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SPARTACIST LEAGUE

INTERNAL DISCUSSION BULLETIN

- Call for the Fourth National Conference of the SL/US to be held 28-31 August, 12 June 1974
- Draft Declaration for the Organizing of an International Trotskyist Tendency, 23 May 1974 (with appended Report on Interim International Conference held in Germany, January 1974)
- Spartacist League Trade Union Work, by the Trade Union Commission, 8 June 1974
- Minutes of the Enlarged Plenum of the SL/US Central Committee (with attachments), 16-17 March 1974

Call for the Fourth National Conference
of the Spartacist League of the U.S.

12 June 1974

To all Local and Organizing
Committees and Members of
the SL/U.S.:

On behalf of the Central Committee, the Political Bureau hereby calls the Fourth National Conference of the SL/U.S. to convene in southern Michigan on Wednesday, 28 August 1974 and to continue for two and one half more days, adjourning on Saturday, 31 August. A party plenum is projected for the latter half of that last day. (The National Conference is being held in conjunction with the SL-RCY Summer Camp which runs from 1 p.m., Saturday, 24 August through noon, Sunday, 1 September. It is also proposed that the RCY National Conference occupy Sunday and Monday, 25 and 26 August, and that youth and party plenums take place on Tuesday, 27 August.)

Proposed Agenda

The PB proposes that the Conference agenda include the following points:

- The World Movement and the international Spartacist tendency
- The National Question and its Concrete Application in Complex Conditions
- Perspectives and Tasks of the SL/U.S.
- reports and commissions on conference credentials, CC nominations, SL local work, trade union work and perspectives, Black, women, Latin, press, national organization and youth
- adoption of Organizational Rules
- election of new Central Committee and Control Commission

Pre-Conference Discussion

The SL pre-Conference discussion period formally opens with the publication of this Internal Discussion Bulletin--containing this Conference Call, the draft "Declaration for the Organizing of an International Trotskyist Tendency" (with appended report on the interim international conference held in Germany in January 1974), the Trade Union Commission's "Spartacist League Trade Union Work," and the Minutes (with attachments) of the 16-17 March Enlarged 3rd Plenum of the 3rd Central Committee. In addition the RCY has now published its draft "Tasks of the RCY for the Coming Period" in its Internal Discussion Bulletin No.12, 15 June.

The attention of the membership is also directed to those bulletins published since the last National Conference: the TUC's Internal Trade Union Information Bulletin, July 1973; the two International Discussion Bulletins of August 1973 and March 1974 on Stalinism;

and especially the U.S.-Ceylon exchange in the third International Discussion Bulletin.

Comrades should also be familiar with the first product of the Benjamin-Cunningham group, "The Fall of Allende and the Triumph of the Chilean Counterrevolution--the Spartacist League and the Strategy of Abstentionist Putschism" (reprinted by the SL) and with the most recent "Basic Documents of the Spartacist League" in Marxist Bulletin No.9--Part III.

Additional material is already scheduled to appear in later Bulletins: the "Perspectives" and "Tasks" sections of the main domestic resolution; a document on the National Question; a supplemental international memorandum; and a few contributions from individual members previously received. Material for the International Discussion Bulletin is also accumulating rapidly.

Pre-Conference Procedures

Pre-Conference discussion and delegate election procedures will be as set forth for the last National Conference (see pages 2 through 5 of the Conference Call in Internal Discussion Bulletin No. 15, August 1972), except as follows:

1) Because the Conference will be away from a party centre and preceded by several days of such isolation from adequate technical facilities, tighter restrictions must be placed on late arriving material to be published in the Discussion Bulletin. Therefore the PB directs that any document over sixty double-spaced pages in length submitted at any time, or in the last month before the Conference any over thirty pages, or over ten pages received after 9 August, or any document at all received after 16 August must be previously negotiated with and agreed to by the Central Office.

2) Comrades who are otherwise qualified to vote, but who are away from their and any Local or Organizing Committee of the SL/U.S. as a result of a specific working party assignment, may cast a written proxy vote in the last local committee of which they were or remain members. Members-at-large, who reside near a local committee, may cast a vote in that local committee, providing they participate in pre-Conference discussion in that local. These provisions shall include SL/U.S. members outside the U.S., i.e. providing that such comrades do not have present voting rights in another section or sympathizing group.

3) The ratio of members voting to delegates shall be five to one. Therefore, in general, where n is 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6....:

- (a) for a faction of $5n$ qualified and voting supporters in a local, there will be n delegates, each with one full vote
- (b) for a faction of $5n + 1$, there will be $n-1$ delegates with one full vote each, and one other delegate with $1 \frac{1}{5}$ vote (for $5n+1$) or $\frac{4}{5}$ vote (for $5n-1$).

- (c) for a faction of $5n+2$, there will be $n-1$ delegates with one full vote each, and one other delegate with $1 \frac{2}{5}$ vote (for $5n+2$) or $\frac{3}{5}$ vote (for $5n-2$).
- (d) where $n = 0$, the faction may assign the votes of its 1 or 2 local supporters as proxies if supporters exist elsewhere, to obtain Conference representation.

4) While the ten dollar Conference assessment must be paid prior to voting for positions and electing delegates, locals are urged to collect and transmit these monies early so as to facilitate the travel of delegates. Note that with the Conference locale in the mid-West, delegates normally entitled to consideration for reimbursement of a portion of their expenses will be in this case from the East, South and, especially, the Pacific Coast.

(adopted by PB #32, 12 June 1974)

draft

DECLARATION FOR THE ORGANIZING
OF AN INTERNATIONAL TROTSKYIST TENDENCY

1. The Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand and the Spartacist League of the United States declare themselves to be the nucleus for the early crystallization of an international Trotskyist tendency based upon the 1966 Declaration of Principles and dedicated to the rebirth of the Fourth International.
2. In a half dozen other countries parties, groups and committees have expressed their general or specific sympathy or support for the international Spartacist tendency, as have scattered supporters or sympathizers from a number of additional countries. Among these groups and individuals are comrades, in both Europe and Asia, possessing many years or even decades of experience as cadres of the Trotskyist movement.
3. The Revolutionary Internationalist Tendency, a small Marxist wing of the "United Secretariat," centered on the United States and with supporters in Australia and elsewhere, has seen its spokesmen expelled from their national sections and parties for seeking to express their views within the United Secretariat, that deeply factionally divided and unprincipled conglomeration of reformists and revisionists, latter-day Kautskys, Bukharins and Pablos. If the main contenders in the "United Secretariat" are united in their common and not-so-veiled class collaborationist appetites, they are deeply divided between the electoralism and placid neo-populism of, e.g., the American Socialist Workers Party and the guerrilla-terrorist enthusing of, e.g., the French ex-Ligue Communiste. These differences reflect far more the differing national terrains and resulting opportunist appetites than they do any questions of principle. The recently concluded "Tenth World Congress" of the United Secretariat refused to hear or even acknowledge the appeal of RIT comrades against their expulsion. The RIT forces are now making common cause with the Spartacist tendency. They are but a vanguard of those who will struggle out of the revisionist swamp and toward revolutionary Marxism. Already in France an oppositional Central Committee member of the former Ligue Communiste has broken from the Front Communiste Revolutionnaire (recently formed by Rouge) in solidarity with the views of the RIT.
4. In Germany senior elements from the centrist and now fragmented left split from the United Secretariat in 1970 are being won to the Spartacist tendency. They are regrouping around the publication Kommunistische Korrespondenz. In Germany three inextricable tasks are posed for Leninists: to programmatically win over subjectively revolutionary elements from among the thousands of young left social-democrats, centrists, revisionists and Maoists; to fuse together intellectual and proletarian elements, above all through the development and struggle of communist industrial fractions; to inwardly assimilate some thirty years of Marxist experience and analysis from which the long break in continuity has left the new generation of German revolutionary Marxists still partially isolated.

5. In Austria, Israel, Canada and elsewhere similar splits, followed by revolutionary regroupment and growth, are occurring. In Austria the initial nucleus came from the youth of the United Secretariat section. The "Vanguard" group of Israel is the last still united section of the old "International Committee" which split in 1971 between the British Socialist Labour League's wing led by Gerry Healy (with which the American Workers League of Wohlforth is still united despite friction) and the French Organisation Communiste Internationaliste led by Pierre Lambert which subsequently lost most of its international support--i.e. with the Bolivian Partido Obrero Revolucionario of G. Lora and the European groupings around the Hungarian, Varga, both breaking away. If the "Vanguard" group amid this welter of disintegration is still unable to choose between the counterposed claims of Healy and Lambert, it did produce and promptly expel a principled and valiant counter-tendency to both. In Canada youth from the Revolutionary Marxist Group's Red Circles are being drawn to Trotskyism. Everywhere unprincipled formations are subjected to the hammer blows of sharpened capitalist crisis and upsurge in the class struggle.

6. In Ceylon where the historical consequences of Pabloist revisionism have been most fully revealed, only the Revolutionary Workers Party, led by the veteran Trotskyist, Edmund Samarakkody, has emerged with integrity from the welter of betrayals perpetrated by the old LSSP and which were aided and abetted by the United Secretariat, its unspeakable agent on the island, Bala Tampoe, and the craven Healyite "International Committee." The RWP has been compelled to seek to generalize the revolutionary Marxist program anew from Marxist class struggle principles.

7. The Spartacist tendency is now actively working for the immediate convening of an international conference to politically and geographically extend the tendency and to further formalize and consolidate it. The tendency organizing nucleus will seek to work in the closest collaboration with sympathizing groups, particularly in continuing and assuring a broadly-based and full written and verbal discussion process leading to this international conference.

In the pre-conference interim the tendency organizing nucleus assumes political and organizational responsibility for the prior international resolutions, declarations, open letters and agreements for common work of its present constituent groups. These documents notably include: "Toward Rebirth of the Fourth International," 14 June 1963; Statement to the 3rd Conference of the International Committee, 6 April 1966; Letter to the OCRFI and French OCI, 15 January 1973; Letter to Samarakkody, 27 October 1973; the historical analyses: "Genesis of Pabloism," "Development of the Spartacist League [of New Zealand]," and "The Struggle for Trotskyism in Ceylon"; and the agreements endorsed at the interim international conference held in Germany in January 1974.

8. Both the present "United Secretariat" and the former "International Committee" despite their respective pretensions "to be" the Fourth International, as a necessary condition for their fake "unities,"

have chronically mocked the principles of internationalism and of Bolshevik democratic centralism as their different national groups or nationally-based factions have gone their own way--ultimately in response to the pressures of their own ruling classes. Thus until the English and French components of the ex-"International Committee" blew apart, the International Committee operated explicitly on the proposition that "the only method of arriving at decisions that remains possible at present is the principle of unanimity" (decision at the 1966 London International Committee Conference). Today, following the just concluded "Tenth Congress" of the United Secretariat, its American supporters, being themselves in the Minority internationally, threaten their own national minority, the Internationalist Tendency (which belongs to the international Majority), by declaring:

"The Socialist Workers Party proclaims its fraternal solidarity with the Fourth International but is prevented by reactionary legislation from affiliating to it. All political activities of members of the SWP are decided upon by the democratically elected national leadership bodies of the SWP and by the local and branch units of the party. Unconditional acceptance of the authority of these SWP bodies is a prerequisite of membership. There are no other bodies whose decisions are binding on the SWP or its members." (our emphasis) (SWP Internal Information Bulletin #4, April 1974, from Introductory Note, 17 April 1974)

9. This apparently naked assertion of national independence by or toward organizations in the United States is not unique and has a specific history. Thus the American Healyite publicist, Wohlforth, declares in his pamphlet, "Revisionism in Crisis":

"With the passing of the Voorhis Act in 1940 the SWP was barred from membership in the Fourth International by law. Ever since that time the SWP has not been able to be an affiliate of the Fourth International. So today its relationship to the United Secretariat is one of political solidarity just as the Workers' League stands in political solidarity with the International Committee."

The "Voorhis Act" passed by the American Congress in 1940 has been used as a convenient excuse for revisionists to more openly display their concrete anti-internationalism than is convenient for their co-thinkers elsewhere.

