

January 18, 1975

To the Leninist Trotskyist Faction Coordinators

Dear Comrades,

The bulk of the material included with this mailing is related to the SWP's campaign against the racist drive to prevent school desegregation in Boston. Enclosed are:

1. An article that appeared in the October 24, 1974, issue of Red Weekly, the paper of the British section, concerning the Boston situation.
2. A reply to this article by Gus Horowitz, printed in the December 12, 1974, issue of Red Weekly.
3. An article that appeared in the November 29, 1974, issue of Rouge, signed B. Carapace.
4. A reply to Carapace, written by Caroline Lund at the request of the SWP Political Bureau, and sent to the Rouge editors with a request that it be published.
5. An article by Charles Michaloux that appeared in the January 5, 1975, issue of Rouge (before the Lund article had arrived.) After reading the Michaloux article the SWP Political Bureau agreed with the Rouge editors that it would not be necessary to publish the Lund reply as well.
6. Two letters from comrades in the Belgian section, and in the LTF, raising some questions and objections to the demand that federal troops be used to protect Black students if necessary.
7. A reply to these letters from Mary-Alice.

In addition to these items, you will also find enclosed a copy of an introductory article that appeared in a recent (undated) issue of Correspondence Internationale, the international internal discussion bulletin published by the OCI in French. The introduction, and the rest of the material contained in that issue of Correspondence Internationale, deals with the differences within the Fourth International.

Comradely,

Ed Shaw

Trade unionists back Boston's racist mobsters

Black people's defence squads needed

White racism, always beneath the surface in American cities, erupted in Boston last week. Scores of white hoodlums set up vigilante squads to prevent the implementation of a court-ordered school desegregation. This involved black kids being taken to white schools in white areas in special buses.

The racists were determined to defend the special privileges enjoyed by whites. They went on the warpath. Blacks were attacked, a lynch mob was formed, and only policemen firing shots in the air prevented the lynchers from claiming the life of a black Haitian, Jean-Louis Andre Yvon.

All this is happening not in some Southern backwater, but in Boston, Massachusetts, the heart of liberal America. Small wonder then that the liberal heart-throb, Edward Kennedy, has failed to come out and support the blacks struggling for elementary civil and human rights.

KLAN

It was white Boston also which played host to the white thugs of the Ku Klux Klans several weeks ago. A Klan rally attracted thousands of racists. When Klan chief, David Duke, declared that: "The real issue isn't education, the real issue isn't a school here or a school there... the real issue is niggers... the crowd of bigots screamed its approval in no uncertain way. Duke referred to blacks as 'cannibals' and 'apes' saying 'we don't believe Negroes fit into modern society.'

The American Trotskyist weekly, *Militant*, reported that the trade union officials had either kept silent or supported the racists: "A contingent of iron and construction workers marched in the 4 October 'anti-busing' demonstration, and the officials of the Boston Teachers Union, the local affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers, has threatened a strike or work stoppage until 'order is restored' rather than coming out resolutely against the racist violence."

Many notables of both the Rep-

ublican and Democratic parties have, according to *Militant*, been providing the actual leadership for the racist mobilisations, while the liberals in both parties have been providing a 'respectable' cover for their colleagues.

In this situation many black community leaders and State representatives have called for federal troops to be sent in to deal with the racists and to implement the court order on desegregation. The attitude of President Ford was to attack the federal court decision which ordered busing to end segregation in Boston's schools. Ford understands the extreme social and growing economic tension which exists in the cities. He does not want to take on white racists even to implement a court order in the months preceding elections in a number of States.

DESPERATION

The desperation of the black people is understandable. Like oppressed minorities in other parts of the world their first appeal is to the authority of the capitalist State, and yet we know that while federal troops or marshals might cool the situation temporarily, in the medium term they would back up the white racist power structure, particularly in northern cities like Boston.

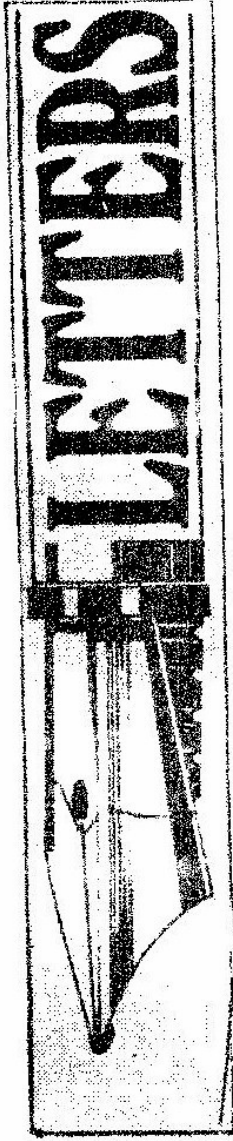
In some ways the situation is analogous to the initial response of the oppressed catholic minority in Derry and Belfast when threatened with the Orange pogroms in the Six Counties: they welcomed and warmly greeted the British troops. A few months later the relationship had turned sour. The defence of the embattled nationalist minority was to be taken up by the Provisional IRA.

It is precisely the lack of self-defence organisations based in the black communities that makes the federal troops appear an attractive proposition. The black vanguard organisations that developed out of the ghetto rebellions of '68 and '69 no longer exist. The Black Panther Party was destroyed by repression. The Amer-

ican rulers knew the potential appeal of such a group to the black masses.

In Boston today there must be thousands of blacks who must be secretly wishing that the Black Panthers or similar groups still existed. Because in the long run it will only be the self-organisation of the black masses which will effectively resist, combat and defeat racism.

The creation of armed black self-defence groups to defend black school students would, even in the short term, be a more effective method of combating white racism than federal marshals. Though ironically enough it would be the existence and effectiveness of such groups which would probably bring the federal marshals in rather quickly to 'preserve law and order'.



Boston - why demand troops?

The 24 October issue of *Red Weekly* carried a story about the racist offensive against school desegregation in Boston, Massachusetts. This development rightly deserves international coverage, but it is much more than a local issue. The racist offensive is aimed at the gains made by the Black liberation struggle in the US over the last 30 years. If the racists in Boston succeed in stopping desegregation there, it will give a powerful impetus to determined forces across the US.

But I think that *Red Weekly* made an error in criticising the demand made by Black leaders for federal troops to enforce Black students' attempts to attend white schools.

The demand has been raised in the following context. The racists are trying to stop a court-ordered busing plan by which Black students are transported to white schools, and white students are bused to Black schools. The goal is to stop segregation in the schools, enabling Black students to get a better education.

The racists are trying to stop the buses by force. They have mounted a sustained and effective campaign, including mass mobilisations of many thousands, and harassment, threats, and mob violence against Black students. There have been beatings and stonings of Blacks and even a riot lynching. It is in this context that Blacks have demanded that the Government take effective action against the racists, by sending troops.

What should revolutionists say? Our goal is to involve the masses of Black people and their allies in action against the racists. Such mass action will include self-defence.

Part of the process of building mass actions is to make demands on the Government. In this case, we should demand that the Government enforce the court desegregation order and ensure that the buses are not stopped. If federal troops are necessary to enforce the court order, we favour that.

Does supporting the call for troops violate principles from a revolutionary point of view? Of course not. What is involved here is simply demanding that the US Government enforce the laws against segregation.

American revolutionists have long put forward demands along this line. For example, in the 1930s, the American Trotskyists demanded the passage of federal anti-lynching legislation, to enable the federal government to intervene with force against the lynch mobs in the South. This was necessary, because at that time the lynchings operated with the open complicity of the state and local governmental authorities.

In Boston today, the local authorities are backed away from enforcing the law on buses. In this situation, revolutionists demand that the federal Government intervene to enforce the law.

It would hardly make sense to demand that civil rights laws be passed, and then refuse to demand that the laws be enforced. However, the *Red Weekly* article is caught in this dilemma. It criticises Ford because he does not want to take on white racists but to implement a court order.

How would you propose that Ford implement the court order? Surely more than words are required.

In the *Red Weekly* article it is argued that while federal troops or marshals might guard the station temporarily, the racists will then try to work back into the white racist power structure... It is not completely clear what is meant here. The argument seems to be that even if troops guard the buses to enforce the desegregation of the capitalist class.

This argument is irrelevant. The white racists in Boston are not afraid of overt troops. The laws are not being enforced because the racist power structure is using the court order to justify its actions. That is why the racists oppose troops. That is why President Ford doesn't want to send them. And that is why the Black community has demanded them.

The *Red Weekly* article criticises the situation in Boston so that in Northern Ireland when the Catholic majority was threatened with partitions and finally welcomed the British troops. The call

for British troops to Northern Ireland was a mistake, because it cut across the central goal of the struggle - for British withdrawal from Ireland so that the Irish people could freely exercise their right to self-determination.

The situation in Boston is not analogous. Boston is not a colony of American imperialism. Furthermore, the demand here is not for federal troops to occupy the Black community, but for the troops to go onto the white areas and use whatever force is necessary against the white racists.

A much better strategy can be made with the Black freedom struggle in the South in the 1950s and 1960s. This movement was built largely around demands that the Government enforce its own laws against segregation. Under pressure of mass actions by Black people and their allies, the Government was often compelled to enforce these laws in some cases using troops to prevent the racists from overturning the law.

These victories gave the Black movement encouragement and self-confidence. More mass actions developed, creating a climate in which the inclination to organise self-defence grew stronger than before.

This is the experience to draw upon in assessing the demand for troops in Boston.

-GUS HOROWITZ - New York

SELF-DEFENSE AGAINST THE RACISTS

[The following article is translated from the November 29, 1974 issue of Rouge (No. 276).]

With the beginning of the school term this year, the desegregation plan for the Boston schools became a center of attention for a well-organized new racist offensive. Violent attacks on Blacks have been continual. In the best tradition of the Ku Klux Klan, Black children are beaten with chains, and Black workers are dragged from their trucks and beaten with baseball bats.

In the USA, the public school structure is nowhere near adequate, and racist oppression keeps schools for racial minorities poorly developed. Blacks are demanding entry to white schools which are better financed. At the same time, they are trying to bring pressure on whites to improve schools in the Black neighborhoods by insisting that white children attend them. The means for correcting racial imbalance is called "busing."

In recent years in northern cities, the racists organized and demonstrated, demagogically using the inconvenience of busing to protect their educational privileges. If the racists destroy the desegregation plan in Boston, it can have national impact and could embolden them to attack other concessions won by the Black movement. That is why the attention of all racists and anti-racists is fixed on Boston.

The two bourgeois parties have actually encouraged the racist forces. Ted Kennedy, practicing liberalism Giscard-style, stated that the racists "think that this is a very important problem. They have the right to express their point of view."

At present, the economic and social integration of racial minorities is out of the question. More than ever, the bosses need a reserve army of labor and widespread racism, which is the foundation of a political division within the working class and a precondition for maintaining the undivided power of big capital.

How to Fight Racism?

The racist offensive has developed almost with impunity for several weeks. But it would have been possible to organize massive resistance. In the first place, Black self-defense groups must be organized in the schools and in the Black neighborhoods.

In the face of the racist attacks, it is necessary to win struggles, and to adjust operations to fit the means used by the enemy. After the assassination of Malcolm X, after the suppression of ghetto rebellions by the army, and after the physical repression against the Black Panthers, the need for self-defense is clear. When Blacks inflict tactical defeats on racist bands, they increase the confidence of other exploited and oppressed groups, they show white workers that struggle pays off, and they polarize the social and political arena.

Self-defense groups could become the skeleton of quite large support demonstrations. There are many campuses in Boston, and students would be prepared to join antiracist picket squads. Most trade unions

give verbal support to Blacks. It is necessary to put pressure on these unions to force them to help defend the Blacks and help organize actions. If these steps had been taken, we would have seen a major initiative in Boston, in which trade unions and antiracists from all over the East Coast would have participated.

But nothing of the kind was done. The reformist Black leaders merely called for federal troops to reestablish order. After the struggles of the sixties, this will certainly not stimulate the Blacks to mobilize! Unfortunately, even the far-left organizations took up the reformists' slogan without calling for self-defense, and in so doing have put the brakes on all mobilizations. Only the understanding of self-defense will allow the Blacks and the American revolutionaries as a whole to successfully lead struggles and achieve a political breakthrough.

B. Carapace

Boston: The Meaning of the Struggle

exclusive for Rouge

by Caroline Land

The November 29 issue of Rouge carried an article dealing with the struggle by Black people in Boston to desegregate the schools. Unfortunately the article, signed by B. Carapace, gives an inaccurate picture of the nature and implications of the Boston struggle.

First, the axis of the article -- as summarized in its title "Self defense against the racists" -- obscures the real issue of the struggle, the fight by Black people for their democratic rights. Second, the article is factually inaccurate. And third, although it makes reference to the role of an undefined "far left" the article leaves out the role of the two most important tendencies in the American radical movement. It does not mention the leadership role played in Boston by the American Trotskyists -- the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance. And it leaves out the scandalous role played by the American Stalinists, the Communist Party USA.

