



Discussion Bulletin

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THE PERSPECTIVE FOR WORKERS DEMOCRACY IN THE U.S.

By Jan Garrett

"Precisely in a period when the trend towards authoritarianism and a technocratic outlook becomes more and more pronounced in bourgeois society, it is all the more necessary to stress these [democratic] basic aspects of the socialist revolution in the advanced industrial countries. The concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat must once again be re-interpreted in the sense of Marx and Lenin (See "State and Revolution") as a dictatorship only against the overthrown ruling class...

"Full power to elected representative bodies where the working-class parties and tendencies can struggle for leadership by political means but not by violence or repression. The right to organize any party which the laboring masses care to within the framework of the socialist constitution. Freedom in all the workers parties to organize tendencies. Independence of the trade unions from the state and the parties. Full freedom for scientific research and cultural and artistic creation without restrictions by the state. Full equality between men and women. That is the image of socialism which revolutionary Marxists must uphold ceaselessly."

-- "Capitalist Europe in Crisis"
By the United Secretariat,
January 15, 1969

With an added plank on the self-determination of presently oppressed nations, this is a theme equally applicable to the United States. For it becomes increasingly important, in our day-to-day political discussion and contact work, not only to be the ideological vanguard of the struggles against capitalism, not only to be the best-informed militants in the context of these struggles; we must also be intelligent partisans of a socialism which we can describe.

We should not avoid giving an answer to the question of which we wish to replace the present system with. That is as important as knowing what to do next in practical struggle. If we do avoid giving an answer to this question, we leave untouched, in the minds of most Americans with whom we come in contact, a conception of socialism as a "1984," a statist society where the individual is helpless. People have experienced plenty of this under capitalism, especially the black and youth sections of the people. Even if we can convince someone that socialism is desirable as an economic system that can eliminate war, racism and gross poverty, it still is necessary to clear up the political character of socialism in their minds.

Too often, we advance the concept of socialism without definition or purely in an economic sense. The latter happens unintentionally when we stress the need to defend the residual socialist conquests of a deformed workers state -- nationalization of the basic means of production, monopoly of foreign trade, etc. It occurs also when we slip, on occasion, into using the Stalinist or Vietnamese/Castroist terminology of the "socialist countries" or "socialist bloc." The emphasis on the more or less mechanical aspects reflects the pressure of a generation and a half of Stalinist hegemony on the world scale and the residue of the Economism of the old Socialist movement.

The "high tradition" of the Trotskyist movement, which not all of our members have assimilated, on the other hand, includes the DeLeon-IWW conception of socialist industrial union democracy; the experience of Soviets in the October Revolution, by far the richest (see Trotsky's History); the experience of Soviets in Germany 1918, in Hungary, 1956, and the Action Committees of May 1968 in France; the post-World War II village committees of China, North Korea and Vietnam; and the recent rebirth of Bolshevik-Leninism in the Eastern European writings of Kuron and Modzelewski.

There is a parallel growth between the amount of freedom required by the embodiment of labor-power, the worker, and the level of the productive forces. This has been negatively shown by the slowing down of the growth rate of the economies of the deformed workers states after the initial industrialization. Applied to the United States, this law would seem to indicate that if it were possible to implant a bureaucratic workers state on American soil, the antagonism between the productive forces and the political enslavement of the masses might be so great as to allow no appreciable improvement over the anarchy of capitalist production.

The United States society could not go forward on the basis of "socialism" without workers democracy. I think many workers and students sense this fact on an unconscious level. It accounts for a good deal of the residual anti-socialism; it is the dialectical opposite of successful brainwashing by the capitalist mass media.

It is not sufficient to give an economic definition of socialism. Too long the concept of socialism has been associated in the minds of people with Stalinism. Even where people espousing socialism do not identify with Stalinism in the

least, the sharper, more rounded, integrated political-social-economic definition is needed to help these people effectively fight for it.

We must start our discussions on the subject by not only dissociating ourselves from the Stalinist definition of a post-capitalist state as socialist. We should make it clear that this is nothing but a lie, and speak as though our definition of socialism could be found in Webster's dictionary! Then we should concretely define socialism as a system of popular power made up of representative workers' and consumers' councils,...etc.

This way we give the very definition of socialism a transitional, viz. democratic, character.

This way we remove the problem of explaining the botch-ups that occurred part way between capitalism and socialism (the degeneration of the USSR, etc.) to the position of a problem secondary (as it has become) to the fight for socialism here. In this fashion, we keep ourselves on the propaganda offensive rather than the defensive.

We should more consciously use our election campaigns to attack the system of bourgeois elections. By no means should our polemics against abstentionism give the idea that we think bourgeois elections are even half-way adequate for political democracy. The only way effectively to do this is to contrast the system of socialist workers democracy to bourgeois-democratic parliamentarism. As an example of what I mean, I include the following quote from a speech made during the Minneapolis election campaign.

* * *

Directly, the candidates and myself have spoken to 1000 people specifically about the campaign.... Now 1000 people isn't an extremely large number, but when you consider (as we had occasion to discover) that meetings for bourgeois candidates, even mayoralty candidates, often number only 30 people or less, I think it is fair to conclude that we spoke to more people than most of the bourgeois candidates....

Why did we decide to undertake all this work, knowing full well that the return in votes next Tuesday will be quite small; knowing, furthermore, that the socialist revolution will not take place through ballots being cast in a "non-partisan" election, to say the least?...

It would be ridiculous to say that the bourgeois elections have caught the imagination of the man on the street. They have in fact been deliberately reduced to hollow shells by the ruling class

with its constant maneuvers to keep minority parties off the ballot (phony non-partisanship also accomplishes this in part) and by the important fact that, in this very much working-class society -- population-wise -- organized labor has no party of its own even on the level of England's Labour Party.

Yet the rulers have to have some way of cooling opposition elements within their own ranks and in the ranks of the middle class from whom, by the way, the vote-getting machines recruit their cadres. The bourgeois elections serve this function in the case of McCarthy on the one hand and Peace and Freedom on the other. As long as there is a Peace and Freedom type alternative that middle-class radicals can look to which can serve as a safety valve for the frustrations generated under capitalism, they will not throw their lot in with the working class to fight for a working-class democracy based on socialization of the basic means of production.

We use the bourgeois elections precisely in order to undermine them, to explain and expose the ridiculousness of parliamentarism and its parties, and to counterpose to it the socialist system of representative workers' and consumers' councils; with full freedom of the press and assembly for all those workers' tendencies which stand on the abolition of private property in the major means of production; with a reduced work week so that the mass of the workers can participate consciously in politics and self-education; with the right of immediate recall by the grass-roots factory or tenants' committee of a representative who has proven unresponsive to its needs.

We tell our audiences that the idea of workers democracy is now an objectively realizable perspective for the advanced capitalist nations, as the evolution of the Action Committees in May and June in France last year showed. Our Eastern European counterparts are reviving the concept there too, and it is where the struggle is at.

As long as the old-style elections continue to fool the mass of the people about just how democratic they are, socialists will participate. We will continue to use the elections to demand the right to contradict the brainwashing lies of the capitalist politicians, lies which they spread more thickly in election time than others. We use the opportunity to explain to the people our disarmingly reasonable program for the transition from this sick and dying social system to that of socialist workers democracy. We spread the idea that, if this is a democracy, why shouldn't the workers, who are the majority, operate it in their own interests? Why shouldn't they be the power?

We use the bourgeois elections to expose the fact that the whole social system of which they are the crowning fraud is bankrupt to the core....

* * *

There is a good deal of literature in our movement on the subject of workers democracy, but over the long period of time when we have had to make a major orientation on the basis of struggles outside the United States -- especially when a major part of our work has been opposition to other tendencies in the workers movement that were more influential than ourselves, we have tended to postpone the application of this perspective to the United States. (There are some exceptions, Cannon's America's Road to Socialism being the most notable, but for some years this has not been used much because it is somewhat out of date.) This void has contributed to a real reluctance to discuss socialism as a program for the United States on the part of comrades. In turn, this reluctance results often in a tendency to argue our position solely on the basis of a negative, ahistorical, moralistic anti-capitalism (where the comrades are not too shy to debate in an area where they are

not fully armed politically). * Negation is very dialectical, of course, but the students and workers will need the negation of the negation (a constructive, positive alternative) in order to see their way to the socialist movement.

I would hope that explanation of our perspective for socialism could be integrated into party work at all relevant levels, from individual contact work to local election campaigns to educational features in the paper. We could take a series of examples to show how a system of workers' and consumers' councils might handle current social problems that everyone gripes about, but nobody, under capitalism, does anything about: pollution, traffic congestion (the auto syndrome), high prices for education and commodities, etc. Then we could contrast this with the way the bourgeois "democratic" governmental system covers up and procrastinates with these problems.

Twin Cities
May 3, 1969

*Equally fruitless are attempts to talk about socialism that shade over into picturing it as a paradise. But this utopianism, too, is really a result of the same educational void of which I have spoken.

MULTI-NATIONAL LENINIST PARTY -- CHICAGO BRANCH DISCUSSION

New York, N.Y.
May 23, 1969

National Office

Dear Comrades,

Since our last convention the party and youth's intervention into the Third World struggles has deepened as has the revolutionary nationalist consciousness within the black, Puerto Rican, and Chicano communities. This has led to various new problems as well as opportunities and responsibilities, in various branches.

An important discussion took place in the Chicago branch on December 3, 1968 following the resignation of an Afro-American comrade, Wilbert A., from the youth and the party. The discussion not only with various tactical and organizational problems but also with the meaning of the historic perspective of the Socialist Workers Party as a multi-national Leninist organization. The partial transcript of this discussion was very valuable, even if preliminary. I would like this material, along with the memorandum from Gus Horowitz on the framework of the discussion, to be introduced as part of the preconvention discussion.

It is important to note that the comrades who were participating in the discussion did not anticipate the publication of their remarks, and often were responding with first impressions to a branch discussion.

Comradely,
s/Tony Thomas

* * *

873 Broadway
2nd floor south
New York, N.Y.

January 6, 1969

To All National Committee
Members and Organizers

Dear Comrades,

Chicago Branch Discussion,
December 3, 1968

Attached is a transcript of the remarks of the party and youth NCers and the head of the main campus fraction made during a Chicago branch discussion on December 3, 1968. Also attached is a memorandum from Gus Horowitz on the framework of the discussion.

The transcript has not been edited by the participants.

This is for the information of the National Committee members and organizers only and not for general membership distribution.

Comradely,
s/Jack Barnes
Organization
Secretary

* * *

Chicago, Illinois
December 15, 1968

National Office

Dear Comrades,

The enclosed tape is the complete discussion held in the Chicago branch on December 3, 1968. The point on the agenda was membership, under which an Afro-American comrade, Wilbert A., submitted his resignation from the SWP. The branch voted to accept his resignation.

Discussion on the point was organized in an educational fashion to help clarify some of our concepts of the revolutionary party and the necessity of recruitment of black cadres to the SWP.

Wilbert A. had come to the conclusion that the black cadres of a revolutionary party would have to be built outside the SWP, at least at this time. He believed the Black Panther Party was developing as the vanguard party of the black liberation struggle and was the arena in which black Marxists would be developed. He did not think recruitment of black cadres to the SWP was a realizable or necessary task and questioned the validity of building a multi-national revolutionary Marxist party.

Accordingly, on his own initiative and without consulting the branch, he joined the Chicago Black Panther Party and decided to function politically as a member of that organization. He stated his primary loyalty was to the BPP. He wanted to work to recruit black militants to that organization rather than the SWP.