This act, while ostensibly aimed centrally at domestic military conspiracies directed by foreign powers, was actually intended, as was the overlapping "Smith Act," to harass the American Communist Party, then supporting the Hitler-Stalin Pact. A key provision states: "An organization is subject to foreign control if... its policies or any of them are determined by or at the suggestion of... an international political organization" (political activity being defined as that aimed at the forcible control or overthrow of the government). Such organizations were to be subject to such massive and repetitive "registration" requirements as to paralyze them, quite aside from the impermissible nature of many of the disclosures

demanded. Thus it was similar to the later "Communist Control Act" which was successfully fought by the American CP. But the "Voorhis Act" with its patently unconstitutional and contradictory provisions has never been used by the government--only by revisionists.

10. Today the United Secretariat Majority makes loud cries in favor of international unity and discipline i.e., over the SWP's views and conduct, but it was not always so. When the forerunner of the Spartacist League tried to appeal its expulsion from the SWP to the United Secretariat, Pierre Frank wrote for the United Secretariat on 28 May 1965 that:

"In reply to your letter of May 18 we call your attention first of all to the fact that the Fourth International has no organizational connection with the Socialist Workers party and consequently has no jurisdiction in a problem such as you raise; namely, the application of democratic centralism as it affects the organization either as a whole or in individual instances."

After Frank gave the Spartacists his answer, Healy publicly expressed sympathy for the Spartacists' plight, charging in his Newsletter of 16 June 1965 that Frank "ducks behind a legal formula for cover." But when Healy's own ox was gored by the SWP's publication of the embarrassing pamphlet "Healy 'Reconstructs' the Fourth International," Healy's SLL threatened violence and/or legal action ("Political Committee Statement," 20 August 1966 Newsletter) against any who circulated the pamphlet in his England. Shortly he used both--the Tate affair! Healy claimed as the basis for his threats the self-same fear of the Voorhis Act on behalf of Wohlforth and the Spartacists. But the Spartacist then replied:

"We for our part reject the SLL's solicitousness on our behalf. The Voorhis Act is a paper tiger--never used against anyone and patently unconstitutional. For the Justice Department to start proceedings against a small group like ours or the smaller and less threatening [Wohlforthite] ACFI would make the government a laughing stock, and Healy knows this. He is aware that for years the SWP has hidden behind this very act to defend its own federalist idea of an International."

--Spartacist #7, Sept.-Oct. 1966

11. More currently, however, as in the United Secretariat Majority's "Again, and Always, the Question of the International" (by Alain Krivine and the self-same Pierre Frank, 10 June 1971, SWP International Information Bulletin #5, July 1971) they attack the public formulation by Jack Barnes, SWP National Secretary, that "the principal condition for international organization" is "collaboration between leaderships... in every country." To this idea Krivine and Frank counterpose "the International, a world party based on democratic centralism." And later this Majority Tendency (in IIDB Volume X, #20, October 1973) notes that the Minority, in flagrant contradiction to Barnes' and Hansen's previously expressed views, declares "we will do our utmost to construct a strong [international] center," and the Majority concludes that "actual practice leaves no doubt: the [Minority] faction would be for a 'strong center' if it

were able to have a majority in it." And most recently the same United Secretariat Majority asserts that behind the acts of the SWP-based Minority "lies a federalist conception of the International which contradicts the statutes and the line adopted by the [Tenth] World Congress" (17 March 1974, IIDB Volume XI, #5, April 1974). The United Secretariat Majority ought to know. They made this accusation in commenting on a Tenth Congress joint Minority-Majority agreement so flagrant in mutually amnestying every sort of indiscipline, public attack and disavowal, organizational chicanery, walkout and expulsion that the Majority also had to offer the feeble disclaimer that these "compromises adopted at this World Congress should in no way be taken as precedents" and that "the exceptional character of these measures is demonstrated, moreover, by the unanimous adoption of our new statutes" (which formally contradict the real practice!). Yes indeed, for opportunists and revisionists basic organizational principles are not of centralized, comradely, even-handed and consistent practice but just boil down to the simple matter of whose ox is gored. This is the organizational aspect of Pabloism.

If today the United Secretariat promises to back up its own friends in the SWP should action be taken against them, the point to be made is not the United Secretariat's dishonesty and hypocrisy per se, but rather the shattering of the United Secretariat's pretensions (like those of the International Committee) to be the Fourth International. They both trim their avowed organizational principles through expediency for petty advantage just as and because they do the same with their political principles and program.

12. The international Spartacist tendency is just that, a tendency in the process of consolidation. But from its international outset it declares its continuing fidelity already tested for a decade in national confines to Marxist-Leninist principle and Trotskyist program--Revolutionary, Internationalist and Proletarian.

The struggle for the rebirth of the Fourth International promises to be difficult, long, and, above all, uneven. But it is an indispensable and central task facing those who would win proletarian power and thus open the road to the achievement of socialism for humanity. The struggle begun by L.D. Trotsky in 1929 to constitute an International Left Opposition must be studied. Both despite and because of the differing objective and subjective particulars and with ultimately common basis then and now there is much to be learned especially as to the testing and selection of cadres in the course of the vicissitudes of social and internal struggles.

The giant figure of Trotsky attracted around itself all sorts of personally and programmatically unstable elements repelled by the degenerating Comintern. This led, together with demoralization from the succession of working-class defeats culminating in the second World War, to a prolonged and not always successful sorting out process. It is a small compensation for the lack of a Trotsky that the Spartacist tendency has little extraneous, symbolic drawing power at the outset. But a decade of largely localized experience shows no lack of weak or accidental elements drawn temporarily to the tendency. The only real test is in hard-driving, all-sided

involvement in living class struggle.

As L.D. Trotsky noted in "At the Fresh Grave of Kote Tsintsadze,"
7 January 1931:

"It took altogether extraordinary conditions like czarism, illegality, prison, and deportation, many years of struggle against the Mensheviks, and especially the experience of three revolutions to produce fighters like Kote Tsintsadze....

"The Communist parties in the West have not yet brought up fighters of Tsintsadze's type. This is their besetting weakness, determined by historical reasons but nonetheless a weakness. The Left Opposition in the Western countries is not an exception in this respect and it must well take note of it."

Central Committee, SL/ANZ

Central Committee, SL/U.S.

[this draft agreed to on 23 May 1974 by the PB-SL/U.S. and a representative of the CC-SL/ANZ and accepted for submission to the two Central Committees for action and to other groups for discussion]

[for release to the public press of sympathizing organizations; subsequently printed in Australasian Spartacist #6, March 1974, and Workers Vanguard #39, 1 March 1974.]

International Conference Held

An interim Conference, centered on the European work and perspectives of Revolutionary Marxists, took place this January in Germany. Comrades from or in seven countries participated.

The programmatic basis for the interim Conference was drawn from a political agreement on the basis for undertaking common work in Germany by the Austrian Bolshevik-Leninists and the Spartacist League/US. This document, setting forth eight specific points, is as follows:

"Declaration of Political Basis for Common Work in Germany"

"I. The Austrian Bolshevik-Leninists (ÖBL) will undertake political work in Germany in common with the Spartacist League/US on the basis of programmatic agreement with the 1966 'Declaration of Principles' of the SL/US, subsequently adopted also by the Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand. Fundamental to this Declaration of Principles are the decisions of the Communist International during the period of its first four Congresses and the 'Transitional Program,' adopted by the 1938 Founding Conference of the Fourth International.

"II. In particular the following points are singled out for special emphasis or amplification in connection with our common work:

"1) Recognition of the necessity of the rebirth of the Fourth International, destroyed by Pabloist revisionism. Rejection of the claims of all ostensibly Trotskyist international groupings to represent programmatically the continuity of, or to be the Fourth International.

"2) Unconditional defense of the degenerated or deformed workers states against capitalist imperialism must be coupled with recognition of the necessity for political revolution against the bureaucracies of all these states, from Moscow and East Berlin to Belgrade, Hanoi, Havana and Peking.

"3) Rejection of the ultra-left position that the Social Democratic parties are bourgeois parties through and through. Recognition of the dual character of reformist workers parties, such as Social Democratic parties generally, as being simultaneously bourgeois and workers parties or, in Lenin's terms, 'bourgeois workers parties.'

"4) Recognition that the Trotskyist tactic of entrism flows from the historic task of revolutionists facing massive Social Democratic, Labour or Stalinist parties is, under ripe conditions, to split such parties into their essentially bourgeois

and proletarian elements. This task is vital to the creation of mass revolutionary proletarian parties and thereby of advancing on the road to the proletarian revolution itself.

"5) Rejection of the longtime Pabloist conception of entrism ('sui generis') to pressure reformist, revisionist or nationalist bureaucracies so that a left section is supposed to be assisted in becoming the 'unconscious agent' of an allegedly automatic process of permanent revolution, i.e., the denial of the centrality of the proletariat and the substitution for its programmatically-based revolutionary party in the struggle for socialism. Rejection of the ultra-left, and often petty-bourgeois radical, Pabloist complement which rejects the tactic of entrism as such.

"6) Recognition of the validity of the tactic of revolutionary regroupment. This is a tactic which is particularly applicable as a means for furthering political differentiation and clarification through a process of splits and fusions among ostensibly revolutionary groups when conditions have produced turmoil on the left. 'To set the base against the top' is the essence of this tactic as it is for other Leninist-Trotskyist tactics as well, such as the united front and entrism.

"7) Recognition of the need to struggle for a class opposition to all popular fronts, from Allende's Unidad Popular to the Union de la Gauche in France. No electoral support to any of the parties of popular fronts. Projection instead, where there is no mass revolutionary proletarian pole, of a policy of 'conditional opposition' to the reformist and revisionist parties in such a popular front, i.e., to raise the demand that such parties break from their coalition with bourgeois elements as a condition for critical support to them by class-conscious militants.

"8) Acceptance of the Bolshevick-Leninist conception of democratic centralism: full freedom of internal discussion, full unity in action. Rejection of 'freedom of criticism' outside the party as a perversion of Leninist democratic centralism and a throwback to the pre-First World War Second International.

"III. Since the above points constitute a relatively advanced level of programmatic agreement, we recognize our responsibility to struggle actively for the constitution as soon as possible of a democratic-centralist international Spartacist tendency, based on an elaborated common programmatic outlook among several national sections. At present, this necessarily entails the fullest possible consultation regarding this development."

Agreed to by the Political Bureau of the SL/US on 10 September 1973; and ratified by the Plenum of the OBL on 8 December 1973.

Edited for publication by the
International Department of the
SL/US on 14 February 1974.

Following discussion this Declaration in draft form was endorsed by the interim Conference unanimously with one abstention.

A companion document was also endorsed (unanimously). Its political provisions note:

"[Our] aim...is the constitution of a fighting propaganda group resolutely based on 'the historic tasks which flow from [the objective] situation irrespective as to whether or not the workers are today ripe for this. Our tasks don't depend on the mentality of the workers. The task is to develop the mentality of the workers' (Trotsky). Any programmatic adaptation or capitulation to the present consciousness of the masses in the name of 'tactics' must be rejected.

"The work of communists in trade unions must aim at the construction of a class struggle group with a membership defined by participation in the group and by agreement with the program of the group; a program which is an application of the Transitional Program to the concrete trade union situation and which aims at posing the class struggle group as an alternative revolutionary leadership of the union.

"The goal of the united front tactic is to implant the revolutionary program in the masses. Hence the decisive element of the action of revolutionists within the united front is the struggle for the revolutionary program in opposition to that of reformists or centrists. Without the struggle for the revolutionary program, any reference to the united front as a means to achieve 'the broadest possible unity of the class' is simply an adaptation to pre-World War I Kautskyist revisionism."

