

# SWP

# discussion bulletin

Published by the  
**SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY**

116 UNIVERSITY PLACE  
NEW YORK 3, NEW YORK

Vol. 24, No. 26

June 1963

## Contents

	<u>Page</u>
1. Amendments to the P.C. Draft -- Resolution, "Freedom Now," sub- mitted by Fred Mazelis for the Re- organized Minority Tendency	1
2. Correcting Wrong Attitudes Toward the Negro Struggle, by C. DeBruce	6
3. Criticism of the 1963 P.C. Draft Resolution, by Joseph Johnson	10
4. Towards Rebirth of the Fourth Inter- national (Draft Resolution on the World Movement), submitted for the Minority by Shane Mage, James Robertson and Geoffrey White	11
6. The White-Radical Left on Trial, by R. Vernon.	19

40¢

June 16, 1963

Farrell Dobbs  
National Secretary, SWP  
116 University Place  
New York 3, New York

Dear Farrell,

Enclosed are the amendments being presented to the discussion bulletin and for the consideration of the PC, on the PC Draft Resolution, Freedom Now. I am submitting these amendments for the Reorganized Minority Tendency.

Comradely,

Fred Mazelis

\* \* \* \*

AMENDMENTS TO THE PC DRAFT RESOLUTION, FREEDOM NOW

1. Amendment to Section V., The Movement in the South

Delete paragraph A and insert the following paragraphs:

Although the struggle in the South has up to now consisted largely of direct actions not involving large masses, mass struggle involving the most oppressed layers of the Negro community has been increasing rapidly, as indicated by the events in Birmingham, and by recent events throughout the South. In Birmingham the mass nature of the struggle, the fact that it involved the entire Negro community, including the most heavily exploited section of the proletariat, resulted in a tendency for the movement to go beyond the reformist leadership of Rev. King. The crucial need for self-defense against the racists was also posed extremely sharply. These aspects of the Birmingham struggle show that it is the most important specific development in the Negro struggle since Monroe, and is even more important than Monroe in many ways. The bourgeoisie has no progressive solution to the segregation crisis, and the struggle against the system in the South tends to transcend the limits of reform much more directly than in the North, where the revolutionary implications of the struggle are posed in a less sharp manner at present. In the South the struggle has pitted the Negro masses directly against the system. In the North ideological opposition to the system within the Negro movement is on a higher level, but the movement has yet to engage in direct

action on a large scale for its goals. On the one hand, the movement in the South can inspire, and is, in fact, right now inspiring the Northern Negro proletariat to take action for freedom now. On the other hand, the experiences and the ideological development in the North can help to shatter illusions in the Southern movement in relation to the federal government, and can help to provide the movement with the necessary program of opposition to the entire capitalist system, in the "liberal" North as well as the reactionary South. Proletarian revolutionists have a crucial role to play in the linking of the Northern and Southern struggles on a higher level. We must keep in mind that the policies of the present leadership in the Southern struggle will definitely lead to defeat and demoralization in the future, and that this is a danger right now.

The slogan of federal troops to the South is not one which should be advanced in all circumstances by the revolutionary party. Although such a slogan can be quite applicable in a school desegregation situation where several students must be protected from racist mobs, it does not advance the level of consciousness in a situation like Birmingham, where the masses are taking the initiative in a struggle of extremely wide scope. Under these circumstances the troops will contain the struggle, taking action against the Negro masses at least as much as against the racists, if not more so. The troops were sent to the Birmingham area not when the Negroes were being beaten, but only after they had retaliated. If troops were to actually intervene in a struggle such as the one in Birmingham, they would enforce a compromise settlement satisfactory to the federal government but not necessarily at all satisfactory to the Negroes. Although the troops slogan may be quite popular in the civil rights movement at present, we must patiently explain the problems it entails. Actually, the slogan is quickly losing its popularity, as a part of the growing mood of no reliance on the federal government. The troops slogan is especially dangerous when a pacifist leadership is prepared to sell out the struggle under government pressure. We must understand that the new stage of the Negro movement is one in which a large section of the movement has assimilated the lesson of the need for self-reliance. We must stress the need for self-reliance and reliance upon working class allies, not upon the government.

2. Amendment to Add a New Section, Entitled The Role of Class in the Negro Struggle, after Section IV, Separatism and a Separate Nation.

The SWP advocates the fusing together of militant forces throughout the Negro movement into a new independent revolutionary Negro movement, a movement which although it need not begin with a Marxist approach, needs as a transitional step a working class leadership and orientation toward Negro liberation. The Negro movement today is in most instances led by sections of the Negro middle class. A working class leadership is not clearly envisaged by any of the existing leaderships, and is in fact in most instances clearly not envisaged. We look upon such a leadership as a transitional form to the Negro-white leadership of the revolutionary combat party, the vanguard of the class as a whole.

We differ with the concept advanced by the nationalists of a bourgeois leadership of the Negro movement. We must explain the reactionary character of this concept, illustrating what the orientation of the small black bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeoisie has been in the past.

The Muslims are ideologically strong in their attack on white society. But they also advance, and in many instances concentrate upon, demands which do not serve the interests of the Negro masses. It is not the demand for a separate state which is the main problem. The writing off of potential white working class allies, and the concept of a separate section of the economy and the building of black businesses, are reactionary and blunt the revolutionary struggle of the Negro people. These demands of the Muslims, coupled with the criticism, in sections of their press, of struggles such as Birmingham, are a petty-bourgeois rejection of the actual struggle in favor of isolation and a sort of peaceful co-existence with American capitalism. In this regard the Muslim program is fully as illusory and dangerous as the analogous bourgeois solution in the colonial countries. It is the militancy of the Muslims and not their accommodation to the system through rejection of struggle against it, which has attracted support among the Negro masses. The Muslim program tends to assume the stability and permanency of imperialism itself, pitting the black, colonial world against the entire white, advanced world. We must take a patient attitude toward these ideological developments in the Negro movement, in view of the relatively slow pace of developments and the bureaucratic stranglehold in the labor movement. We must, however, at the same time, strongly criticize the negative aspects if we are to maximize the progressive impact of class struggle developments upon this section of the Negro movement.

We must explain that, whether the Negro people eventually decide on separation or integration, the goal of liberation can only be fully achieved through an alliance with the white working class. An independent Negro movement, whether it favors separation or integration, must link its struggle to the struggle of the working class as a whole if it is to be successful. This kind of outlook, together with a program of militant struggle (not to be limited by the present pace of developments within the class as a whole), the advocacy of the self-defense tactic, and a break with capitalist politics, is essential for the new leadership which must be built within the Negro movement.

The transitional leadership which we want to help build would be careful in handling tactics, which, while they might be temporarily successful, would weaken instead of strengthen the alliance necessary for achieving equality. Such a leadership would press for a united struggle and for the formation of a labor party, even if an independent Negro party were formed prior to the labor party. It would avoid tactics which needlessly exaggerate antagonisms within the class, such as government decertification of discriminatory unions, and changes in seniority rules which result in a sort of preferential layoff of white workers.