After discussion with the branch organizer, it was mutually agreed that his continued membership in the SWP would be incompatible with that perspective.

In the discussion in the Chicago YSA prior to the YSA convention there had been some discussion of the theoretical points that were raised here. At the YSA convention, where Wilbert spoke as a delegate, there was also some discussion of these points. So we assumed the discussion in the Chicago branch should be organized

to clarify as much as possible the Leninist concept of the revolutionary party as composed of revolutionaries of all nations, oppressor and oppressed both.

In addition to the members of the Chicago branch, Comrade Derrick Morrison from the YSA NEC agreed to stay over following the YSA convention and participate in the discussion.

The Chicago YSA members were invited to attend the meeting as observers.

Comradely,
s/Gus Horowitz

* * *

Chicago Branch Discussion
December 3, 1968

Wilbert A.: I guess everyone has figured it out by now, I'm resigning from the SWP and the YSA. The reason is not because of any major political difference, it's mostly because of where I can work, and where I cannot work, because of organizational problems. What I'll be doing is probably spending most of my time working with the Black Panthers, and I would have to begin organizing a section of the Black Panther Party at U. of Illinois.

In the nationalist movement these days, there develops this idea about black socialism, and what they call revolutionary nationalism, where it's moving farther to the left, along socialist lines. Since we're not recruiting large numbers of blacks to the YSA, my perspective is that the best thing that could be done is to go into the Panthers and try to develop sort of semi-Marxist or Marxist cadres within the Panther Party which I see as the most realistic perspective right now.

From what I've been able to see so far from the Panthers, they're growing quite fast, and all that sort of stuff, but they have made quite a few political errors. People have criticized the Panthers, but there haven't been any black Marxists within the Panthers to try to correct some of these errors that they have made. People stand on the sidelines and talk about criticizing on organizational questions. We should be in it, and trying to build it, and correct some of those errors.

And the Chicago Panthers, I guess, is one of the most healthy chapters in the nation. The chapter here didn't go by the decision that was made in Oakland all the way, around that Cleaver campaign, the whole Peace and Freedom thing, they just sort of ignored it. So, what I'd be doing is working full time in the Panthers, and I guess more discussion could go on later

about this whole idea about recruiting black people to the YSA and developing Marxist cadres in the YSA. That's good for a long term objective, though, maybe that's good for five or six years, as radicalization deepens in this country, where you might be able to bring some in. But in the meantime, as the development of the nationalist movement in this country deepens as a mass movement, there's less chance of recruiting anybody black into the YSA, nationalists, that is. You might be able to recruit blacks, I wouldn't doubt that at all. But I'm saying that there's a lesser chance of recruiting real nationalists.

Then another thing I noticed in the YSA, not the YSA, just the movement in general, is that we have [black] people who seem to have lost touch with the nationalist movement at times. Especially when people are speaking to a group of students it seems they can't communicate and cut across that barrier when they're talking to you. This is something that has to be corrected. We intend to make an impact, and recruit nationalists. You have to be able to communicate with people; if you can't communicate with people, then you can't even talk to them. That's become a serious problem with [black] people who are more or less recruited into all-white organizations. And the only way I can see that this error can be corrected is by [black] people working within these organizations, working among their own people, to help build a revolutionary nationalist movement, and not losing so much contact with their community and with their people. So that's the main reason I'm resigning, because I see that the Black Panther Party is probably the vanguard nationalist party in this country, and they will probably become a mass revolutionary party -- that's my perspective. I don't think the SWP wholly agrees on that, and that's the main reason I'm resigning. I have political disagreement mainly around the Black Panther Party.

Rich H. (branch organizer) [statement for the branch executive committee]: As Wilbert said, and didn't say, the discussion here is over a serious question. That is, the disagreement is not over the tactical question of whether to go into the Black Panthers or not, whether to support the Black Panthers or not, but the question here is basic, a key question for the revolutionary party, that is -- whether we should try to build a multi-national Marxist party to lead the revolution in this country. That is, whether that remains or does not remain our central perspective and whether we should or should not try to build, as an integral part of that party, a black Marxist cadre which can intervene in the struggle for self-determination and develop revolutionary Marxist leadership.

Now what we wanted to do this evening is to devote some time to this question to begin to clarify some things. The whole context of the discussion and the implications for the party are very important to go into. Now these disagreements, as I mentioned, on the nature of the party, and the kind of party we're building, are not in themselves sufficient reason to resign or drop from membership. But when they go on to involve the question of discipline, the discipline of our party and the question of loyalty to the party and the organization, it becomes something very important to deal with. In this case, the political disagreements are such that, for Wilbert, as he's expressed it, his loyalty to the Black Panther Party comes first. And he has a developed political perspective on why this is the case. We understand in the Socialist Workers Party, for a very good reason, that in order to build a revolutionary combat party, a revolutionary Marxist party, that its line must be homogeneous. The question of discipline and organizational loyalty flow from that, and it's very important that the party remain constructed on this basis, in order to actually carry out its revolutionary program. Because we recognize that Wilbert has very serious political differences with the party, we mutually reached the decision to accept Wilbert's resignation. This came up at the YSA convention, where Wilbert raised the question on the floor of whether a multi-national revolutionary party was really possible, and should be built in this country and how that affects the building of a revolutionary Marxist cadre.

Now, what kind of party are we trying to build, what kind of party can actually lead the American working class to power -- something which is no small task, to be taken lightly. The conception of a revolutionary Marxist party organized along democratic centralist lines was developed by Lenin in order to deal with the problem of facing a centralized ruling class, which uses all the available means of violence in order to protect its power. In order for the workers to overcome and seize power from the capitalists, they need a combat party of their own, which reflects their own interests in that class struggle. They need a party which not only reflects their own interests, but which is capable of acting as a centralized unit in that revolutionary struggle.

Lenin also developed the Marxist approach to national minorities, who suffer from racial and national oppression as well as class oppression. That is, the Bolshevik party served to coordinate these struggles as well, recruiting the best revolutionists from the oppressed nationalities to the Bolshevik party itself. The Bolshevik party was seen by the Bolsheviks as a vanguard party, which could coordinate the struggles of all revolutionary elements within society and

which could unite them in the struggle to eliminate the capitalist system itself. And that conception of revolutionary organization was borne out in the making of the Russian Revolution. We carry out that conception today in our task of building a party that can lead the American revolution. Within the United States, we understand that there exist conditions of national oppression of blacks, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Indians. The job, then, of defeating and removing American capitalism, is that of coordinating the revolutionary struggle of all oppressed peoples within the United States against the capitalist system, the struggle of the oppressed peoples within the United States in alliance with the working class struggle.

The experiences of the world working class movement have shown that this struggle must be carried out through a party grounded in the theory of Marxism. The program of Marxism, of Trotskyism, is the only consistent program which brings the experiences of over 100 years of struggle against capitalism to young revolutionaries today. It is the only program which helps us to avoid the mistakes and defeats of the past. It is multi-national because the struggle against national oppression is the struggle against capitalism itself. This struggle is best carried out around a common revolutionary program, and a common democratic centralist organization. This is what we've learned, especially over the last 50 years.

Now, in addition we recognize that Afro-Americans will play a vanguard role in the American revolution. That due to their dual racial and class oppression, we see blacks as the first and the most militant in the struggle against capitalism, as playing the most advanced role in the revolution itself and the development of that revolution. It's for this reason that revolutionary Marxists should pay extra attention to the recruiting and developing of a black Marxist cadre in the SWP and the YSA. The purpose of our revolutionary party is to develop a capable political leadership that is the cadre which can intervene in the struggles under capitalism, which can fight for a program which can mobilize the masses in struggle along lines which educate the masses that capitalism must be destroyed. We have a perspective of building a black cadre within our party, of intervening in the black struggle, of doing contact work among black militants to acquaint them with our program and to recruit them to our organization.

Our experience in the last period in Chicago itself, and this we saw at the YSA convention, and it has to a certain extent been borne out nationally, is of increasing contact with Afro-Americans who are interested in the YSA as a revolu-

tionary Marxist organization. Our perspective in Chicago as well as nationally should be the development of a black work fraction which can orient towards activity in and support for the struggle for self-determination, that can draw revolutionary minded militants in the direction of our Marxist program and organization. And we've got to see this as it is, as a realistic perspective.

I want to emphasize that what's involved here in this discussion is not the question of support to the Panthers. We've shown our support both in our program and in our actions -- through our election campaign, "Free Huey" work, joint actions along with and in support of the Panthers in various centers, and in our general propaganda work. We welcome emergence of the Panthers as a revolutionary force within the black community, as a force in politicizing and involving growing numbers of black people, especially black youth, in struggle. The Black Panther Party sees itself as becoming the vanguard leadership within the black nation, as Wilbert pointed out. And we recognize that vanguard formations like the Black Panther Party (there will undoubtedly be others) can play a key role in initiating and building what we recognize as the next step in the development of a mass struggle for self-determination for the black community. That is, a mass independent black political party which would include in its ranks the masses of Afro-Americans around demands such as black control of the black community, organizing them in a revolutionary direction. In such a party the vanguard revolutionary tendencies would play a key role. And then, in addition, the SWP and the YSA can also play an important role as a vanguard tendency, as a vanguard Marxist tendency in bringing about such a party, and that's our perspective. Thus, we see the Black Panther Party as a fraternal organization, as a potentially great ally in educating and developing revolutionary consciousness among Afro-Americans.

We must bear in mind that the reason for a revolutionary Marxist organization is that it is based on the only consistent revolutionary program today, that we can't afford to give over the construction of what we consider to be key, that is the construction of a revolutionary Marxist black cadre, to vanguard groupings which are not based on a Marxist program, and which have not yet worked out within their organizations that perspective. The BPP has emerged on a national level within the last six months, and we will see considerable developments and discussions within its own ranks, discussions of various questions, including the question of socialism and of what sort of system to replace capitalism with, etc. And we'll see that developing, and we'll play a role in that general discussion within the black van-

guard over what kind of program will be needed in order to make the necessary revolution in this country.

Our perspective again is to develop a cadre in a multi-national Marxist party and over time to develop the closest relationship with other revolutionary tendencies including those like the Black Panther Party.

We recognize, as has been shown in the history of the development of working class parties, that the revolutionary party will be built through splits and fusions and discussions and disagreements and through a process of clarification in order to draw together the cadre that can actually intervene in a role of leadership in the mass movement. And it's our perspective to be able to demonstrate in action, to vanguard militants both now and through all sorts of struggles that will lead up to the American revolution, the necessity and the superiority of such a party that we are trying to build.

It's a tactical question whether, in a certain period, we work inside revolutionary nationalist formations like the BPP, or we don't. We have no such mechanical view toward these groupings that we say automatically upon their emergence we enter them. There's a lot of factors there which need to be taken into consideration, such as the size of our own cadre, such as where the leadership in these nationalist formations comes from, and what is the effect of something which might be seen as entryism, and the relationships with this party. There's a lot of considerations that we take into account, in gauging our relationship with these formations, and at this time, due to reasons that I mentioned, our perspective is not to enter the BPP, though we're not opposed in principle to working inside these formations. Now our perspective is to work to support and help defend the BPP and other such formations that are moving in a revolutionary direction, and to develop as well as possible common actions where agreed upon with these formations. We believe that in so doing over a period of time, that we'll be able to demonstrate why the revolutionary party, which is a multi-national party, is the logical and most efficient, and best way of building a revolutionary leadership which can end capitalism.