Preparation for the interim Conference included the production of a substantial first issue of the German edition of Spartacist. It contains the following material:

"Toward Rebirth of the Fourth International"
(1963 Tendency Resolution in the SWP)

"Contribution to the International Committee Conference"
(1966 Spartacist Remarks in London)

Material on the German IKD and Spartacus-BL
(1972 Spartacist Letter and 1973 Conference Greetings)

"To the International Organizing Committee supported by
the French OCI"
(1973 Spartacist Letter)

"Reformist Appetite versus Guerrilla-Oriented Centrism"
(reprint of 1973 leftist factional material from the
struggle within the United Secretariat)

"Turn the Guns Around!"
(ÖBL statement on the October 1973 war in the Near East)

The work of the interim Conference notably included endorsement of the publication, by Berlin supporters, of the periodical Kommunistische Korrespondenz, the first issue of which is in preparation.

The interim Conference concluded, upon a high note of determination for the furtherance of our common international work, with the singing of "The Internationale."

--statement by the International
Department of the SL/US,
16 February 1974

SPARTACIST LEAGUE TRADE UNION WORK

Submitted by the Trade Union Commission

A. INTRODUCTORY

1. The Spartacist League has conducted trade union work commensurate with its size and general tasks since its inception, and has always emphasized the intimate connection between trade union work and other aspects of building the vanguard party. Trade union work is not somehow "separate" from the struggle for revolutionary leadership: on the contrary, communist work in the trade unions is an integral part of this struggle. Thus the Spartacist League undertakes trade union work precisely in order to be able to raise a full, class-struggle program from within the mass organizations of the working class. We follow in the footsteps of the Leninist Communist International, which called for mass work to be based on:

"In place of the minimal program of the reformists and centrists the Communist International poses the struggle for concrete needs of the proletariat, for a system of demands which in their totality disintegrate the power of the bourgeoisie, organize the proletariat, constitute stages in the struggle for the proletarian dictatorship and each of which lends expression to the need of the broadest masses, even if these masses do not yet consciously stand on the soil of the dictatorship of the proletariat."

- "Theses on Tactics"
Third CI Congress, 1921

Trotsky carried this conception forward with the Transitional Program (1938), and in his insistence that in the epoch of imperialist decay, revolutionary leadership alone is capable of breaking the trade unions from subservience to imperialism and its state, and of resetting the course of the unions in the direction of class struggle.

2. The SL is unique in its adherence to Leninist-Trotskyist principles in trade union work. The conception that revolutionists must be prepared to abandon part or all of their program, capitulating to outright reformism, in order to work in the trade unions is a hallmark of present-day centrism. The organizational weakness of the revolutionary left and the predominance of the reformist bureaucracy in the trade unions--the only mass organizations of the working class--only increases the need to struggle for the revolutionary program in those organizations. Any other approach vitiates the Trotskyist Transitional Program, rendering it a useless abstraction.

Unlike reformists and centrists, therefore, the SL seeks to organize oppositional groupings in the unions founded on the basis of the full application of the Trotskyist Transitional Program to the arena. Such caucuses are organizationally separate from the SL and limited to the unions in which they operate, yet they provide the basis for the politically unambiguous application of the SL program directly into the arenas of the class struggle. They constitute a nucleus of revolutionary leadership within the unions politically harmonious to the growing nucleus of the vanguard party. They contribute to the growth of the party through their immediate interventions and recruitment to a class-struggle program. They are thus

similar in purpose to the early (1922-24) Trade Union Educational League (TUEL), trade union arm of the American CP in the 1920's, which was a membership organization based on the party's program of transitional, class-struggle demands, including the call for "a workers republic."

Because of the danger of red-baiting, however, we cannot say everything communists must say to the workers from within the framework of the unions. Furthermore, class-struggle caucuses we support do not require members to adhere to everything the SL stands for. This does not entail an opportunist withholding of any essential part of our program, but rather a recognition of the necessary distinction between propaganda and agitation. The party press is thus an essential adjunct to our work in the unions, especially during the early phases of fraction development: not for disinterested reporting, but as a fighting weapon of intervention and conveyor of views of the SL not covered by the caucus' program.

B. IMPLANTATION

3. The revolutionary program is nothing without the revolutionists who carry it into the class struggle. Despite our episodically wide impact, class-struggle caucuses do not develop automatically or independently of the leadership and experience of the revolutionary party. Implantation of SL members into the unions is thus required, and the SL fractions are the backbone of our political perspectives in the unions.

The goal of systematic implantation of the rapidly growing SL membership into a set of key, national unions was part of the Memorandum on the Transformation of the Spartacist League, adopted by the Central Committee in September 1971. Attainment of this goal was characterized as an essential concretization of our proletarian perspectives despite anticipated difficulties in getting the indicated people into the indicated locations. Success was considered integral to the transformation of the SL into the nucleus of the vanguard party. Through systematic national coordination and a highly dedicated membership, and aided by the continuance of boom conditions in some industries, we had initial successes prior to the Third National Conference in November of 1972, and have managed to extend and deepen this network of implantation since then. Maintenance and political development of this network replaced massive new implantation as our central national priority.

4. The wave of workerism on the left noted in the Trade Union Memorandum of the Third National Conference was accompanied by efforts on the part of New Left, Maoist and pseudo-Trotskyist groups to penetrate the unions simultaneously with the SL's major effort. The SL, however, in addition to its program, is distinguished by its serious, long-term approach to implantation.

In trade union work particularly, our program is judged on the basis of the individuals who defend it. To the workers, the caucus is the people that make it up; it cannot survive if they are removed from the scene, nor can it appear to emerge, ready-made, with no preparation. It must represent the coming together of real individuals

who are seen as legitimate members of the union with a history of political intervention consistent with, and as extensive as, the formal program of the caucus they are founding. Generally at least a year, and usually longer, is required between a fresh implantation and the development of a caucus. In this difficult and contradictory preparatory period, the fraction is especially dependent on party guidance and support work.

Implantation requires distortion of the effective strength of the organization. Newly-implanted members must carefully lay the groundwork for their future intervention by at first refraining from virtually all public political activity and avoiding premature confrontations with bureaucrats. Fraction members must adapt themselves to the work situation, establish reputations as good workers, and learn the ins and outs of dealing with the union and management on the shop floor. They must learn to control the initial temptations to act like the stereotypical image of the wild-eyed radical, and develop reputations as reliable and knowledgeable union militants. They must discipline themselves to avoid foolish errors and be able to handle a wide variety of situations posing security problems as naturally as possible. They must control or change their life styles sufficiently to avoid standing out in significant non-political ways. Finally, they must emerge as political individuals, through the gradual unfolding of distinct ideas--the elements of our program--on a broad range of trade union and general political issues and subjects.

5. In the period since the adoption of the Transformation Memorandum our trade union work has involved a substantial proportion of the SL membership, stabilizing at between 25 and 30 percent of the combined SL/RCY membership. The March 1974 figure was 27 percent of total SL/RCY membership. Many new and untested elements, some gained through regroupment and still in the process of being integrated into the SL, were involved in implantation during the period of our transformation, mostly in II. Initial success depended on a struggle to instill a patient, "go slow, go deep" policy in the newly-forming fractions. This test of the seriousness of the SL's perspectives was thus also the first test of the new fractions themselves. This problem of maturation and integration gradually developed into the need to begin laying the groundwork for open political work. In order to aid the political development of the new fractions, the Expanded Political Bureau meeting of 9 June 1973 adopted a Memorandum on Trade Union Work and Security, incorporating political and organizational guidelines for new fractions. This Memorandum remains the guide to our policy on fraction development and should be required study for all new local officers, fractions and fraction members.

C. FRACTIONS

6. The implantation process will continue, especially in connection with the formation of new branches. In the current year, however, we are emerging from this preparatory period for the bulk of our present fractions, resulting in a greatly increased proportion of active unionists (i.e., those producing or in a position to produce written material in their unions), and thus an increase in our over-all political presence.

7. Of the individual fractions, our first transport union (T1), Intermediate Industry (II), and Light Industry (LI) are presently the most important within the overall network. T1 is our oldest and most experienced fraction. Although its base is somewhat narrow, the arena unrewarding and recruitment difficult, it is indispensable as an aid to international work, and its leadership and example has proved vital both to trade union work and party work as a whole. II is still the single most important union in the country for political work as well as being our largest implantation, with five local fractions. Three of the older fractions have successfully emerged into public political life. Chronic layoffs in the industry, isolating our members from the work location, prevent one of these from advancing further and have severely hampered the other two fractions, but they have not curtailed our perspectives.

Concretization of our II perspective required colonization of a branch in the center of the industry, the "North American" city (No.Am.). This was successfully accomplished, and includes a fraction in another industry and campus work as well to make a fully-rounded branch. II work in No.Am. lags about a year behind the other fractions because of the time of implantation, although it will eventually be the center of our national caucus. The fraction there faces some special problems due to the violence, intense racial antagonisms and chaotic and poorly-attended union meetings. These will have to be addressed with an extra note of caution, and attempts to build up contacts and conduct recruiting independently of activities directly related to union intervention, including maximising social contacts with workers, independent study groups, work on campuses frequented by II workers and eventually public caucus activities.

Only one of our three originally-implanted work locations in the North American fraction is in a position to begin political activation this year, but it is important for it to do so to provide a center in the city for the establishment of a national caucus next year.

Our second oldest fraction, in LI, has intervened well in the national union despite a limited base of local operations, and has also proven indispensable to party work generally. LI is a large and important national union with heavy differentiation along regional, race and sex lines, which makes a sexually integrated, national intervention more important than in other unions. Perspectives for the future depend on the activation, beginning this year, of fractions in three new locations around the country, providing the basis for national extension of the original caucus, and bridging of the pervasive sexual division in the industry. Difficulty in hiring and ingetting transfers to desired locations has been greatest in LI. The resulting strain on the members and delayed perspectives has been particularly bad in the East Coast section. Once caucuses are established in the three new locations, the original caucus will be used for leadership and guidance. The pressure from within the fraction to prematurely liquidate this original base tends to underestimate the value of a well-established presence.

8. Our second transport union implantation (T2), and a Basic Industry implantation begun over a year ago, link up well with our other fractions. T2 is an important union on the West Coast which we have penetrated by recruiting a well-known militant, followed by some initial reinforcement. The fake-left background of the union leadership and its CP supporters leads to a tendency on the part of the latter to respond virulently to our militant's principled politics. Our task is to ease our resulting isolation and lay the basis for recruitment through consolidation of a caucus, hopefully this fall.

Our BI implantation now extends to three locations around the country. The union has strong ties to II both industrially and in union consciousness. Our orientation to BI was acquired through the process of stabilization of two Mid-West branches originally obtained through regroupments. Together with II, it now forms the core of a future base in Mid-West industry and a strong argument for reinforcement of the Mid-West; it has already led to a qualitative expansion of our perspectives in the "Mid-West" city, the center of the industry. Our perspectives call for our emergence as political individuals in the two older locations beginning this year. Development, however, is necessarily slowed by deeply-imbedded racism and national chauvinism in the industry. BI furthermore is our one fraction which faces the danger of being completely wiped out through layoffs in the expected downturn, requiring a probable long delay in caucus perspectives. This fact gives pause to the otherwise strong desire to reinforce the existing implantation with new fractions in new branches.

9. Our fraction in the public employee union on the South Coast has done exemplary political work for more than two years and produced two organizers who have been sent into other industries. The transfers of cadre and a political split robbed it of its personal continuity, so that the old fraction is now composed of entirely new people with no personal knowledge of the earlier struggles. The fraction therefore clings to continued existence only precariously. The national union, however, continues to be useful for secondary trade union work, particularly in connection with campuses. Retention of the South Coast fraction, if possible, is desirable and will be an aid to recruitment elsewhere.

10. Several specific unions and industrial sectors are noteworthy by their absence from our present implantation network, either because they repeatedly loom as important opportunities for work in existing SL branches, or because of their inherent centrality. We have nothing in the extraction and basic resource processing industries, which, among other things, will be an important part of colonization of the South. The Teamsters union is another target which must eventually be tackled, probably through an initial penetration of key, militant locals in several cities in which we have branches. Competing with these for attention are several important city transit unions and various branches of heavy industry related to II. In addition, some possibilities and special purposes exist for work in other transport unions.