Rouge readers will be interested in knowing more about the Boston busing battle, which has become one of the central political issues in the United States today. At stake is nothing less than an attempt by the ruling class to halt any further advances by the Black freedom struggle and even to reverse some of the gains made by the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s.

To understand the meaning of the Boston busing controversy it is necessary to look at it from a broader perspective.

Civil rights movement

The civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s swept away the system of "Jim Crow" laws that existed in the Southern states. These laws enforced the segregation of whites and Blacks in all areas of life, much like the apartheid system in South Africa. Their purpose was to aid in keeping Blacks a superexploited section of the labor force on the farms in rural areas of the South.

As the South became much more urbanized and industrialized following World War II, Blacks moved from rural areas to the big cities, North and South. This made the Jim Crow system of legally enforced segregation impractical. Moreover, with the rise of the colonial revolution in the 1940s and 1950s, the Jim Crow system became more embarrassing to the U.S. imperialists, who were attempting to pose as supporters of independence for the colonies of the European imperialists.

The turn of the U.S. ruling class toward dumping legalized segregation was reflected in the Supreme Court decision of 1954, which said that segregated schools for Blacks were inherently inferior and a violation of the democratic rights of Black people.

Of course the U.S. rulers would have liked to go slow in eliminating legal segregation. But the masses of Black people, encouraged by the Supreme Court decision as well as by the upsurge of the colonial revolution, surged forward in the civil rights demonstrations of the late 1950s and early 1960s.

The civil rights forces were able to take advantage of temporary differences within the ruling class -- demanding that the federal government implement its Supreme Court decision against the local representatives of the ruling class who were not ready to adjust to the new situation. Major gains were won for Black people, and legalized segregation was eliminated throughout the country.

The end of the Jim Crow laws did not, however, mean the end of segregation or inequality. Blacks still lived in ghettos, were the "last hired and the first fired," and had the worst jobs and the worst schools. In fact today it is the Northern cities where de facto segregation is the most extreme.

While the capitalist rulers could make a tactical decision to end legally enforced segregation, they had no intention of ending the actual segregation of Blacks in housing, jobs, and schools. To do that would mean a complete social upheaval and a huge blow to the American capitalist class whose profits are dependent upon the super-exploitation of Black workers.

Ruling class offensive

Beginning in the late 1960s, the U.S. government began a drive to head off and push back the struggle for equal rights for Black people. One of the major battlefields was the schools. In the face of growing demands from Blacks for the right to equal educational opportunities the federal government began to retreat from extending the position embodied in the 1954 Supreme Court decision.

This is the context in which the Boston busing controversy takes place. Underlying this struggle is the simple fact that white schools are better than Black schools, in Boston as well as in every other major U.S. city. One way of equalizing educational opportunities for Blacks is to desegregate the schools. But since Blacks are segregated by housing into neighborhoods separated from whites, the only way to do this is to transport white children into schools in the Black neighborhoods and Black children into schools in the white neighborhoods.

Boston has the reputation of being one of the most liberal cities in the U.S., but as far as racial segregation is concerned, it is like all the rest.

In 1972, representatives of the Boston Black community filed suit in federal court demanding desegregation of the schools. In 1974 the federal court finally ruled in their favor, and against the Boston School Committee (the body that administers the public school system -- in the U.S., schools not under federal control, but administered by the local government). The judge's ruling said that the School Committee had "knowingly carried out a systematic program of segregation affecting all of the city's students, teachers, and school facilities and. . .intentionally brought about and maintained a dual school system."

The judge ordered the schools desegregated by means of the busing program that began last September.

What made Boston different from other cities where struggles over busing have taken place is the degree of organization of the racist and reactionary forces. The leadership for the racists is in

the local government -- the city council and the School Committee -- both of them controlled by the Democratic Party and both of them all-white.

In addition to having millions of dollars worth of funding and patronage at their disposal, these government officials have mobilized an extraparliamentary force -- weekly rallies, marches, and other activities organized by the most right-wing elements among the whites. The racist antibusing coalition is so brazen that it holds its weekly meetings in the city council chambers.

The Ku Klux Klan, the American Nazi Party, the John Birch Society and other ultraright organizations have openly sent forces into Boston to help organize the racist actions.

The racists organized to stop the buses carrying Black children to attend the relatively privileged white schools. The viciousness and violence of the racists exceeded anything that had been seen since the days of Jim Crow in the South. The confrontation in Boston finally burst into national publicity when a Black man was almost lynched by a white mob on October 7.

The change in the U.S. ruling class's attitude toward desegregation could be seen by examining the response of President Ford to the racist violence in Boston and comparing it to the response of President Eisenhower to the racist violence against Black school children in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1957.

In Little Rock, the local government was openly defying the federal law on school desegregation. Eisenhower, after vacillating for several weeks, finally sent federal troops to enforce the law and protect Black children going to school. Ford, on the other hand, announced only two days after the near-lynching in Boston that busing to desegregate the schools was wrong. Ford refused to send federal troops as requested by the governor of the state, who admitted that it could not be guaranteed that the local police forces could restrain the racist mobs.

Ford's approval of the racist offensive gave the green light to reactionary forces throughout the country. His response illustrates how the decisive section of the ruling class favors a policy of blocking any further advances by the Black freedom struggle.

This is the historical dimension of the struggle that is now centered in Boston. Unfortunately, the Carapace article, by focusing on problems of self-defense, misses this broader significance.

How to fight back

To determine the revolutionary political approach in this situation, it is necessary to look at the relationship of forces. This is one of the places where the Carapace article goes wrong. Carapace writes, "Il y a beaucoup d'universités à Boston et les étudiants seraient prêts à se joindre aux piquets anti-racistes. La plupart des syndicats soutiennent les noirs verbalement. Il faudrait faire pression sur ces syndicats afin qu'ils participent à la défense des noirs et aident dans l'organisation des actions."

The fact is that the majority of students in Boston were not at all clearly on the side of the Black community, especially in the

early stages of the struggle. Many white college students as well as high school students, were openly hostile to the Black students. Among the overwhelming majority of students confusion reigned. Most students accepted some of the demagogy of the racists -- who claimed that the antibusing movement was not against Blacks but merely for the concept of "neighborhood schools."

Similarly with regard to the trade unions in Boston. Most of them were either silent on the busing controversy, or came out publicly against busing. The Boston teachers union, which has traditionally been a white job trust with close ties to the all-white School Committee, threatened to go to court to reverse the federal court's desegregation order!

For weeks -- due to the total default of the liberal leadership of the Black community -- there was no organized demonstration of opposition to the racists in Boston whatsoever -- only the resistance expressed by the courageous Black children and their parents, who continued to defy the racists by demanding the right to go to the white schools.

The task was not, as Carapace suggests, to begin organizing Black and trade union self-defense forces. The burning task of the moment was to assemble a coalition of forces capable of building a mass mobilization in support of the Black students, in a situation where the racists were highly organized but leadership among the Black community and its allies was very weak.

What was needed was a persistent, political offensive to explain the real issues and the high stakes involved and to expose the capitulation of the Democratic Party politicians to the racists -- combined with a campaign to build progressively larger mass actions by the Black community and its allies.

This was the only way to bring forth confidence and new leadership from the Black community that was needed to move the struggle forward -- as well as to lay the basis for the possibility of organized Black self-defense. From the beginning, this was the policy of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance -- in contrast to every other radical group, from reformist to "far left."

SWP and YSA

Here is how the SWP explained its position, in a statement released Oct. 9 by the SWP candidate for governor of Massachusetts in the elections that took place last November.

"What is needed to begin to change the atmosphere in this city is for the Black community and all supporters of civil rights to take the offensive.

"The gains of the civil rights movement were the result of mass actions, exerting moral and political pressure on the government to act to stop racist attacks. The major civil rights battles of the 1950s and 1960s -- in Southern cities such as Little Rock and Selma -- became the focus of national and international attention and concern.

"Boston is the Little Rock and Selma of 1974.

"We appeal to backers of civil rights and opponents of racism throughout the entire country to take action in solidarity with the Black students here, and in support of the demand issued by Black leaders for federal troops. . . .

"The stakes in Boston are high, and getting higher. The outcome of the struggle here will have an impact far beyond the city of Boston. The time for action is now."

The statement also explained that, "All necessary force must be used to smash the racist offensive and guarantee the safety and constitutional rights of Black people in this city." To this end, it gave full support to the demand from the Black community for federal troops to be sent to protect Black students, and to the right of the Black community to organize its own defense by any means necessary.

The SWP used its newspaper The Militant to sound the alarm throughout the country on the importance of the struggle in Boston. 3,200 copies of the Oct. 18 issue headed "Stop Boston Lynch Mobs!" were sold on the streets of Boston in one week -- mostly to Blacks.

SWP and YSA members worked with others to build protest meetings on Boston campuses and in the Black community, and to begin to call demonstrations. At first these were small and difficult to build. But the SWP and YSA carried out this work consistently.

This patient work, in conjunction with Black students and others willing to fight finally culminated in the Dec. 14 march of 12,000. (The police estimate was 20,000.) This action began to break the monopoly that the racists had achieved in the streets and in the media. A racist counter-mobilization, held on the following day, was less than half the size.

Together with Black student leaders, the YSA and SWP have provided the leadership in organizing a student conference scheduled for Feb. 14, that will plan how to continue the mass action offensive begun on Dec. 14.

Demand for federal troops

The Carapace article is also wrong in regard to the role of the Black liberals and the "far left" groups in relation to the demand that the federal government send troops to Boston to protect the Black children.

Carapace says that rather than organizing self-defense forces, "Les dirigeants noirs réformistes ont simplement lancé un appel aux troupes fédérales pour qu'ils rétablissent l'ordre. Après les luttes des années soixante, cela ne stimulera certainement pas une mobilisation chez les noirs!! Malheureusement, même des organisations d'extrême-gauche ont repris le mot d'ordre des réformistes sans faire appel à l'auto-défense et ont ainsi freiné toutes les mobilisations."

This is wrong on all counts. First of all, the demand was not for federal troops to "restore order," but for troops to go into the white racist strongholds and disperse the racist mobs, so that the Black school children could enter the white schools in safety.

This demand is not "reformist," as Carapace implies. Revolutionists support the law on busing to desegregate the schools; the

demand for troops is simply a demand that the government enforce the law. This is completely principled. It would be absurd to support the law, but refuse to support its enforcement.

Furthermore, it was not the Black liberals who championed this demand. Only a few Black politicians momentarily called for federal troops immediately after the near-lynching that took place October 7; but they dropped the demand like a hot potato.

The Congressional Black Caucus (a grouping of all the Black members of the U.S. Congress) refused to raise this demand, despite an appeal to them from a coalition of Black organizations in Boston to use their authority to get federal troops sent.

The call for troops came out of the Black community itself -- especially from the Black students and their parents facing the racist mobs.

Each day the buses carrying Black children, who have refused to be intimidated by the racists, are pummeled with bricks, rocks, and iron pipes. The bus routes are lined with racist posters and slogans like "Kill niggers." The only force preventing the racist mobs from stopping the buses and attacking the Black students are the city police, who ride alongside the buses each day on motorcycles.

When the police proved unable or unwilling to restrain the racist mobs, Blacks throughout the community began calling for the federal government to send troops to enforce the desegregation order.

This demand had also been voiced by militants who participated in the civil rights movement in the 1960s, when massive pressure by the antiracist movement forced the federal government to send troops to Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1957 to protect Black children going into white schools, and to Selma, Alabama, in 1965 to protect a civil rights march.

The truth is that the liberals were afraid of the radical implications of this demand, which is to call for the use of any force necessary to stop the racists. And they feared the political sharpness of putting the federal government on the spot.

Carapace argues that the call for federal troops discourages the organization of Black self-defense. This is false. The two demands are complementary.

The organization of self-defense by a section of the working-class movement or an oppressed national minority arises out of a mass struggle around economic or political demands. The organization of self-defense does not mean abandoning demands on the government. This was illustrated in the experience of the Southern civil-rights movement, where the beginnings of self-defense of the Black community, and demands for protection of demonstrations and Black students by federal troops, went hand in hand.

Black self-defense

This was also illustrated by what took place in Columbia Point, a small Black area of Boston. For a short time this small section of the Black community began to organize a rudimentary form of self-defense, that is, "observation patrols" to protect the community from

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white vigilantes who rode through the Black apartment complex firing their guns at windows.

However, in the main struggle in Boston -- the struggle over busing -- the tactical problems of defense are much greater than in the defense of a section of the Black community like Columbia Point. The problem is not how to protect an area densely populated by Black people, but how to protect the buses carrying Black children into the white racist strongholds.