Wilbert mentioned that there hadn't been much recruiting of Afro-Americans to the YSA or the SWP over the last period, and that's undeniably true. But what we shouldn't take from that is any defeatism whatsoever -- that because we haven't, we can't. That's not true. That's not true unless we can find elements within our program that serve to prevent us from being able to relate to the black struggle, being able to get out our revolutionary

Marxist ideas within the black struggle, being able to interest black militants in building the sort of revolutionary party which we consider key. We shouldn't have a trace of defeatism or skepticism on that account. This is not to say that this small upsurge we see in terms of interest in the YSA and the SWP is going to be a steady, continuous thing which will not have dips and rises like everything else, but that over a period of time we will be able to demonstrate our program within the black movement, within the general working class movement as well, in order to recruit the vanguard elements, revolutionary militants, within these mass struggles.

Speaker A:

Well, what we're talking about is really a very high level question, of where revolutionists should operate. Simply because it's an organizational question and not what would be technically called a programmatic question, a difference in basic political perspective -- that doesn't in any way decrease its importance. You see, the transition between capitalism and socialism is only an organizational question. It's a question of how you organize society differently. That's all it is. For example, there was no programmatic difference between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, none at all; they had the same program, only an organizational difference on how you construct vanguard organizations.

The organizational differences shouldn't be very quickly brushed aside by saying, well, you know, revolutionists should work where they can. That's good -- but that's just insufficient, and the reason it's insufficient is simply because in any serious social struggle there will be millions of people in the United States forced into struggle simply to defend themselves. They're going to be up against a very highly centralized opposition, and if the revolutionists find themselves at the highest levels of command having several points of leadership I'd say it's virtually guaranteed that they will lose, it's almost for certain. There's military history -- don't forget that the most important reason the Red Army won the Civil War is that the counter-revolutionaries could not build a unified command. In the American Civil War, the reason that the Union was unsuccessful in having big military victories in the first part of the war was that the South had a unified command, and the North did not have a unified command. You can go through any military analogy to the question, and in the final analysis important political questions are decided militarily and the question of a unified command is absolutely central. When you don't have a unified command and have only close collaboration among people who generally have the same approach, it is impossible to win, espe-

cially given the speed with which any important revolutionary development will hit the United States. There's not much time for collaboration.

Another thing to be wary of on this whole question is the American exceptionalism approach. In most countries you have oppressed national minorities. It's an exceptional country where you don't have a strong oppressed national minority. In Canada, obviously, in England, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, wherever you want to go -- Finland -- you have very important oppressed national minorities, and it's an international question of how you relate to them. It's a very exceptional country that has no oppressed national minorities. So, how do you relate to that? And the general approach that Lenin basically is the author of was that the revolutionists had to organize themselves not on the basis of the way their national backgrounds happened to be laid out, but according to the way the ruling class had itself laid out. That on the general strategy, the world goes socialist by countries. And so the strategy and organization and approach towards successful national revolutions, which taken together become an international revolution -- the simplest way to understand it, the most correct way to understand it, is in military terms.

If you're going to wage incredibly complicated, ruthless struggle against an opponent, you at least have to have the same degree of centralization as the opponent has. What it comes down to in the United States is simply this, that in a serious revolutionary situation in the United States, the ruling class is going to be organized out of the East Wing of the White House. A small group of people are going to call all the tactics -- 8 or 9 or 10 guys. That's the way they run the Vietnam war. There's not going to be a lot of collaboration and confusion and like that; they're going to run it in a very centralized and disciplined way, with their staff, that they've learned during years and years to rely on, and trust. The revolutionists have to have the same degree of centralization. They have to be able to successfully politically compete against the extremely high level of competence and organization that the ruling class has at its disposal.

Now a lot can be achieved, an awful lot can be achieved through purely nationalist organizations, by doing things organizationally incorrect. But it depends on what you want to achieve. That's important to the whole concept of a black party, a tremendous amount of gains can be made, you shouldn't slight that. But you're not going to successfully abolish the state apparatus in the United States through several organizations based on nationalities.

Then the final thing is that making

socialist revolutions is difficult, a lot of pressure is brought on the comrades. Well, it's nothing like the position of revolutionists in Germany under Hitler. The pressure the comrades have to be able to expect during the course of important struggles is going to be 100 times greater than anything people experience at the present time.

The most important thing, I think, to keep in mind, is that we're not talking about a peculiar question in the United States. But the general approach would have to be international. I think it would immediately be seen as peculiar if the revolutionists in Israel, for example, were divided up into one group that were Arabs, and one group that was Jewish. If they had the same program, but couldn't get together because they didn't speak the same language; or if the revolutionists in Wales would not come in with the English and Scottish revolutionaries. You know, there are big parliamentary nationalist parties in these countries. It becomes clear when you put it on the internationalist level where you're less swayed by the peculiar social pressures which exist in the United States at the present time. The basic argument in favor of a centralized organization is based on a unity of revolutionists within the nation-states the bourgeoisie has established. Our battle lines correspond to their battle lines.

Literally, it's the highest level organizational question, which finally comes down to a simple fact that unless you can successfully compete against the ruling class and their political and military apparatus, you simply cannot bring about socialism. It's inconceivable, I think, almost theoretically excluded, that you could have a successful socialist revolution, especially in the United States, without one authoritative, centralized political leadership, a leadership that has through years and years of collaboration gained trust and authority, both within itself and in the mass of the population. I don't see any other way to win.

Speaker B:

What is not involved here is not a dispute over a tactical question of whether Wilbert should work in the BPP or not. If it is his main area of work. The question here is not a dispute over entryism. Now in some periods we would send people into organizations like the BPP, some periods we wouldn't. That's a decision you make on the basis of a political evaluation you have of what the status or situation is now and what are the advantages, what are the disadvantages.

The national feeling now is it would be a mistake to send YSAers and SWPers into the BPP. There are a number of

reasons for this. This isn't the key question, but to just go into it briefly, one of the major reasons is that the BPP are at a very young stage. They are ultra-sensitive of other organizations sending people in there. As a new organization, with a leadership completely in flux, very unsure of themselves, very unstable, very sensitive, especially about other organizations which they define as a white organization -- how would they look at the YSA-SWP sending comrades into the organization? They would look on that as a move on the part of the SWP-YSA to open up a fight for the leadership of that organization. We think that would be a mistake. We think that would result in a deterioration of our relationship with the BPP. They'd look on that as opening up a power fight within their organization, on the part of a democratic centralist organization coming in and trying to take over their organization.

We feel that we can develop friendly relationships, and have in a whole number of areas, by working with the BPP. We're very close with the BPP in Seattle. In Indianapolis they sell the paper in their headquarters; they look on it as next to their own paper the most important paper in the movement. But this is not the question. Whether we're right or wrong on that decision is not the key question.

See, Wilbert does not have an entryist perspective. The key question is that Wilbert says that the SWP and the YSA is not the organization that's going to develop black cadre. That that's going to be done in the BPP. That's the key question. Wilbert has the perspective, as I understand it, of encouraging all blacks not to join the SWP, not to join the YSA -- but to join directly the BPP. Because that's where the black cadres who will lead the revolution will be made. On this question we have a key political difference. We say that the black movement and the black nationalist movement is a tremendously progressive step and raises a tremendously progressive objective factor of increasing the revolutionary potential in this country. We still have the analysis that the main question today is not the objective situation but a crisis of leadership. And we still have the analysis that a Marxist-Leninist-Trotskyist revolutionary leadership has to be developed in a revolutionary party that is consciously Marxist-Leninist. We say there's only one such party around. And we say that if we're going to succeed and make a revolution in this country, that black cadre have to be recruited to this party, and trained in it. Wilbert has a different perspective on it. He says, no, he doesn't believe that a multi-national party is the road to revolution in this country. Blacks will have to be trained somewhere else. Now this is the

key difference that's involved here.

The comparison that the ruling class is an extremely centralized organization, so we have to be extremely centralized too, is good, but I don't want to push that line too far. I think you can get into hang-ups by making direct comparisons with the ruling class that way. They've got different kinds of problems. They don't have a democratic centralist type of organization and they run their thing without it. And you can't make too close comparison with it. The key question here and the key dispute here is how is the multi-national revolutionary party still valid? Or do we have some kind of American exceptionalism here? We at this point say no. That the key question for making the revolution is still what Trotsky pointed out 40, 30 years ago -- the crisis of leadership exists.

Now where is that leadership going to be constructed? We don't feel that the BPP, with all its revolutionary potential, is going to develop a black cadre that's going to be able to lead the revolution, on its own, or through some kind of osmosis. For instance, make one comparison. People say to me, "Well, we say the BPP is revolutionary, we say the BPP is in the vanguard, and that black people are going to be the vanguard of the American revolution. Well, then, shouldn't we be in the BPP?" All comparisons are dangerous. The workers in the IWW were the revolutionary vanguard, the IWW was the most revolutionary organization around. But the IWW in its program, and its organizational form, had defects which it could not surmount. And they could not create a revolutionary cadre to lead a revolution in that organization. You have to develop beyond that into something else.

And so an organization can have tremendous revolutionary potential, and be in a vanguard in many senses, but still not be the organization that's going to develop the revolutionary cadre. And we certainly would have been opposed to dissolving the Marxist party into the IWW, or something like that. So the key question here, as I pointed out, is not entryism. We can argue pro or con whether some black comrades should be sent into the BPP. At the present, the party's position is that we think it would be a mistake. That's a tactical question. Wilbert's disagreement goes way beyond that. He says that we shouldn't recruit potential black revolutionaries, that they should join the BPP, and that revolutionary black cadre will be developed in the BPP. He says that the concept that Lenin developed of the multi-national revolutionary workers party, a single revolutionary party to lead the revolution in any single nation-state, is not any longer valid.

that all analogies are weak. I don't want to rob you of the essence of what you meant, but first, the comparisons have been made to the IWW, the Progressive Party. Just to make clear one difference is that they were not nationalist organizations, they didn't have the dynamics of a nationalist organization like the BPP. Also, I'm unclear on a lot of things but there are a few ideas I have that I'd just like to bring out. But first of all, I'm not sure whether Wilbert rejects the idea of unified command, or whether it is necessary to build a centralized command that will deal effectively in a military manner with the ruling class. I hope he doesn't dismiss that. Because we'd be fools, the BPP or any other vanguard nationalist formation, would be foolish to do so. I even asked Robert Browne about this. He said, I'd be a fool not to make an alliance in action with allies. A unified command sort of intimates that what we're saying when we support the BPP to the extent that some of our members would drop membership in the YSA and SWP to join it, is that this would be splitting forces, going off on tangents, dividing our command -- that's the implication.

I think that's wrong. First of all, we're not in a pre-revolutionary situation. I don't think it's that necessary at all, at this point, to have a centralized leadership of the nationalist movement, and the bi-national revolutionary party which I still respect. And I think we'll ultimately make the revolution, with an alliance of some sort under a centralized, bi-national revolutionary party. But the centralization does not have to be now. So it is not splitting of forces to build a nationalist organization that has a revolutionary perspective.