Perspectives for new implantation, however, are subordinate to

the need to expand existing fractions and to perspectives for the colonization of new branches. Once a new branch perspective is settled upon and the question of reinforcement of existing fractions disposed of, intervention in a new union will have to be conditioned by the relative importance of the union locally, regionally and nationally, and its relationship to our existing network of fractions. Thus colonization of the South, for instance, would raise the question of reinforcing LI immediately, and possibly colonizing a basic resource industry, depending on the area. Further penetration of the Mid-West poses the conflict between II and BI primarily; this should be resolved in favor of II because of greater prospects for recruitment and potential BI opportunities elsewhere (in the Mid-Atlantic and South Coast areas). A steady growth rate over the next few years could pose the possibility of our making a massive, nationwide colonization of a new national union, but reinforcement of existing fractions combined with some of the better local and possibly regional perspectives seems preferable.

11. Recruitment is a sine qua non for our trade union work in a period of normal trade union activity and bourgeois democracy. Specific conditions will of course vary, but in general, failure to recruit means failure to build the roots essential for long-term work in the arena; it will result in stagnation, political degeneration and threats to the security of the implantation itself. Although recruitment depends on the existence of a caucus to attract militants, it is a function of the fraction which furthermore must be accorded the highest priority. Recruitment from our fractions has averaged out as moderate. Our current, well-established fractions--T1, public employee and West Coast LI--have all resulted in at least some excellent party recruits, but our biggest implantation, II, has been disappointing so far. The tailing off of recruitment in West Coast LI forms an important part of our concern to establish fractions in other more fruitful locals.

Recruitment requires a balanced division of labor in each fraction, with time and resources allotted for contacting by fraction members and introduction of trade union contacts to the SL/RCY through forums, classes, social gatherings and individual contacting sessions. Fractions should note that recruitment work may not dovetail exactly with activity oriented toward intervention in union meetings, since likely recruits in this period may be thoughtful, untypical, inactive workers, possibly part-time students, rather than active unionists. Fractions should devote a portion of their time to the attempt to ferret out such people through general communist propaganda, tracking down WV purchasers, scouring campuses attended by workers, etc.

12. Two experiences in pre-caucus fraction development stand out as lessons for future party work. After almost a year of implantation, one of the II fractions was confronted with a wildcat strike which was aborted by anti-communist union leaders. The more active fraction members had been identified through their initial political work as part of the small (5%) militant minority in the plant, and, through their own impatience and inexperience, got caught up in an over-active intervention in the events, despite their maintenance of a verbally more conservative line. We survived well compared to the generally reckless OROs (some of which got completely wiped out),

but our organizational mistakes led to one firing. A "two-tier" organizational conception of the fraction, in which the newer and less active half of the fraction earlier had been designated to remain an inactive reserve, helped in cutting our losses. The experience underlined the need for organizational caution and attention to detail in developing wildcat situations, and for strong party leadership. It also confirmed our line on wildcats. While condemning the bureaucracy for its lack of democracy and ruthless suppression of wildcats, we counterpose a programmatic struggle for the right to strike on the local and production-unit level with full union support. Mindless militancy and adventurism must be opposed politically as tactically suicidal, not by appearing to back bureaucratic suppression, but through programmatic struggle to win the backing of the entire union and to build an alternative revolutionary leadership.

Political vacillation rather than organizational inexperience was the problem with our T2 fraction in the ILA-boycott incident. Anti-communist maritime union leaders had called for a boycott of goods to the Soviet Union, until the latter stopped aiding the Arabs, during the October 1973 Arab-Israeli war. The Political Bureau proposed that both transport union fractions make statements for publication in WV showing evidence of support for our anti-bureaucratic and revolutionary defeatist line on the war from within unions potentially affected by the boycott call. The statements would condemn the boycott as reactionary, call on corresponding Soviet workers to aid only the legitimate struggles of workers in the Near East, not their rulers, and emphasize international class solidarity. The T2 fraction requested withdrawal of the statement from publication after the cease fire was announced on grounds that reflected the momentary domination of social-democratic thinking: the printing of such a statement would put the fraction in an awkward position in the arena. Direct danger of expulsion from the union as a result of the action was discounted by the fraction itself.

This amounted to a statement that the fraction perspective was not one of Trotskyist political intervention but of adaptation to narrow trade-unionism and the sort of fake-leftism typified by the union leadership. The local SL leadership also revealed disorientation by seizing on the cease-fire as an excuse to abandon the fight against capitulationism when issue itself remained unresolved (as the boycott continued), thus failing to see the capitulationism of the fraction as the problem. The PB acceded to the fraction request at the time with the intent of aggressively pursuing discussion on the matter, characterising the fraction's position as reflecting "a conservative and parochial bias."

13. The changed priorities more than the increased numbers of the fractions have mushroomed the job of trade union director beyond the part-time bounds called for in the Transformation Memorandum. The task of coordinating and leading political development, interventions and other work of the fractions, as well as guiding the continuing job of new implantation, now calls for a separate office as soon as possible headed by a labor secretary elected as a national officer.

D. CAUCUSES

14. Caucuses facilitate recruitment of revolutionists by bringing trade union militants into an organization struggling to build an alternative, revolutionary leadership in the union. The caucus intervenes in the economic and other partial struggles of and in the union (union democracy, contracts, anti-discrimination struggles, etc.), seeking to assimilate them to the class struggle as a whole and impart class consciousness to the best militants. In the course of these struggles, it calls for a sliding scale of wages and hours, opposition to all forms of class collaboration and government intervention in the labor movement, internationalist class solidarity, and the need for expropriation of industry under workers control, a workers party based on the trade unions to fight for a workers government, and a class-struggle leadership to oust the reformist bureaucracy.

One of the most important functions of the caucus is to point constantly to the importance of intervention by the union in major events of the class struggle--Chilean coup, British miners strike, deportations of minorities, etc.--in opposition to myopic trade union reformists and their "left" conciliators. The caucus requires disciplined functioning on the part of its members, who must agree with the general thrust of the caucus' program, be willing to keep differences internal, and make serious organizational commitments.

15. Despite the often-times close connection between caucus building and united-front work in the unions, the caucus is not a form of the united front itself. Confusion on this point aided the Stalinist degeneration of the American CP's trade union work in the 1920's. The original, programmatically-based, membership conception of the TUEL was replaced with a politically watered-down, permanent "united front" coalition, in which all oppositional bureaucrats were welcome. Communists seek to achieve leadership hegemony in and through united fronts by attempting to unite the whole class in counterposition to the bourgeoisie on episodic, immediate issues, but they do not liquidate the party into the united front. Revolutionary leadership must be built within the unions on a similar basis, not shifting from one united front formation to another, but intervening from one issue to the next with a consistent program and organizational structure. Just as the party must not be liquidated into the united front, so the caucus must not be liquidated into broad, "left-bloc" trade unionism, although it seeks every opportunity to undertake united-front work, including the formation of episodic united-front committees for special purposes where relevant. The most successful united front work in the unions consists in uniting the union itself as a form of the united front under the leadership of the programmatically-based caucus, which in turn operates under the leadership of the vanguard party.

16. Our caucuses have succeeded in providing examples of revolutionary trade union work, including avoiding destruction at the hands of conniving, red-baiting bureaucrats, Stalinists, etc., and continuing to build and recruit on the basis of aggressively-applied class-struggle programs. In T1 our caucus represents the only alternative to the publicity-conscious, social-democratic out-bureaucrat

supported by all the OROs. Its strength was great enough to make the opportunist Class Struggle League tail after it from outside the arena through "critical support" in the last union elections, despite the CSL's openly expressed orientation to the afore-mentioned out-bureaucrat. In West Coast LI, a concerted drive to expel us from the union brought on partly by our own confrontationist errors was thwarted with a successful united-front campaign, and our LI caucus led another united front which was instrumental in reversing an attempt by a section of the bureaucracy to strengthen the formal anti-communism of the union at a national convention.

17. Consistent proletarian internationalism is one of the central politically distinguishing characteristics of our caucuses. ORO supporters and bureaucratic reformers invariably capitulate to the bureaucracy's national chauvinism, saving their "leftism" for narrow, domestic issues and shunning anything smacking of international class solidarity like the plague. Our caucuses oppose all forms of protectionism and bourgeois immigration restrictions, and call for international organizing and strike support with class-struggle methods. In T1, massive international capital migration makes this issue a central dividing line separating our caucus from all other forces in the union. Our caucus in LI, a union closely associated with CIA-union busting and anti-communism abroad, called for the severing of all ties with the CIA in connection with its opposition to the Chilean junta. A vigorous, unconditional defense of the rights of foreign workers in the U.S.--no deportations, immediate citizenship rights for all foreign workers, union publications in relevant foreign languages--is another important distinction of our caucuses which, together with the caucus' own foreign language material, gives us a hearing with workers often completely ignored by everyone else. In one local election campaign, our candidates won the votes of virtually an entire national minority in the location. Contact with such emigre national groupings has often been important historically in the initiation of communist work in their native countries. Internationalist propaganda will be an especially important political cutting edge in BI, a union with a long history of impregnating its members with support for the aggressive foreign economic interests of U.S. imperialism.

Our caucuses also distinguish themselves by calling for class-struggle methods in supporting the strikes of other workers (Farm-workers, British miners), counterposing "hot cargo" labor boycotts and spreading the strike to the reformist methods of the bureaucrats. We thus emphasize the continual need for revolutionary leadership as against the OROs and trade union oppositionists who tail uncritically after every "left" manifestation of the bureaucracy (e.g., Cesar Chavez, British CP Mineworkers leaders, etc.).

Our caucuses have also led the way in breaking the barriers of local union parochialism, not only by espousing a proletarian, internationalist program, but also by conducting direct interventions where possible outside the union. While such interventions cannot extend to the point of surpassing the caucus' role as a union caucus, they can nevertheless provide an important back-up to the work of the party. Thus our T1 caucus has played a propaganda role through strike support work to an LI local we were interested in, in addition to numerous other examples, and our LI caucus has been

active in a number of arenas, particularly the women's movement.

18. Our caucuses stand out as unique in opposing the growing trend on the part of bureaucratic reformists to appeal to the courts against opponents in the unions. This opportunist crossing of the class line legitimizes both anti-labor laws and entrenched, right-wing bureaucrats, and leads to extension of government power in the unions. This was a key issue in the creation of the T1 caucus through a split with a typical bureaucratic reformist. This trend has given a sinister meaning to the slogan "union democracy," since under this slogan the government replaces discredited bureaucrats with those better able to discipline the workers. This slogan, which was never sufficient to define a break with the bureaucracy (i.e., for the sake of giving critical support) is now doubly treacherous. Revolutionists must ask the question, union democracy under whose auspices? Trotsky's insistence on linking the demand for union democracy with the demand for independence of the union from the bourgeois state is thus a critical point of departure for class consciousness in the labor movement today.

19. Concretization of our perspective of maximising a small, exemplary propaganda intervention by concentration in key national unions begins now to require the setting up of national caucuses. Formal national caucus organization will prove very useful during strikes, union elections, conventions, etc., and for implementing nationwide campaigns around our own slogans. Some of these advantages already accrue from our T1 group.

National caucuses should be set up in II and LI in 1975, based on development of caucuses in three II locations this year and one in No.Am. next year, and on the extension of the existing LI caucus to other areas by early next year. The national caucus will function with a national leadership based in one of the local areas which will publish a national caucus paper and coordinate caucus work in the national union. National caucus gatherings will not be able to be frequent, and will probably have to coincide with SL national gatherings, especially at first. The formal national caucus formation will not be rushed, but will be based on the prior linking-up of the local caucuses. In addition to II and LI, political development in BI fractions could proceed to caucus development in at least two locations next year if layoffs do not wipe out our fractions.

This relative, over-all righting of the balance between our potential and active forces represented by the political development of several caucuses should have an effect not merely in the work in the unions involved, but in the work of the SL/RCY generally. Active unionists, especially those who have run for office, led struggles or conducted otherwise noteworthy work, can play an important supportive role to the SL in public, including giving talks as guest speakers, participating in interventions, aiding recruiting and helping other fractions. Unionists should be used by the RCY campus fractions to the same advantage.