In this situation -- a life-and-death matter for the Black students -- most Black people correctly saw that only an armed force comparable in size and strength to federal troops would be capable of protecting the small groups of Black children scattered throughout numerous schools many miles from the Black community. To talk about organizing a non-existent Black and labor self-defense force, under conditions where for several months it had proved impossible to organize even a modest-sized demonstration to support the Black students, is to ignore the realities of the struggle in Boston.

"Far left" groups

Contrary to the Carapace article, none of the so-called "far-left" groups called for federal troops. The sectarian and Maoist groups generally denounced this demand as unprincipled. This stance showed how far out of touch these groups are with the real situation. The SWP and YSA backed the demand. The CP and YWLL gave it token support at one point.

The "far left" groups were not, however, the most vociferous opponents of intervention by federal armed forces. The most vociferous were the racists.

The relevance of the demand for troops was confirmed dramatically three days before the Dec. 14 demonstration, when a white mob of several hundred people held Black children captive inside South Boston High School for four hours, literally screaming for blood and trying to get into the school. After a violent confrontation with the mob, the police were finally able to get the students into buses and out of the white neighborhood.

A Revolutionary Perspective

While it is necessary to make demands upon the government, it would be wrong to place any confidence whatsoever in the capitalist government to meet the needs of the Black people. The only force that the masses of Black people can rely upon is their own mass power and that of their allies.

What the SWP and YSA have attempted to do from the beginning is to build up a mass movement in Boston that can spearhead a nationwide political counteroffensive against the racist drive. This perspective has had to be carried out against the policies of both the liberal capitalist politicians and the so-called "far left" groups on each of the most important questions: 1) the need to focus the struggle on keeping the buses moving to enforce the desegregation plan, in direct opposition to the racists, 2) the need to put the federal government on the spot with the demand for federal troops and all force necessary against the racists, and 3) the need for mass action. This perspective has the merit of putting the struggle in

proper focus so that the question of self-defense arises naturally and on the correct basis -- mass struggle.

In fighting for this perspective, the SWP and YSA have found allies throughout the country among militant young Blacks as well as trade unionists, Chicanos, and others. A central point of discussion at the national convention of the YSA Dec. 28 to Jan 1 was on how to move forward the nationwide solidarity movement in support of the Boston Black community.

Default of U.S. Stalinists

In contrast to the energetic campaign carried out by the American Trotskyist movement against the Boston racists, the Communist Party USA avoided treating the Boston events in an urgent or dramatic manner. One reason was that the busing confrontation arose during an election period, and the CP policy is to cover up for the liberal Democrats who were capitulating to the racists in Boston. Furthermore, they didn't relish denouncing Ford too sharply just before he was off to meet with Brezhnev in Vladivostok.

The default of the Stalinists in the Boston struggle was epitomized by their boycott of the Dec. 14 demonstration -- the largest action thus far against the racists. The Stalinist youth group, the Young Workers Liberation League, held its convention in Philadelphia on the same weekend as the Dec. 14 demonstration. Stalinist leader Angela Davis demonstratively addressed the YWLL convention on Dec. 14 rather than attending the anti-racist action.

The YWLL decided to go ahead with their convention as scheduled despite an open letter from the Young Socialist Alliance urging them to postpone it in order not to conflict with the demonstration.

The struggle to defeat the racist offensive in Boston serves as a test of all the organizations on the left in the U.S. The leadership role being played by the American Trotskyist movement and the blow that has been dealt to the Stalinists, are significant in the context of the future of the class struggle in the United States. The struggle of Black people for democratic rights will be central to the American socialist revolution.

January 2, 1975

USA: NATIONAL MARCH AGAINST RACISM IN BOSTON

[The following article is translated from the January 5, 1975 issue of Rouge, (No. 281).]

By the thousands, and often coming in buses from all over the United States, on Saturday, December 14, some 20,000 participants gathered in Boston for the National Freedom March. This national march, called by more than a thousand important figures and organizations in the Black, trade union, and civil rights movements, was organized to answer the racist wave that has recently swept over Boston: it was preceeded by a national teach-in, built by the students, at Harvard University near Boston. National demonstrations took place on the same day in the principal cities of the United States.

Boston, "Cradle of Liberty" and Symbol of Racism

The origin of the racist fire that spread through Boston is the judicial ruling of June 21, 1974, which imposed desegregation on the Boston schools. This, as we know, takes the form of "busing": taking Black children in buses to white schools and vice-versa.

Thus since the beginning of autumn, gangs of white hoodlums have stoned the buses transporting the Black children, when they went through the streets of the white neighborhoods. A real campaign of terror against the Black community developed in Boston, marked by beatings and lynchings such as in the case of Jean-Louis Yvon, a Haitian immigrant worker, who was pulled from his car by a group of racists and would undoubtedly have died at the hands of the lynch-mob had it not been for a shot fired in the air by a passing policeman.

"Boston is Klan Country"

Boston, the traditional "cradle of liberty," has seen packs of white demonstrators roam the streets of the city looking for "niggers," whether men, women, or children, bringing to mind scenes from the South that one thought had ended since the 1960s.

The Democratic and Republican politicians in Boston and Massachusetts, in their overwhelming majority, more or less openly upheld the mass mobilization of the racists. Ford, president of the United States, even went so far as to make some statements calling into question the advisability of busing, in this way providing supplementary encouragement to the hysteria of the whites in "Southie" (South Boston, which the residents call "Southie") who keep on shouting "Keep Southie Clean." The Ku Klux Klan has gotten into the middle of this, sending its spokesmen to Boston. These spokesmen, dressed in their white silk hoods and gowns, held meetings right in the downtown area, which attracted thousands of fanatics screaming at the top of their lungs their slogan: "Boston is Klan country, niggers go home!"

Boston has become a symbol: a symbol of the desperate struggle that Blacks again must wage for respect of their most elementary rights, such as the right to send their children from the rotten schools in the Roxbury ghetto to Boston -- against the opposition of the white racists who are again raising their heads, encouraged by the statements and the attitude of the entire American governmental administration.

The March: A Decisive Victory Against Racism

The December 14 National March is a mass response against the racist offensive, of which the Boston lynch mobs are only the tip of the iceberg. But the national march and the demonstrations throughout the United States that accompanied it, also represent an important victory against the racist policy of American capitalism. For it would be incorrect to see the Boston events simply as the reappearance, in strength and in mass, of the old reactionary Southern prejudices which impregnate the American white population, including a large part of the working class. It would be a mistake to interpret it as a sort of aberration of history going against the liberal evolution shown by the most lucid sectors of the American bourgeoisie, for whom Kennedy can serve as spokesman.

The attitude of the officials in Boston and in Massachusetts, followed by Gerald Ford, Ted Kennedy, and plenty of others, is enough to show the opposite. Boston is an example of the tactic presently being used by the American ruling class vis-a-vis the Black community.

In a previous phase the bourgeoisie made concessions such as the abolition of the Jim Crow legislation that governed the South. The concessions were accompanied, moreover, by attempts, in large part successful, to take control of the Black movement for civil rights. The Democratic Party, in the South as well as the North, opened itself up to Blacks. "War on poverty programs" were put into effect with the aim of rooting the Democratic machine in the Black community, offering positions of responsibility to the active militants and leaders. In this way the movement was largely coopted by the Democratic Party, which today can happily count in its ranks many Black Congressmen, Senators, mayors and representatives of all sorts who come from the civil rights movement of the 1960s, now serving as the white bourgeoisie's lieutenants among the Black workers who vote for them and consequently for the ruling class that oppresses them.

Once this was done and successfully carried out, the second stage consisted of unleashing an incredibly violent repression against the Black organizations that did not respond to the bourgeoisie's offer of some lame compromises. The members and leaders of SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee), at that time led by Stokely Carmichael, and later of other organizations like the Black Panther Party, were thrown into prison and even cold-bloodedly murdered in transparent set-ups in front of their headquarters. The majority of these groups were literally decimated in this way.

The present phase is based on American capitalism's need to be in a position of strength vis-a-vis its class adversaries -- the American working class -- as it confronts the crisis that is shaking it up. The Black community is 95 percent proletarian, auto and steel workers in giant Northern factories, civil service and office workers in all the large cities from East to West in the United States. The official statistics of the Labor Department list 6 percent of the workforce currently unemployed, which equals 5.5 million people. To this one must add 2.9 million workers working part-time because they can't find a full-time job, and at least 600,000 who are so discouraged that they have stopped looking for work. This makes a total of about 9 million. But in the Black population unemployment reaches 11 percent, and in certain heavily-Black cities (Newark, Detroit, Washington) it reaches about 15 percent.

For this reason the American bourgeoisie has thrown itself into a major campaign to divide the Black and white workers, using the following three "arguments":

1. Thanks to governmental benevolence, Blacks now have the same rights as whites.

2. There is thus no reason for them to demand anything whatsoever from the government: as far as rights are concerned, they already have them.

3. If they continue to make demands it's because they are no longer demanding the same rights as whites (this has seemingly been granted), but want special treatment in housing, jobs, welfare, etc., which the situation makes it very difficult to grant even if Uncle Sam wanted to, and which in any event, being very expensive, cannot be financed except through supplementary taxes.

In this way the bourgeoisie attempts to lend credence to the idea that the "exorbitant" demands of the Blacks are the cause of the rise in taxes that the workers as a whole have to submit to. Busing is presented as an "unwarranted" exhibition of Blacks trying to get satisfaction at the expense of the already precarious living conditions and conditions of education of white "little people."

In this way busing became a decisive test in order to finish the work begun by the American capitalist class, i.e., the destruction of the Black movement before it could play a role in the troubled period that is approaching. The spokesmen of the bourgeoisie, from the Boston Board of Education all the way to the president of the United States, far from opposing the racist campaign, helped to promote it. The Supreme Court, which is the source of Federal law, recently broke with a twenty-year history of integrationist rulings by rendering a decision favorable to segregation in Detroit.

A defeat in Boston would have seriously jeopardized, in a decisive if not fatal way, the future of the reborn Black movement. The success of the march on Boston, on the other hand, will contribute to making the racist vermin bite the dust (the day after the march the racists were only able to bring out 3,000 people to demonstrate against busing), and above all will encourage the Black movement to get out of the Republican and especially Democratic straight-jacket that is suffocating it.

The Far Left and Busing

It is necessary to stress that in large part success was possible only because the North American revolutionaries threw all their forces into the balance, picking up on the call made by one of the few Black officials in Massachusetts, State Senator William Owens.

From this point of view, the article signed by B. Carapace, which appeared in Rouge No. 276 (November 29, 1974), is vague to the point of becoming totally incorrect.

In particular, the article says: "There are many campuses in Boston, and students would be prepared to join antiracist picket squads. Most trade unions give support to Blacks. It is necessary

to put pressure on these unions to force them to help defend the Blacks and help organize actions. If these steps had been taken, we would have seen a major initiative in Boston, in which trade unions and antiracists from all over the East Coast would have participated."

A national march was indeed organized in Boston on December 14. The main student associations called it, as well as the most important Black civil rights organizations, the Black unionists of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) and many local unions and union women organized in the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW). The only national revolutionary organization that had signed the call and actively contributed to the preparation of the march, through meetings and intense propaganda work, was the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), which is prevented by a reactionary law from officially being the American section of the Fourth International, and its youth organization, the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA).

This contradicts the conclusion of the article: "But nothing of the kind was done. The reformist Black leaders merely called for federal troops to reestablish order. After the struggles of the sixties, this will certainly not stimulate the Blacks to mobilize! Unfortunately, even the far-left organizations took up the reformists' slogan without calling for self-defense, and in so doing have put the brakes on all mobilizations."

This says either too much or not enough. Let's imagine that an American revolutionary newspaper were to write that at the time of the French presidential elections of 1974 "unfortunately even the far-left organizations took up the reformists' slogan" in calling for a vote for Mitterrand. We would then have to answer that some did (AJS-OCI in supporting Mitterrand in the first round) and others didn't.

"The Buses Must Move. . ."

The Maoists of the Revolutionary Union and their youth organization, the Revolutionary Student Brigade, have, for example, taken a position against busing. The first page of an issue of their newspaper Revolution carried the headline: "The People Must Unite to Smash Boston Busing Plan." Almost word for word the same slogan as the racists use! They went so far as to organize their own demonstration against busing and to include on some of their leaflets the rallying emblem of the racists: A school bus-stop sign covered with the word "Stop." And all this was done in the name of the best intentions in the world; according to them it was necessary to fight against busing because busing does not solve the crisis of education and constitutes a diversion by dividing the workers on the question of rotten schools.