This whole thing of isolation; that's a real question. That is a most important question to me. If a comrade takes it upon himself to drop out of an organization, he's asking himself two questions -- I don't know what he's asking, let me say what I'd ask -- I would say first of all, there's things you'd have to do. The problem of the crisis of leadership. We respect that as the highest principle. Where can you build that revolutionary black Marxist leadership? I think it can be built in the YSA. As a matter of fact, I think the main responsibility for building black Marxist cadre lies with white comrades. White comrades had better do the recruiting and not rely on black comrades. White comrades had better demonstrate that a white revolutionist is not peculiar or some strange fluke that occurs somewhere, but that the whole organization has white revolutionists, Indian revolutionists, Mexican revolutionists and black revolutionists. We coordinate our activities, and we act on that basis.

Speaker C:

We mentioned

But that is not to slight a nation-

alist formation, that is not to say that Marxist cadre cannot be built independently of our organization, and that is not to say that some of our cadre cannot aid in that development. Marxist cadre can and must be built in the revolutionary party, but you've got a nationalist development like the BPP which is attracting the youth. In my opinion it's going to become a mass formation -- not membership wise -- but in its actions it's going to include masses. It has an apparatus, it has a newspaper, a national office, already, and it's got a program, a transitional program, and it's got this big image, and it's got cadre. A woman from Oakland organized the Des Moines local of the Black Panthers. Des Moines. They're sending people to Des Moines, Iowa. That's consciousness.

The question is, how do you solve the crisis of leadership? Where are you going to do it? And I say you're going to do it in two places -- one in the YSA, and our comrades should stay in here, or if they can be more effective it should be a national decision to send them into the BPP. And if it means a little thing, which I think is a technicality, of dropping their formal ties with the YSA and the SWP, then do it. That's when the question of isolation enters in. And I would suggest very strongly that people attend our forums. SWP educationals should be open to ex-comrades who have that arrangement working. Make every attempt not to lose their isolation, or else it will be useless to a great extent.

Now, that's got to be a cold blooded decision, who goes where. That can't be based on any emotionalism or blood is thicker than water and I'm black and I've got to join this black formation and you're a white organization, so I'm not going to stick with you. No, we're revolutionists, we're the most conscious, we're the vanguard, especially our black comrades. The vanguard, the most politically conscious beings on this continent. And they've got to make national, collective decisions, of who goes where. Where can white comrades be? There's a black nationalist formation which is going ahead, of a mass character, which makes this question take on a whole greater importance.

Now the question of the size of our cadre was raised. This size would mitigate against entering the BPP, I think Richard said. We're not suggesting that every black member of the YSA join the BPP. Not every black member of our party could join the BPP. Someone said that's a slander. How do you mean that's a slander? Someone said in my defense that Che said that not everyone who wants to be a guerrilla can be one. That's true, and similar to the BPP. Where can people be more valuable in developing leadership? Very many of our

most conscious people I would suggest should stay here, in the YSA. The people who would be sent into the BPP would be the ones that could relate to its struggles that are occurring, predominantly, although not actually on campuses.

We're not going to send in people just to fill up the ranks of the BPP. That's stupid. Because if we're going to lose a comrade in our discussions, known as a YSAer, it's got to be on a basis that he can aid the development of a black nationalist revolutionary Marxist cadre. I've got a lot more to say, but I just want to say that it's not a splitting of forces. I disagree with that 100 percent, and a revolutionary bi-national party will be built. We're going to continue to build it, we're going to have to be realistic, and I'm not being defeatist in saying that we cannot compete with the BPP. I don't think we ever thought we could compete with a nationalist organization for the black youth. We can't do that. Really, until we reach the working class. I don't think we're going to recruit blacks in numbers and in the quality that the Black Panthers will until we reach the working class when we really demonstrate the power of revolutionary Marxism.

The struggles we'll be involved in in the trade unions are really going to be relevant to black workers. Every black man is a worker. Everyone lives in a rotten community. And campus struggles that we're involved in now, not to discredit them, and I'm not going to go that far, because I believe they're correct -- but black people cannot relate to those struggles as they can relate to the Black Panther and nationalist formations. That's why they're flocking to them. To think that we're competing with the Black Panthers in a race to see how many you can get in, is stupid. We should accept the perspective that the Black Panthers are going to grow, and develop revolutionary Marxist cadre. And the YSA is going to grow and get revolutionary cadre. When we reach the working class there's probably going to be an alliance and I don't see how it's going to be avoided, an alliance in action. Just to emphasize the importance of not losing touch. That to me is very important.

Speaker D:

I think before you can have a thorough discussion as to what type of party you're trying to build, and what its relationship is going to be with other political organizations, it's necessary to go back a little and discuss first what we mean by a party. What we're dealing with right now is a sentiment in sections of the world, in the underdeveloped countries, a rising sentiment of nationalism. First off, I think it's necessary for comrades, even though it's been said time and time again, to understand that what we're about is

internationalism, building an international party.

It's necessary to understand exactly what we mean by internationalism, and to understand this, I think it's necessary to go a little bit into what we mean by a nation. Now, during the summer school, under one section, Dan gave something on nations. Where did nations come from? All society is divided into classes and is also divided into nations. Now the nations that we see in the world today -- Cuba, Guatemala, France -- whatever it is, these nations were not formed by the boundaries somehow falling from heaven and then all of a sudden there are nations. National boundaries, to a certain extent, correspond to geographical boundaries. Nations as we see them today are direct products of developing capitalism. A nation was basically a place where a capitalist class could guarantee that its trade relations would be to a certain extent secure; that its armies could make certain that there wouldn't be any revolutions and social uprisings, that there would be laws pertaining to trade in a certain area, so that you could trade a pound of wheat for a pound of oats, and come out somewhere with a good deal, according to the laws of the state. These things are basically what determined where nations came from.

But as capitalism continues to develop, both in technology and travel, it overcomes geographical barriers and develops more international markets. As it develops into imperialism, it tends to cut across national boundaries and to a great extent, you have at the present time a few very powerful imperialist nations in the world that completely subjugate the rest of the nations of the world. Now this is why nationalism in the underdeveloped countries, in the underdeveloped world, can have such a revolutionary potential. Because it directly fights against imperialism. However, nationalism, it must be remembered, that is the desire for a nation to determine its own fate is not in itself revolutionary. In the fight against imperialism it's a revolutionary goal, but it is not in any sense going to bring about socialism just in and of itself.

Now what kind of party do you want to have? First of all, what is a party? I think the best definition I've ever seen is in the first section of the ABC of Communism where it's stated that a party is an organization that is formed in order to express and work towards the best interests of a social class. Now all society most really and concretely is not divided into these nations, but into classes -- social classes, that are determined by the relationship of people in society to the productive forces of that society. This is a very basic thing. World society is divided into classes, and the various par-

ties in the world are organized to work towards the best interests of these classes. Taking this into account, a class party is by definition an international party.

A party that is struggling solely for the bourgeois democratic right of national self determination, against imperialism, will fail in its struggle unless it becomes a class party, an international class party, and wages a class war. Now this gets into permanent revolution, and the necessity of developing a struggle to achieve its end of national liberation and the other goals of national liberation like Cuba, the necessity for it to develop into a social revolution.

I want to read something out of Che Speaks. In 1959 in an interview, Che says, on page 13, "The Cuban revolution was not a class war; it was just a war of national liberation." Now, he was obviously wrong on this, and he realized this himself because a few pages later he contradicts that exactly. His future development indicates that, and also the development of the Cuban Communist Party and the Cuban revolution as a whole, which bears out the theory of the permanent revolution.

Now, what we're trying to do, what we've been saying all along, is that we're partisans of building an international working class party, even though because of the Voorhis Act we cannot be a section of an international organization. This is where I disagree with the formulation talking about a bi-national party or a multi-national party when you're talking just about the United States. I think that all that's necessary to say is to reaffirm that we're building an international party. Now, it's necessary for an international working class party to work in cooperation with nationalist organizations that are moving in a progressive direction with a perspective of developing these revolutionary nationalist parties into revolutionary internationalist parties, revolutionary Marxist organizations. Questions of organizational affiliation with one or another international organization will be settled once political clarity and agreement is gained, at which time national boundaries become secondary, because it's understood what national boundaries are, and that class boundaries are much more important than national boundaries. Now it's this basic misunderstanding of the importance of the division of world society into classes, rather than division of world society into nations, that has caused all of the defeats that the socialist movement has seen in the past years.

Specifically on our relation with the Panthers. Our position is -- and I think it's come out very clearly in our propaganda and our talks -- to support and

work to build the Panthers. I don't think there should be any confusion about that. That's what we're for, is to support and build the Panthers. Now there are other alternatives to this; we could stand aloof from the Panthers, and just ignore them or we could concentrate on criticizing the Panthers in our press and our talks. Or we could just say the Panthers are totally secondary, that the cultural revolution in China is a much more important issue in the U.S. There are any number of other positions we could take, but our position right now is to support and build the Panthers.

Now what Marxists would be doing should we decide to enter the Panthers would be to develop a Marxist caucus within the Panthers and fight to attain control of that organization. This would be entry work. I don't think that would be correct. For one reason, it's not the best way to develop friendly relationships with the leadership of the organization when they know that you're coming in to take over. Secondly, I think that we must realize that the Panthers, as the most revolutionary and most conscious expression of the fight for black liberation right now, are still an organization that is based on national liberation. This has to be taken into account. So I think our best perspective is to continue to build an international working class party that works along with nationalist parties that are developing in a correct direction, with the perspective of what I said before.

Gus Horowitz:

We have three interrelated discussions, as was mentioned before. One is on the character of the BPP -- whether it's a vanguard formation, whether it will develop into a mass black political party, whether it will develop in a Marxist direction in the broad sense of the term. Another question is the tactical orientation of our party to the BPP -- whether or not black members of the SWP should enter into the BPP and work within it, or whether our work should be outside of it. And the third, the most important point and the one which has been the axis of this discussion, is the character of the revolutionary Marxist party itself, which is one of the fundamental questions in our program.

Wilbert mentioned that one of his aims in joining the Panthers is to try to develop Marxist cadre within the Panthers. And Speaker C developed this general conception a little bit further, that is that what we mean by the crisis of revolutionary leadership is the lack of Marxist cadres; we need to develop a sufficient number of Marxist revolutionary socialists. Well, that's not what we mean by the crisis of revolutionary leadership. We say that the objective situation of the world socialist

revolution has existed for many, many years. There have been revolutionary situations that have taken place in numerous countries and yet many of these situations have not resulted in successful socialist revolutions because of the crisis of revolutionary leadership. What we meant by this is not that there weren't a sufficient number of Marxists, people who thought they were Marxists, or individual cadres who thought they were revolutionaries, or people who thought they were revolutionary socialists, or people who thought they were Leninists but that the crisis of leadership was that there was not a revolutionary socialist party, an organization with a program adequate to the task of achieving that socialist revolution.

There's a difference between so many individuals who consider themselves to be Marxists, with varying degrees of really being Marxists, and those same number of individuals actually working together in a democratically centralized manner within a revolutionary socialist party. We together as individuals can only do so much, but together in an organization, we're able to accomplish a lot more. The crisis of revolutionary leadership and the central task for the world socialist revolution is the development of a revolutionary socialist Marxist Trotskyist Leninist vanguard party, which will lead the revolution. That's the task which we have in the United States and throughout the world as a fraternal part of the world revolutionary socialist party. And so it's not a question of where you can develop Marxists, or where you can develop Marxist cadre. The question is how to build a revolutionary Marxist organization, a party. That's where a fundamental line of difference exists.