E. ORO's

Our most important ORO opponents in trade union work are the CP and the organizations of the orthodox Maoist spectrum, particularly the OL and the RU. The SWP is not much of a factor in the

unions because of its organizational abstentionism and passivity, although it is an important obstacle in related arenas like CLUW (the labor bureaucracy's women's organization), in which it unabashedly acts as the direct organizational henchman of the reformist bureaucracy. PL was always too impatient to lead wildcat strikes to get anywhere in any one place, and is now split. The WL's "TUALP" house of cards collapsed in short order, after which virtually its entire cadre departed the organization without so much as a political murmur; Wohlforth's perspective of a daily press should take care of any remaining illusions the WL might have about itself actually playing a role in the unions. The IS remains a factor to consider in some unions, such as II (in No.Am.) and the Teamsters, but in general its rampant opportunism has afforded it little more in the way of concrete organizational gains than has the equally opportunist posturing of its recently split off left sister, the RSL. The frenzied and seemingly insane NCLC appears from time to time in many places, but is a real force in none of them.

21. The CP stands out as our chief opponent in four unions. Although most OROs have been in II for at least two or three years if not longer, only the CP has national significance. BI has probably the most important single CP trade union fraction, despite a slight numerical edge in CP commitment to II. Although the Maoists have a base in BI, the weakness of other OROs there increases the relative importance of the CP. We have fractions in two key local bases of the CP in BI and II respectively, as well as overlapping elsewhere.

Despite its increasing organizational boldness, which has extended to the publication of openly-identified CP shop papers in some locations, the CP remains extremely politically conservative. It spent a number of years buried in a left-bureaucratic caucus centered in No.Am., but has now linked up its supporters in other areas into its own national caucus. Part of its reason for this independent move was to shift to the right politically: its caucus' founding gathering disavowed any explicitly oppositional intentions. Without making a definitive break, the CP has left the oppositional bureaucrats in No.Am. to the IS, which provides them with a cover of rhetoric too leftist for the CP. The CP abstained from a massive rebellion over the last contract, and even "critically supported" the sellout in some locations. In BI, the CP has made a fetish of government intervention, raising court decisions on its banners in lieu of program.

Unlike II or BI, in which we have yet to really confront the CP, in T2 we have been both threatening and vulnerable to it because of the history, aggressiveness and isolation of our main supporter. Its response has been a vicious, anti-Trotskyist red-baiting campaign in defense of its allies in the union's bureaucracy, which is as venal as any in the labor movement despite its fake-left history. The CP is also one of our main persecutors in the local bureaucracy of the small South Coast public employee local. In all of these unions, some recruiting of young CP supporters and even small cracks in the cadre are possible, but our main task will be to politically discredit and isolate this fake-left prop of the reformist bureaucracy.

22. The orthodox Maoist groupings dissipate their forces by random penetration of both significant and irrelevant arenas, but their organizational weight is considerable. The relatively extensive penetration of the unions by both the OL and the RU over the last two or three years is beginning to have its effect, both in the penetration of bureaucratic caucuses and the setting up of various non-political groupings of their own, in which they always remain well disguised politically and organizationally. However, like the IS, they too have generally suffered from a lack of results from their rampant efforts to sell themselves to a section of the bureaucracy, largely because they are too small and lack the roots to be an attractive ally. Often they are inept and lack the skill to reap the full benefits of their opportunism. In the West Coast II local they continue the attempt to maintain their alliance with a section of the bureaucracy despite the latter's efforts to freeze them out of every leadership or official position.

Unlike the IS, however, the OL and RU are bigger to begin with and tend to make up in organizational energy what they lack in saleability. The RU particularly oscillates between the grossest opportunism and flashy, confrontationist adventurism, generating internal dissatisfaction over the lack of program. The OL, more consistent in its right-Stalinist appetites, has a sounder organizational future. It is more deeply buried in bureaucratic formations and consequently harder to find. The latter is moving into direct organizational competition with the CP, as evidenced by its attempt to build a base from which to tail the CP's favorite grouping of left bureaucrats in BI. The OL and/or RU are important opponents throughout II, BI, LI and T2.

23. Though small, our effect on at least the rhetoric of ORO's both bigger and smaller than we are has been noteworthy recently. In No.Am. II, the IS has begun to reflect parts of our program despite its hardened commitment to left reformism in its recent split. Both the RU and the OL have reflected our slogans and "sophisticated" terminology on a few issues in West Coast II, including internationalist positions, while avoiding the principled conclusions which would rupture their bureaucratic alliances. This trend can only benefit us in the long run, by raising the level of political debate in the unions.

F. UNION ELECTIONS AND CRITICAL SUPPORT

24. Intervention in union elections is an important tactic for both established and newly-emerging caucuses. As in national elections, union elections are looked to by the workers to focus and resolve the outstanding questions and problems facing the union. They provide an opportunity not normally present in the form of a ready audience for our program and increased organizational security for its presentation. Our caucuses maximise their impact in union elections by intervening with as many candidates as possible. They also seek opportunities to encourage caucus-regroupment with leftward moving forces by extending critical support to other class-struggle candidates in the elections and even running joint slates with elements that are politically quite close and on the verge of joining the caucus.

Especially at an early stage of caucus development, campaigns for national convention delegateships are useful for raising general issues, avoiding premature power fights with local bureaucrats over more lucrative posts and avoiding excessive burdens of office should caucus members get elected. We do not make a fallacious counter-position between "getting elected" and "raising our program," since we always operate on the basis of our consistent, principled class-struggle program, and expect eventually to get our leaders elected to posts on the basis of it. This is a necessary development at some point for all fractions. Our credibility as claimants to leadership depends in large measure on how well we acquit ourselves as lower-level union leaders. SL fractions in public employee (in the early New York location as well as the present South Coast) and LI unions have successfully elected members to lower local union posts. The political activation of II fractions in three locations was accomplished through election interventions in which whole sections of our periphery were moved closer, new contacts made and the basis laid for caucus formation. Election intervention in T1, while failing to make any dramatic inroads in the heavy barriers to recruitment in the union, nevertheless increased the contacts and periphery of the fraction and increased its general presence and legitimacy in the union.

25. The SL's insistence on a Leninist understanding of the tactic of critical support in union elections remains an important political point of distinction between us and the centrist and reformist OROs. While the latter pick sides in intra-bureaucratic contests on the basis of momentary popularity of the leaders and the episodic, lesser-evil character of their trade-unionist politics, the SL recognizes a key distinction: while it is principled to give critical support to labor reformists running against bourgeois politicians in general elections, in trade union elections there is no such class distinction between "left" and right bureaucrats who are equally committed to pro-capitalist trade union reformism. Thus the SL alone refused to give "critical support" to Arnold Miller of the Mineworkers, on the grounds that his democratic-militant, pro-government interventionist reformism was not qualitatively different from Boyle's dictatorial right-wing Lewis-tradition reformism.

The tactic of critical support has for Leninists the same purpose as the united front: to regroup the workers around the leadership of the revolutionary vanguard--not to refurbish the authority of the bankrupt reformists and centrists. Critical support may be extended on the basis of as little as one point, but this point must represent a central, programmatic departure from bureaucratic reformism and class collaborationism in the direction of a class-struggle policy. Such key points may, of course, change rapidly with changing conditions and levels of class struggle. For instance, industrial unionism constituted such a point in the early and middle 1930's, but this condition rapidly waned in the latter part of the decade, after the building of the CIO.

In the case of smaller phenomena--i.e., groups or individuals with little following in rapid motion--substantial programmatic agreement with our caucus (especially in the early stages of its development) is required, since the aim of breaking the workers' illusions

is not the major consideration, and we must build a clear programmatic pole in opposition to centrism.

26. The high degree of vertical integration of the trade union bureaucracies, taken together with the generally determining character of politics over the functioning of the entire bureaucracy down to the smallest details of working conditions, requires a consistent policy on critical support throughout the union structure. Since there is no level on which simple trade-union militancy is sufficient to define a break with the bureaucracy, we do not support steward-candidates because they would make "good stewards," but only if their candidacies represent a clear, class-struggle program and break with the bureaucracy and its reformism, i.e., the same criteria as for any other level in the bureaucracy.

An important corollary to this is that our actions as individuals are generally inseparable from our fractions' political positions, i.e., we ourselves cannot vote for candidates (on trade-unionist or any other grounds) if we do not support them politically. The 1973 plenum of the SL Central Committee, after a discussion of the question of critical support to stewards in union elections, passed the following motion, which stands as the policy of the SL:

"...our supporters in the labor movement should give critical support to others running for steward only upon the basis of candidacies which, even if only implicitly, advance key points which are programmatically counterposed to class collaborationism and to the union bureaucracy. In all other cases our supporters should resist the strong shop floor pressures to line up in the struggles between rival candidates (who are not qualitatively differentiated according to our class-struggle criteria)--counterposing instead our views on what is necessary for a genuine workers' leader, i.e., what political and social views must underly systematic militancy, rather than surprise betrayal."

G. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

27. The intersecting questions of racial and sexual discrimination and government intervention to erode union consciousness are central in both LI and BI, as well as being generally important throughout the labor movement. Conservative and chauvinist union leaderships have allowed Labor Department and EEOC crusaders to have a field day in boorishly racist and male-chauvinist industries. Company-government deals have established quotas for women and minorities, while the union leaderships have attempted to join the deals in order to retain their basic bargaining rights, with no program other than defense of the status quo.

Our opposition to these "affirmative action" quota hiring programs, and other forms of preferential treatment for women and minorities, flows from the character of these programs as vehicles for government intervention into the labor movement, and for advancing the position of some workers at the expense of other workers. Correcting the historic abuses of discrimination in the work

force cannot be solved within the framework of capitalist control of the job market, i.e., under capitalism. Under the dictatorship of the proletariat, the workers state will of course institute radical corrective measures to equalize the situation of all minority groups within all layers of the work force in the context of expanding production and opportunities for useful, productive labor. Thus even exclusive hiring from particular groups in special cases to achieve equalization will not mean victimization through loss of decent, productive livelihood to any worker. Under capitalism, however, this kind of preference inevitably means victimization of some, at the very least through lost job opportunities, to benefit others in the limited, capitalist-controlled pool of jobs.

28. However, despite our opposition to quotas under capitalism, we are for the eradication of all discrimination at all levels. Therefore, we critically support quotas if necessary to counterpose ourselves to the racist status quo (as long as they don't entail replacement of some workers by others). And in cases of government intervention, we do not side with racists calling for reversion to the status quo, but call instead for the workers to act to ensure the prevention of further government intervention both by protecting the union and by struggling within it to abolish all discrimination.

Our propaganda on quotas must make crystal clear our program for abolishing discrimination and all its vestiges at the expense of the employers rather than the workers. The economic downturn, layoffs, "tightening" of the job market and recent wave of government decisions enforcing "affirmative action" programs in various industries combine to make the demand for a shorter work week with no loss in pay centrally important. This demand gives abolition of discrimination at all levels a transitional character. To it we add demands for union control of hiring to enforce a policy of first-come, first-served in all hiring and upgrading; union-controlled, company-financed training programs aimed at upgrading minorities and women into previously exclusionary job categories; equal pay for equal work; critical support for the Equal Rights Amendment; etc. However, we do not incorporate quotas, preferential hiring or other preferential treatment for any group into our program under capitalism because these demands, raised against the capitalists, can only be implemented by the latter in a reactionary manner, having nothing in common with the possible utilization of the same measures by a workers state.

H. LAYOFFS AND RED PURGES

29. Of the many dangers that threaten our fragile implantation and its political perspectives, layoffs and red purges are the worst. Layoffs have temporarily nullified close to half our implantation in II and threaten to be much worse in BI, with the latter's older and more stable work force. Meanwhile, rapid automation and other conditions create less severe problems in LI, T1 and T2. Economic downturn makes the reinforcement of any fraction much more difficult as well as temporarily depressing the combativity of the class. However, a serious perspective requires a firm commitment to ride out layoffs and be present when return to work is possible. As recognized by the Political Bureau:

"...a crucial part of our historic viability in the U.S. depends on our ability to reconstruct fractions from among those laid off in those same work locations."