We intervene in the Negro movement in a dual way. We give full support to the movement as it exists today under the present leaderships, but we also expose the betrayals of the conservative middle class leaderships, and we criticize all the existing tendencies in the movement. At the same time we support all progressive actions taken by the existing leaderships and all the correct criticisms made by the more militant sections of the movement against the more conservative tops. We do not demand, in sectarian and paternalistic fashion, that we take charge of the struggle. But we do pose the need for a new leadership, a proletarian leadership around a program of militant struggle. If we did not pose this need we would not be fulfilling our duty to advance the level of consciousness of the Negro struggle, and we would, of course, not recruit many Negroes to the Marxist movement if we ourselves saw no need for an alternative Negro leadership and thus no real role for our own movement in the process of its creation.

Amendment to Section X, The Role and Tasks of the Socialist Workers Party, Add the Following paragraphs to point 3 on page 27.

We must take the recent developments in the South into account and seek to integrate several of our cadres into the

Southern movement. Of course, relatively inexperienced comrades should work closely with more experienced ones, and we must not neglect the primary work in the Northern movement, which is fundamental in the long run. But with these qualifications, we can and must spare a small section of our forces to help forge the link between the Northern and Southern struggles and between the white workers and the Negro masses in both the North and the South. In their work in the South our comrades take the same basic approach as in the North. They participate in and learn from the struggles, and they help to spread the revolutionary answer for the Negro struggle. We must see as an inevitable although not necessarily immediate byproduct of work in the South, the growth of a Southern cadre for the revolutionary movement.

In our work in the Negro struggle we must begin by recognizing as a serious weakness our recent isolation from the Negro mass movement. The steps outlined above for activity in the North and the South are to be regarded as steps toward correcting this weakness by a major turn to the Negro mass movement. In all branches, and on a national level for the entire party, our work in the Negro movement must be looked upon as one of our major tasks. Civil rights fractions should be organized wherever practicable, and a civil rights commission responsible to the Political Committee should be appointed to coordinate our civil rights work.

In the discussions in 1939 Trotsky, in discussing the Negroes as the most exploited section of the proletariat, stated, "If it happens that we in the SWP are not able to find the road to this stratum, then we are not worthy at all. The permanent revolution and all the rest would be only a lie." Our party must prove its worthiness now by making a genuine turn to the Negro movement. This means we must not limit the turn to more treatment of the Negro struggle in the press. We must penetrate into the movement itself, and link our intervention to the rest of our activity, such as our election campaigns. Only with this kind of serious and thorough approach will we be able to accomplish what Trotsky was speaking of.

Add to Point 5, Page 23

To begin this task, it will be necessary to speak more directly in our press to the Negro masses themselves, with articles drawing the lessons of current struggles, criticizing the various trends in the movement, and covering all sectors of the struggle, in the trade unions, in the South, and in the Northern communities. It will also be necessary to organize regular sales and distributions of our literature in the Negro communities.

CORRECTING WRONG ATTITUDES TOWARD THE NEGRO STRUGGLE

by C. DeBruce

I support the general line of the P.C. draft on the Negro question, "Freedom Now". However, I believe it is necessary to begin the process of inoculation against ideas and concepts which have been a product of bourgeois brain-washing and are alien to the revolutionary movement.

Overcoming of misunderstanding and mistaken notions about the Negro struggle and the Negro people are a pre-condition for intervening, participating and recruiting from the Negro struggle. All are necessary for the building of a Negro cadre.

Attitudes of sectarianism, paternalism, adventurism and patronizing.

Patronizing must be eliminated because it can create barriers which prevent us from accomplishing our task. To hold a sectarian position is a retrogression to the position of the early socialist movement that the Negro question is solely an economic problem which can only be solved by the working class overthrowing capitalism. The SWP as the vanguard party doesn't have to do anything within the Negro struggle because if and when the Negro people are ready, they will have to come to the vanguard party for leadership. Or when the working class is ready to move it will embrace the Negro struggle and there is really nothing to do until then.

Paternalism flows from a sectarian approach to the Negro struggle. Like a father tells the child, we (the vanguard party) must tell the Negro people what to do, how and when they must do it. Patronizing is the other side of the same coin of sectarianism. It is manifested by the creation of two standards, one for whites, another for Negroes. It is carried over into the thinking, activity, and discussions of whites, testifying to the success of the brain-washing job done by the ruling class.

Another form of patronizing is catering to the backwardness and limitations of the Negro people. While making an attempt to really show sympathy and understanding for the Negro people in their struggle, it is important not to display pity instead.

Still another is when white radicals act as if they really understand the Negro problem better than the Negro people, except for not being Negro. This is best expressed by the classic statement: "I'm not prejudiced and I understand Negroes because some of my best friends are Negroes." It does not matter if this is expressed in thought, words or action.

Patronizing can result in a one-sided approach to the Negro question and lead to adventuristic acts such as separating the Negro struggle from the class struggle, substituting the party for the mass movement, substituting our Negro comrades either for the Negro people or for the leadership of the Negro people. All of these get-rich-quick schemes artificially leap over stages.

Some white radicals who in the past have participated in the civil rights movement feel they have made sacrifices and contributions to the Negro struggle, believe they have proven themselves to the Negro people, and they should therefore have certain rights and prestige in the Negro struggle.

These white radicals feel excluded and indignantly resent the go-it-along policy adopted by the Negro people. They should realize that this is not a personal matter. There will then be less need for indignation and more understanding of the facts of life.

The Negro people have had years of experience with white radicals in both white and Negro organizations; the Communist Party, labor movement, NAACP and others. Since they have been betrayed to different degrees by all, it should not be hard to understand why the Negroes have decided to rely only in themselves and go it alone.

Another point to be kept in mind is that, while the American ruling class are Pharaohs, the Negro people are not down in Egyptland waiting for a Moses to lead them out. They do not need any messiah, either black or white.

What the Negro people need is their own organization, program, leadership, which they must build in their own way and at their own tempo.

It is erroneous to attempt to think for or to think like the Negro people, and just as incorrect to attempt to substitute ourselves for the Negro people or self-appoint ourselves



as their leaders. Such thinking is a capitulation to bourgeois ideology and alien to the revolutionary movement. It denies the Negro people the right of self-determination, the dual role of the Negro struggle, the need for an all-Negro organization, and their ability to develop their own leadership. It denies the revolutionary character of the Negro struggle and the Negro people.

Other parties cannot support the right of self-determination of the Negro people. Capitalist parties cannot support this right because the right of a people to decide their own fate runs counter to the material interests of the capitalists. The Kremlin bureaucracy can only exist as long as capitalism does; to eliminate capitalism is to eliminate themselves. As agents of the Kremlin, the American Communist Party exists only to carry out the policies of the bureaucratic caste in the Kremlin and must pursue a policy of supporting capitalism. Therefore they oppose all independent action by the working class as a whole, or a minority within the working class.