Now the character of the party as an international, multi-national vanguard organization is not one which someone has thought up simply as a good idea and so on. To the contrary, as has been mentioned by a number of speakers, the character of the party is one which is imposed upon it, imposed on the working class by the nature of the capitalist system and the tasks of building a new system, a socialist society. Capitalist rule throughout the world has specific national characteristics that may differ from country to country. In the colonial world and in the United States the axes of emphasis of the single revolutionary program may vary, but the general nature of capitalism has also imposed general international tasks upon the working class, a single program before it for the overthrow of capitalism. The reason why you have a single organization is because you have a single program. We don't have a program that's different from the program of the revolutionary Marxists in Africa or in Asia or in Latin America, or in the Soviet Union, or in Czechoslo-

vakia, or in France -- that program is the same. We all have the same program -- the Transitional Program. The program takes on different specifics in different sections of the world. The struggle for national independence, democracy and land reform aren't crucial revolutionary demands within the United States as they are in the colonial world, but these are all part of the international socialist program. There is a single organization because there is a single program. A world party is not a federation of different sections. It's a centralized organization, a democratic centralized organization and not a federation where each national grouping has autonomy in its national area. There is one program which every member of the world party of the socialist revolution carries out, although there are different concrete national strategies, emphases of application in different countries in the world and in different sections of the same country. In other words, the tasks of the world working class are both separate and interconnected at the same time. Separate and interconnected. And while, because of the Voorhis Act, the SWP cannot affiliate to a world party, we are in full ideological and fraternal solidarity with the Fourth International.

We're aiming for an international society, with no nation-state boundaries as exist under capitalism. At the same time, the struggle takes place within different national states and in a single national state there are different sides and aspects to the struggle. So there is one party of the revolutionary vanguard with a program applying to the separate and interconnected aspects of the class struggle, both internationally and within a single nation. That is why for instance the seemingly contradictory demand of nationalism has a revolutionary content. The nationalism of oppressed nations has a revolutionary content which will lead toward the elimination of oppressive nationalism and nation-states themselves.

So our task, as we've already said, is to develop within one organization internationally, and in its national sections or fraternal organizations, revolutionary Marxists of all sections of the society, of the oppressed nations and revolutionary Marxists of the oppressor nations as well, in one party, to coordinate the single program of struggle for the victory of the socialist revolution. That is, it's not sufficient merely to develop individual Marxist cadres, but you must develop Marxists who are all members of the same revolutionary organization. The organization which has the program for the American socialist revolution. So in this sense, Wilbert's decision to resign from the party is a step away from a fundamental concept which we have always had.

The question then is, will we be

able to develop and to recruit black revolutionaries as members of the revolutionary socialist party, the Socialist Workers Party? There is an uneven development of the building of the revolutionary party, and recruitment to the party takes place in different ways in different times. We are going through a period right now where we're recruiting one by one. But in the accumulation of individuals joining the party there will be times when we recruit through fusions and joining together with other groupings, including groupings of black revolutionary-minded militants who are looking toward the building of a revolutionary party. Now there's a difference. We sometimes use the terms "Marxist" and "socialist" and "revolutionary" in a very broad sense, which is okay. That is, there are revolutionaries throughout the world fighting, there's people who consider themselves Marxists throughout the world, fighting, and in that broad sense, yes, there is a very large revolutionary movement. But there is a distinction between revolutionaries, and revolutionaries in the revolutionary organization. There's a distinction and an important difference there.

Now we can be sure that there will develop outside of our ranks black militants who consider themselves Marxists, who haven't yet fully accepted the one crucial point of the revolutionary Marxist program, that is, the need for a revolutionary party, an international, revolutionary Marxist party. Our task will be, in some form or another, to fuse with, or to recruit these individuals or groupings of individuals into one organization because it will have one program. When you have the development of black revolutionaries who come to agree with us in our program, then the problem of joining together in a single organization isn't so deep a problem as it may seem right now when that situation doesn't yet exist. And the only way that we will be able to recruit and fuse with such revolutionary-minded black socialist revolutionaries in the broad sense of the word is by being organizationally very flexible and collaborative, working together in the course of the struggle. At the same time, in terms of our ideas, our program must be 100 percent firm politically. We can't give a single inch on this fundamental aspect of our program; otherwise we'll never be able to build the revolutionary party. You can only build it by being 100 percent firm politically and by being organizationally very flexible. The test of our theory, as with all theories, is going to be in practice. It's going to be in what happens. And that's the only real test in the long run of how you will be able to build a revolutionary organization.

Now this discussion is a significant discussion for us, because it reflects two

things. This discussion and the one we had at the YSA convention, and which will be continuing, reflect first of all a growing radicalization in the black community. More and more numbers of black militants are coming to consider themselves socialists or Marxists or revolutionaries. That's a very important development, and something which we are for 100 percent. And secondly, that brings with it also the development of formations within this vanguard in the black struggle, like the BPP, and other organizations. This is also a very important and progressive development, which we support 100 percent. The beginnings of the possibility for us to recruit black revolutionaries into the revolutionary party is also a very good development.

We don't see the Panthers as a competitor to the revolutionary Marxist vanguard party; the two are different types of organizations. The BPP is not the revolutionary socialist vanguard party, although they are a vanguard organization in the black liberation struggle. So we support them and work together with them, and we don't see a competition with them. Our task as always will be to try to recruit black militants into our organization. There will be a time when in these vanguard organizations in the black struggle, and in other struggles, the revolutionary party will play a leadership role through its cadres within that organization. That is, I make the distinction between Marxist cadres playing a leading role within such an organization, and the party playing a leading role in such an organization.

Just as we see in the antiwar movement, there's no contradiction between having mass actions, or a vanguard organization, having a revolutionary Marxist leadership or partially having a revolutionary Marxist leadership which leads in carrying out mass actions of a sort. The antiwar movement has partially a revolutionary Marxist leadership in the person of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance. There is no contradiction between those mass organizations that carry out mass actions and ourselves.

Now, one final point. I want to repeat something Richard said. And that is, that in terms of the specific situation with Wilbert, that Wilbert has a fundamental political disagreement with us, which makes his first loyalty not towards the building of the revolutionary socialist party, but towards working within the Black Panthers. It is for good intentions, but still, the fact remains that his first loyalty is not towards the revolutionary party and for that reason it is incompatible with membership in the SWP. But the members of the Socialist Workers Party have the responsibility and the obligation, and the YSA members who are members of the SWP especially must have that ob-

ligation since the convention has voted on and passed our line as being one of aiming to recruit black militants to our organization, to carry out that line in practice, whatever variations of opinion, agreement, disagreement there are.

Derrick M. (youth national office):
I just have a few remarks to make. First I want to deal with tactics and second with strategy. In regard to our policy with the BPP, the role that black YSAers play in respect to that organization has been discussed out in relation to the experiences we have had, and we have come to the decision that on the basis of the forces we have that we shouldn't commit them to the Panther Party. We're not strong enough to intervene effectively in the development of the Panther Party at this time. This is a tactical question. It's been helped by the fact that the Panthers have a clause which says that you can't belong to other political organizations and belong to the Panther Party. In some areas they may be flexible on that clause, but that clause does exist. And because of that, and because of the experiences that we've had with black comrades trying to enter the Panther Party, at present, that's not the tactic that we're going to pursue.

Back in 1964, when the Freedom Now Party was launched, that is, when the call was put out for an independent black political party called the Freedom Now Party, we did have enough forces in Detroit, Michigan at that time to not only enter and participate in the party, but actually to get the thing off the ground, that is, as a black party. And it was through the intervention of black SWPers that the Freedom Now Party in Detroit took form and grew. It was the result of recruitment of nationalists to that perspective of building the black political party at that time. And we participated in that party.

The decision not to enter the Black Panther Party at this point raises a question in regard to strategy in a sense: the view of most white radicals (and I use the term white radicals not as a physical description but as a political description in the sense of people who have a certain outlook) and most nationalists, is to see the class and national struggles as one which will develop parallel -- that is, white radicals will work in the white community and develop revolutionary organizations, and black nationalists will work in the black community and develop revolutionary organizations and along the way they will form alliances and eventually will overthrow the state.

That's a very mechanical view of the class and national question. We deal with the whole class and national struggle from the dialectical point of view. That's what

distinguishes us from the general radical and nationalist milieu in which we work. Because we deal with it dialectically, that is, we understand the indivisible relationship between the class struggle and the national struggle -- that one cannot succeed without the other. Our understanding of that indivisible relationship between nationalism or the struggle for national liberation and the struggle to end exploitation, the class struggle -- that's reflected in the way we see the construction of an organization to deal with these struggles. That's why we attempt to form a multi-national, revolutionary socialist party. And this is not something that is just going to struggle along class lines, developing the class struggle, but it's also something that will be necessary in order to attain black liberation.

Because generally today nationalist organizations are in one place, and revolutionary socialist organizations are in another place, we tend to compartmentalize, and to see in this a parallel development, when in practice, that is, in historical practice, that has not been the case. The way we understand the situation in this country and the situation in the world is that the question of liberating oppressed nations (which in this country would include black people, Puerto Ricans, Mexican-Americans, Indians) -- the liberation of those oppressed nations revolves around the whole question of building a nationalist organization. In fact, to be a consistent nationalist, you'd have to be related to the building of a revolutionary Marxist party. That's been a historical experience. If we study the events in Russia, Russia was a nation that was nationally oppressed, yet to liberate Russia from the status of an oppressed nation required the building of a Marxist-Leninist vanguard party. Not just the building of a nationalist organization. But the whole concept of national liberation was expressed through the building of that party.

That's why you had the development of the struggles in China and North Vietnam the way you did. They attempted to build a nationalist organization in China. In fact, that was the line of the Third International from 1920 to 1925. That is, Chinese Communists were to work within the Kuomintang which was the Chinese nationalist organization at that time, and attempt to construct a Chinese Communist Party out of that. And not to work at building the Chinese Communist Party. The way it turned out, with the debacle in 1927 -- that wasn't the correct way to go. And the subsequent liberation of China depended on the building of the Chinese Communist Party, just as the subsequent liberation of Vietnam depended on the building of the workers party, the Vietnamese Communist Party. That's where most of the con-

sistent nationalists in Vietnam and in China found themselves. If they were consistent about real national liberation, they found themselves in a vanguard Marxist party.

That's the way the struggles have developed. But because of the fact that you had the degeneration of the Russian revolution and subsequent degeneration of the Third International, what you had after World War II is a whole series of struggles that have been organized just along nationalist lines. This is the case in the third world. You see the rise of nationalist governments, nationalist organizations, in Africa, and somewhat in Asia, with Indonesia, Burma, Thailand, and what have you, and also somewhat in Latin America, but as we see the development of these nations, and in dealing with the tasks that confront these nations, we find that they've not been too successful in dealing with the problems of the third world. That's because they looked at it from a purely nationalist point of view, as if independence would suffice to solve their problems.

But nationalism just wasn't enough. Nationalism just defined as independence. But what was needed was a more defined conception of the political and economic and social realities of the third world. And so now you have the attempt to build revolutionary Marxist vanguard parties in these countries whether it be through guerrilla warfare or through some other method. That is what's going on now. And the struggles there throw light on the struggles in this country. The liberation of the black nation, the liberation of the Puerto Rican nation, the liberation of the Mexican-American nation, will in the end revolve around the building of a revolutionary Marxist party which embraces nationalists from the Puerto Rican, Mexican-American and black nations who are Marxists within it. These developments of nationalism within the black community are good, and we support them. In fact, we have laid the basis for them in some ways. By getting across our literature, getting across the Militant and Young Socialist, getting across our whole thing on the black party -- that helped pave the way for the Black Panther Party. The whole experience of the Freedom Now Party helped pave the way for the Black Panther Party.