-PB No.26, 12 March 1974

While some laid off fraction members may be permanently reassigned, enough members to viably reconstitute the fraction and maintain continuity will be retained in every case unless absolutely impossible. In order to know when call-backs are likely and to maintain contact with the rest of the remaining workers, laid off fraction members should struggle to keep up contacts and stay in touch with the union except, of course, when reassigned elsewhere. Temporary reassignment to public work in other cities is an excellent opportunity and very useful to both organization and member.

30. Our political slogans are shifted somewhat in an industrial or general economic downturn, to reflect the new conditions. Demands addressed to layoffs and unemployment become more important, while those concerning speedup and overtime are relatively less important. The demand for a sliding scale of hours becomes more important, and we raise demands for strikes against layoffs and the rights of the unemployed. The demand for strikes against layoffs must be carefully applied to embrace the entire company or industry in order to avoid playing into the hands of a company that wants to shut down part of its works in a downturn. Demands for the rights of the unemployed proceed from maintenance of membership rights within the union to committees, departments and special sections to mobilize the unemployed and fight for their interests under the leadership of the employed workers' organizations.

31. Red purges are a big danger to us even though the bureaucracy is generally unable to mobilize mass right-wing sentiment in the ranks as it once did, and even though it is extremely vulnerable to the "backlash" it could spark if red-baiting becomes too closely linked in the workers' minds with gross betrayals and abuses of the bureaucracy. The II leadership stands forth as one of the most energetic and vicious agencies of red-baiting and anti-communism in the labor movement, while continuing to maintain its liberal veneer. This red-baiting has been an important element in most of the II locations we are in, although left-reformist leaderships in some of them afford temporarily safer conditions.

Our response to red purges makes us as unique on the left as does virtually everything else. Tendencies which politically subordinate themselves to the liberal wing of the bureaucracy are particularly vulnerable to red-baiting, since they hide their politics in the first place and must mold their response to conform to the tastes of "allies" who vacillate to the right under the slightest pressure. Open, principled political behavior, combined with a vigorous denunciation and counterattack, is the best defense against red-baiting. Our fraction's intervention in one II location in the recent election campaign, in which the incumbents relied on their usual heavy red-baiting of both us and the out-bureaucrats, was a model response. We were able to turn the tables on the red-baiters by exposing company-union collusion, with the result that formal respect for our rights increased after the election.

I. SKILLS ACQUISITION

32. Encouragement should be given to comrades involved in trade union work and in possible future assignment to trade union work to acquire industrial skills through apprenticeships, training programs, etc. Such skills are useful for getting work during recessions and depressions, thereby helping us maintain contact with the class and an organizational income. Hard lines of division often separate skilled from production workers, on the other hand workers with some skill are often seen as more important and accorded greater respect and authority, and this gives us the opportunity both to demonstrate long-term perspectives in the work location and to politically combat class and status privileges from a position in which our words will carry greater weight. Skilled workers, particularly electricians and repairmen, furthermore, are often in exceptionally good positions for organizing in many plants, by virtue of their ability to roam the plant at will.

Our Mid-West BI fraction, however, is totally composed of apprentices, and isolated from the production workers. This is an over-correction of our usual problem which should be avoided if possible, the general aim being to spread our implantation throughout the layers of the work force. However, in our trade union work as a whole we are still imbalanced the other way, and a deep economic downturn could drive our unskilled workers out of industry entirely. The Mid-West BI problem should thus be corrected with new implantation rather than sacrificing existing apprentices.

--8 June 1974

Enlarged 3rd Plenum of 3rd Central Committee.....16-17 March 1974
1st Session--Saturday, 16 March

Present: CC Brosius, Foster, Knox, Gordon, Robertson, Samuels,
Seymour, Schaefer, Jennings (NYC); Crawford (Detroit);
Carter, Nelson (BA); Shapiro (LA).
alt CC: Cantor, Norden, Drummond, Sharpe (NYC); Green,
Gilman, Smith (Chicago); Adrian (Detroit); Waters (BA);
Hayes (LA)
Control Commission: Reissner
C.O. staff: Grant, Kelley, Toni, Rossi, Ryan
International Department: Dimir; Barbara (Walloon)
SL organizers and exec. members:
Boston--Simons (org.), Carling, Anderson
Buffalo--Shepherd (org.), Apple, Billy B., Charlie,
Bruce A.
Detroit--Jerry H.
Chicago--Spector
New York City--Morris (org.), Knolls, Brule
LA--Martha P. (org.)
Cleveland--Watson (org.), Eastman, Pam E., Ed C.
SL fraction heads: Davidson (NYC); Keith D. (Detroit)
RCY N.C.: Larkin, Gibbons, Atkins, McAllister, Gardner,
Elliot
RCY N.O. staff: Steve R., Sanders, Steve B., Johnson
Fraternal: Hannah (SL/ANZ CC), John (SL/ANZ); Phil, Reed
(Toronto).

(Secretary's note: Numerous comrades did not give the secretary their names and status, hence were not recorded.)

Meeting convened 9:30 a.m.

1. Convene plenum. Report by Robertson.
 - a. Organization of plenum.
 - b. Rules.

Motion: To adopt the plenum rules (attached to these minutes).

passed

Motion: That CCers not on the presiding committee chair sessions.

passed

- c. Agenda.

Motion: To adopt the proposed agenda (attached to these minutes).

passed

- d. Attendance. It is proposed that the heads of TU fractions, the youth NC, local executive committee members, and SL organizers from areas where there are no CC members, international department members, and active comrades with political differences to be debated, be invited to this plenum.

Motion: To enlarge this plenum by inviting the indicated comrades to attend the open sessions.

passed

- e. Physical arrangements. Report by Brosius (5 min.)
- f. Projected scope of plenum.

Chair: Carter

2. International Movement.

a. Greetings from SL/ANZ and British Report. Report by Hannah.
(15 min.)

b. Report by Sharpe. (45 min.)

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------|
| 1) European conference | 5) India |
| 2) France | 6) Ceylon |
| 3) Germany | 7) Canada |
| 4) Israel | 8) Latin America |

c. Report on British working class movement. By Brule. (11 min.)

discussion: (4 min.) Gordon, Norden, Shapiro, Robertson, Foster, Hayes, Nelson, Cantor, Carter, 2nd round: (2 min.) Seymour, Gordon, Norden, Shapiro, Robertson, Foster, Cantor, Carter

Summaries by Brule (4 min.), Sharpe (30 min.), Hannah (5 min.)

3. Nationalism. Report by Samuels (25 min.)

discussion: Robertson, Norden, Hayes, Schaefer, Eastman, Foster, Samuels, Robertson, Seymour, Norden, Robertson, Norden

Summary by Samuels (5 min.)

Motion (by Sharpe): To accept the international report. passed unan.

Motion (by Samuels): To accept the Y. Rad article in WV #35, excluding the characterization of the 1948 war as an "imperialist" war. passed unan.

Motion (by Robertson): To authorize the drafting of a resolution to be submitted to the National Conference in accordance with [the thrust of:] the report here on Nationalism, the article by Y. Rad in WV #35 and "The Leninist Policy Toward Immigration/Emigration" in WV #36, and the draft PB motion of PB #22 (11 December 1973), noting the resultant emphasis shift in the "Orange and Green" article on Ireland in WV #7.

Motion (by Norden): That the right of self-determination is a general democratic right which applies to all nations, including Hebrew and Arab-speaking peoples in the Near East. However, whether Leninists advocate separation depends on a number of concrete circumstances. The right of self-determination cannot be implemented by suppressing the right of self-determination for another people.

Proposal that the above statement by Norden be added as an amendment to the motion by Robertson. agreed

Norden Amendment passed unanimously

VOTE on Robertson's motion as
amended: for: all except;
abstaining: Ed C., Davidson
passed

Announcements.

Session adjourned 2:30 p.m. reconvened 4:30 p.m.

Chair: Gordon

4. Perspective & tasks. (see outline appended to these minutes).
Reports by Seymour and Robertson.

discussion: (4 min.) Crawford, Hayes, Green, Schaefer, Smith, Sharpe, Samuels, Shapiro, Drummond, Gilman, Davidson, Brosius, Norden, Carter, Martha P., Foster, Adrian, Cantor, Nelson, Jennings, Knox, Simons, Shepherd, Keith, Gordon, 2nd round: (2 min.) Crawford, Hayes, Green, Schaefer, Smith, Sharpe, Samuels, Shapiro, Drummond, Gilman, Davidson, Brosius, Norden, Carter, Martha, Foster, Cantor, Nelson, Jennings, Knox, Simons, Shepherd, Keith, Waters, Diana

Motion (by Robertson): That the closed session of the plenum also be open to the organizers where there is no CC member (Cleveland, Boston, Buffalo) and to the Control Commission. passed

Session adjourned 8:50 p.m., reconvened 11:20 p.m.

Summaries by Robertson (18 min.) and Seymour (10 min.)

Motion (by Seymour): We see Detroit as the primary priority for black colonization.

Motion (by Robertson): To authorize the PB to proceed with drafting a document for the National Conference on the basis of the attached outline and this discussion, excepting those questions which have been held out for debate later in the plenum. passed unan.

Motion: To table the motion by Seymour on black colonization to Detroit until the point on organization. passed

Motion: To table the following ten-point motion by Robertson to the Political Bureau. passed unan.

- Motion(by Robertson): Financial Crisis Interim Measures
1. locals should be financially aggressive; C.O. financially conservative--local costs much less and primary source of recruitment--this is above all a national crisis.
 2. subs--we announce in WV change in subs to primarily 3rd class, also offer first class sub. Motivation: "toward weekly WV" (not only rise in postal rates), search out fruitful paper sales--make money on street sales.
 3. hold up financial implementation on weekly WV.

4. clamp down on international and domestic travel expense, esp. the latter (need criteria, see below).
 5. local self-financing on tours, e.g. rigid local total financing, i.e., locals to pay 1/2 travel from last area and 1/2 travel cost to next area; seek "honorariums."
 6. keep YS at bi-monthly, maximum 12-pager (use WV as necessary supplement).
 7. no present Southern branch-building perspective.
 8. give working reality to P.D.F.; gainful job emphasis; survey sympathizers and contacts systematically and heavily for donations.
 9. no pamphlets run on small press.
 10. C.O. cutback--hold off for 1 to 2 months to: e.g. Allen and Norden part-time; Rossi look after her and Kelley's kids; Brosius on return, to part time.
5. Terrorism & the SLA. Presentation by Foster, presentation by Perry. (see attached letter by Perry to PB)

Announcements.

Session adjourned 1:10 a.m.

* * * * *

Sunday, 17 March 1974

Meeting convened 9:30 a.m.

Chair: Knox

discussion: (5 min.) Robertson, Norden, Cantor, Samuels, Seymour, Carter, Jennings, Schaefer, Hayes, Brosius, Shapiro, Nelson, Adrian, Gilman, Waters, Drummond, Crawford, 2nd round: (2 min.) Robertson, Norden, Cantor, Samuels, Seymour, Carter, Jennings, Schaefer, Hayes, Brosius, Shapiro, Nelson, Adrian, Waters, Drummond, Crawford, Gordon, Sharpe, Brule, Green, Eastman

Summaries by Perry (15 min.) and Foster (15 min.)

Motion (by Robertson and Seymour): The plenum endorses the line and article "Idiot Terrorism" in WV and specifically the sentence in that article; "Also not defensible is the SLA, with its obscure origins and its even more obscure politics, including a significant dose of mysticism and irrationality."