In their 1959 convention the Communist Party dropped the demand of supporting the right of self-determination. This is demonstrated by their recent attack against the black Muslims. And it continues to oppose any form of action which can lead to a break with capitalist parties.

The SWP is the only party which supports the right of self-determination for the Negro people, gives recognition to the dual role of the Negro struggle, the revolutionary character of the Negro struggle.

What should be our attitude and approach?

We should begin by meeting Negroes as equals, act like we have something to learn from them, indicate our willingness to work by our participation in the struggle. By going through common experiences we demonstrate our willingness to work, our ability to learn from them, and then we earn the right to make suggestions and participate in the making of policy. We can then bring to the Negro movement our experiences as a revolutionary party.

A necessary step to such preparation and participation in the Negro struggle is training our Negro comrades in how revolutionists do mass work, alerting them to the ideologies in the struggle, teaching them Negro history and the relationship of the Negro struggle to the struggle for socialism. They

should be taught writing, speaking, how to teach and then be sent into the Negro movement or, in some cases, start experiments in the Negro community.

As conscientious participants in the Negro struggle, our Negro comrades can play a key role in helping the party to be attuned to the needs of the Negro struggle and assist in working out a program for the education, integration and training of new Negro comrades coming into the party. This will be a key factor in bridging the gap between the Negro struggle and the revolutionary party, a necessary achievement for furthering the struggle for socialism.

June 24, 1963

END

Criticism of the 1963 P.C. DRAFT RESOLUTION

by Joseph Johnson

I am in general agreement with the line of the P.C. Draft Resolution, but I have some criticisms:

1. The relationship of the Socialist Workers Party to the Stalinists and the Social Democrats should be put positively. It is a major victory for us that the C.P. and the S.P. are all but eliminated as active political forces in the U.S. at this time.

2. The pauperizing of the working class is becoming greater. This needs presentation.

3. The National Farmers Organization is increasing its militancy and another holding action by it can be expected soon. The word withholding used in the Draft Resolution is incorrect. The correct word is holding. Withholding food from the market implies a boycott. All the NFO wishes to do is hold produce from the packing houses, etc. as all other business men do until their customers meet their price. For lack of a better word, the starting of this action is called a holding action. As it is the case with all businesses the holding action is hoped to be established as a permanent condition in farmers business relationships. The results of a holding action can be revolutionary.

Summary:

The present political situation is more optimistic for us than presented in the draft resolution. We can now establish ourselves as THE Socialist Party in the U.S. It is not in some future period that we will start moving forward. The party is moving towards a socialist society of peace, prosperity, freedom and equality; NOW!

June 17, 1963  
Twin Cities

TOWARD REBIRTH OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL(DRAFT RESOLUTION ON THE WORLD MOVEMENT)

--submitted for the Minority Tendency by  
Shane Mage, James Robertson, and Geoffrey White

INTRODUCTION

(1) For the past 15 years the movement founded by Leon Trotsky has been rent by a profound theoretical, political, and organizational crisis. The surface manifestation of this crisis has been the disappearance of the Fourth International as a meaningful structure. The movement has consequently been reduced to a large number of grouplets, nominally arrayed into three tendencies: the 'International Committee,' 'International Secretariat (Pablo),' and 'International Secretariat (Posadas).' Superficial politicians hope to conjure the crisis away through an organizational formula--'unity' of all those grouplets willing to unite around a common-denominator program. This proposal obscures, and indeed aggravates, the fundamental political and theoretical causes of the crisis.

(2) The emergence of Pabloite revisionism pointed to the underlying root of the crisis of our movement: abandonment of a working-class revolutionary perspective. Under the influence of the relative stabilization of capitalism in the industrial states of the West and of the partial success of petit-bourgeois movements in overthrowing imperialist rule in some of the backward countries, the revisionist tendency within the Trotskyist movement developed an orientation away from the proletariat and toward the petit-bourgeois leaderships. The conversion of Trotskyism into a left satellite of the existing labor and colonial-revolutionary leaderships, combined with a classically centrist verbal orthodoxy, was typified by Pablo--but by no means was confined to him or his organizational faction. On the contrary, the Cuban and Algerian revolutions have constituted acid tests proving that the centrist tendency is also prevalent among certain groups which originally opposed the Pablo faction.

(3) There is an obvious and forceful logic in the proposals for early reunification of the centrist groups within the Trotskyist movement. But 'reunification' on the basis of centrist politics cannot signify re-establishment of the Fourth International. The struggle for the Fourth International is the struggle for a program embodying the working-class revolutionary perspective of Marxism. It is true that the basic doctrines of the movement, as abstractly formulated, have not been formally denied. But by their abandonment of a revolutionary perspective the revisionists concretely challenge the programmatic bases of our movement.

(4) The essence of the debate within the Trotskyist movement is the question of the perspective of the proletariat and its revolutionary vanguard elements toward the existing petit-bourgeois leaderships of the labor movement, the deformed workers states, and the colonial revolution. The heart of the revolutionary perspective of Marxism is in the struggle for the independence of the workers as a class from all non-proletarian forces; the guiding political issue and theoretical criterion is workers' democracy, of which the supreme expression is workers' power. This applies to all countries where the proletariat has become capable of carrying on independent politics--only the forms in which the issue is posed vary from country to country. These forms, of course, determine the practical intervention of the Marxists.

### EUROPE

(5) The recovery and prolonged prosperity of European capitalism has not, as revisionists of all stripes contend, produced a conservatized workers' movement. In reality, the strength, cohesion, cultural level, and potential combativity of the European proletariat are higher today than ever before. The defeat of DeGaulle by the French miners and the persistent, currently accelerating, electoral swing to the Left in the bourgeois-democratic countries of Europe (most notably Italy, Great Britain, Germany) illustrate this fact.

(6) The European workers' attempts to go beyond partial economic struggles to the socialist transformation of society have been frustrated by the resistance and treason of the labor bureaucracy. The four years of reaction in France following the seizure of power by DeGaulle show the terrible price still exacted for tolerance of these misleaders. The Belgian general strike showed once again that 'leftist' bureaucrats like Renard would also do all in their power to block or divert a movement capable of threatening capitalist rule. But the experiences of both France and Belgium prove a spontaneous desire of the workers to engage in struggle against the capitalist class--rising on occasion to an open confrontation with the system.

(7) The task of the Trotskyists in the European workers' movement is the construction within the existing mass organizations (unions and, in certain instances, parties) of an alternative leadership. Marxists must at all times retain and exercise political and programmatic independence within the context of the organizational form involved. Support to tendencies within the labor bureaucracy, to the extent that they defend essential interests of the working class or reflect class-struggle desires within the labor movement, is correct and even obligatory; but

this support is always only conditional and critical. When, as is inevitable, the class struggle reaches the stage at which the 'leftist' bureaucrats play a reactionary role, the Marxists must oppose them immediately and openly. The behavior of the centrist tendency around the Belgian journal La Gauche in withdrawing during the general strike the correct slogan of a march on Brussels, in order to avoid a break with Renard, is the opposite of a Marxist attitude toward the labor bureaucracy.

