretofore supported the government completely, and began to take advantage of the popular opposition toward the government's policies. The Stalinists

launched an adventurous coup d'etat in September 1948 which was quickly suppressed by the Republican forces with the assistance of Tanmalaka who had been released from jail for this express purpose. The Stalinists were decimated but the Dutch used this revolt as a pretext to move in and administer the final coup de grace in December 1948. The Republic has now been driven into the hills, its leaders arrested, its forces shattered. Any nonsense about, "How the Republic Fights On," must take this tremendous defeat as its starting point.

Without any trappings, this is a picture of the character of the struggle of the colonial bourgeoisie -- the Republican government of Indonesia. Can it honestly be said that this government has not hindered the struggle for national independence? Can anyone ask the masses of Indonesia to put any faith in the ability of this government?

"As socialists we prefer the victory of the most conservative Republic over the most paternalistic Dutch regime." Despite the lip service to social revolution, its program and tactics, this statement and this statement alone, represents Brad's orientation. We posit a different orientation: "As socialists we prefer national independence under the leadership of the working class and peasants." In any case, the degree to which national independence is the result of the independent and conscious struggle of the masses will measure the strength and ability of the masses to emancipate themselves from their new oppressors -- the colonial bourgeoisie.

Brad is incorrect when he attempts to make the "inevitability" of the future betrayal of the bourgeoisie the crux of our differences for it is actually a strategical and tactical question in the general fight for workers' power. The real difference revolves around the political and ideological attitude toward this government today and the arena in which this attitude should be developed. To put it in a nutshell, Brad is for unconditional support to the Republican leadership, and I am for unconditional support to Tanmalaka. Proof?

Brad first attempts to whitewash the Republican government by calling it democratic when as a matter of fact there never was an election in Republican territory during its entire two years of tenure, and furthermore, the President under the Constitution is a dictator who appoints the Indonesian National Council. We learn further in the February 21 LABOR ACTION, that "the only apparent upper stratum is an intellectual one..." although "this statement exaggerates(?) the absence of economic differences," and that "whatever disagreeable (!!) compromises are entered into on the way, there will be no stopping short of the goal (national independence)." Thus a prediction of the possibility of a development in the future (national independence under the Republican leadership) is turned into slavish and servile praise of these future oppressors and the subordination of the masses to their policies in the present. More proof?

In this same article, "How Indonesian Republic Fights On," the entire tone of which is objectionable, we learn that "apparently (?) the government had prepared for the Dutch attack ever since the Renville truce and made its plans accordingly." This statement, as

Brad knows full well, is patent nonsense. It is an attempt to justify, to cover up, the Renville "truce" as a tricky maneuver of the Republican government to gain time, when it was actually a sell-out, a betrayal of the struggle for independence. The government, unable to rely on the mass support of the people, was forced to compromise with the Dutch in order to hold on to its "non-existent" class privileges. It never had any other policy but compromise; it has no other today. Every action taken by these spineless "military experts" was devoted to the passionate defense of the property of the landowners and the foreign holdings of the imperialists. Brad is forced to admit this but promptly forgets it. The Republican leadership stands for "a return to the boundaries and conditions of the Lingajatti agreement (is this another "disagreeable" compromise?), "industry is to be developed by the State" (who's state?), and the "government does not propose to expropriate Dutch or other foreign holdings immediately" (does this mean that Brad thinks they will someday?). And finally, "the present leadership proposes to continue the moderate policy of compromise which has already failed twice."

Nevertheless, "the main task is not to warn against future treason or to recall past defections, but to give revolutionary content to the present." How? By "joining freely with all other elements particularly with the social democrats. And without conditions." (my emphasis -- R.M.) But it is impossible "to give revolutionary content to the present" except by drawing the lessons from the past and by opposing the social democrats politically and ideologically. The social democrats, as a matter of fact, are the most capitulatory section of the Republican government. Wasn't it Sjahir (socialist leader) who negotiated the Lingajatti and Renville agreements? Even the conservative Moslems bitterly attacked him for "going too far." Can Brad stand up in front of the Indonesian masses and justify and hide this action, as he would be compelled to do if he joined "loyally" with these compromisers "without conditions?"

"We should not at this time seek to establish an alternative arena of struggle." This means, in practice, complete subordination to the Republican officers, blurring class differences, and insuring in advance the complete betrayal of the workers and peasants. Here we have the "bloc of four classes" which led to the Shanghai massacre. Brad would become the "socialistic" cover for the bourgeoisie and would thereby help pave the way for a future massacre.