(VOTE: CC: for: Nelson, Robertson, Jennings, Gordon, Knox, Foster, Seymour, Schaefer, Crawford, Brosius, Hannah, Samuels, Carter

alt CC: opp: Shapiro
for: Cantor, Sharpe, Norden, Adrian, Drummond, Smith, Waters, Gilman, Green

VOTE (continued):

alt CC: opp: Hayes
other: for: Morris, Gardner, Larkin, Gibbons,
Dimir, Johnson, Steve B., Grant,
Spector, Cramer, Smith, Roman,
Anderson, Charlie, Watson, Elliot,
Karen W., Knolls, Jerry H., Hansen,
Sanders, Ed C., Reisling, Apple,
Ryan, Barbara, Diana, John, Allen,
Brule, Steve R., Reissner, Douglas,
Carling, Toni, Bruce A., Kelley,
Shepherd, Simons, Sam H., Atkins
opp: Perry) passed

Motion (by Shapiro): With the information available to us, and the action required of us, at this time, it is not desirable to take a position on whether the SLA itself is defensible as part of the left. The act of kidnapping Patty Hearst is clearly indefensible.

(VOTE: CC: for: Shapiro
opp: all other
alt CC: for: none
opp: all
other: for: none
opp: (same as listed "for" in above motion).) defeated

Motion (by Hayes): With the information available to us, we judge the SLA part of the left, of the same type as Weatherman, Venceremos or the Black Panthers in their early phase, and therefore defensible, noting that the kidnapping of P. Hearst is an indefensible act.

(VOTE: CC: for: none
opp: all
alt CC: for: Hayes
opp: all other
other: for: none
opp: same list as "for" first motion.
abstaining: Perry) defeated

Motion (by Perry): The killing of Foster and the kidnapping of P. Hearst were political attacks against the bourgeois state and the bourgeois class by the radical petty-bourgeois SLA and thus are defensible terrorism.

(VOTE: CC: for: none
opp: all
alt CC: for: none
opp: all
other: for: Perry
opp: same list as "for" first motion.) defeated

6. United Front vs. Class Collaboration. Presentation by Robertson, presentation by Henry.

Announcements.

Session adjourned 1:55 p.m., reconvened 4:30 p.m.

discussion: (5 min.) Gordon, Drummond, Norden, Jennings, Foster, Sharpe, Schaefer, Martha, Gilman, Hayes, Seymour, Nelson, Shapiro, Charlie, Samuels, Green, 2nd round: (2 min.) Hannah, Ed C., Simons, Carter, Gordon, Drummond, Norden, Jennings, Foster, Sharpe, Schaefer, Martha, Hayes, Nelson, Samuels

Summaries by Henry and Robertson.

Motion (by Robertson): The plenum endorses as principled and pertinent our successful solicitation of the bourgeois Democratic Party leader and lawyer, NY City Council President Paul O'Dwyer, to endorse the demonstration in support of the British miners' strike which was organized in accordance with Leninist united front principles.

(VOTE: CC: for: all
alt CC: for: all
other: for: 46
abstaining: Henry) passed

7. Other Organizational Questions.

a. Report by Brosius.

discussion: Robertson, Samuels, Seymour, Schaefer, Shepherd, Jennings, Shapiro, Nelson, Drummond, Gilman, Adrian, Smith, Knox, Crawford, Hayes, Carter, Martha, Green, Foster

Summary by Brosius.

Motion (by Brosius): 1) that we seek to transfer two black comrades to Detroit in the next few months;
2) that we reinforce TU implantation in the following descending order of priority: Chicago II, Buffalo BI, Cleveland BI, and Chicago BI;
3) that there be no new in-transfer of cadre to LA;
4) that Buffalo become a chartered local.

Amendment (by Seymour): To amend part 2 of Brosius' motion, so that there be no listed order of priority, at this time, among the BI locales for implantation.

(VOTE: CC: for: Seymour
opp: all others, except:
abstaining: Jennings
not voting: Hannah
alt CC: abstaining: Hayes, Adrian, Waters, Smith
other: opp: Reissner, Shepherd, Bruce A., Perry,
Billy B., Martha, Charlie, Cramer
abstaining: 15) amendment defeated
Brosius' motion passed unan.

b. 1974 Summer Camp Report by Drummond.

8. Proposed Call & National Conference. Report by Robertson.

discussion: Jennings, Schaefer, Foster, Simons

Motion: That there be an SL National Conference [for 3 1/2-4 days] in the period of August 24-1 September, and that a call be issued in the name of the Central Committee in accordance with the organizational statutes, and that the main conference document be produced prior to the beginning of the 90-day pre-conference discussion period. passed unan.

Motion: That it is our intention to prepare the following three additional documents for submission to the National Conference: a memo on the international movement; a resolution on the national question; and revised organizational rules. passed unan.

Announcements.

Session adjourned 8:00 p.m., reconvened 10:00 p.m.

* * * * *

Closed session
Chair: Schaefer

Present: CC: Carter, Jennings, Robertson, Scahefer, Samuels, Seymour, Foster, Nelson, Gordon, Brosius, Shapiro, Crawford, Knox
alt CC: Cantor, Hayes, Sharpe, Norden, Waters, Green, Adrian, Gilman, Drummond, Smith
frat: Hannah (SL/ANZ CC)
other: Ryan, Shepherd (Buffalo org.), Watson (Cleveland org.), Reissner (Control Commission)

Report on Slate Question by Robertson. (25 min.)

- a. Possible full & alternate members of CC.
- b. Mechanism for composing slate.

discussion: Samuels, Nelson, Foster, Adrian, Cantor, Robertson, Seymour, Samuels, Nelson, Robertson, Gordon, Sharpe, Cantor, Seymour, Foster, Crawford, Norden, Nelson, Robertson

Motion: To accept the recommendation to have a nominating commission for slate, holding over to the next question the exact range or number of alternates to be selected. passed

Plenum adjourned 11:45 p.m.

Recorded and transcribed by: Cantor
Reviewed by: Robertson

Enlarged 3rd Plenum of the 3rd Central Committee,
Spartacist League/U.S.
16-17 March 1974

proposed agenda

Saturday

- 9:00-9:45 a.m. Convene plenum (attendance), organize (committees, commissions, rules and announcements), projected scope and tasks (toward next National Conference)--Robertson 45 min.
- 9:45-10:55 International Movement--Sharpe 45 min.
special report on British working class movement--
"Special Correspondent" 10 min.
greetings from SL/ANZ and British report--Hannah
15 min.
- 10:55-11:55 general discussion--60 min.
11:55-12:35 p.m. summaries--"s.c." & Hannah 10 min., Sharpe 30 min.
- 12:35-1:45 Nationalism--Samuels 20 min.
general discussion--40 min.
summary--10 min.
- 1:45-3:45 lunch and commissions--120 min.
- 3:45-5:00 Perspective & Tasks of the SL/US--Seymour 45 min.,
Robertson 30 min.
- 5:00-7:30 general discussion--150 min.
- 7:30-10:00 dinner and commissions--150 min.
- 10:00-10:50 summaries--Robertson 20 min., Seymour 30 min.
- 10:50-11:50 Terrorism & the SLA--Foster 30 min., Perry 30 min.
- recess

Sunday

9:00-11:30 general discussion--150 min.

11:30-12:00 summaries--Perry 15 min., Foster 15 min.

12:00-1:00 United Front vs. Class Collaboration--Robertson
30 min., Henry 30 min.

1:00-3:30 lunch and commissions, including RCY-NC--150 min.

3:30-5:30 general discussion--120 min.

5:30-6:00 summaries--Henry 15 min., Robertson 15 min.

(to be scheduled) Affirmative Action--Knox, Waters [?], transfer
needs, other organizational questions--e.g.
Buffalo L.C.?

Proposed Call & Documents for National Conference
20 min.

special report--Drummond 10 min.

dinner and commissions--120 min.

closed session (to all but full and alternate
CC and Ryan)

Proposed Rules for
Enlarged Plenum of 16-17 March 1974

1. The condition for our use of the meeting room is extreme orderliness on the premises--including halls, elevator and toilets. No cigarette butts ground out on floors, no soft drink cans left in corners, etc.
2. Commissions--the long meal breaks (2, 2 1/2, 2 1/2, 2 hrs. respectively) are for commission meetings, e.g. TU (separate fractions?), Black, Women, Latin, finances, press, archival, RCY-NC. These will be specifically arranged as the plenum proceeds.
3. Normal speaking rights are accorded to: full and alternate CC members, party organizers in locals without CC members, C.O. department heads, Control Commission members and CC members of other sections. Others may speak by permission of the body.
4. On a discussion point a speakers' list will be taken in advance for a first round and closed. Two thirds of the scheduled total speaking time will be divided equally among the speakers. The balance of the time will be used for a second round. If the number of would-be speakers is so great as not to permit significant contribution in the time available, adjustment--preferably in advance and by equitable negotiation--must be made.
5. All motions and amendments, other than procedural, shall be made in writing and submitted to the plenum secretariat.
6. The presiding committee will be Brosius, Crawford, Foster, Nelson, Robertson.

Perspective and Tasks--
draft outline for National Conference resolution

(unless otherwise indicated, for
line see relevant Workers Vanguards)

I. World Economy

1. 1972-73 Boom

- a) strongest since Korean war.
- b) produced acute shortages in primary products (actual decline in world food output in 1972).
- c) physical shortages spurred primary products, inflationary spiral, becoming speculative and cartel manipulated (e.g. oil).
- d) likely recessions in Germany and U.S., slowdown in Japan in 1974, independent of oil.

2. Oil and World Conjunction

- a) moved forward, intensified and made more uniform world downturn.
- b) financial effects should lead to sharp reduction in world trade between advanced capitalist countries.
- c) devalue all currencies relative to U.S. dollar.
- d) significant impetus to world finance chaos.
- e) primary product price spiral should break in world slump; likely early 1975.

II. World Political Situation

1. Interimperialist rivalries
2. Deformed workers states urge toward detente and tendency to break down
3. European instability

4. Yom Kippur war and aftermath
5. economic crisis impact on backward countries.

[Note: A separate document on nationalism is projected for the National Conference.]

III. U.S. Economy

1. Current Situation
 - a) in absence of oil crisis, normal downturn should have occurred in Spring 1974.
 - b) oil crisis created uneven contraction, with elements maintaining momentum of past boom.
 - c) above elements (overcoming bottlenecks, rebuilding depleted inventories, capital investment) should carry through early 1975.
2. International effects
 - a) general reduction in market for U.S. manufactured exports.
 - b) large influx of speculative money capital with both positive and inflationary results.
3. Most Likely Projection
 - a) net zero growth in 1974 with extreme sectoral differences; 10% inflation.
4. Possibility of Runaway Inflation
 - a) if wage offensive breaks 13%, possibility of 20% inflation by late 1974.

- b) would create overriding immediate political crisis; possibility of state wage freeze.

IV. Domestic Politics

- 1. Constitutional crisis, electoral prospects, etc. in light of economic and international situation
- 2. Strength of Henry Jackson, Wallace as social chauvinist champions vis-a-vis sharpened arms race with Soviet Union.

V. Labor and Social Struggles

1. Current Situation

- a) unexpected lull in working-class struggle following 1970-71 strike wave.
- b) only working class in advanced capitalist countries suffering fall in real wages in 1973, fewest strikes in a decade.
- c) trade union bureaucracy main, direct agency of repression (e.g. UAW 1,000 bureaucrat goon squad).
- d) complete moral bankruptcy of central government.
- e) tendency of unions to increase reliance on state, e.g. Miller and suits against local unions by 'leftists.'

2. Projection

- a) major labor/social struggles in coming year.
- b) low-level bureaucrats, aspirants supporting radical resolutions, flirting with reds.
- c) condition for deferral--sharp depressionary economic downturn, massive unemployment.

4.

- d) symptomatic very good response to WV at plants, including among unlikely workers' strata.

3. Lumpen-proletariat

- a) lumpen frenzy caused by inflation and welfare program cutbacks.
- b) lumpen-hippie terrorism (SLA/Hearst case).

VI. SL Trade Union Work

1. General

- a) choice of industries for work and implantation.
- b) elections--supporter candidates and critical support to others.
- c) Affirmative action--"for whom, by whom?"

2. Specific

- | | |
|-------|-------|
| a) II | d) T1 |
| b) LI | e) T2 |
| c) BI | f) PE |

VII. Blacks

1. Objective Conditions

- a) continuing tendency for black dominance in key sectors of proletariat.
- b) instances of sub-black proletariat (e.g. Arabs in Detroit auto).
- c) continued collapse of revolutionary socialist black nationalist (e.g. BWC is stillborn and localized).