(8) The objective prospects for development of the Trotskyist movement in Europe are extremely bright. Large numbers of the best young militants in all countries, rejecting the cynical and careerist routinism of the Stalinist and Social-Democratic bureaucrats, are earnestly searching for a socialist perspective. They can be won to a movement capable of convincing them, practically and theoretically, that it offers such a perspective. The structural changes stemming from European integration pose the issues of workers' democracy and of the independence of the political and economic organs of the working class as the alternative to state control of the labor movement--and impel the working class into increasingly significant class battles. If, under these objective conditions, the West European Trotskyists fail to grow at a rapid rate it will be because they themselves have adopted the revisionist stance of a satellite of the labor leadership as opposed to a perspective of struggle around the program of workers' democracy.

### SOVIET BLOC

(9) Since the Second World War, the countries of Eastern Europe have been developing into modern industrial states. As the proletariat of the deformed workers states increases in numbers and raises its living standards and cultural level, so grows the irrepressible conflict between the working class and the totalitarian Stalinist bureaucracy. Despite the defeat of the Hungarian workers' revolution, the Soviet-bloc proletariat has won significant reforms, substantially widening its latitude of thought and action. These reforms, however, do not signify a 'process of reform' or 'destalinization process': they were yielded only grudgingly by the unreformable bureaucracy, are under perpetual attack by the faction of 'Stalin's heirs,' and remain in jeopardy as long as Stalinist bureaucratic rule prevails. These concessions are historically significant only to the extent that they help the proletariat to prepare for the overthrow of the bureaucracy. Real destalinization can be accomplished only by the political revolution.

(10) A new revolutionary leadership is emerging among the proletarian youth of the Soviet bloc. Inspired by twin sources--the inextinguishable Leninist tradition and the direct and tangible needs of their class--the new generation is formulating and implementing in struggle the program of workers' democracy. Notable in this regard is the point made recently by a long-time participant in Soviet student life. Regarding the fundamental character to much of the widespread opposition among Russian youth, it was stated, 'Because he is a Marxist-Leninist, the Soviet student is much more radically dissatisfied than if he were an Anglo-Saxon pragmatist.' (David Burg to The New York Times) The Trotskyists, lineal continuers of the earlier stage, have an indispensable contribution to make to this struggle: the concept of the international party and of a transitional program required to carry through the political revolution. Assistance to the development of a revolutionary leadership in the Soviet bloc through personal and ideological contact is a primary practical activity for any international leadership worthy of the name.

### COLONIAL REVOLUTION

(11) The programmatic significance of workers' democracy is greatest in the backward, formerly colonial, areas of the world: it is precisely in this sector that the program of workers' democracy provides the clearest possible line of demarcation between revolutionary and revisionist tendencies. In all of these countries the struggle for bourgeois democratic rights (freedom of speech, right to organize and strike, free elections) is of great importance to the working class because it lays the basis for the advanced struggle for proletarian democracy and workers' power (workers' control of production, state power based on workers' and peasants' councils).

(12) The theory of the Permanent Revolution, which is basic to our movement, declares that in the modern world the bourgeois-democratic revolution cannot be completed except through the victory and extension of the proletarian revolution--the consummation of workers' democracy. The experience of all the colonial countries has vindicated this theory and laid bare the manifest inner contradictions which continually unsettle the present state of the colonial revolution against imperialism. Precisely in those states where the bourgeois aims of national independence and land reform have been most fully achieved, the democratic political rights of the workers and peasants have not been realized, whatever the social gains. This is particularly true of those countries where the colonial revolution led to the establishment of deformed workers states: China, North Vietnam,...and Cuba. The balance, to date, has been a thwarted success, either essentially empty, as in the neo-colonies of the African model, or profoundly deformed and

limited, as in the Chinese example. This present outcome is a consequence of the predominance of specific class forces within the colonial upheavals, and of the class-related forms employed in the struggles. These forms imposed upon the struggle have been, for all their variety, exclusively 'from above,' i.e., parliamentary ranging through the bureaucratic-military. And the class forces involved have been, of course, bourgeois or petit-bourgeois. A class counterposition is developed out of the complex of antagonisms resulting from failure to fulfill the bourgeois-democratic revolution. The petit-bourgeois leaderships with their bureaucratic forms and empiricist methods are ranged against participation by the workers as a class in the struggle. The involvement of the working class is necessarily centered on winning workers' democracy and requires the leadership of the revolutionary proletarian vanguard with its programmatic consciousness of historic mission. As the working class gains ascendancy in the struggle and takes in tow the more oppressed strata of the petit-bourgeoisie, the Permanent Revolution will be driven forward.

(13) The Cuban Revolution has exposed the vast inroads of revisionism upon our movement. On the pretext of defense of the Cuban Revolution, in itself an obligation for our movement, full unconditional and uncritical support has been given to the Castro government and leadership, despite its petit-bourgeois nature and bureaucratic behavior. Yet the record of the regime's opposition to the democratic rights of the Cuban workers and peasants is clear: bureaucratic ouster of the democratically-elected leaders of the labor movement and their replacement by Stalinist hacks; suppression of the Trotskyist press; proclamation of the single-party system; and much else. This record stands side-by-side with enormous initial social and economic accomplishments of the Cuban Revolution. Thus Trotskyists are at once the most militant and unconditional defenders against imperialism of both the Cuban Revolution and of the deformed workers state which has issued therefrom. But Trotskyists cannot give confidence and political support, however critical, to a governing regime hostile to the most elementary principles and practices of workers' democracy, even if our tactical approach is not as toward a hardened bureaucratic caste.

(14) What is true of the revisionists' approach toward the Castro regime is even more apparent in regard to the Ben Bella regime now governing Algeria on the program of a 'socialist' revolution in cooperation with French imperialism. The anti-working-class nature of this petit-bourgeois group has been made clear to all but the willfully blind by its forcible seizure of control over the labor movement and its suppression of all opposition parties. Even widespread nationalization and



development of management committees seen in the context of the political expropriation of the working class and the economic orientation towards collaboration with France cannot give Algeria the character of a workers state, but leave it, on the contrary, a backward capitalist society with a high degree of statification. As revolutionaries our intervention in both revolutions, as in every existing state, must be in accordance with the position of Trotsky: 'We are not a government party; we are the party of irreconcilable opposition' (In Defense of Marxism). This can cease to apply only in relation to a government genuinely based on workers' democracy.