At the other end of the galaxy of small groups, the Workers League (formerly close to the AJS) and the Spartacist League scaled the peaks of orthodoxy by invoking the indispensable unity of the Black and white workers, the necessary struggle for quality education for all, the urgency of bi-racial trade-union militias, etc. All of which are things one has to be for, but only on the precondition that one defend in Boston and elsewhere the elementary right of Blacks to go to the schools of their choice, and to do so by means of the buses provided for by the busing plan if necessary. Otherwise, under cover of rumbling rhetoric that buries the main point in an avalanche of general (and correct) demands, you do nothing less than

succumb to the racist pressure in Boston and elsewhere.

On the other hand, our comrades in the SWP, and this is to their credit as Black, Brown, and white revolutionaries, adopted an unambiguous position both in theory and in practice: "We are for those buses moving and we'll use any means necessary to get the racists out of the way." (ISR, December 1974).

The Call for Federal Troops

Among these means is one (to which the Rouge article refers) that can, at first glance, seem questionable: the call for federal troops (U.S. troops as opposed to the local troops of the different states). Aren't these troops the ones responsible for the Bay of Pigs invasion, the genocide in Vietnam and the aggression against Laos, Cambodia, etc.? Certainly, and they are responsible for many others carried out even on U.S. soil itself. They are, moreover, set up to beat down the workers' revolt as well as the national liberation struggle. But these are also the universal characteristics of all armed banks of men who, throughout the world, protect capitalism's safes.

Nevertheless, the working class and the oppressed national minorities, in the course of their struggle, manage to force concessions from capitalist governments. The now official recognition of formal racial equality in American laws is one of these concessions, one that is continually thrown into question, as it is today in Boston.

The representatives of the Black community in Boston -- they are the first ones who called for the sending of federal troops -- demanded that a right that Blacks had won after great struggle be respected, through force if necessary. Rev. Rafe Taylor, one of the leading figures in Boston's Black community, expressed the sentiment of the city's Black population in this way: "We need at least a division of federal troops with tanks, ack-ack guns, machine-guns, grenades, bazookas and everything else, to put down the rock-throwing and intimidation" of Blacks.

To support such a call in no way goes against revolutionary principles. It simply means that everything must be done to protect the lives of Blacks in Boston, which are placed in real danger by the fury of the racist whites.

Moreover, there are precedents. In September 1957 Eisenhower decided to send federal troops to Little Rock to protect the lives of Black children threatened by the racist lynch-mobs and the Arkansas state troops mobilized by the super-reactionary governor Orval Faubus. In March 1965, Johnson sent federal troops to Selma (Alabama) and the demonstrations in defense of the civil rights of Blacks were able to take place, against the will of Governor Wallace, with national repercussions. "The differences between the federal and state authorities were of course only tactical. In the interests of the American capitalist class as a whole, the federal government -- because of mounting pressure from the Black liberation movement -- was following a policy of removing the worst features of the Jim Crow system. Faubus and Wallace represented the benighted sectors that would concede only if clearly compelled to. Minor as the differences were, they were nonetheless real and the outcome was the Little Rock and Selma victories." (Joe Hansen, Intercontinental Press, November 25, 1974).

In Boston in October-November-December 1974 the situation was similar, except that this time the government did not send federal troops. And for a reason: it was openly closer to the side of the lynchers than to that of the formal laws that its own courts had decreed.

The call for federal troops contributes to unmasking the hypocrisy of the American administration in the same way that the demand that the French government bring the fascists to their senses by enforcing the antiracist provisions of its own constitution on June 21, 1973 lifted the veil, if there was still need of it, on the democratic pretensions of Pompidou and his ministers.

For Black Self-defense

From the first weeks when the pogrom atmosphere began to run rampant in Boston, the SWP's candidates in the Massachusetts elections declared their support for "the call for federal troops and for any initiative taken by the Black community to organize its self-defense" (Militant, SWP weekly, Oct. 9, 1974). [The actual date is the October 18 issue.]

So it is, in fact, that support for the call for federal troops could in no way constitute the "be all and end all" of a line of defense of the Boston Black community. It was immediately necessary, but accompanied by propaganda in favor of Black self-defense. And the carrying out of the latter took place by building a mass base for self-defense protected by as broad as possible a national solidarity movement. "The SWP's central aim was to get mass action going. Through this a strong base could be formed for self-defense. Support for the demand of the Black community that federal troops be sent in to enforce civil rights came within this context. The objective, let it be repeated, was to facilitate organization of self-defense." (Joe Hansen in IP, November 25.)

This method, the only one that could bear fruit, was the one our comrades in the SWP applied by throwing all their forces into building the December 13 national march. That it took place is already a victory against all the racists who wanted "the niggers to go home" and against Gerald Ford's government, which was concerned about not doing anything against the white lynch-mob in Boston that might compromise its electoral base in the reactionary South. Its breadth testifies to the rebirth of a Black movement against capitalist exploitation and racial oppression, around which the American working-class vanguard will be forged.

But for the moment, nothing is yet definitely settled in Boston; the stakes remain important. The American Trotskyists are ready for what follows, as the conclusion of the article by Joe Hansen, a leader of the SWP, attests: "The racists, aware of what Boston can symbolize for the country as a whole, are organizing and preparing new assaults which they hope will definitively lock Black children into their ghetto schools. The Black community has no choice but to take countermeasures. Any other course would only invite a pogrom of great ferocity. In preparing the defense, the SWP can be counted on to play an effective role."

Charles Michaloux

Ghent, November 11, 1974

Dear Comrades,

We recently learned about the attacks against the Black community in Boston (Mass.), in connection with racist reaction against the desegregation law.

We were very surprised, if not shocked, when reading the article in the 18 Oct. issue of The Militant bearing the headline: "Stop Boston Lynch Mobs: Black Leaders Demand Federal Troops Now."

The fact that this headline did not merely constitute a verbal mention of the Black leaders' position was made clear by a statement made by D. Gurewitz, SWP candidate for governor of Massachusetts; Ollie Bivins, SWP candidate for Lieutenant Governor, and Jeanne Lafferty, SWP candidate for Attorney-general, which runs as follows:

"We completely support the demands made by leaders of the Black Community that federal troops be sent to Boston immediately, to protect Black students from the escalating violence." (also in The Militant, 18/10/74). Further in the article, the SWP gives support to any initiatives for self-defense taken by the Black community.

In the 25/10 issue of The Militant, another call for federal troops was made. This call has been broadcast on October 18th.

Many of the comrades of the LTT (the Tendency in the Belgian section to support the LTF in the essential points) think that to appeal to the bourgeois repressive forces in order to protect the Black community is a grave error of fundamental nature, and not merely a tactical one.

The arguments that led to this conclusion are the following:

1. To support the demand that federal troops be sent in order to protect the Black community leads to strengthening the illusions that the federal troops are the neutral guarantors of court decisions, democratic rights, and civil liberties; and the neutral defenders of the Black community.

2. To support that demand in order to denounce Ford and other officials and politicians who refuse to send troops or to ask for them, is equally wrong. In the best case Ford, Mayor Keven White, and Edward Kennedy are denounced, but the illusions concerning the federal troops continue to exist, the masses can believe that another (bourgeois) president, another mayor would have sent troops, and that the troops, if they were sent would give adequate protection. Maybe, individual politicians (who up and disappear) are denounced, but the confidence in the federal army, the backbone of the state apparatus, remains.

3. This slogan hasn't anything to do with a transitional demand, because transitional demands constitute steps in the direction of the socialist revolution and must teach the masses

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to rely on their own forces. For example, one can request the nationalization of certain industries from a bourgeois government, for that is a progressive step, or the cutting of military expenditures by half, that being a weakening of the repressive apparatus, but the demand "Federal Troops Now" hasn't anything to do with all that. Transitional demands must go in the direction of the weakening and the destruction of the state apparatus and first of all toward the destruction of the confidence the masses have in it.

When you add the call for federal troops, the timid call for self-defense by the Black community loses all its content. The only practical conclusion can be to "wait and see" if the federal troops intervene or not.

The only correct line -- even isolated and against the stream -- is to advance the autonomous mobilization of the masses and their own self-defense.

5. A parallel to appealing to the federal army to protect the Black community against white racists, would be to ask for intervention by the British army in Northern Ireland to protect the Catholic community against the Protestant thugs.

In the case of Ireland the SWP has never defended that position. To the contrary, the SWP has always advanced the slogan "British troops out now," which is a correct one.

6. A year ago, Joe criticized the Ligue Communiste because they asked the prohibition of a fascist meeting by the police, because it was wrong to rely on the police to fight against the fascists.

The demand for federal troops is in sharp contradiction with the overall political line of the SWP, which has always, in a correct way denounced the police and FBI harassment of the Black and Latin communities and of left-wing militants and the police terror against the ghettos. The SWP has given the correct answer: the demand for the removal of the cops from the ghettos and their replacement by defense units, formed and controlled by the Black and Latin communities. This contradiction too has surprised us, and we would be very pleased if you would answer us, as soon as possible.

With comradely greetings,

Leon

12 December 1974

Dear Comrades,

Here is a new letter about the position of the SWP on the racist mobs in Boston. I didn't have the opportunity to read the previous letter from Leon, so I don't know how far I will repeat the same arguments. Before starting to argue, let me tell you frankly that the other comrades of the faction are more convinced of the correctness of the SWP position than I am.

* * *

For me the arguments put forward by Joe in his article "Should federal troops be used in Boston" are not entirely convincing.

First, seen from here Joe seems to turn away from the issue that was central in the previous weeks. When I read "The Militant" I did not get the impression that the essence of the SWP position could be reflected in the question: "Is it principled for revolutionary socialists to support a demand that the laws concerning desegregation be enforced against racist mobs even if this requires the use of federal troops?"

My impression was that the central point in asking for federal troops was the defense of the Black community. The key issue was the defense. Let's reread the 9 October statement of Donald Gurewitz as reprinted in IP, V. 12, No. 42: "We completely support the demands made by leaders of the Black community that federal troops be sent to Boston immediately to protect Black students from the escalating violence."

But before taking up this point, I want to answer the question posed by Joe. Of course it is principled to put demands on a bourgeois government and for instance to demand desegregation. And if in the Boston events somebody is asking us "Even if this requires the use of federal troops?", we have to answer "Yes, but...."

"Yes but" because the feelings of the Black community in favour of ~~the~~ federal troops, put us in a difficult position in which we have to swim against the stream. A very difficult situation in which we must avoid giving way to any illusions that the mass movement should fight for a "better use" of the troops.

In that sense I want to take up the following extract from Joe's article: "Most glaring of all is the political blindness of the Workers League. It has never occurred to these self-proclaimed 'Trotskyists' that America's rulers are capable of making concessions in the use of military force."

Of course the bourgeoisie can make concessions on that level. But linked with that are our demands on the troops themselves. We can put forward all kinds of demands on the bourgeoisie that are progressive steps as nationalization of the steel industry, desegregation and so on; but on the bourgeois troops we have only one program, their destruction and only

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demands that point to that aim as cutting the military budget, democratic rights for soldiers....

I think we agree on this. Now, for me it seems clear that when the Black community asks for the federal troops, they have a lot of illusions and think that you can force America's rulers to make a "better" use of the federal troops and that finally they can play a positive role in society. My opinion is that the SWP did not do enough to fight against that kind of illusion. Too much emphasis was put on the demand for troops, and too little was done to explain the role of federal troops in the kind of desegregation policy the government is putting forward. This lack was -- for me -- most evident in the public statements that reached the masses.

Of course the Ford administration was discrediting itself by not sending the federal troops. But someone who was asking for troops could still think that things would have been better with another president. No rise of conscience occurred concerning the federal troops themselves which are the "gang of armed men," in the last instance, the state.

Another point in Joe's article: "Obviously at the core of the appeal for federal troops is to be found a correct, if only rough, grasp of the fact that the civil rights of oppressed minorities in the United States cannot be assured without the application of force on a scale demanding an army -- or its equivalent."

Only one detail: the Black community seems to look for their armed allies on the wrong side. That's the central point in working out a tactic in the Boston circumstances.

My conclusion is that along with the demand for desegregation put on the government, a much more important emphasis should have been put on the slogan of self-defense, that was only put forward in a very limited way. That slogan was the correct one for organising an independent mass movement that is not relying on the bourgeois armed forces, but only on its own force and on its allies: the student movement, the women's movement, the working class.

Comradely,

Marcel

January 13, 1975

Leon and Marcel
Ghent

Dear Comrades,

Thank you for your letters of November 11 and December 12. I'm glad you wrote down the points you and other comrades were concerned about in relationship to the Boston situation and the demand that federal troops be used if necessary to enforce desegregation laws.

I know some of you had a chance to discuss this question with Johnson and Sam and have changed your opinion on a number of points since you wrote. But I thought it would be useful to write anyway as I assume other comrades may have some of the same doubts.