The BPP is only an embryonic organization -- an embryonic step toward the construction of an independent black political party. It's not the end; it's the beginning. The BPP itself is just an organizational reflection of the radicalization of black students, the radicalization of black youth. Had you not had that radicalization among black students, the BPP would have been impossible. And the BPP is just one form of organizational expression of that youth radicalization. The BPP

doesn't embrace every radicalizing youth, every radicalizing black nationalist. And based on that, we attempt to recruit to our organization those revolutionary black nationalists who are beginning to deal with socialist ideas and who want to become revolutionary socialists. The reason we can't relate to a lot of the rank and file that the Panthers recruit is that they're recruited simply on the basis of being nationalists. They begin to develop some sort of an idea of sympathy for socialist ideas as a result of the Panther Party leadership. But the Panther Party is just one channel through which that radicalization is going. We expect to recruit, and we are in the process of recruiting black militants, black nationalists who consider themselves socialists. So that's our perspective.

At the same time that we have this perspective, we are still pushing the idea of the independent black party, attempting to get out our literature, and to convince the masses of black people of that idea. So it's a question of carrying out the task of propagating the building of an independent black party but at the same time seeing the key task of any revolutionary in this country as the building of a multi-national revolutionary Marxist party. And that in the end will determine the question of whether any oppressed nation is liberated in this country.

Speaker E: I just want to say something briefly on one point that came up: that is, I don't think it's quite adequate to say that we have an international program and an international party and therefore it follows that the national sections or fraternal groups will be homogeneous. You see, the French section of the Fourth International is not analogous to the New York local of the SWP. Obviously there are clear differences between different national parties. They have independent organizations and independent leaderships, they work in the closest cooperation in fighting a common enemy which is world imperialism, but at the same time there are distinct national parties.

But the reason that that exists is that imperialism is unable to overcome some of the more reactionary aspects of capitalism. That is, there's a French bourgeoisie, which is distinct from the American capitalist class. That is, there's a French ruling class that oppresses French workers in a particular way, and an American capitalist class that that oppresses American workers in a particular way just because of the peculiarities of the geographical situation and because of certain national economic differences that developed over time.

But there's no section of the American capitalist class distinct from other sections that oppresses black workers. The

historical enemy of black and white workers is an identity. It's one entity; it's the American ruling class. Now, I don't think that in the course of fighting that enemy there's any contradiction between nationalism and an organizational unity in that struggle against a single enemy. That is, I don't even think that nationalism is going to be able to develop in its fullest political sense until after the American revolution when it loses its political necessity.

I think that all the points about the problems of recruitment have been made very well, and also the point of the tremendous gap in consciousness between black and white workers, the racism of white workers and the problems that creates in the organization of a multi-national party.

On the tactical question of entry, that is entry of revolutionary Marxists into another organization, the best way that that can be organized, if that is the correct tactical position, is to organize that on a national scale with the apparatus that a revolutionary Marxist party is able to provide. That is, national press, national coordination of activities, national organization of the various political interventions that will be made from time to time. It seems to me, if the time comes when we'd want to do that type of work in the BPP, that would be the way to do it.

Summary Statements

Wilbert A.: As far as recruitment is concerned, there might be a problem at U. of Illinois. No one could expect me to recruit people to the YSA at the U. of Illinois this next quarter. I couldn't do it last quarter. We tried last quarter; we couldn't do it. But next quarter will be an entirely different thing. If you can recruit individuals into the YSA and SWP, if the person wants to join, we won't put any pressure on them and tell them not to join. That's not our business. We'll try to recruit people into the Black Panthers the best we can. And go ahead and build the Panthers at U. of Illinois.

This whole thing about bi-national party and national(ist) party, I don't think is really too important. Because, when people begin to fight for their freedom, as the development of the nationalist movement in this country gets larger, whether the white working class moves or not, black people are going to move. The nationalist movement is going to grow. You don't have to be a genius to see that. Just look around. These people just don't seem to be jiving. And Speaker E said that he doesn't think the nationalist feeling of the black community will come out until after the revolution. Probably after the revolution, nationalist feeling will die

down -- there'll be no need for it. I think you'll see it before the revolution. That's what makes people fight. When they look at the common oppressor, the capitalist. People like Robert Browne, even.

If you're Marxists, you've got to be able to apply your politics, you've got to be able to organize people. If you can't do that, forget it. If you're going to be an intellectual, and not be able to organize people in the black community, forget it; you're out of it. People who are black Marxists are going to have to seriously think about that question. They're going to have to seriously think about working in the BPP and around the BPP, building a mass revolutionary nationalist party. Not only nationalist; I think a large section of it will become Marxist. I'm sure of that. And people will have to seriously think of that question. You're not going to be able to influence nationalists by writing an article in the Militant, and criticizing them. You're not going to influence anybody that way. The way you're going to influence people is by setting the example working among them, help build their organization. Setting the example that others can follow.

He once said that what he considered the revolutionary party was the party in the forefront of the struggle of the working class. Now which party is in the forefront of the struggle of the working class at this present time? More or less to me it's the BPP. If you want to argue about that, I can find all types of arguments to prove it. And the way I see it, I'm not against the development of the binational party; if it comes about, good. It's okay. But what I am for, right now, is to build that revolutionary nationalist party.

If you can recruit, when mass radicalization begins to take place, in another section of the population, good and well. But at the present time, there won't be any mass recruitment [to the YSA] of black students from the campuses. And this will be more so because of the Black Panthers in this city. Because they will tend to recruit the best students on campus. Which will be proven in the coming months. Then, if you recruit a few people who are fairly good, if these people can't find an area where they can be involved in something that is going on in the West Side, or the South Side, with the Panthers, or any other militant organization, they will soon drop out. Because what black people need less of is intellectuals. If we want black intellectuals, we can get some from Northwestern or Roosevelt, where you have a whole lot of them. What we need is fighters.

I didn't drop out of the YSA and SWP because of pressure from anyone. I don't make any decisions that way; I make deci-

sions on a political basis. I see the Panthers as being the most important organization at the present time. And I think it should be built. That's how I make decisions.

Speaker D made a comment that we could talk about something else; like we could talk about Chairman Mao and the cultural revolution in China instead of the Panther Party. The reason you don't talk about Chairman Mao is because it's not politically important to talk about Chairman Mao, and the cultural revolution, at this time. Why talk about that? No one's interested in the cultural revolution except a few Maoists. But what people are interested in is the Black Panther Party. It's an important political development. So, you write about it. That's the only reason you write about it. People don't write about it because of pressure; they write about it because it's important. That's how people make their decisions.

And as far as the campus is concerned, we hope to work fairly close with the YSA. That'll probably be the only white organization that we'll work fairly close with. Probably, because there's nothing else on campus to work with. You can't work with SDS, and you certainly can't work with PL. If we can't work with YSA, we can't work with anyone, and that'll be a whole different thing. But as far as pressure is concerned, I don't make any decisions on that basis. It's whether or not I see the Panthers as being important. When I see the Panthers as reaching the people that need to be reached, the people that the SWP won't be able to reach for a long time. And those are the people that black Marxists who are serious have got to consider reaching. If you can't reach those people, then we can forget about the revolution.

Richard H.: I think we've had a pretty full discussion and I think that what Wilbert said at the end lays out the important differences, and the reason why the Exec recommends that we should accept his resignation from the SWP.

The thread that's come through this discussion is the basic disagreement over where the revolutionary leadership will be built, over whether the building of the SWP on a consistent basis, with consistent work, over a period of developing struggles in the working class, whether the building of that party is the most important task of revolutionary Marxists. It's very important and basic to the program of the Socialist Workers Party that that difference be clear.

Within the working class movement on a world scale there are three main tendencies -- the Stalinists, the Social Democracy and the Trotskyists, that is the

revolutionary Marxists. Every emergent revolutionary tendency has to consider where it stands regarding these three main groupings. And we take a very clear and principled position on which grouping we feel is that revolutionary Marxist grouping through which we will be able to lead the revolution in this country. We're very clear that the SWP will be that organization, and it's our task to build it as that organization.

All along the development of a revolutionary party differences develop due to different evaluations and although we don't welcome resignations, splits, and

people dropping out of the party, we recognize that these things happen. But the continuity of the party has to go on. We hope to be able to collaborate with Wilbert and the BPP, that's our perspective, and we hope that it works out. We see no reason why it shouldn't. But the differences are really such that the only realistic and politically correct thing that we can do is to accept his resignation from the party and hope to develop collaborative relationships with him and with the BPP over a period of time, recognizing that our perspective is to develop revolutionary Marxist cadre within the SWP and to work closely with any revolutionary organizations which develop.

NOTES ON THE CHICANO AND PUERTO RICAN STRUGGLES IN THE UNITED STATES

By Richard Garza

Preface

I am contributing these preliminary notes to the preconvention discussion in the hope they will stimulate further contributions about a subject which will have growing importance to our work. Especially valuable would be contributions from Third World comrades involved in this work.

* * *

The Chicanos

Chicanos are the second largest minority in the U.S., numbering about five million. Almost 90 percent live in the five Southwestern states -- Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, and Texas. In 1960 Chicanos constituted 11.8 percent of the total population of the Southwest. Between 1950 and 1960 California's Chicanos increased by 87 percent, while the total population of the state increased by only 44 percent.

Chicanos are a distinctive but highly heterogeneous group. One of the oldest groups in the country, it is steadily augmented by a stream of new immigrants from Mexico. They have been subject to massive dislocation and change owing to the impact of technology and a changing economy, yet have clung with remarkable tenacity to their traditional language and culture. The sense of a common identity is probably stronger now than it ever was, in spite of (or because of) many years of overt and covert discrimination.

The Afro-American struggle has tended to obscure the more localized protest of Chicano groups. Nonetheless, Chicano protests have been steadily growing in numbers and strength, and they bespeak increasing solidarity and militancy within the community. In early 1968, Chicano students boycotted several Los Angeles high schools (and enlisted significant parental and community support); Chicano leaders in California affirmed support of land claims made by Spanish-speaking residents of New Mexico; Chicano students at colleges and universities all over the Southwest started efforts to organize; and Chicanos participated in the "Poor People's March" on Washington.

Civil rights legislation's failure to reduce poverty and inequality has been accompanied by growing frustration by Chicanos. This is understandable: a special census of East Los Angeles, which is about 75.6 percent Chicano, found that between 1960 and 1965 real income in the area dropped, home ownership declined, and housing deteriorated.

Throughout the Southwest as a whole, more than a third of all Chicano families live in "official" poverty, on incomes of less than \$3000 per year. A Chicano is seven times more likely than an Anglo to live in substandard housing. The chance that his baby will be born dead or will die before his first birthday is about twice as great. On the average, they achieve several years less of education than either the Anglo or other nonwhite populations of the Southwest. Chicanos' unemployment rate is about twice that of Anglos. Eighty percent of those employed work at unskilled or low-skilled, low-paying jobs.

There are certain unique characteristics of the Chicano and there are several misconceptions about him nationally and in the Southwest. The Chicano is not primarily engaged in farm labor; he is heavily urbanized. Chicanos are the youngest population in the country and have the highest birth rate.

There is an astonishing lack of "hard data" and research which reveal Chicano poverty. Few studies have been made of life in the crowded barrios where 80 percent of Chicanos live. The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights has announced it will publish various studies during 1969 and will make recommendations to the President and the Congress for action.