(15) Experience since the Second World War has demonstrated that peasant-based guerilla warfare under petit-bourgeois leadership can in itself lead to nothing more than an anti-working-class bureaucratic regime. The creation of such regimes has come about under the conditions of decay of imperialism, the demoralization and disorientation caused by Stalinist betrayals, and the absence of revolutionary Marxist leadership of the working class. Colonial revolution can have an unequivocally progressive significance only under such leadership of the revolutionary proletariat. For Trotskyists to incorporate into their strategy revisionism on the proletarian leadership in the revolution is a profound negation of Marxism-Leninism no matter what pious wish may be concurrently expressed for 'building revolutionary Marxist parties in colonial countries.' Marxists must resolutely oppose any adventurist acceptance of the peasant-guerilla road to socialism--historically akin to the Social Revolutionary program on tactics that Lenin fought. This alternative would be a suicidal course for the socialist goals of the movement, and perhaps physically for the adventurers.

(16) In all backward countries where the proletariat exists as a class, the fundamental principle of Trotskyism is the independence of the working-class, its unions, and its parties, in intransigent opposition to imperialism, to any national liberal bourgeoisie, and to petit-bourgeois governments and parties of all sorts, including those professing 'socialism' and even 'Marxism-Leninism.' Only in this way can the ground be laid for working-class hegemony in the revolutionary alliance with oppressed petit-bourgeois strata, particularly the peasantry. Similarly, for a working-class party in an advanced country to violate class solidarity with the workers of a backward country by politically endorsing a petit-bourgeois colonial-revolutionary government is a sure sign of centrist opportunism, just as refusal to defend a colonial revolution because of the non-proletarian character of its leadership is a sign of sectarianism or worse.

(17) The inter-relationship between bourgeois-democratic and proletarian-democratic struggles in the colonial revolution remains as formulated in the founding program of the Fourth International, a formulation which today retains complete validity:

'It is impossible merely to reject the democratic program; it is imperative that in the struggle the masses outgrow it. The slogan for a National (or Constituent) Assembly preserves its full force for such countries as China or India. This slogan must be indissolubly tied up with the problem of national liberation and agrarian reform. As a primary step, the workers must be armed with this democratic program. Only they will be able to summon and unite the farmers. On the basis of the revolutionary democratic program, it is necessary to oppose the workers to the 'national' bourgeoisie. Then, at a certain stage in the mobilization of the masses under the slogans of revolutionary democracy, soviets can and should arise. Their historical role in each given period, particularly their relation to the National Assembly, will be determined by the political level of the proletariat, the bond between them and the peasantry, and the character of the proletarian party policies. Sooner or later, the soviets should overthrow bourgeois democracy. Only they are capable of bringing the democratic revolution to a conclusion and likewise opening an era of socialist revolution.

The relative weight of the individual democratic and transitional demands in the proletariat's struggle, their mutual ties and their order of presentation, is determined by the peculiarities and specific conditions of each backward country and to a considerable extent by the degree of its backwardness. Nevertheless, the general trend of revolutionary development in all backward countries can be determined by the formula of the permanent revolution in the sense definitely imparted to it by the three revolutions in Russia (1905, February 1917, October 1917).' (The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International)

### CONCLUSIONS

(18) The task of the international revolutionary-Marxist movement today is to re-establish its own real existence. To speak of the 'conquest of the masses' as a general guideline internationally is a qualitative overstatement. The tasks before

most Trotskyist sections and groups today flow from the need for political clarification in the struggle against revisionism, in the context of a level of work of a generally propagandistic and preparatory nature. An indispensable part of our preparation is the development and strengthening of roots within the broader working-class movement without which the Trotskyists would be condemned to sterile isolation or to political degeneration in the periods of rising class struggle and in either case unable to go forward in our historic task of leading the working class to power. Above all what can and must be done is the building of a world party firmly based on strong national sections, the assembling of a cadre of working-class militants won and tested in the process of the class struggle and on the firm basis of the revolutionary perspective of the Fourth International, the program to realize workers' democracy--culminating in workers' power. A fundamental statement expanding on this perspective, its opposition to Pabloism, and its relevance in the United States is contained in the Minority's 'In Defense of a Revolutionary Perspective' (in SWP Discussion Bulletin Vol 23, No. 4, July 1962).

(19) 'Reunification' of the Trotskyist movement on the centrist basis of Pabloism in any of its variants would be a step away from, not toward, the genuine rebirth of the Fourth International. If, however, the majority of the presently existing Trotskyist groups insists on going through with such 'reunification,' the revolutionary tendency of the world movement should not turn its back on these cadres. On the contrary: it would be vitally necessary to go through this experience with them. The revolutionary tendency would enter a 'reunified' movement as a minority faction, with a perspective of winning a majority to the program of workers' democracy. The Fourth International will not be reborn through adaptation to Pabloite revisionism: only by political and theoretical struggle against all forms of centrism can the world party of socialist revolution finally be established.

June 14, 1963

\*\*\*\*\*

## THE WHITE-RADICAL LEFT ON TRIAL

by R. Vernon

The black revolt in the United States, as any other complex of events of revolutionary significance, places all the radical tendencies and organizations on trial. Since all the traditional radical tendencies are almost entirely white in their composition and traditions, the new black radicalism sweeping the Negro population North and South makes the test especially severe, penalizing any of these tendencies for lack of flexibility or lack of revolutionary marrow.

In an interview in February 1961, Robert F. Williams (Studies on the Left, Vol. 2, No. 3, 1962) bluntly predicted: "... This thing is moving so fast that we're going to leave all of these liberals and so-called radical groups behind. And the next thing they know we'll be too far ahead of them. You see, then they won't have anything to contribute to our struggle at all."

### Socialist Workers Party

The SWP, in my opinion, stands out in the present comparison as far superior to any of its rivals in the first stages of meeting this exacting test. The two major advantages of the SWP are its genuinely revolutionary character, and the free internal discussion fostering a continuing ideological vigor and flexibility in meeting new problems. Only revolutionists can possibly find a common language to speak with the new black radicalism. And only freedom of internal discussion can enable any tendency of almost exclusively white membership and traditions to develop its ideological potentialities to meet the new challenge.

The SWP has a long and continuous history of fairly good and consistently improved approximations to a comprehensive and profound understanding of the entire Negro struggle, and, being revolutionary, is receptive to more refined approximations and to the revolutionary implications of the new situation, even when these implications appear in a perplexing and somewhat unforeseen guise. Comrade Breitman's contributions over the past few years, built upon the SWP's general approach to the Negro struggle, have pointed consistently in the right direction(s) with an excellent sense of proportion and boldness in probing out new ground and new ideas, but without unfounded exaggerations. To date, this has meant an alerting and a gradual reorientation of the

membership's attitudes on the Negro struggle, with some resistance to the diffusion of concepts which appear strange to many white comrades. The PC Draft Resolution "Freedom Now" is a high point in this direction, and even in an unamended state would represent a great step forward for the party, far in advance of any rival tendencies among white radicals. The draft resolution is in my opinion the best comprehensive statement on the Negro struggle that I have seen, even considering the revisions which I suggest in an accompanying article.