Since your letters were written I'm sure you have seen subsequent articles in the Militant, the ISR and the press of the international that deal with many of the points you raise. Joe Hansen's article in the November 25 issue of Intercontinental Press "Should Federal Troops be Used in Boston?" is especially helpful. Red Weekly printed an article in their October 26 issue, as well as a reply from Gus Horowitz in the December 12, 1974, issue.

You may also have seen the article by Carapace in the November 29 Rouge entitled "Auto-defense Contre les Racists," which manages to be wrong on just about every point. Caroline Lund has written an article for Rouge, answering Carapace and setting the record straight, so I'll enclose a copy of her reply.

The only other articles I've seen in the press of different sections and sympathizing organizations are two short items in Révolution Socialiste, the paper of the Antilles comrades. Unlike Carapace and Red Weekly they seem to have a better understanding of what is at stake in the Boston struggle and the significance of the fact that the U.S. government refuses to enforce its laws against segregation, and they took a line similar to ours.

In addition, we will soon be publishing an Education for Socialists bulletin that contains material concerning Boston as well as previous discussions in the party around this same issue.

I mention all these items because I won't try to cover the same ground. I simply want to add a few things from a different angle. In the process I'll try to deal with the questions and arguments you raise.

In thinking about the situation in Boston and what kinds of demands revolutionists should put forward it helps to separate three questions:

1. Do our class struggle principles preclude demanding that a bourgeois government enforce some of its own laws?

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2. Why has this demand been raised in the Black community in Boston?

3. In the concrete situation that exists in Boston today, does the demand that the government use its organized power to protect Black children whose lives are endangered stand in contradiction to developing the concept of self-defense growing out of the mass movement itself?

* * *

First, I think it is helpful to reiterate what the orientation of the SWP and YSA has been from the beginning of the Boston confrontation, which is but the latest chapter in the struggle for democratic rights by the most important oppressed nationality in the U.S. Later I'll come back to some of the recent history of the civil rights struggle as that is the framework for understanding what is happening in the Boston struggle today. The essential point is that Boston is a focal point for a concerted, well-organized, reactionary drive to start rolling back the gains of the last 20 years of the Black struggle. If it succeeds it will be a major defeat for that struggle and for the entire American working class.

A powerful racist mobilization has been building in Boston for months. But due to the crisis of political leadership in the Black community there has been virtually no organized response until recently. While the ruling class certainly has a stake in halting the advances of the Black struggle, they have not really decided which side to back on this round of the fight. They are equivocating, waiting to see how it develops, and whether a defeat can be dealt the Black struggle without paying too high a price. For the last few months, with everything going in the direction of the racists, even the majority of the liberal Black Democratic and Republican politicians remained silent -- to say nothing of the white "moderates" like Kennedy.

From the beginning our line in Boston has been based on our general strategic orientation -- the mobilization of the Black community and its allies in extra-parliamentary action to advance the struggle for their democratic rights.

This struggle of the oppressed nationalities in the United States is part of the uncompleted bourgeois democratic revolution, but its fate is inextricably intermeshed with the coming proletarian revolution, a revolution that will have a combined character.

Our tactics and slogans are always determined by the strategy of mobilizing the masses and teaching them to rely on their own power. From the beginning we saw our job in Boston as doing everything possible to organize a massive local and national political response to the racist offensive. We threw our whole party into this effort, as you can tell from reading the Militant week after week. The fact that it took us three months before the first significant action could be organized simply attests to the depth of the political problems. I'll come back

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to this point later. But that was our strategic orientation from the start -- to build a mass political response. And that is the framework in which we have to discuss the troops slogan and judge whether it was correct or not.

* * *

It is useful to take up the question of principle first. If it is precluded in principle to place specific kinds of demands on a bourgeois government, then the historical context, or the concrete strategic and tactical considerations that might lead revolutionists to pose one or another demand on the government are irrelevant and we need go no further. This is really the main aspect Joe deals with in his article.

I think we all agree that of course it is within our class principles to place demands on a capitalist government. As Trotskyists this is fundamental to our strategy for mobilizing the masses of workers in struggle against the ruling class, and we can all think of many examples: bring the troops home now; abolish the Industrial Relations Act; rescind tuition hikes; apply the sliding scale to all social welfare payments; political rights for soldiers; let the people vote on war. We try to mobilize the working masses around such demands organizing them in action and independent of bourgeois political parties.

Sometimes the relationship of class forces is such that the ruling class is obliged to enact laws (imperfect or limited though they may be) that are in the interests of the masses of workers and their allies. For example, the right to vote, or guaranteeing freedom of assembly, or social security, or desegregation. If we were in favor of a particular measure being enacted in the first place, even building mass mobilizations to demand it be adopted, then we must also say we are in favor of it being enforced against reactionary opposition. If there are divisions within the ruling class, some wanting to enforce the law and others wanting to reverse it, then it is correct for revolutionists to take advantage of these divisions to deal the ruling class a blow and to help create conditions that make the organization of the workers' struggle easier.

But obviously, if we say a measure or law is in the interests of the workers, and should be enforced by the existing bourgeois government, and if the resistance to that law by elements of the bourgeoisie is so great that the law cannot be enforced except by the capitalist state's armed power, then we must also demand that the bourgeois government use its armed bodies of men to break the resistance and implement the law. Any other position would be worse than inconsistent -- it would be seen by the oppressed, and correctly so, as an example of radical dilletantism.

To oppose the enforcement of such laws logically leads to a position of denying the validity of making demands on any existing bourgeois government and to a rejection of the method of the transitional program. That is essentially the position held by the various sectarian Trotskyist groups like the Spartacists and the Healyites, although they get caught in all kinds of contradictions as Joe showed in his article in IP.

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To take an illustration from American history: Black males won the right to vote following the civil war and Black women won the right to vote in 1920. Yet the Jim Crow system that existed in the South of the U.S. from 1877 until less than 10 years ago prevented Blacks from exercising that right. Obviously, revolutionists demanded that the federal government protect the rights of Black citizens and enforce the constitutional right to vote. But to impose this required a head-on confrontation between different elements of the ruling class.

Should revolutionists have said: "Enforce the constitutional right to vote, but..." But what? But if the only way to enforce the laws is by using federal troops to register the voters, guard the polling booths, and escort Blacks to and from their homes to vote, then we withdraw our demand to enforce the right to vote because if troops are used that will create illusions on the part of the Black population that the government is defending their democratic rights?

The contradictions in that position are obvious. But that is the bind the Spartacists and others find themselves in today in Boston when they say they are for busing [a democratic right of equal education] yet oppose demands that the federal government impose its laws through force if necessary.

(I am not using the example of the Spartacists, etc., because I think you agree with any of their positions. I know you do not. They draw many positions out to a logical extreme though, and it is sometimes easier to see where certain points lead by taking a look at what the Sparts say and do.)

There is another variant that Marcel seems to raise when he argues that while we can place all kinds of demands on the government, "on the bourgeois troops we have only one program, their destruction and only demands that point to that aim as cutting the military budget, democratic rights for soldiers..."

But this argument seems to place a qualitative dividing line between the troops and other institutions of bourgeois rule such as federal marshalls, the courts, prisons, the congress, the executive, etc. I don't think that is correct.

We direct our demands against the entire capitalist government. There is no fundamental difference in the purpose of the various agencies of the bourgeois state apparatus. Each one plays a decisive role in maintaining capitalist rule; each is interlinked with the others. Not just the army and police, but all, without exception, have to be abolished. That was the lesson of the Paris Commune and the soviets. Unless the question of armed violence is elevated to some kind of supernatural place in the revolutionary and counterrevolutionary scheme of things (as the IMT seems to do) then there is no basis for a qualitative differentiation between demands on the government that might involve the use of the army as opposed to the courts, for example.

(I'm leaving aside the question of special political openings which revolutionists have to affect the masses of workers who make up the capitalist conscript armies, especially during periods of war and social upheaval. In that sense our attitude

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to the troops is different from the way we approach the cops, or the other parts of the state apparatus. But that is a different topic.)

Doesn't a demand that the courts uphold desegregation laws, or that the congress pass laws against segregation create illusions that the bourgeoisie will defend and extend the democratic rights of an oppressed nationality?

I think you can get off on a whole wrong axis if you try to argue simply on the basis of whether any particular demand creates "illusions." For example, when workers win higher wages, doesn't this create "illusions" that they can improve their conditions under capitalism? Such "illusions" are based in reality and reflect the workers experiences. By organizing and struggling they can improve their conditions.

Bourgeois courts and congress do sometimes enact laws that improve the living conditions of our class and its allies -- like the 1954 desegregation decision, or social security laws.

The key thing is not whether the masses have "illusions," but whether the demands we put forward encourage the will to struggle and help advance the independent mobilization of the workers and their allies, a course that encourages them to rely on themselves.

Granted that the masses of workers have all kinds of illusions about the government, the bosses, the courts, the cops, etc. etc. How do revolutionists go about helping the workers and their allies to see the reality of the capitalist system and all the institutions that uphold it? How do we help them see the need for a socialist revolution to fundamentally change their condition?

First of all, we do this by consistently opposing the bourgeoisie on the political level, always counterposing our proposals, our solution, to theirs.

For example, if the SWP had someone in the House of Representatives and a bill came on the floor to appropriate \$30 million for a school lunch program we would denounce the proposal as totally inadequate, expose the corruption in the school lunch programs, and show how most of the money would go to the food monopolies instead of the schools. We would counterpose our own bill appropriating \$5 billion for a breakfast, lunch and dinner program that closed all the loopholes against the corruption and super-profits for the food monopolies.

Secondly, we mobilize the masses of workers to rely on their own independent power in the struggle to win their demands.

For example, we would organize meetings, rallies, marches, pickets demanding \$5 billion for school lunches. We would mobilize the parents and teachers to take over the lunch facilities in their schools and start running them in the interests of the children and their families. We would link it to the fight by oppressed nationalities to gain control over their own schools.

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It is only in the process of such struggle that the masses of workers will come to see that while the ruling class makes concessions under pressure, they cannot be forced to place our interests ahead of theirs (the interests of the overwhelming majority ahead of those of a tiny handful), that we can organize society better than they, and then illusions will begin to crumble, the correctness of our program, our alternative will start to become clear.

In my opinion this general approach holds true for demands that might involve use of the troops just as for demands that require action by the legislature or courts.

In Boston, our candidates for office clearly explained what we would do if we were in power. (We would have had a mobilization of troops in there so fast that the racist resistance would have evaporated in 24 hours.) At the same time we used all the means at our disposal to organize the Black community and its allies to fight for their elementary democratic rights, to keep the buses rolling by whatever means necessary.

If you consider all the angles carefully, I think you'll come to the conclusion that calling on the government to use troops if necessary to break the racist resistance to desegregation is no different in principle than other kinds of demands on the government. It is a concrete question of strategy and tactics, not a principled one.

To decide whether it is a correct demand to raise, therefore, you have to dig much deeper. You have to look at the concrete situation that exists in Boston today, including the historical context, and try to determine whether the demand will help to advance the independent mobilization of the masses and develop their political confidence and consciousness, or not.

* * *

That brings us to the second question I posed at the beginning: why has this demand been raised in the course of the struggle in Boston today?

To answer this you have to recall a little American history, starting with the Civil War and Reconstruction. Union troops fought one of the bloodiest wars in history and defeated the slavocracy. In the process Black slavery was ended -- an event that contributed mightily to the "illusions" among Blacks that the federal government sometimes uses military force in such a way that it benefits Blacks. Following the Civil War the South was militarily occupied for more than a decade during which time constitutional amendments and federal laws were enacted to legally establish the democratic rights of Blacks.

With the triumph of the counterrevolution in 1877, the federal troops were withdrawn and state laws denying all democratic rights to Blacks were enacted. These were in direct contradiction to the federal laws. This was the legal structure of the Jim Crow system. And it was maintained by "legal" and mass, organized, extralegal terror, most notably through the

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institution of lynchings. There were some 4,000 publicly recorded lynchings in the South between 1877 and 1950. In some years the rate reached one lynching every other day.

This contradiction between the federal laws and the state laws of the Jim Crow system in the South, enforced by mass terror against the Black population, gave rise to the demand that the bourgeois democratic rights prevailing in the rest of the country be enforced in the South as well. This was the central thrust of the Black struggle in the United States from 1867 through the civil rights battles of the 1950s and 1960s.

Starting with the Second World War a whole set of new circumstances, political as well as economic, led the ruling class to decide that the Jim Crow system had become an obstacle rather than an advantage.

The courts, which had for decades upheld the Jim Crow laws, began ruling in favor of Blacks on some issues. One of the high points was the "no separate but equal" ruling on schools by the Supreme Court in 1954. A mass movement developed. Demonstrations of hundreds of thousands took place. Under mass pressure the federal government was forced to act. Federal troops were used several times to stop racist attacks on Blacks as in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1957. Between 1955 and 1965 all legal segregation was ended.