By 1853 the U.S. had acquired, by purchases and by force -- primarily the latter -- nearly one million square miles of Mexican territory, or half of all Mexico.

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, which ended the Mexican-American War, stipulated "...property of every kind, now belonging to Mexicans not established there, shall be inviolably respected. The present owners, the heirs of these, and all Mexicans who may hereafter acquire said property by contract, shall enjoy with respect to it guarantees equally ample as if the same belonged to citizens of the United States." The rights guaranteed by this treaty have been consistently violated.

By the turn of the century most of the states had already enacted language laws which inhibited Chicano participation in voting and judicial processes and in schools. Segregation, either by school or by classroom, was widespread. Some parts of Texas even maintained three separate systems for Anglos, Chicanos, and blacks. There were many incidents of violence against Chicanos and Mexicans in the U.S. By 1922 they had become so severe that the

Secretary of State warned the Governor of Texas that action would have to be taken to protect Mexicans.

However bad wages and conditions were on this side of the border, they were worse on the other side. Waves of immigration have brought Mexican labor to U.S. mines, railroads and industry. Recently machines have increasingly taken over in the fields and vineyards and Chicanos have joined the migration to towns and cities.

The barrios and colonias have relatively high juvenile delinquency and social dependence, educational deprivation, disintegrating family life, and, of course, unemployment. In addition, the Chicano is subject to an additional set of economic and social pressures. Immigrants from Mexico -- 40,000 a year -- represent direct competition for the few available jobs (and are particularly susceptible to exploitation in sweatshops). Between 1960 and 1964, nearly 218,000 Mexican immigrants arrived, of whom more than 78 percent were either unskilled or had low-paying skills; only 30 percent of all immigrants to the U.S. during that period fell into this category.

Almost 42 percent of Chicanos are under the age of 15, compared with 29.7 percent of Anglos and 36.6 percent of other nonwhites. The proportion of Chicano families of six persons or more is about three times that of Anglos.

The large-family, low-income pattern makes housing a particular problem for Chicanos, with families often forced to choose between adequate space in dilapidated housing or very crowded space in more desirable dwellings. Frequently, housing is both crowded and dilapidated.

Residential segregation is widespread. The old colonias which often ringed the Southwestern towns and cities, were engulfed as the towns grew. The result is that there are usually several concentrations of Chicanos rather than just one.

What little information there is on health statistics for Chicanos, notably for Colorado and San Antonio, indicates a larger proportion of Chicanos die from causes which are associated with poverty than the general population. In Colorado, the mean age at death of a Chicano is 56.7 years in contrast to 67.5 years for others.

Chicano political strength is potentially large, but this potential has not been realized. There is no organization of Chicanos equivalent to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; no Chicano colleges; and virtually no sources of financial or other help outside the community itself.

Three recurring complaints are made

with special frequency by Chicanos -- of police brutality, illegal arrest, and exclusion from juries. In 1966 the Council on Mexican-American Affairs took testimony in nearly 30 cases of alleged brutality in the Los Angeles area alone and demanded Federal investigation of the findings.

In the labor dispute in Starr County, Texas the Texas Advisory Committee to the Commission on Civil Rights concluded that excessive force had been used by the local police and Texas Rangers. One Chicano said to the Committee: "There's a lot to the saying that you hear in South Texas that all of the Rangers have Mexican blood. They have it on their boots."

Many Chicanos have a special grievance against the Border Patrol of the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Officers of the Border Patrol are authorized to interrogate, without a warrant, any person believed to be an alien on his right to be or remain in the U.S., and to search conveyances, such as buses or railway cars, within 100 miles of the border. Many Chicanos are accosted and questioned -- a harassment that no other group in the U.S. suffers. In addition, the Border Patrol serves the needs of the powerful agricultural interests in the Southwest. Before the mid-1950's, millions of "wetbacks" (braceros) entered the U.S. illegally to provide a supply of cheap labor despite the Patrol. After the initiation of the bracero program of 1951, which provided for Mexicans to work on contract under government supervision, the Border Patrol suddenly and unaccountably became so efficient that within five years it had rounded up and deported nearly four million "wetbacks," more than a million in 1954 alone.

In jury service in the Hernandez case, no Chicano had been summoned for jury trial in 25 years although the area had a substantial Spanish-speaking population.

In Nueces County, Texas 288 grand jurors were selected over a period of nine years and only 16 had Latin American surnames. Many Chicanos would rather plead guilty than go before a jury system like that. Because of the language problem many Chicanos plead guilty "just to avoid the fuss." Studies show that Chicanos receive harsher sentences for the same crimes committed by Anglos.

The right to vote has also been restricted by law and by outright intimidation. In Texas a new registration law enacted in 1966 substitutes its restrictions for the repealed poll tax. In 1967 local officials in two Northern California counties refused to give registration books to Chicano volunteer deputy regis-

trants.

As of 1960, only 2 percent of the lawyers in the Southwest had Spanish surnames. A large volume of cases and low incomes makes it impossible for them to donate the time necessary for difficult civil rights cases.

In May 1968 the Ford Foundation announced the establishment of the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund. A small legal staff will work with local lawyers throughout the Southwest in preparing civil rights cases for litigation.

Taking the Southwest as a whole, Mexican-Americans on the average have about eight years of schooling, or four years less than Anglos. In Texas, for example, 40 percent of all Chicanos are functionally illiterate. In 1966, two predominantly Chicano high schools in Los Angeles had dropout rates of 53.8 percent and 47.5 percent. Only 2 percent of California's college population, for example, is of Spanish surname.

Grievances about education have provided the impetus for community and parental action and organization. In 1967, a Colorado state government report on Spanish-surnamed citizens found that it is the prevailing opinion among many school administrators that Chicano youth "because of their cultural value system...do not aspire to educational success." But, the report asserted: "The lack of aspiration in any Spanish-surnamed student is probably not his failure to accept prevailing cultural goals, but his awareness that he cannot make it."

English must be used as the language of classroom instruction except in New Mexico and California, and California repealed its "English only" law just last year (1968). Until recently, the practice has been widespread (and is still today) to resolutely prohibit the speaking of Spanish even on the playground. A Chicano leader deplored the "bigoted approach on the part of the schools which immediately puts in the child's mind the idea that the Spanish language is inferior -- not socially acceptable -- since you cannot use it in public."

In integrated schools, Chicanos are sometimes separated from their Anglo classmates in the classroom, on the playground, and in extra-curricular affairs. In one rural California district Chicanos are always seated behind Anglos at graduation ceremonies. "It makes for a better looking stage," explained the school principal.

Numerous academic and social practices are such as to impress Chicanos with the idea that they are not only different but inferior.

The curriculum in general and textbooks in particular neglect to inform both Anglo and Chicano pupils of the substantial contributions to the Southwest made by Mexicans, and of the rich history and culture of Spanish-speaking people.

The crisis in identity is obviously acute. Studies show that differences in behavior between U.S.-born Chicanos and Mexican-born Chicanos show the Mexican-born youngster knew who he was, while the U.S.-born Chicano was very much ashamed, very insecure.

In some cases, school personnel display an insensitivity which borders on brutality. Dressing down of Chicano parents before their children and other children, especially over feeding them something different than beans, or about the clothes they wear, etc.

California has released an ethnic breakdown of its schools which shows that "57 percent of Chicano students in the eight largest school districts attend schools that are segregated according to California's definition -- the ethnic composition of the student body not within 15 percent of the composition of the school district." Only 2.25 percent of California's teachers have Spanish surnames.

In California, Chicanos comprise more than a quarter of the children assigned to classes for the mentally retarded.

Counselors guide Chicano students into "realistic" vocational and business programs rather than a curriculum that might prepare them for more education. In Los Angeles only a fifth of Chicano students are in an academic program while half the Anglo children are.

As the Spanish-speaking child has seldom mastered the basic grammatical concepts of the Spanish language before he is forced to deal with English, he seldom learns either Spanish or English well. There is now great pressure from the Chicano community for bilingual teaching programs which would enable children to learn English as a second language while taking basic subjects in Spanish.

Children of migratory workers suffer more severe educational deprivation than any others. They are moved from school to school, few of which welcome them, and some which refuse to admit migrant children. Often they are placed in segregated classes under the instruction of substitute or non-credentialed teachers. School attendance laws are seldom enforced in the case of migrant children.

Chicanos have been unable to move

into the mainstream of U.S. economic life. In the Southwest, their unemployment rate is about double that of Anglos. Unemployed farm workers are not included in unemployment statistics. Furthermore, conglomerate regional figures hide the severity of the situation that exists in many barrios where Chicanos are concentrated. The unemployment level hovers at about 20 percent in one Denver ward, 12 percent in one Los Angeles census tract.

More important is widespread underemployment. Many Chicanos that work do not have full-time, year-around jobs. A 1966 survey by the Department of Labor showed that 47 percent of the men in a Chicano district of San Antonio were either unemployed, underemployed, or earning less than \$60 per week.

Chicanos are heavily concentrated in the lowest paying jobs. This condition holds for public employment -- federal, state, county, and city -- as well as private. In 1960, 79 percent of all Chicanos labored in unskilled and semi-skilled jobs.

In Los Angeles County, they have been well represented, since World War II, in the food, steel, automobile assembly, and diecast aluminum industries. But in aircraft, telephone, space, and electronic and allied industries Chicano employees total 5 percent or less, though they constitute from 12 to 14 percent of the County population as a whole.

There is an additional factor -- a crucial one -- which affects the employment and wage possibilities of the many Chicanos living along the border from Brownsville, Texas to San Diego, California. Each day, at least 44,000 Mexicans and 18,000 U.S. citizens commute to jobs in the U.S. border towns from their homes in Mexico.

These commuters, whose wages are high by Mexican standards, are admitted each day under what Judge Luther Youngdahl of the Federal District Court in Washington has termed an "amiable fiction" -- that they are bona fide immigrants to the U.S. The U.S. government grants them the immigration documents from which they derive the designation "Green Carder" despite the fact that there is no proof that they intend ever to establish residence in this country and, in fact, every evidence that they do not.

These commuters have been used as strikebreakers in the U.S. and their daily migration depresses wages and creates unemployment for Chicanos who live in the U.S. along the border. In 1966 unemployment in Texas border towns was almost 95 percent higher than in the interior. Wages in the same towns were 31 percent below the state average. Reluctance by Chicanos

to press for a closing of the border may spring from the fear that the already increasing tendency for the border to lose industry will be spurred. Already "run-away industries" are establishing plants just inside the Mexican border, with the encouragement of the Mexican government which allows the plants to import machinery, raw goods, and semi-finished goods duty-free, and to export the finished products freely. Moreover, when these products are shipped into the U.S., Section 807 of the Tariff Code provides a special, very low tariff -- not on the value of the products, but on the cost of the value added in the Mexican plant.

Although primarily urban, there are 250,000 Chicanos in agriculture. Chicanos from Texas dominate the migrant labor force which fans out across the Midwest, the Rocky Mountain states, and up the Pacific Coast. Resident Chicanos comprise most of the farm labor force in California, Arizona, and Colorado.

In 1967 the annual income for farm workers averaged \$1,213 with migrants earning less than \$1,000 on the average. Threatened by competition from Mexican immigrants more desperate than they, Chicanos find little protection in U.S. laws. Farm labor is specifically excluded from the right to bargain under the National Labor Relations Act, and it is limited in its coverage under Social Security and minimum wage laws.