The article "Why White Radicals Are Incapable of Understanding Black Nationalism," referred to in what follows as WWR, will, I hope, place the SWP so far ahead in the running as to make a qualitative difference. Although it states the bitter truth that most Negroes regard all white radicals as pretty much the same thing, the intention of the article is to help change that situation definitively with respect to the SWP. In fact, the SWP is the only such group worth trying to change, as the survey below will demonstrate; it is probably the only white-radical group that CAN be re-oriented to the revolutionary potentialities and subtleties of the new situation. It is the only group whose internal discussion and ideological life can, and did, produce either the WWR document or the general statement of the quality of the PC draft resolution.

There are other important connotations worth noting, bearing on the internal disputes within the SWP and on the quality of the rival political tendencies. The WWR article is clear and ipso facto evidence that independent Negro radical thought, not straightjacketed into a white-radical mold, is possible, encouraged, and welcomed in the SWP. It is equally ipso facto evidence that severe and even somewhat savage criticism of things taken much for granted in the party's spoken or unspoken traditions is seriously considered where the criticism is clarifying, poses issues and difficulties squarely as the critic is capable of doing, and is not subordinated to the confusionism entailed in grinding a factional axe. The WWR article takes severe issue at least implicitly with some propagandistic derivatives of the party's trade-union orientation (i.e., with the picture of the white working class as presented to skeptical Negroes), the mystique of Americanization and the prototype of the real-American midwest radical glorified in the SWP's writings and traditions, the entire past integrationist emphasis of the party's work among Negroes, many aspects of the party's internal discussion, and many other things taken for granted by

the SWP and other white radicals as well. The criticism is far more extensive and detailed, and deeper-going than anything presented by any of the several minorities now in the field.

Other radical organizations boast of welcoming or correctly channeling internal criticism, of developing their Negro cadre as an autonomous entity to some extent. Very little evidence of true freedom of internal discussion has been seen or reported outside of the SWP, and almost all of the expression of the Negro membership of other white-radical organizations is limited to a re-hashing of the group's official views, except for those cases where their Negro members are blasting them in the process of simply walking out in disgust.

The SWP is of course not a monolithic entity, and the thinking of the entire membership, on all levels and around the country, naturally varies in the face of this new situation. The surface has been barely scratched in the immense task of "white radical work" to reorient the bulk of the membership to the potentialities and detailed difficulties of the new situation. Much more discussion will be needed even after the convention to help implement decisions, thrash out obscure points, correct exaggerated conclusions, and improve poor formulations.

The present discussion period has not been put to best use, partly because this most important problem is swamped in a welter of other discussions, partly because majority and minorities alike are much more at home with their customary white-radical discussions than with the radically new and different problems to be dealt with in this area.

Discussion of an action -- and participation-oriented nature on the Negro struggle and the white-radical problem should be continued into the post-Convention period, with emphasis on experiences, projected work, and difficulties in communication between white radicalism and black radicalism. But the important first steps have been made, and a revolutionary and ideologically vigorous party can meet its challenge as no organization lacking those qualities can hope to.

#### Studies on the Left.

This publication and the students around it can boast the distinction of being the first to sponsor a serious discussion between white radicals and Negro semi-nationalist radicals on the problem of rising black nationalism and its

place in the radical picture. The article "Revolutionary Nationalism and the Afro-American" by Harold Cruse, and the interview with Rob Williams, both in Vol. 2, No. 3 (1962) are highly instructive and rewarding reading. Cruse's article comes into much clearer focus after a reading of the WWR article. But this is only one of many interesting discussions to the readers of this publication, apparently. Although open-minded in exemplary fashion, their interest seems to be limited to a radical-liberal curiosity, and, being neither revolutionists nor people who conceive of themselves as revolutionists, they never will really get a comprehensive picture of the black revolt of the sixties unless they get it by following our discussion. Left to their own devices, it will take them a certain amount of time to even reach the level the bulk of the SWP membership was at in the early part of this year, even though they had a head start.

#### Monthly Review

MR has produced, this year, a somewhat understanding editorial on the Negro revolt, later a hard-hitting article by J. Boggs (Black Political Power, March 1963), Detroit Negro auto worker, which really lays some aspects of current Negro thinking and rejection of white radicals and workers right on the line. Their readership as a whole is way behind, and focuses on itself, worn-out leftovers from the CP halcyon days, as "The Left." A recent symposium discussing the present and future of American radicalism in MR passed over the Negro struggle with barely a fleeting mention, and none of the four contributors saw black radicalism as any significant part of the picture.

National Guardian. Lags behind MR in this area.

#### Progressive Labor.

This group features a super-trade union "orientation." Their press reads as if we were in the high-water days of the CIO organizing drive. They will never see the Negro struggle as anything but a derivative of the all-important proletarian class battles (real or fancied) on which they are completely fixated. They promised to present an "analysis" of the Black Muslims, but have not come across yet. When drawn into the vortex of the black revolt away from their present preoccupations, and against their will, they will probably pontificate the "correct" Marxist line of Negro-White unity to the errant and unenlightened Negroes in an adventurous and ultimativistic fashion.

American Labor-Negro Vanguard Party.

Although unusual among groups steeped in white-radical ideology in its large Negro membership, most of the Negroes retain earlier CP attitudes, more reminiscent of the Third Period, are trade union and integration oriented, and openly contemptuous of nationalism. They are more likely to concentrate on "saving" Negroes from the deviation of nationalism in the immediate future.

Communist Party, Advance, etc.

The CP is probably hopeless (so much the better for Negroes). They have already burnt their fingers once on their own synthetic separatism, and are now irretrievably inoculated against any further infection. Their opposition to nationalism is now codified and ossified, openly stated in their press in their inimitable slanderous fashion, and buttressed by the dedication of the CP to the liberals, labor fakers, and the Kennedy administration. The CP has a cadre of developed Negro party officials, but Davis, Jackson, Patterson, Winston, Lightfoot are not noted for any original contributions of their own to Marxist strategy (any more than white CP officials). At best, the CP produces white-radical Negro leading cadres, black outside and white inside (as is the case with all other white-radical tendencies). The CP lacks both internal democracy and revolutionary drive, and is well-suited to learn nothing and unlearn nothing. Their fixation on peace and peaceful co-existence is totally meaningless to Negroes. Negroes have not forgotten their home-front policies during World War II, and the CP's name is mud in extensive layers of the radical Negro community.

Workers World.

This group has engaged in an intense flirtation with black nationalism since 1959, and has the distinction of being the first white-radical action-oriented group to attempt to "turn on" to the Northern ghetto in recent years. They believe they can relate emotionally to the ghetto radicals. However, their approach seems to be as yet a superficial white-radical approach, allowing a certain minor good point or two to nationalism only to get the ear of Negroes long enough to lead them to the "correct" path of Negro-White unity, right now. There is no clear evidence of any serious grasp in depth of the totality of the black revolt, its potentialities, and its real weaknesses. Despite their orientation, they still sound to Negroes like what they are,



a howling bunch of semi-hysterical white radicals who know-it-all and really don't know much. They may feel they have burnt their fingers on nationalism, in the case of Dr. Lonnie X.