We understand that the bourgeoisie ceded to the mass pressure, nationally and internationally, because they had decided it was in their interests to do so. They were using their national state apparatus (legislatures, courts, army) to create economic and political conditions more favorable to capitalist development. But it is not a matter of indifference to us. We are for the extension of democratic rights. If a sector of the bourgeoisie, under pressure from the masses nationally or internationally is in favor of expanding democratic rights for their own reasons, we don't reject the gains made because the bourgeoisie (or a sector of the ruling class) also supports them. We don't refuse to take advantage of them saying they are only designed to dupe us and demobilize us. On the contrary, we say fine, it's an advantage for our class; now let's take another step.

We know that the bourgeoisie in the epoch of imperialism is incapable of carrying through democratic tasks to the end. The tendency is for them to try to restrict democratic rights which brings the rulers into conflict not only with the oppressed nationalities but with the interests of the working class, the only social force today able to consistently fight for the expansion of democratic freedoms.

While we may support a progressive act taken by the bourgeoisie, we do not support the bourgeoisie itself or rely on any of its political formations or institutions. We organize separately, using proletarian methods of struggle, because we know the bourgeoisie acts on the basis of their interests not ours. If the interests of some wing of the capitalist class coincide with ours for a period of time on some issue, so be it. We take advantage of that coincidence and use it to help broaden the mobilization of the working masses. But we maintain our total indepen-

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dence and prepare the workers to rely only on themselves and their class allies in carrying their struggle through to the end.

The civil rights battles of the 1950s and 1960s are fresh in the minds of millions of Blacks today. Many participated in those mass mobilizations which on several occasions led to confrontations in which the White House was forced to send federal troops to enforce desegregation laws. The intervention of the troops was a defeat for the racists and a victory for the Black struggle.

(Caroline Lund goes into this history a little more in her article for Rouge.)

Today Boston has become a new national test of strength where every one of the gains made during the last 20 years of struggle is in jeopardy. The key issue is to keep the schools open and the buses moving, and Black youth are literally putting their lives on the line day after day because they know what is at stake.

Many in the Black community have demanded federal troops to protect the youth going to school. It is a concrete form of a political demand directed at Washington -- that the federal government enforce its desegregation laws. Many Blacks realize that force on the scale of federal troops may be necessary to break the racist resistance, and they know from their own recent experience that if federal troops are sent, their presence will decisively alter the relationship of forces in favor of the Black community. It will be a victory for the Black struggle. That is a fact, not an illusion. And that, of course, is why President Ford refuses to enforce the busing order.

No one would deny that the masses of Blacks have plenty of illusions in Kennedy, the congress, the Black elected Democratic officials and many other things. But at the same time they are quite capable of determining when the intervention of federal troops will help them and when it will be directed against them.

For example, the Black community in Detroit was not so dis-oriented by the fact that troops had aided the desegregation battle in Selma, Alabama, in 1965 that they demanded troops be sent into Detroit in 1967 during the ghetto uprising. They found it quite easy to determine that in one case the troops would act to break racist resistance, and in the other would act to terrorize the Black community.

One additional point should be kept in mind. Neither the Black community nor anyone else is demanding that troops be sent to occupy or police the Black community. The problem is to protect relatively isolated groups of Black youth being sent out of the ghetto into racist strongholds in the white community. The lynch mob that threatened the lives of a group of Black students trapped in South High last December 11, just a few days before the December 14 mobilization, reemphasized the acuteness of the problem.

* * *

This brings us to the third question I posed at the beginning: Does the demand that the government use its armed power to

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protect Black children whose lives are endangered stand in contradiction to developing the concept of self-defense growing out of the mass movement itself?

I don't think so. The two things do not have to be counterposed. They are complementary.

Here it is helpful to know something about the particular situation in Boston itself.

1. The confrontation on the busing issue has been coming for several years. The ultraright (John Birch Society, Ku Klux Klan, Wallace forces) have made this one of their central campaigns. Violent clashes have taken place in other areas of the country in the last few years. For example, in Michigan in 1971 several dozen school buses were bombed and burned by reactionary opponents of busing. In other parts of the country, buses have been stoned, turned over and burned by racist mobs. (One of the more notable characteristics of the class struggle in the United States has always been its extreme violence.)

Opposition to "busing" per se is of course only a convenient cover for the racist campaign. As the saying goes in the Black community today, "The problem's not the bus, it's us."

Several times previously in other cities when it looked like a head-on confrontation was developing, the ruling class caved into the racist pressure and found some legal formula to avoid implementing desegregation plans. This always meant a retreat from and a partial nullification of the 1954 Supreme Court decision. But sooner or later a Boston-type confrontation had to develop. And more will. And not only over busing but housing, job discrimination, etc.

2. The Black community in Boston is relatively small, about 17 percent of the population. In that sense it is quite different from many other major northern industrial cities where the Black population is more like 40-60 percent of the total population. This, of course, is one reason the racists are so bold in Boston. Another is what the federal judge who ordered the busing plan called the "ten year conspiracy" of the Boston School Committee to deliberately segregate the schools. The School Committee is the elected municipal body with almost total control over the school system and a budget of tens of millions of dollars at its disposal. That is the powerful base from which the racist campaign is organized.

3. In this type of situation a massive mobilization of the Black community in Boston itself and a call for national support is obviously crucial. Yet the liberal Democratic Party leadership of the Black community in Boston has been adamantly opposed to any kind of mobilization. As the racists mobilized day after day, week after week, not one single Black community leader would stand up and say, "what we need is a show of strength for our side." In the three months between September 1 and November 30, despite all our efforts, there was only one small (1,000) demonstration in favor of busing. Other than that, nothing!

The liberals were all scared of a demonstration before the

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November elections on the grounds that it would only incite more racial hostility and lessen the chances of liberal candidates being elected. They even refused to campaign for a referendum that was on the ballot to abolish the School Committee, the organizing base of the racist drive. Most liberals supported the referendum, of course, but they took the position that it was best not to call attention to it in their speeches or literature because if they were silent it might just accidentally get passed. Only the SWP campaigned for it. Meanwhile, of course, the racists organized a massive campaign to defeat the referendum. And it lost.

Some of the Black student organizations were more open to the possibility of organizing a response, but the one or two times we made serious progress in that direction, the Black Democrats would send representatives to the planning meetings and convince the students that they would be hurting the desegregation fight to do anything so rash as to call people into the streets. So for three months while Boston became the national focus of the ultraright (Ku Klux Klan leaders spoke openly to a large crowd on at least one occasion, the American Nazi Party tried to open a public headquarters in South Boston, etc.) there was no response.

Of course, the various Maoist and "Trotskyist" sectarian groups and the Communist Party contributed nothing to overcoming the crisis of leadership in the Black community. They were all willing to work to build some kind of action -- on the condition it was small enough so they could control it. The last thing they wanted to do was come together in a united front effort that put the needs of the Black masses and the class struggle ahead of their own sectarian considerations or class collaborationist schemas.

Against the Black liberal Democrats and other groups on the left our efforts to get some kind of response off the ground were unsuccessful.

That's where things stood until shortly after the November elections when we finally succeeded in getting together a coalition with just enough breadth to be able to call an action. One maverick Black state senator interested in trying to build a powerbase for himself inside the Democratic party finally lent his name to a call for a demonstration. That was all we needed.

I will refrain from going into the details of how we built the December 14 demonstration, but sometime when we have an evening we'll tell you the story. It is highly instructive about the leadership crisis in the Black community -- and what a small revolutionary party can do in such a situation, both possibilities and limits.

Our central preoccupation has been how to break out of the vice imposed on the Boston Black community by the liberal leadership (which the sectarians and ultralefts were totally incapable of even beginning to challenge), and how to take even a tiny step in the direction of the mass response demanded by the objective situation. That is the context in which the question of troops and self-defense must be placed.

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The liberal leaders of the Black community (in Boston or Washington D.C.) were not campaigning for the government to send troops. The demand was raised at the very beginning of the fall and then dropped like a hot potato. They knew it would take a massive mobilization and confrontation with the racists, the organization of a serious struggle and they were not about to lead any such campaign. On the contrary they acted as if they thought they could just be real quiet and the racist mobilizations would die away of their own accord.

Our main concern was to get some kind of mass action going. But at the same time, what was our response to the daily threat of lynch mobs? We did two things. We supported the demand that federal troops be sent to protect the students; and we publicized such examples of self-defense actions as developed in the Black community like the patrols at the Columbia Point housing project and proposals to have non-students ride the school buses with the students, etc. But to make self-defense the axis of our propaganda when there was no organized base for it and no possibility of it being anything but a general propaganda slogan at the time would have been untenable. It would have meant saying to the Black community; you shouldn't demand federal troops to protect your children because they might actually save some kids from being killed and then you might have illusions that troops could be relied upon to defend you again sometime in the future.

Such a response would be nothing but ultraleft irresponsibility, at best.

It would be different if a mass movement existed or was well along in the process of being built, if there were mass organizations supporting and organizing the struggle, through which you could also pose the need for self-defense, educating, organizing and helping to lead them forward. Of course, in that case too you might very well couple the organization of self-defense with the call for troops, explaining that since the troops were not enforcing the laws, the Black community and labor movement would have to protect themselves against the law breakers. But the relative weight of the components of our propaganda and agitation would certainly shift as a mass movement emerged and the organization of defense at every level became feasible.

For us, self-defense is not a slogan we automatically bring forward in an agitational fashion, as a proposal for immediate action, every time anyone in the labor movement gets physically attacked. We would use such incidents to educate and explain the nature of goons and cops and how such problems must be handled in general. But what we actually propose to do in any given case depends on many interrelated factors, starting with the basic relationship of forces and a political assessment of how best to advance the mass struggle at that moment. Teaching the workers and their allies how to defend their struggles is something we always do. It takes place on many different levels. But for us it is something that arises out of the needs of the mass movement itself at each stage, as an integral part of a developing mass struggle, and as a necessary means to advance the struggle. Self-defense is not a strategic axis separate from our mass action perspective, but subordinate to it.

The key problem all along has been the need to find some way to get a mass mobilization off the ground, the need to bring national political pressure to bear on the side of the Black community and their allies. In the process of building such a mass movement you can educate about the need for the movement to defend itself and put it in a context that has meaning as part of our mass-action strategy of class political independence.

Of course, this comes back to touch on the IMT's erroneous concept of "self defense" which tends not to be rooted in a developing mass movement, but tends to be something prepared separately that is then "linked" to such a movement. "Self defense" becomes a strategy separate and apart from our strategic orientation of mobilizing the masses.

This was expressed very clearly in the article that appeared in the October 26 issue of Red Weekly. It wistfully remarks, "In Boston today there must be thousands of blacks who must be secretly wishing that the Black Panthers or similar groups still existed." The saviors from afar, like the ERP! But the Panthers in their heyday never tried to organize or mobilize the Black masses to fight for their demands. The Panthers were going to do it for them. Their concept was never organizing the Black community to defend themselves and advance their independent mobilization, but armed actions by a tiny vanguard group.

(I'm enclosing a copy of the Red Weekly article and the reply by Gus Horowitz that was printed in the December 12 issue. Some of the same errors are repeated in the Rouge article by Carapace. One of the more ironic aspects is that there is a Panther type group in the Boston ghetto today called De Mau Mau. Owens, the Black liberal who lent his name to the December 14 action as I explained earlier, told us that we could forget about organizing marshals for the demonstration because De Mau Mau would handle all defense problems. Needless to say, we declined the offer and organized hundreds of marshals to keep order on all sides during the action.)

We did not support the troops demand primarily in order to expose the bourgeoisie, or some bourgeois politicians. We supported the troops demand because we thought it was objectively in the interests of advancing the class struggle in Boston this fall, under the concrete circumstances that existed. We thought the troops should be sent to Boston, If Ford came out on the side of the most reactionary racists instead, and Kennedy equivocated, then of course they were exposed as opponents of the democratic rights of Blacks. But that was not the fundamental motivation for raising the demand.

We always determine our demands by what is in the best objective interests of the working class and its allies, not some tricky maneuver to expose the bourgeoisie -- or for that matter, to appeal to the interest of the vanguard. Only by putting forward objectively correct demands can we begin to appear to those we are able to reach with our positions as people capable of leading the masses forward. In the process, we need not fear, the bourgeois politicians will be exposed.

You are right of course when you say that the troops demand

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is not a transitional demand. Transitional demands are those which begin to challenge the prerogatives of the ruling class, their right to rule and decide. The troops demand is a democratic demand, raised in defense of the democratic rights of an oppressed nationality. It is one aspect of a solution to a rather pressing problem -- how to stop the Black students from being lynched, stoned, stabbed and beaten, how to break the racist mobilization.