Brad's incessant repetition of the formula of "utmost loyalty to the Republic" and carrying on the struggle "within the framework of Republican democracy" means, in practice, the betrayal of the Republic and its fight for independence, by confining the struggle within the bounds of a narrow and limited bourgeois democracy. How is it possible to have a "program of social revolution" while not struggling against the native bourgeoisie, dividing the land, and establishing an alternative arena of power. As a matter of fact, the "alternative arena of power" which Brad so vehemently opposes, now exists in fact in the person of Tanmalaka and his forces. Does Brad believe that Tanmalaka has been incorrect in maintaining intransigent political opposition to the Republican leadership? Will Brad demand that Tanmalaka subordinate himself to the betrayers of

Indonesian independence -- Soekarno, Soederman, and Hatta, his former jailke pers?

Let the Dutch Information Service testify to the effectiveness of Tanmalaka. A December 25, United Press Dispatch from Batavia reports that:

They (the Dutch) said a cease fire order would leave a small area between Madium and Keriri in East Java as a Republic but under the leadership of Trotskyite Communists. The Communist leader, the Dutch quarters said, is Tanmalaka, who earlier this week said over radio Kediri that he would lead the Indonesian people to freedom and lead the war against the Dutch. (italics mine -- R.M.)

To sum up, my position is as follows: 1) defense of the Republic against Dutch imperialism, 2) material aid to all Indonesian armies, (3) uncompromising political opposition to the Republican government, 4) unconditional support to Tanmalaka and his program.

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YOUTH RESOLUTION

Since the last Active Workers Conference of the Workers Party the activity of the Socialist Youth League has netted the formation and consolidation of four new units. In this period the SYL has more than doubled its size and has successfully organized a number of discussion groups and clubs on campuses. Though these gains have been real, their significance should not be exaggerated. Half of their value lies in the proof that student work can be a very fruitful field for general socialist activity and, more specifically, for recruitment to the SYL. Organizational inefficiency and inexperience prevented the SYL in this period from fully benefitting from its activities on campus.

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There has been no significant change in the overall economic status of American youth in the past period. Consistent with its economic stabilization the apathy and indifference of youth and students towards political organizations, particularly towards radical and pseudo-radical movements remains substantially the same. The only indication of a political renaissance among youth, especially those on campus, was the Wallace movement. The nature of this movement, however - its poor leadership and its superficiality - combined with the small Wallace vote and the decline of the Wallace Party has led to the virtual disintegration of the Youth for Wallace movement. Aside from this brief political flurry on campus, the political relationship of forces has not changed.

This lack of politicalization has its roots in the relative economic stability of the United States. Though unemployment has increased somewhat, students do not as yet feel the insecurity of a depression era when prospects were bleak; nor do young workers who are still in a far better economic position than the young workers of ten years ago feel the economic compulsion to look for a way out that will make them receptive to the ideas of socialism. Nor has the threat of war and the reality of conscription evoked any tangible rebelliousness among the youth. The inevitability of the war appears to be accepted with passive resignation and conscription has affected only a few thousands.

This should not be interpreted as meaning that objective conditions prohibit a much greater extension of our activities, size and influence. However, it is apparent that operating in this atmosphere the Socialist Youth League can not think in terms of building a mass youth movement either on campus or among young workers in the coming period.

There are many thousands of young people, found mainly on campus, who will listen to us with interest and eventually with sympathy, all of whom are potential members of our movement. The fact that almost all these potential youth members are found on campus dictates the continuation of our student orientation.

Our movement, because of its small size, will find it more difficult to integrate young workers than students. To integrate a worker in any radical political organization it is necessary to offer something meaningful in terms of union activity and direction. On the

other hand, students, because they are more concerned with ideas, can be more easily attracted and absorbed into the life of our movement today on the basis of the validity of our socialist ideas. Thus, for the next period, our work more than ever must be directed towards the students. It must never be forgotten that this campus approach is only a means towards an end; that it is intended to build a youth movement of sufficient numbers and competence to act as a cadre for a working class socialist youth movement.

Agitation and Propaganda

The Socialist Youth League remains primarily a propaganda group. But it has several important advantages over the party in its ability to conduct popular agitational activity. The reason for this lies basically in the greater receptivity of those in our chosen arena of student work as compared with the tremendous obstacles confronting a small revolutionary party which attempts to take the lead in the working class movement. For example, three or four comrades on campus can organize a student club which is in turn capable of carrying out at least a minimum of agitational activities: Petitioning, organizing a committee for student rights, sponsoring agitational meetings, etc. It is obvious that three or four comrades working in a plant cannot carry out comparable objectives. Therefore, the proposal of the party Political Committee to recognize the party as a propaganda organization does not have the same meaning for the SYL.