- d) growth of Pan-African nationalism: cultural-academic; political--support to guerrilla movements.

2. SL's Black Work

- a) lack of black cadres is only and signal failure of transformation.
- b) in recent period modest linear recruitment to RCY, serious trade union contacts.
- c) lack of black cadre is absolute barrier to key trade union activity (i.e. North American II).
- d) recruitment and development of black cadre must be a dominant concern of entire movement.
- e) need to concentrate black members initially in a strongly-led local with a suitable milieu.

VIII. Latin Work

- 1. Chicano
- 2. Puerto Rican
- 3. Other, especially international aspects

IX. Students

- 1. Political Mood
 - a) general absence of militant struggle.
 - b) no positive solidarity with bourgeois society.
 - c) growth and respectability of academic Marxism.
- 2. RCY (toward SY)
 - a) other than YSA and RU (Attica Brigade), only socialist

organization doing systematic campus work, important source of growth.

- b) division of labor between NB and RCY chapters.
- c) importance of regional work, campus towns.

X. Work Among Women

1. General

- a) decline in, but continued existence of, radical feminist circles.
- b) growth of social democratic, trade union bureaucracy labor/reformist women's groups (e.g. CLUW).

2. SL Women's Work

- a) over-all assessment.
- b) Women & Revolution.

XI. SL General Perspectives

1. Role of SL in U.S. left

- a) have surpassed IS, PL, WL, NCLC.
- b) above organizations have suffered major splits, cadre depletion and/or general discrediting reflecting over-ambitious perspectives in relatively quiescent period.
- c) only CP, SWP, Maoist spectrum is now larger, more important than SL.

2. To go beyond Transformation Tasks

- a) if projected period of labor/social struggles occur, historic responsibility to qualitatively increase our

roots, influence among masses.

- b) failure to take advantage of opportunities, or stagnation flowing from objective conditions would lead to demoralization, reaction within our membership.
- c) financial crisis.

XII. Concrete Tasks

1. Preparation for WV weekly as necessary interventionist organ; other periodicals; bulletins and pamphlets; importance of indexed bound volumes of Spartacist and Workers Vanguard
2. United Front
 - a) greater use of united front, tactical maneuvering in coming period.
 - b) criteria for organizing, participating in united fronts (e.g. O'Dwyer question).
3. Candidacies in 1974 governmental elections.
4. Regroupment
 - a) lull in recent past.
 - b) continued importance and prospects (e.g. IT).
5. National Geographical Distribution--the South.

XIII. International Spartacist Tendency (IST). [Separate memo projected for National Conference]. Importance of SL/US and its responsibility in this work.

STRIKES

Attachment to Draft Outline

<u>Year</u>	<u>Man-Days (Millions)</u>	<u>Percent of Work Time</u>
1965	23.3	0.15 %
1966	25.4	.15
1967	42.1	.25
1968	49.0	.28
1969	42.9	.24
1970	66.4	.37
1971	47.6	.26
1972	27.1	.15
Jan-Oct 1972	24.8	.16
Jan-Oct 1973	20.9	.13

(Source: Monthly Labor Review,
January 1974)

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<u>Year</u>	<u>Combined Index</u> (based on rate of unemployment and rise in cost of living)
1974 (spring)	15. %
1973	13.7
1972	8.9
1971	10.2
1970	10.4
1969	9.6
1968	8.3
1967	6.9
1966	7.1
1965	6.5
1964	6.3
1963	7.4
1962	6.7
1960	7.1
1958	8.5
1956	7.0
1954	5.1
1953	3.5
1952	3.9
1950	11.1

(Source: New York Post)

Letter to Political Bureau

12 March 1974
Oakland, California

Political Bureau

Dear Comrades:

The purpose of this letter is to briefly motivate my opposition to the "Idiot Terrorism" article in WV #39 summarized in the motion put forward in the BASL local discussions of 17 February and 3 March which stated:

Motion: The killing of Foster and the kidnapping of P. Hearst were political attacks against the bourgeois state and the bourgeois class by the radical petty bourgeois SLA and thus are defensible terrorism.

The position of this motion, that the SL should solidarize with the anticapitalist impulse of the SLA's terrorism and be willing to take up their defense as we did with Weatherman, is counterposed to the position taken in the article that "also not defensible is the SLA."

At issue here is the Leninist position on terrorism. The articles on "Terrorism and Communism" in Spartacist #17-18 and "Massacre at Attica" in WV #1 should have served as models for the correct evaluation of the SLA. Instead, to the extent that the IT article concentrates on a hands-off attitude toward the SLA, to that extent the article skewed the Leninist strategy which rejects left-wing terrorism as not revolutionary enough. That is, arguing that the SLA is rightist, criminal, provocateur-riddled, mentally unstable, mystical, irrational, Mansonite, programless and obscure, a cult indulging in indiscriminate reactionary nationalist atrocities, a melange alien to the left even if they had bombed the UC AMRC, the article condemns the SLA too zealously; it "proves" too much. Thus when we repudiate misguided militants in the face of the reaction of the bourgeois state, then we present the Leninist position on terrorism only secondarily.

Historically, Lenin's break from his early acute sympathy for terrorism (violence which was the tragic convulsion of the already doomed claims of declassé layers to an independent historic role, where Alexander Ulyanov stood farther from the workers than had the terrorists of the preceding generation), prefaced Lenin's embracing of the Emancipation of Labour group on the eve of mass proletarian upheaval. Today when we anticipate mass working class strikes it is our task to counterpose Leninism to what the SLA represents, namely the fanatical extreme convulsion of the New Left. In particular, as a part of the struggle to win black cadre from groups whose impulse is to transcend the limitations of 3rd period Stalinism, it is our task to counterpose Leninism to the SLA's black lumpen influenced tragic inversion of VN militarism and prison repression. To counterpose Leninism to terrorism begins with the recognition that the SLA has indeed drawn a class line.

The problem with the SLA is that killing and kidnapping are the usual activities of criminals. But as the ERP actions attest, attacks on the lives of the bourgeoisie or their agents can also shade over into politically motivated attacks directed against the

class enemy. And it is not at all the length or prominence of history, nor the coherence of program that divides the pathetic killer from the political terrorist. Rather:

"One may disagree with 'outbreaks' tactically; one is bound to advise militants--including Black militants--against adventurism. But this much must be clear: once the battle has been joined, we have a side--the side of the oppressed, outraged and exploited...against the ruling class and its state." (Spartacist #17-18)

The history of the SLA is completely obscure only if one chooses to ignore the evolved history of Venceremos-like groups, heterogeneous and chaotically amorphous to begin with, active among subjectively anticapitalist prisoners, VN vets, radical women, Indians, etc. in protest activity which the SL only marginally intersects. That this milieu could spawn an ideological descendent like the SLA is alluded to in the article as events "not without their lessons for the Marxist movement." In fact the dynamic of the degeneration of such doomed politics is precisely to elevate an ex-con, like Cinque, as the "3rd world" leadership of former activists around Venceremos, as Little and Remiero, coalescing into the SLA. That the article "obscures" the arrest of the 2 SLA-claimed "soldiers" indicates a certain unseriousness (since they're not defensible why even mention them). Even now the SLA's organizational history can be traced back thru a split in the fall of '73 to their founding conference last June. Their utopian democratic and anti-imperialist program has been published, broadcast, and televised in anything but an obscure manner.

The article merely reports the killing of Foster. Later the characterization is drawn that the SLA indulges in "actions such as the mass murder at Lod" which were reactionary nationalist inspired. On the contrary, the SLA's communicated claims for offering a "contract" on and then gunning down Foster to get Cops Out of the Schools is not nationalist; this is terrorism carried out on a minimal class basis, as was the Sofia Cathedral killings. As an isolated case the Foster killing resembles the normal existence of blacks in U.S. urban jungles. But his killers did not retreat into obscurity. Again they carried out in practice their communicated strategy against the capitalist enemy. For kidnapping P. Hearst as an anti-capitalist hostage the SLA has enraged and embarrassed the bourgeoisie and can expect to die for their fanatical idealism of those who dream of destroying, not appropriating, the capitalist system of value.

The kidnapping of Caroline Kennedy's class sister is certainly a misfortune. However, in this case the explanation is not to be found in the "only" parallel of the rhetoric of S. Bond, flourished for primitive capitalist accumulation. Nor is a Freudian analysis of the SLA's preoccupation with primordial reptiles adequate (although there is some parallel with Weatherman's fascination with the four pronged devil fork). Among other things, the SLA uses language of multi-racial utopians who long for the freedom of pre-class equality. Also, as the current impotence of the BA gestapo (i.e. police bureaucracy) demonstrates, a police-provocateur is not the problem with the SLA. In any case, writhing with the government

instability of Watergate, sections of the ruling class are not dispatching agents to kidnap each other's daughters.

The axis of the article is its reaction to the Hearst kidnapping:

"Even though it only involves one person, the kidnapping of Patricia Hearst, who, unlike her father, is guilty of no known crime against the working people..., has more in common with the completely indefensible...kidnapping of Israeli athletes than it does with 'a bomb' against 'the Russian tsars; which, however misguided, was at least an attack on an important class enemy'."

That is, although the SLA has been exhibited as so idiotically apolitical to the point that they would be indefensible even if they had attacked viciously reactionary Randolph, it is felt doubly necessary to deny that the SLA has in any way attacked a powerfully important class enemy. However, the tears of Catherine do not wash away her job as UC regent, who, among other things, directs the policies of the campus AMRC. Unlike athletes kidnapped to attack the Israeli nation, P. Hearst was not kidnapped simply as any member of the American nation. Denied in the article is the direct biological, and thus legal, class relationship between bourgeois parents and daughter which is fundamentally necessary for the perpetuation of their class, a relationship summed up in the right of inheritance of property and drawn out as the dominant relationship under the circumstances of an attack directed at the Hearst family.

It is a subordinate question that P. Hearst is not only personally "innocent" but openly sympathetic to the SLA, in her liberal fashion. It is elemental Marxism to regard the relations between people as primary and their consciousness of those relationships as secondary. Her declassé student life-style, during which her class ties remained temporarily in the background, was not some self-contained permanent status; declassé status (not only for her but also for prisoners!) is the suspension, for a period, of a clearly defined class role. The SLA has changed that intermediate situation and defined her primary relationship to her family's class.

The class nature of "innocent" ruling class children was clear to the Bolsheviks. The taking hostage of ruling class children was the kind of terrorist tactics not rejected by the Bolsheviks. Is it not our task to counterpose a tactic, when facing the white army, of terrorist child-napping to the SLA's strategy of kidnapping ruling class children in order to provoke a civil war?

Notably, class instincts contradict WV. Randolph knows he is being attacked as an important class enemy. "If my son were kidnapped nobody would give a damn" says a hungry mother defiantly taking food. Similarly, an FBI agent remarked some time ago that the SLA's next step would be to demand the release of all CA prisoners. He was close; their most recent demand is for the TV exposure of the reality of CA prisoners, the special bodies of bourgeois violence which provided the material conditions for those who would evolve into the SLA to recognize their oppression as social rather

than individual. Naturally the U.S. left uncritically enthusing over the Gulag Archipelago has nothing but uniform denunciation for the SLA. It is essential that we raise the banner of Smash the Prisons! The TV demand, idealizing the prison "vanguard," is directed at Reagan whose administration rests on the prisons and who appreciated Rockefeller's response to Attica. We can expect that he will not be concerned with humane treatment of hostages.

We should solidarize with the SLA's ultra-militant struggle against the state. We only seek to give that struggle the strategic perspectives that will lead to the workers conquering state power. As the Spartacist so eloquently stated:

"The left-wing terrorists are, then, an integral part of the radical movement whose orientation is dramatically counterposed to that of revolutionary socialism. They are objectively anti-Leninist, destructive and self-destructive. Like any other radical but not genuinely Marxist grouping (the CP, SWP, Workers League, Progressive Labor) they are no more than this. But it is necessary to understand that they are no less."

With comradely and Leninist greetings,

Perry