But democratic as well as immediate demands are certainly part of a transitional program, depending on how they are fought for, on what methods we use. In fact, such demands are essential to a transitional program, even in an imperialist country. On this level, of course, we think our December 14 initiative has been an exemplary one, including organizing the self-defense of the action to the extent of our ability. We took responsibility for this as for all other aspects of the action and organized it not through the party but through the existing forms of the mass movement however rudimentary and transitory they might be.

If our line were to counterpose the troops demand to independent mass mobilization and self-defense, then many of your objections would be correct. But that is not the case. Under the concrete circumstances the two things are complementary.

Far from telling the Black community "wait and see if the troops come to defend you," it gives a realistic perspective of how they can continue the struggle to desegregate the schools through demands on the government and organizing whatever forms of action they are capable of at any given stage. Both are important and together lead toward mobilizations able to defend themselves. But to oppose the troops demand by placing all kinds of qualifiers on it and tell the masses to rely on self-defense units that at the given stage of mobilization can only be imaginary, would be saying in essence: you must wait in the struggle to win your democratic rights because, given the present relationship of forces and the lack of leadership in the Black community, you cannot defend your struggle. You may have to stop until you are strong enough to physically defend every Black child being bused to a white school.

The use of federal troops to enforce the desegregation laws would have the effect, among other things, of further legitimizing the use of force against organized racists. Moreover it would be a victory for the Black community, and it would be felt as such, increasing confidence and strengthening the mobilization of the Black community in Boston and elsewhere, making the development of self-defense concepts more likely, more real.

It would advance the organization of similar pro-busing struggles elsewhere in the country.

* * *

You raise two final example, or situations, that you consider parallel, where in contrast to Boston you think we have taken a correct position. One involved calling on the government to ban fascist meetings, the other concerns the demand for British troops

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to get out of Northern Ireland. However, in both cases I think the parallels don't hold when you take a look at the concrete circumstances, the differences between those situations and Boston.

For example, in Ireland the whole question of a colonial occupation army is involved, as well as the history and character of the mass movement in the six and 26 counties. Concerning the fascists, a call for the government to ban them simply sets us up for the bourgeoisie to turn our demand back against us, as the French government did on June 28, 1973.

But such concrete questions of strategy and tactics can be discussed out amongst revolutionists. As with the issues involved in Boston, we all benefit from a thorough discussion and the opinion of comrades in other countries are valuable in helping to think through all the problems involved. You see things from a different perspective than we, of course, and even trying to answer your questions and arguments forces us to make our own explanations clearer. So I hope you'll write again if you're still unconvinced.

Comradely,

Mary-Alice

P.S. Just as I was finishing this letter we received the latest issue of Rouge (January 5, 1975, no. 281) with an article on Boston by Charles Michaloux. It is quite different in character and line than the earlier Carapace article. Despite some errors and weaknesses, it is a step forward in explaining what is involved in the Boston struggle. I am enclosing a copy just in case you missed it.

[The following article is the Introduction to a recent article [undated] issue of Correspondance Internationale, the international internal discussion bulletin published in French by the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste OCI, Internationalist Communist Organization, headed by Pierre Lambert. The bulletin contains French translations of the two reports that appear in SWP Internal Information Bulletin No. 4 in 1974, "Preliminary Report to the New York Caucus of the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction on Fourth World Congress Since Reunification (Tenth World Congress)" by Joseph Hansen, and excerpts from the "Report on the Tenth World Congress" by Bill Massey and John Barzman.

In addition, the issue contains a translation of the first part of George Johnson and Fred Feldman's "Contribution to a Debate: On the Nature of the Vietnamese Communist Party" (ISR, July-August 1973) with a note that the article would be continued in subsequent issues.

The bulletin also contains a transcript (prepared by the OCI) of the October 15, 1974 meeting between the delegations of the OCI and United Secretariat.]

In this issue of Correspondance Internationale, the internal discussion bulletin restricted to members of the organizations and groups affiliated to the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International, you will find two documents relating to the results of the Tenth World Congress of the United Secretariat, held in February 1974. There is the report on this Tenth Congress by Bill Massey and John Barzman in the name of the "Internationalist Tendency," i.e., the minority formed in the SWP which came out for the positions of the International Majority of Mandel-Maitan-Krivine-Ben Said.

In its July-August 1974 issue, Quatrieme Internationale, the French language magazine put out by the United Secretariat, published the documents adopted by the Tenth World Congress of the United Secretariat: the general political resolution, the theses on building revolutionary parties in capitalist Europe (which is basically the document we published in Correspondance Internationale #9), the resolution on armed struggle in Latin America, the balance sheet on the Bolivian revolution, the resolution on the political crisis and revolutionary perspectives in Argentina, and the report on armed struggle in Latin America. Published in the same issue is the draft counter-political resolution and counterreport on armed struggle in Latin America presented by the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction (LTF).

Although there is also a brief communique on the Tenth Congress in this issue, on the other hand QI didn't publish either the text of the organizational agreement between the two factions "on measures to help maintain unity" or the final declarations of either faction.

The documents made public by the United Secretariat confirm the analysis that formed the basis of the letters addressed by the Organizing Committee to the United Secretariat. In May 1973 the International Bureau had proposed participating in the pre-congress discussion for the Tenth World Congress called by the United Secretariat since "for the first time since 1952-1953, the current discussion embraces all the main questions of principle, strategy, and tactics, and thus makes it possible to resume on new bases and with considerably richer international experience the debate that led to the split in the

Fourth International, established in 1938, reconstituted in 1943-46."

The documents adopted at the end of this Tenth World Congress show that the disagreements separating the two factions touch on questions of principle, on programmatic questions, and that the area of difference is extremely vast since, to use the words of a pre-congress document by E. Germain, it encompasses "the relationship between armed struggle and revolutionary mass struggles in prerevolutionary and revolutionary situations in general, the present orientation towards building revolutionary parties in capitalist Europe, the evaluation of the present period and our tasks." But in addition, the documents show that the Tenth World Congress was unable to resolve or even reduce any of these differences.

The two international factions, which in terms of votes were nearly equal in strength, confronted each other as two blocs on all the basic questions discussed at this congress, a congress that only registered the crisis situation that previously existed.

In this context we felt that for the information of the members of the Organizing Committee, we should publish the documents that show how the representatives of these two counterposed factions evaluate the dynamic of this situation.

In order to place these reports, presented shortly after the Tenth World Congress, in the context of the development of the crisis in the United Secretariat and its organizations, one must reexamine the content of the agreement "to help maintain unity" and the more recent political events that have taken place within the United Secretariat.

This "agreement on measures to help maintain unity of the Fourth International" is the only document to come out of the Tenth World Congress that is common to both factions. We reprint it below:

"1. No exclusion of any groups or members now belonging to the tendencies or factions in the Fourth International.

"2. No reduction in status of groups currently recognized as sections or sympathizing groups.

"3. Adoption of a general formula to determine status in the following special situation:

"In countries where adherents of the Fourth International are divided in two or more groups acting publicly apart from each other, no group shall be recognized as a section, but all groups shall be recognized as a sympathizing groups. But if the groups in any of these countries fuse before the next world congress, the International Executive Committee is empowered to recognize the united group as a section.

"These are exceptional measures not to be taken as setting a precedent of any kind. It is not the purpose of these measures to encourage splits by giving minority groups the hope that they will receive recognition from the International if they leave a section and set up a public formation.

"4. No recognition of challenges to mandate claims placed before the mandate commission by sections, sympathizing groups, or groups applying for recognition.

"5. The vote cast on the counterposed political resolutions shall be taken as the criterion in determining the approximate proportional representation in membership of the different tendencies or factions on the incoming International Executive Committee and Control Commission.

"6. Enlargement of the membership of the incoming International Executive Committee to reflect the growth in size of the Fourth International since the last world congress.

"7. Adoption of the following two categories in the membership of the incoming International Executive Committee:

"a. Full status for members of sections.

"b. Consultative status for members of sympathizing groups.

"Full members and consultative members shall have the same rights in everything except voting. Full members shall have decisive votes; consultative members consultative votes.

"8. Reaffirmation of the ten-point agreement defining the pre-conditions for an authoritative world congress that was unanimously adopted by the United Secretariat September 19, 1973.

9. As part of the implementation of this agreement, each of the tendencies or factions shall make statements at the close of the congress proclaiming their firm support to maintaining the unity of the Fourth International."

The ten point agreement, to which this resolution refers, stated, among other things,

"only resolutions and counterresolutions on the following points be placed on the agenda of the coming world congress for a vote: (a) the world political situation; (b) the question of orientation in Argentina; (c) the question of orientation in Bolivia; (d) European perspectives; (e) statutes of the Fourth International.

"That the international discussion on these points be closed following the world congress for one year unless the IEC decides to reopen the discussion earlier.

"That the following points be considered in commissions or panels at the coming world congress: (a) the "cultural revolution" and China; (b) youth radicalization; (c) women's liberation; (d) Middle East; (e) Vietnam; (f) Eastern Europe.

"That votes on these topics not be taken at the coming world congress."

It is necessary to note, as Comrade Hansen, moreover, pointed out in his report, that at the Tenth World Congress these limitations were partially put in question again since a new point was placed on the agenda and put to a vote, a point on "armed struggle in Latin America" in general. Since then, the logic of the differences has placed in jeopardy the seemingly extremely broad and flexible framework of the agreement designed to preserve unity.

First of all, in July 1974, the leadership of the SWP concluded that participation in the faction formed by supporters of the International Majority within the SWP, taking into account this faction's anti-party way of operating, was incompatible with membership in the SWP. The SWP Control Commission in effect stated that this faction had in fact set itself up as a rival party.

"The Control Commission finds that the establishment of this rival party is in violation of the constitution and organizational principles of the Socialist Workers Party. We also note that it is in contradiction with the statutes of the Fourth International and the traditions of the world Trotskyist movement.

"The Control Commission recommends that the Internationalist Tendency's status as a separate, rival party be recognized and that the members of the Internationalist Tendency party be informed that this status places them outside the constitutional provisions of membership in the Socialist Workers Party. . . .

"The evidence clearly establishes the complicity of members of the elected leadership of the Fourth International in the IT's decision to form a rival party"

The leadership of the SWP adopted the conclusions of the control commission. Regarding that complicity, the Political Committee of the SWP declared in a resolution dated July 4:

"The secret IT documents shed new light on the structure, discipline, and methods of functioning of the IMT secret faction.. It has become more highly structured since the Barzman letter^c was written. We learn that the IMT has an international "Bureau" and an "Enlarged Bureau." The composition of these bodies is kept secret from the International. There is a "North American Bureau" -- presumably of the IMT -- which is composed of representatives from the "sections" in North America. The existence of the North American Bureau has been kept a secret from the Fourth International as a whole, the SWP, and the Canadian section of the Fourth International.

"We learn that a political discussion has been opened in the IMT on the political situation in the United States, and that the IMT Bureau has prepared a document on this question, a document that also deals with the SWP and the perspectives of the IT. The existence and content of this discussion has been kept secret from the SWP and the Fourth International. Like the discussion held in the IT preceding its national convention, this discussion in the IMT is not an example of the normal circulation of material within an openly declared faction or tendency, the object of which is to prepare the documents of the tendency or faction for submission to the regular bulletins of the official internal discussion.

"The object of this secret discussion is the opposite -- to hide the real views of the various components of the secret faction from the International as a whole. The Barzman letter revealed that some leaders of the IMT considered it to be the arena where the "real" discussion takes place. The new documents brought to light by the Control Commission show that this is now an operating principle of the IMT as a whole, on a national as well as international scale.

"The IMT secret faction is disciplined to such a degree that it adopted a motion giving various instructions to the IT, even instructing it to violate SWP organizational norms and discipline by accepting non-SWP members of the YSA as members of the IT. It even instructed those IMT supporters who resigned from the IT over disagreement with the IT's split course, to rejoin the splitters.

"The Barzman letter consisted of a report to the Internationalist Tendency of negotiations Barzman was conducting on behalf of the Internationalist Tendency concerning the IT application to join the IMT. Barzman's report indicated that one of the conditions for joining the

IMT was that those members of the IT who disagreed with the IMT line on guerrilla war would have to support the IMT line in the discussion in the International, as part of accepting IMT "discipline." The secret IT documents discovered by the Control Commission demonstrate conclusively that this was in fact the case.

"In 'A Reply to Comrade Massey from Los Angeles,' the Los Angeles grouping within the IT states that it is and always has been opposed to the IMT line on guerrilla warfare and to the IMT Bolivian resolution submitted to the last world congress. Nevertheless, all members of the IT, under IMT faction discipline, voted for the IMT Bolivian resolution in the preconvention discussion in the SWP in preparation for the world congress. Such unprincipled combinationism is not in the tradition of the SWP and the Fourth International, which demands political honesty and faithfulness to principles.