Tasks for the SYL

1. The main objective for the SYL in this period is the building up and consolidation of its membership and to continue training cadres for the party. This means that a higher priority is to be given to such routine activities as contacting than has heretofore been the case in most of our units and fractions. In general, this also means that if a youth unit or fraction finds it physically impossible to carry on activity designed to recruit directly into the SYL and more general socialist work on campus, the former objective is to be given first consideration. Recruitment to the SYL in the past period has been all too small proportionate to the amount of time and energy spent in building clubs and discussion groups on campus. Emphasis must be given to inviting students to SYL meetings, to distributing party literature on campus and to posing to students more boldly the question of joining the SYL.

2. Wherever there is a comrade on campus he should think in terms of building a discussion group or club. Experience has proven that an individual, isolated comrade can accomplish this with a measure of success. Where comrades have managed to organize off-campus discussion groups they should have as their perspective the transformation of such groups into recognized chartered clubs, thus gaining all the facilities at the disposal of a school organization.

3. We propose to the party that it urge all its members on campus to cooperate actively with the SYL center and wherever possible to function as a representative of the SYL. In line with this the perspective of SYL on campus is to recruit students to the SYL in preference to the party. Wherever two or three party comrades are on a campus, the SYL should maintain contact with them and the party branch to which they belong, with the idea of initiating a local unit

of the SYL. Even where such a unit would begin with a nucleus of party members only, experience has shown that such a core of party comrades organized as an SYL unit can recruit students with a greater ease than a party branch.

4. Wherever possible, sections of the SYL should engage in off-campus work. We should not become so completely buried under school activities as to lose sight of the value of joining other political organizations, neighborhood clubs, etc. Also comrades should engage in whatever direct action is possible such as picketing, poster parades, etc.

5. An effort should be made to establish fraternal relations with the members of the Young People's Socialist League (youth section of the Socialist Party). The YPSL has within it a strong left-wing which finds itself at odds with the leadership of the Socialist Party. There is no valid political reason why the left-wing YPSL's should not join the SYL. We believe that they have more in common with the Workers Party than with the Socialist Party, particularly on the basic question of the Third Camp of Socialism. We should constantly impress left-wing comrades of the YPSL that our movement is a democratic one in which they can freely express whatever independent views they have. Proposals should be made to the YPSL for joint discussions and united front activities.

6. A publication is indispensable to the cohesion, education and growth of the SYL. Until we are able to publish a national SYL magazine, local units should publish their own bulletins and newsletters as has been done in several units already. Also, comrades working in campus clubs should make an effort to impress upon these organizations the value of their publishing campus magazines. This has been successfully accomplished in one section and is under way in a second.

As a substitute for a popular SYL magazine in the immediate period the National Bureau should see to it that a regular Educational Bulletin is published. This bulletin should contain articles on more basic theoretical questions with comrades encouraged to contribute articles of agreement or disagreement to it. Contributions need not be limited to members. Sympathizers and even political opponents should be invited to discuss and debate their views with us in the bulletin.

7. Although the establishment of a national socialist student federation has been delayed it is nonetheless necessary for various socialist clubs on campus to integrate their activity towards that end.

8. We must not lose sight of the importance high school work as a bridge between the predominantly student SYL of today and a projected workingclass Socialist Youth League. Some measure of contact with high school youth should be maintained through distributions of literature and announcements of meetings.

Political Tasks on Campus

1. The fundamental political role of the SYL on campus is to spread the ideas of revolutionary socialism. We must endeavor to make the student body aware of the imperialist nature of the struggle between the American and Russian blocs and to make the slogan for the Third Camp of Socialism popular understood and accepted.

2. The comrades should make every effort in the next period to organize meetings protesting the attack on academic freedom being waged by a number of college administrations, and in some cases even by civil authorities. The expulsion of teachers from the faculty on the grounds of membership in the Communist Party must be opposed as a frontal assault upon the democratic rights of all. Comrades should attempt to organize petitioning, rallies and committees to defend academic rights. As a general rule, our policy should be to fight on this issue as on all issues independently of the Stalinists. Where tactical considerations dictate the necessity of functioning on committees together with Stalinists, we must always make clear the differences between our fight for democratic rights and the hypocrisy of the Communist Party and its front organizations.

3. Our comrades should through their propaganda attempt to make the students labor-conscious and to explain to them the stake of all young people in the formation of an independent labor party.

Towards a First National Convention

Our goal is to call the first national convention of the Socialist Youth League by the time of the next national convention of the Workers Party. Within this period, existing units of the SYL must increase their membership and new units must be organized to warrant this step.

National Bureau
Socialist Youth League

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