SP-SDF

The social democrats are not revolutionary at all, but their youth are active in and in harmony with integration struggles, freedom rides, CORE, SNCC, and Dr. King's projects. Black nationalism is beyond them; they may flirt mildly and comment politely on the subject, while most of them will withdraw from it in utter revulsion, unless they possess a spark of latent radicalism. Their attachment to the liberal wing of the US power structure will blind them to many opportunities to interfere with and hold back the development of the black revolt.

\* \* \* \* \*

The black revolt and its political and ideological challenges also make themselves felt in the internal situation in the SWP. Factions and tendencies are tested just as severely, in fact more severely, inside the SWP as outside.

The SWP as a whole, and the majority in particular, has an immense task ahead in assimilating the new lessons to be learned. Some persistence of pockets inside the SWP which are resistant to appreciating the revolutionary potential of black nationalism will not prove fatal, if their criticisms aid in the correction of exaggerated overreactions, weak points, and difficulties. But, in general, no white Americans can understand black nationalism to the full without being revolutionists, and no one who cannot gain a grasp of what black nationalism means in the Negro revolt can claim to be a fully developed revolutionist in the US. We have a lot of ideological work cut out for us, in critical dialogue (with Negro comrades and contacts, rather than with pretentious minorities) and supplementary rounding out of the picture, as well as the job of getting into position to intervene, and intervening effectively.

The two wings of the left-Shachtmanite Minority have not been of much help to date in this area, and have defaulted completely in the ideological sense. Since they lay factional claim to the ability to reorient and lead the party in this area and in general, and to replace the existing leadership in the first place, their defaults come in for serious judgment and criticism.

The Wohlforth-Philips wing of the Minority at least claims to have a position on the Negro revolt and on nationalism. The position sounds better than the ones offered by most white radicals outside the SWP. But it is a sophomoric and completely inadequate, clumsy attempt, considering that it is presented inside the SWP. It should be graded a C minus. The W-Ph wing urges doing everything, everywhere at once, concentrating on all struggles simultaneously. There is some awkward groping at an understanding of black nationalism thrown into the hodgepodge, most of it giving the impression of being a parody of disjointed fragments of contributions made by Comrade Breitman. For the words appearing on paper represent no understanding among the members of the group. Much attention is centered on adolescent adventures in colonizing the South, which is at least as unfamiliar and difficult as the North as an arena for work, under present conditions, and no hint of understanding is offered of the precise difficulties standing in our way either North or South. A minor supporting role is grudgingly assigned to black nationalism, a (happily) transitory phenomenon. The only point which rings clear and true is their impassioned defense of the seniority fortress of white trade unionists.

A later contribution by Comrade Mazelis (Vol. 24, No. 23) constitutes a slightly improved approximation to reality, and offers hope that this wing, or part of it, may not lag behind indefinitely. This article still advocates going south, and lecturing the Negroes on why they need a working-class leadership, with no attention to real problems, no understanding of obstacles and difficulties. A serious mistake is proposed: lecturing to Negroes on the virtues of a Labor Party at this time, i.e., a line which can only be received with suspicion by Negroes at the present time: in the first place, there is no realistic prospect of any Labor Party; secondly, Negroes are presently contemplating a party of their own; thirdly, radical Negroes do not intend to be subordinated to any white-dominated organizations, least of all to anything tied to the white-dominated and unsympathetic labor movement. The absurdity of a Militant talking trade unions and Negro-White unity at the same time that it sounds like the very voice of the depths of the Negro ghetto is offered with a straight face. Complete disregard is shown for the fact that this Militant sounding just as indigenous to the ghettos as Muhammad Speaks (!!) will be hawked by white comrades in the ghettos, and written largely by a white staff which has not worn a black skin a single day in its life, any more than have Comrades Mazelis, Wohlforth, or Philips.

Less can be said for the Robertson-Mage wing of the Minority. Here there is a complete default. This tendency simply has nothing audible or comprehensive to say on this most important social-crisis shaking the entire country. On other subjects, the R-M wing is most eloquent: they are not lost for words on the nature of the state in Cuba, Algeria, China; they are liberal with advice to the Cuban government on how to conduct its internal and foreign affairs, and are experts on the European Common Market, the entire world situation from pole to pole, on how to build and save the world Trotskyist movement.

Both wings of the Minority appeal to inexperienced white youth in or around the party in the guise of vigorous and fearless critics and rivals of a worn-out, disoriented, unimaginative leadership which is allegedly afraid of criticism. This is always the advantage of a critical minority in the party if it can tap a source or mood of discontent, in that its criticisms, whatever their intrinsic merit, will have a certain period of unhampered incubation among more susceptible and less experienced members, and will present facile "solutions" to whatever problems are besetting the party, before the nature of the opposition and its rationale comes into full focus.

The two left-Shachtmanite minorities want more old-time white-radical activism and then some, with no inkling of the inadequacy of such an "orientation." Some of their criticisms related to activities and inactivity could be made by any one in the party, and often are, but are useless in that they are not linked to any understanding of the situation in the country, in particular, to any understanding of the Negro struggle and its direction, and are not linked to any understanding of the objective and subjective difficulties paralyzing the party up to now, difficulties which are not surmountable by any amount of run-hither-and-yon activism or pep talks.

A simple comparison of the VWR (Why White Radicals ...)--bulletin and the Minority writings is instructive in puncturing the Minority balloon. The Minority criticisms, for all their acidity, are flabby and sterile, often contradictory and too steeped in factional motivation to clarify anything. Real and useful criticisms, which seek to point up real difficulties, orient toward genuinely existing opportunities, are welcome in the SWP.

Unfortunately, the two minorities are caught in the same trap as any other white radicals, and their suggestions of

of bigger and better trade-union orientation, taking over the leadership of the Negro masses, bombarding Negroes with importunate and disoriented white-radical criticisms devoid of any relation to Negro thinking and feeling, are impotent and not directed to any real audience. Worse yet, both minorities exhibit signs of hardening in sectarianism, unresponsiveness toward the many aspects of the Negro struggle which do not fit their "scientific" schemas, a refusal to learn anything from Negro comrades or from the Negro masses, a heightened compulsion to insist that the party lecture the Negro masses from afar on the "correct" "Marxist" way.

In contrast, criticisms of Negro comrades take into account the severe problems facing the party, the inexorable limitations on the party and on any white comrades individually in this situation, and focus on the difficulties which have to be unearthed and understood before any spurt of activism can be directed to good advantage. A factional attitude would be justified, under present circumstances, only against individuals or a tendency which refuses to learn and unlearn anything and which drag persistently behind other sections of the party in coming to grips with the complex--new situation or, worse yet, display a hardening of retrogressive traits and a complete inability to orient toward the revolutionary Negro struggle.

On this major test, both of these Minority wings fail and flop miserably. The R-M minority is largely unconcerned, as a tendency, remaining blissfully unaware that it is being subjected to a test, insensitive to the very fact that Negro comrades in particular will judge them even by what they don't have to say. Clarity on the full picture of the Negro struggle probably does not rate that highly with them, and cannot compete with the other titanic issues, such as saving the party from Pabloism.