"The fact that the IMT placed its members under discipline to vote for its resolutions even if they disagreed with the fundamental line of those resolutions throws doubt over the validity of the votes cast at the last world congress. We ask: how many delegates to the world congress voted for the IMT Bolivian resolution, for example, who were in fact opposed to that resolution? Enough to reduce the bare 50.7% majority of delegate votes this resolution received to a minority?

"The IMT Bureau apparently approves of the breaches of SWP discipline organized by the IT. At the recent plenum of the SWP National Committee, Comrades Massey and Barzman asserted they would continue their boycott of SWP finances. They reiterated that the IT would decide and carry out its own tactical interventions in public activities whenever it decided that the tactics decided democratically by the SWP branches were inadequate. They would also, they stated, continue to concentrate on selling the "press of the International" (in which they include the Old Mole of the Canadian RMG and the British IMG's International magazine) regardless of the decisions of the SWP to campaign to increase the circulation of the American Trotskyist press.

"A member of the United Secretariat, who is also a member of the IMT Bureau as the secret IT documents reveal, was present at the SWP National Committee plenum. He presented the summary for the IMT after these statements were made by Massey and Barzman, yet he made no dissociation from these assertions by Massey and Barzman. Thus the SWP leadership could only conclude that these assertions by Massey and Barzman stand as IMT policy.

"By its actions the IMT leadership has contravened its own Political Resolution which was adopted by the World Congress. This resolution states: 'The task of the center cannot consist of making authoritative decisions about the tactics of national sections; this is forbidden by the International's statutes.' It is also in violation of the statutes, which state: 'Rather than exercise disciplinary measures of its own in instances of differences with a national leadership, the International Executive Committee should seek to rely on persuasion and recommendations. In no case has it the power to alter the majority rule of a regularly elected leadership of a national section.'

"In violation of the statutes and the Political Resolution adopted by the world congress, the 'center' overturns the tactical decisions of a sympathizing organization and its branches.

"Further, this 'center' is not even one of the duly elected leadership bodies of the Fourth International. No motion was adopted by the United Secretariat instructing the SWP to concentrate on selling the Old Mole and the International rather than the American Trotskyist

press. No motion was made in the United Secretariat instructing the SWP to utilize Inprecor as their primary weapon in contact work "on the job" rather than the American Trotskyist press. Because such motions themselves would have been such a blatant violation of the statutes and such a gross trampling upon democratic centralism, the 'center' which gave these secret instructions to the IT had to be a secret body, presumably the IMT Bureau.

"We also note that, at the very time the Bureau of the United Secretariat was consulting with the national office of the SWP on organizing the distribution of Inprecor in the United States, the IMT "center" went behind the back of the SWP to organize distribution of Inprecor through the IT.

"Such a conception of 'democratic centralism,' applied by a secret parallel international center that operates behind the backs of the elected leaderships of sections, that overturns majority rule and the democratic decisions made by the sections or sympathizing groups, that seeks to determine tactical questions even down to what leaflet will be distributed at a given demonstration, will wreck the Fourth International if it is not opposed and rooted out. Under such a conception not a single section or sympathizing group would be able to function as a democratic-centralist organization. No self-reliant national leaderships democratically selected by the ranks on the basis of their own class-struggle experience could emerge, capable of building the kind of proletarian combat parties necessary to carry out the historic mission of the Fourth International.

"The IMT leadership has set up a secret apparatus paralleling the elected official bodies of the Fourth International. Parallel to the IEC, there is the IMT Steering Committee; parallel to the United Secretariat, the IMT Enlarged Bureau; parallel to the administrative Bureau of the United Secretariat, the administrative IMT Bureau; parallel to possible regional bureaus (which, according to the statutes of the Fourth International, can only be established by the IEC), there is the IMT North American Bureau and perhaps several others; parallel to the sections and sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International, like the Canadian LSA/LSO and the Socialist Workers Party, there are the 'sections' of the IMT.

"This disciplined secret apparatus places loyalty to itself above loyalty to the Fourth International. It has usurped the functions and authority of the United Secretariat. It holds its own 'real' secret discussions. In the case of the SWP, it seeks to overturn the democratic decisions of the elected leadership concerning tactical questions in the United States, to impose its own tactical line on the SWP, and thereby destroy the SWP's democratic-centralist character. It does this in violation of the Political Resolution adopted by the world congress and codified in the statutes of the Fourth International. The cadres of the Fourth International cannot assume that this method of functioning is restricted to the SWP, but must assume, as in the case of the 'Domingo' letter, that it is being applied to other sections and sympathizing groups.

"Most important, out of greater loyalty to its own secret faction than to the Fourth International, the IMT leadership has permitted and helped cover up a split engineered by its followers in the Socialist Workers Party.

"By taking this course of action, the IMT leadership has broken the nine-point 'Agreement on Measures to Help Maintain the Unity of the Fourth International' adopted by the last world congress. This places the unity of the Fourth International in the gravest danger.

"To avert the danger to the international arising from the actions of the IMT, we call for the convocation of a special world congress of the Fourth International as provided for in the statutes of the Fourth International. Section II, Article (6) of the statutes includes the following provision: 'A special World Congress can be convoked at any time by the International Executive Committee or by one third of the national sections.' Section IV, Article (9) includes: 'In the intervals between sessions of the International Executive Committee, the United Secretariat acts in its name and with its powers except that it cannot organize subsecretariats or commissions.'

"Let the whole International debate the real views of the various components of the IMT. Publish all the secret political resolutions and discussion, including the IMT discussion on the American political situation and the SWP, and submit them for consideration by the whole world movement. Only a special world congress can now isolate the splitters and reverse the disastrous orientation now being fostered by the prosplit wing of the IMT.

July 4, 1974"

We add, in order to provide another element in the evolution of relations within the United Secretariat and its organizations, that on July 26, 1974, Rouge made public, under the title "Ou va le PST?" [Where is the PST going?], a United Secretariat resolution formally condemning the policy of the PST as being a "programmatic deviation," as "breaking with the revolutionary Marxist conception of the workers' united front based on the Leninist conceptions of the Third International and revived by Trotsky."

This didn't prevent the PST from pursuing the policy in Argentina that it feels is correct, no more than the SWP's decision to proclaim the incompatibility between membership in the SWP and participation in the activities of the "Internationalist faction" provoked public protests on the part of the United Secretariat.

In this sense it is necessary to state that despite common organizational resolutions, the result of the Tenth World Congress still further dispels the fiction of the United Secretariat as the "centralized international leadership." There are organizations which call themselves Trotskyist and for whom the strength of their true ties with the Fourth International founded by Leon Trotsky, with the international continuity of Bolshevism, is provided by their historic links to the Fourth International, their politics, their relationship to the program of the Fourth International.

It is, moreover, precisely this relationship to the program at the center of the discussion that led up to the World Congress and that continues since, despite all the organizational guardrails.

We have noted the breadth of the field of differences. It is necessary to stress their depth. They touch, we repeat, on the principles of the founding program of the Fourth International, and for that reason, they cut across the totality of the problems raised at the time of the 1950-53 split between the defenders of the program and the revisionist current with which the name Pablo is associated; they put into question the very existence of the Trotskyist organizations in each country.

One should not let oneself be thrown off by the fact that at the last world congress of the United Secretariat it seemed that the most acute disagreements were crystallized around the question of armed

struggle. In fact, to repeat it once again, it is through this issue that the political independence of the proletariat, the building of the revolutionary party, and the question of the program are posed. And that's precisely why, moreover, no common ground could be found between the two opposing currents at the world congress, not just on the question of the armed struggle, but on questions of the evaluation of the world situation and of the orientation to be followed in Europe.

The programmatic character of the differences is further shown in the "Report on Armed Struggle" presented by Roman in the name of the majority. Roman states that there is a "general programmatic weakness of the International in a very important domain, that of choosing the forms of armed struggle and integrating them in our revolutionary strategy."

As one of the SWP leaders remarked on this subject, "the Marxist program on which the Fourth International stands, far from being 'insufficient' on the question of armed struggle, is extremely rich. Our program on this question is set down with great clarity in 'The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International.'" It is fully explained in writings such as the History of the Russian Revolution, by Trotsky. There is no need to revise it.

"We argued that a revision of program on this question could not be limited to one continent, as the majority pretends to do by entitling its resolution 'On the Question of Armed Struggle in Latin America.'

As evidence, we pointed to the position taken by the ICR/ETA-VI, the Spanish sympathizing organization, whose central leaders support the positions of the International Majority Tendency, following the assassination of Carrero Blanco. The ICR/ETA-VI Political Bureau statement proclaiming 'total support' for the terrorist action was an alarming indication that the IEC Majority's 'programmatic clarification' was already beginning to be applied in practice in at least one European country." [Report to the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party by Mary-Alice Waters, June 23, 1974]

Let us recall that as early as the Ninth World Congress of the United Secretariat, in 1969, the resolution on Latin America, which the SWP had to condemn, asserted that "in fact, in most of the countries the most probable variant is that for a rather long period the peasants will have to bear the main weight of the struggle and the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie in considerable measure will provide the cadres of the movement." (IP, July 14, 1969, p. 719)

On many occasions, in its documents, the OCI has shown the organic link (the abandonment of the revolutionary and leading role of the proletariat) that existed between this conception and the conception of the "new vanguard." In fact, "exemplary action," whether armed or not, is only the other side of the abandonment of the political importance of the proletariat. In this way, to look at another aspect of the discussion, in a critique of Pierre Rousset's positions on Vietnam, members of the SWP correctly showed the link that exists between this position and the one that led the ex-Ligue Communiste to line up in the camp of the Union of the Left: "Rousset's approach transforms popular front governments with a 'proletarian' majority from an obstacle on the road to socialist revolution into a transitional step on the road to a workers' state. The only qualification he seems to place on this is that the 'workers' parties' in the front must have their own armed forces." (Johnson-Feldman, "Vietnam, Stalin-

ism, and the Postwar Socialist Revolutions," ISR, April 1974)

The documents we are publishing in this issue of Correspondance Internationale clearly show that, whatever the point of departure, whatever the specific question through which the discussion develops, the thread of the discussion is formed by the totality of the questions of principle, strategy, and tactics that are posed today for partisans of the Fourth International.

In this discussion it is clear that a wing has arisen that seeks to push the logic of revisionism to the very end, i.e. to the destruction of the Trotskyist organizations in each country. The leadership of the SWP is opposed to this liquidationist course and in this sense tends to base itself on the founding program of the Fourth International. This does not in any way mean that its opposition to the line of the United Secretariat majority suffices to set straight the totality of problems posed. Plenty of questions basic to the reconstruction of the Fourth International are not set straight; plenty of differences remain. We will return to this in future issues of Correspondance Internationale.

The reconstruction of a unified Fourth International on the basis of its founding program can only be the result of a complex process that cannot be abstracted from the solution of the problems raised by the entire crisis of the workers movement. But our task requires first of all a real balance sheet and discussion, without any diplomatic guile, of the crisis of the Fourth International.

It is only by beginning in this way that the questions of principle can be set straight and that revisionism, the obstacle to the reconstruction and to the development of the Fourth International, in whatever form it presents itself, can be eliminated.

As part of this necessary and inevitable discussion we are conveying to the members of the organizations affiliated to the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International the documents that seem to us significant of the results of the last world congress of the United Sec.

We have also included the first part of a critique of Pierre Rousset's book on the Vietnamese Communist Party, which was printed publicly in the SWP's theoretical magazine, but which, as far as we know, has not been published anywhere in French, either in an internal or external organ of the majority of the United Secretariat.

Finally, this issue of Correspondance Internationale contains excerpts from the transcript of a meeting that took place between representatives of the leadership of the OCI -- acting within the framework of the mandate established by the International Bureau of the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International in its letters of May and October 1973 to the United Secretariat -- and a delegation of the leadership of the SWP, accompanied by representatives of the LSA (Canada) and the FCR (France) and constituting a delegation from the United Secretariat. This meeting had been requested by the leadership of the SWP, to whom the OCI had made it known that it was ready for discussions.

These minutes were edited by the OCI delegation and are its sole responsibility.

notes

1. During the course of the Congress a third tendency appeared, but it dissolved itself and its activity in no way changed the basic divisions that appeared at this congress.

2. Reference to a factional letter from Barzman, one of the leaders of the minority within the SWP.

3. As the discussion develops, it will be necessary to assess the politics of Moreno's PST, a political orientation with which we have deep differences. It remains that one cannot but be struck by the cynicism with which the majority of the United Secretariat invokes the "workers' united front policy" -- with respect to Argentina.