This default decisively demolishes any claims they have to leadership as tendencies, except possibly in the eyes of some white students who ask for much less in the way of a leadership or in the way of critics of an existing leadership.

Because of its relation to the factional situation, the SLL must be discussed here. The SLL likewise defaults completely, not just on black nationalism in the US, for ignorance of which they could be excused, but because of their obtuseness and insensitivity to the importance and positive aspects of nationalism anywhere. It is good that the SLL does not adapt itself uncritically to any nationalist currents or moods that manifest themselves in the colonial revolution,

that they do not uncritically adulate Nkrumah, Sekou Toure, Ben Bella, or even Fidel Castro. But they tend rigidly in the direction of a crippling insensitivity to any aspect of nationalism which they could link up with, manipulate, or push in revolutionary directions, even in their criticisms, from afar. They present the aspect of stodgy British critics whose vision cannot extend beyond their own insular position in an advanced and highly industrialized country. This glaring defect will hamper any work they may engage in with West Indian, Asian and African workers and students present in Britain. They may succeed in recruiting some of these elements, but can only help to disorient them as well as themselves. The revolutionary nationalism of oppressed peoples, one of the most powerful and volcanic forces known, will be left without challenge to the province of petty bourgeois nationalists. In their factionally motivated comments on the Negro struggle in the US, they are simply ludicrous, and place a heavy burden on anyone claiming to be their co-thinkers.

\* \* \* \* \*

The youth around the SWP have some special problems to face in reorienting to the Negro struggle. Again, the revolutionary politics and free internal discussion enhance the possibilities of meeting the challenge.

White youth, however, tend to be more directly fixated on civil rights, on the integration struggles of the South, on SNCC, and on freedom rides, and are thus further removed from communication with the black radicalized youth in the ghettos. SWP youth at least have a real audience for a Southern orientation, in the person of Northern white college youth inspired by the Southern integration struggle. For that reason, an orientation toward the South per se, including the prospect of sending members into the South, has some attraction.

The outstanding problem is that young white radicals tend to be even more insensitive to the Northern struggle with its nationalist features than are white adult radicals. Young white students settle readily for simplistic Negro-White unity arguments, think integration is the greatest thing in the world, are perfectly satisfied with simple "scientific" white "Marxism" and are eager to share this newly-found wisdom with anyone they can reach, and have not spent years fruitlessly arguing the economic "explanation" of Jim Crow to skeptical Negro workers. Their radicalism contains many components not shared by today's black radicals (peace movement, fall-out, Ban-the-Bomb, the wonderful future socialist society and

what it will be like, on what day did Cuba become a Workers State?, etc., etc.).

The extensive alienation from the aspirations and concerns of the Negro ghetto youth is bad enough. But the atmosphere repelling Negro youth will be aggravated to the extent that radical white youth in or around the SWP sound like the two left-Shachtmanite minorities. Both of these minority factions are more insensitive than the party in general to the nature of the Northern black revolt, emphasize orientations which reinforce the tendency to ignore Northern Negroes, see Negro demands and methods of struggle as subordinate to the all-American class struggle seen simplistically, and consider any number of world issues more important than the black revolt in their preoccupations. Worse yet, their tradition of Shachtmanite pseudo-Trotskyist empty Nature-of-the State theorizing, totally alien to live revolutionary struggles inside or outside the United States, this ice-cold and frigid "theoretical" acrobatics which has always marked the fringes of the Trotskyist movement, is immensely intriguing and titillating to white college students (cf. YSL, YPSL), but is repulsive to Negroes, young or old, for whom the battle with society is a serious business and not a fascinating intellectualized game. The ludicrous and pathetic failure of this frigid and lifeless "Marxism" and "Bolshevism" is nowhere more striking than in the response of the two left-Shachtmanite minorities to the white problem and the black revolt in the United States.

\* \* \* \* \*

The problem of revolutionary nationalism has never been dealt with adequately in any Marxist or "Marxist" movement anywhere. Lenin only scratched the surface, with an approach, correct as far as it goes, toward allowing nationalities the right to self-determination and incorporating that right and the principle of fighting for that right into the Bolshevik program.

Going far beyond that is the need to develop a working understanding of revolutionary nationalism to the extent of being able to stimulate it, to develop its volcanic potentialities, to rise on a nationalist wave in the fight against colonialism or neo-colonialism, and let that wave power the revolutionary movement forward on its steam.

— Some empirical revolutionaries, Fidel Castro, Mao, Ho Chi-Minh, have not done badly in practice in uniting nationalism and revolutionary action in their respective countries, but no generalized inferences or theoretical advances have been

crystallized from these struggles. On the contrary, anything original these struggles may have produced tends to be lost, even on the masses who participated in these struggles, as they become steeped in one or another version of the same sterile "Marxism" which they had sense enough to honor in the breach during the military-guerrilla phase of their struggle.

"Marxists" living in the advanced countries (USA, Britain, Germany, France), and this means most "Marxists" of all tendencies not in state power, have always naively regarded the revolutionary movements of "their" colonies as appendages of the "revolutionary" movements in the metropolis. They unload their simplistic "Marxist" wisdom on colonial students and workers they come in contact with, remain insensitive to the nationalist aspirations and needs of those students and workers, and present them with something Lenin wrote as the final word on the subject. Eventually, these workers and students, on returning to their own popular struggles for independence, national freedom, and (maybe or maybe not) socialism, either remain in isolation with their sterile "Marxism," or reject the useless teachings of their metropolitan mentors and plunge headlong into the nationalist struggle as it is. The failure of this kindergarten "Marxism" to interest the nationalist-ly fervid masses in the underdeveloped countries leaves the field wide open and unchallenged to petty-bourgeois nationalist movements and programs.

The complete and abysmal failure of any variety or tendency of "Marxism" to make a real dent in the masses of black Africa is a warning signal of the first magnitude. The need to develop an ability to speak a common language with the masses of Africa and Latin America should have top priority on the theoretical agenda internationally, in coming years.

In the United States, we have the odd and somewhat fortunate situation of the "colonial" upsurge occurring within the confines of the metropolitan country, with the Marxist movement in physical proximity to the nationalist struggle and in at least minimal contact with it. This affords a unique and excellent opportunity to find out something about what makes nationalism tick, vibrate, and erupt, in a profound human sense and not just in a dry, abstract theoretical approximation. It is absolutely imperative to make the most of this opportunity from all conceivable angles.

Any tendency or individual foolish enough to waste this unique opportunity cannot be viewed as a reasonable facsimile

of anything scientific. The sectarian who turns his back on this problem and hardens in resistance to persist in traditional simplistic white "Marxism," withdrawing to the sanctity of old concepts and old quotations which he seeks to preserve from defilement by reality, is not a social scientist, i.e., not a Marxist, but a political charlatan doomed to failure.

June 1963