Selective Service boards across the Southwest have slightly less than 6 percent Chicano membership. Chicanos account for nearly 20 percent of the Southwest-ers killed in Vietnam. In Nueces County, Texas over 75 percent of the men killed in the Vietnam war have Spanish surnames.

The government, it seems, can find minorities for those programs in which it desires their participation.

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The most pervasive force among Chicanos today is a growing sense of identity and a quest for unity. The effects of these efforts have not been lost on Federal agencies and private organizations.

In May 1967 L.B.J. announced the establishment of the Interagency Committee on Mexican-American Affairs, consisting of the Secretaries of Agriculture, Labor, Health, Education and Welfare, and Housing and Urban Development, and the Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity. The Committee's first major activity was to hold two days of hearings in El Paso in October 1967 at which four Cabinet members and several agency heads listened to Chicano spokesmen.

Chicanos who sought an entirely different kind of confrontation convened in the heart of El Segundo, an El Paso slum district, to hold the Conference of La Raza Unida. From this conference the Southwest Council of La Raza, funded in June 1968 by the Ford Foundation, was formed.

The force of the Chicano movement is hardly told by the listing of the names of new organizations. The force really lies in the mounting interest and activism of young Chicanos who at the El Paso La Raza Unida Conference said, "If nothing happens from this (conference), you'll have to step aside or we'll walk over you."

Some of the present leaders of the movement in the Southwest are Reies Lopez Tijerina and Rudolfo (Corky) Gonzalez. Another well-known name is that of Cesar Chavez of the farm workers union.

Tijerina came into national prominence with his raid on the Tierra Amarilla courthouse. He is based in rural New Mexico and is a champion of the small Chicano landowner who was crushed by the U.S. government and the big landowners. Tijerina's main demand is for the return of land to the Chicanos on the basis of long forgotten treaties and claims. For his apparently quixotic struggle he has sought support from the black liberation movement and played a role in the Poor People's March on Washington.

He has apparently received some support from reformist circles. Elizabeth Sutherland (Martinez), a former SNCC activist, is publishing his newspaper El Grito del Norte. Beverly Axelrod, formerly associated with Cleaver's case and often associated with the C.P., aided his defense efforts. His recent appearance at the National Lawyers Guild indicates he is being aided by those circles. However, except for his prominence, he has not yet established a national base. The latest attempt on his part to seek national support is his call for students from throughout the country to converge on New Mexico to help in the establishment of his city-state.

Another Southwest leader who has come into national prominence is the Denver militant "Corky" Gonzalez. A former boxer and a former Democratic ward politician who currently opposes working inside the Democratic party, he organized a center for Chicanos in Denver. The financing for the center, according to Gonzalez, came from the community. With an urban base he has become a champion of the Chicanos in their fights against discrimination. Early in 1969 he organized the "Chicano Youth Conference" which attracted 1,500 militants to Denver from throughout the country, primarily from the Southwest. Although no common program was adopted,

the emergence of a revolutionary youth caucus testified to the degree of penetration of radical ideas among Chicano youth. Gonzalez adopts an anti-establishment posture which is in tune with the rising militancy of the Chicano youth.

Cesar Chavez, a product of the Saul Alinsky school of social protest and organizing, came into prominence as leader of the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee. His conservative and pacifist posture have allied him with the Catholic church and the labor bureaucracy. Despite the conservatizing role of the leadership, the ranks of the union have produced a number of rank and filers from the fields who have come into the cities to organize support for their strikes in Delano and in the Rio Grande Valley. The oppressive conditions of the farm workers have made it relatively easy for them to obtain support from liberal, labor and community organizations. In New York, however, the efforts of the militants have not succeeded in arousing mass support in the Puerto Rican community. However, significant support for the boycott has been gathered from liberal circles.

Undoubtedly some of the more significant developments are taking place among the Chicano youth. Organizations have sprung up from California to Chicago. They are displacing the priest and the Virgin of Guadalupe at the head of demonstrations. The programs of the youth are deeply affected by the black nationalist feelings of Afro-American youth. There are no hard statistics about their size, influence, or ideology. That they will play an ever-increasing role is foreshadowed by the struggle at San Francisco State.

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The Puerto Ricans

Among the minority groups in the U.S., Puerto Ricans are the latecomers. In a mass exodus after World War II, nearly half a million Puerto Ricans emigrated to the U.S. between 1945 and 1959. From 1940 to 1960 the island lost nearly a million persons as a result of this mass emigration. Since the mid 50's there has been a reverse migration estimated at 145,000. The absence of immigration requirements (Puerto Ricans have been U.S. citizens since 1917) and the spur of economic necessity help to explain why at least one out of every three persons born in Puerto Rico has lived in the U.S. at some time in his life.

In the decade from 1950 to 1960, 70 percent of the migrants were persons from 15 to 39 years old. The island's labor force, according to government economist Hubert C. Barton, suffers an estimated 30 percent unemployment. Other economists estimate it around 14 percent.

Labor Department official Herbert Beinstock indicated that a 1966 survey had shown that the subemployment rate for Puerto Ricans in slum areas in New York is 33.1 percent, while the unemployment rate is 10 percent. It is easy to understand that the lot of the new Puerto Rican ghetto-dweller in New York is hardly any better than that facing him back in Puerto Rico. The Puerto Ricans are a colonial people. All the problems faced by Puerto Rico as a colony of the U.S. are found and magnified in the U.S. metropolis -- the question of identity, the problem of language and the achievement of political power.

Puerto Ricans exhibit a distinct nationality. They are a people with a culture, a language, a tradition, a history. Colonization under the U.S. flag has meant a gradual erosion of the culture and the slow but persistent destruction of the Puerto Rican sense of identity. The situation is very similar to that of the black people living in a white man's world. They are faced squarely with the problem of either asserting their "negritude" or assimilating the ways of the whites. One of the responses to colonialism may be not liberation, but submission to the colonizer -- assimilation, not the struggle for identity. After seven decades of U.S. colonial rule, what is really surprising is that there is still a hard core of Puerto Rican culture and identity that holds out against the U.S.

And yet, the most pervasive, the most significant tendency that one finds among the Puerto Ricans both on the island and in the U.S. is what might be called the "colonialist syndrome" -- the aggregation of attitudes, orientations, and perceptions which magnify the power, wisdom, and achievements of the colonizer while minimizing the power, wisdom and achievements of the colonized. No one illustrates this attitude better than the completely "Americanized" Puerto Rican, who, in his quest to be more "American" seeks to identify closely with the patterns of culture of the metropolis. The grotesque aspect of this syndrome may be found in the cultural hybrid, resembling the Mexican "pachuco," whose sense of identity is so blurred that he has no bearings -- a cultural schizophrenic who does not know what he is.

Today, the Puerto Rican protest is limited to a minority of the population, while the majority remains acquiescent, perhaps out of a sense of impotence more than out of approval of the present situation. The real problem now is how to crystallize the Puerto Rican protest effectively. "Puerto Rican power" should be a welcome complement to black power. Puerto Ricans are more likely to retain their identity than Europeans because, in addition to other factors, they have been vitally affected by the ineradicable complication of color. The consciousness of

the national problem has created a high degree of awareness of the importance of color.

The Puerto Ricans in the U.S. during the 1930's suffered from the depression. Their conditions improved with the preparations in 1939 for World War II but they were still hampered by ignorance of English and even those with skills or training in white collar jobs had to take whatever jobs were offered to them. As a result they became mostly unskilled marginal laborers. The continued flow of newcomers added to the number of low-paid laborers in New York City, but these were not as helpless as their predecessors. They came with superior information on job prospects and could return more easily due to the cheap transportation rates.

A Harvard University study in 1959 noted that Puerto Ricans and blacks "were largely to be found in the less skilled, lower paid crafts and in shops making lower price lines, and in this industry [garment] their advancement to higher skills was not proceeding very rapidly."

In the ILGWU those locals which are predominantly non-white have contracts providing only a few cents above the minimum wage required by law. The Bureau of Labor Statistics of the Department of Labor concluded that only 11 percent of the unionized garment workers in New York City can realize the basic earnings necessary for the "modest but adequate" standard of living established by the Bureau for the 1960 interim City Workers Family Budget.

A striking comparison between wages in industries where Puerto Ricans and Afros predominate, as compared with white workers, can be made between the printing trade and the garment trade, New York state's largest industries. In 1960 the printing and publishing industries employed a total of 180,845 people. Their total payroll was \$1,109,373,000. The apparel and related products industry employed 342,925 people and the total payroll was \$1,261,994,000. Apparel, with almost twice the number of workers as printing, barely topped the overall wages in the printing trade.

Puerto Ricans have found it easier to break into the restaurant trade than Afros. However, although the industry offers some chances for advancement, money-wise, to a limited number of Puerto Ricans, the industry as a whole is one of the lowest paying in New York City. It is not covered by social legislation on the federal level because it is not engaged in interstate commerce. The industry is constantly being drained of its white workers and being replaced by Puerto Ricans, except in the most exclusive and highest-paying "houses."

Although some Puerto Ricans find it possible to break out of the working class and engage in small businesses, mostly grocery stores, even that number represents an insignificant minority and even then largely in an industry with a high rate of mortality.

The connection between schools and social mobility makes the educational system of special concern to blacks and Puerto Ricans. In 1963 there were a total of 179,233 Puerto Rican children in New York City. According to statistics published by students at City College in their recent strike, 84 percent of the males drop out before finishing high school, and 77 percent of the females and males (black or Puerto Rican) drop out before finishing high school. There are numerous reasons for this extraordinary dropout rate. Many of the Puerto Rican children begin school or transfer into school without speaking English. By the time they have picked up enough English to understand the teacher, two, three, or more years of schooling have been lost. This is part of the educational bureaucracy's hang-up that instruction must be in English only. Those lost years are never made up. By the time the child is in fourth or fifth grade, selection is made for the "Intellectually Gifted Class." In those areas where Puerto Rican and black children attend the same schools as white children they are effectively segregated. In schools that are predominantly black or Puerto Rican the program does not exist.

By the time the child is ready to go to high school, black and Puerto Rican children cannot compete for the special schools of New York City that prepare children for college -- Stuyvesant High School, Brooklyn Technical High School, Bronx High School of Science, or Music and Art High School. Children in all-white neighborhoods, of course, have a better choice of high schools for their "neighborhood" high schools have by and large better programs. The ghetto high schools cannot prepare their students for the competitive examinations on a city-wide basis for the City Colleges.

Of course, this in no way takes into account the fact that most Puerto Rican children are shunted into vocational high schools to prepare them for life at a "trade." At a parents'-day meeting at Joan of Arc Junior High School before the strike, the remains of a lesson were still on the blackboard. The lesson was an illustration of a "dish-washing machine," and the instructions were, "Take good care of your machine." With this attitude the drop-out rate is no mystery. Although New York City teachers have until recently tried to adopt an attitude of benevolent paternalism to Puerto Rican children instead of the open hostility found against

Chicanos in the Southwest, the effect has been the same -- to give Puerto Rican children an inferior education and prepare them for the reserve army of the unemployed or for marginal jobs.

New York City has 800,00 substandard dwelling units. The Puerto Rican, with his larger family, is the latest inhabitant of these slums, left by the immigrant groups that preceded him to New York City. Due to the lack of facility in English, many landlords are able to violate even the city's low-income housing regulations. Although the oldest and best-known Puerto Rican ghetto is El Barrio, on New York's east side, just east of Harlem, the Puerto Ricans have established large barrios in the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens. These areas are not as ethnically solid as Harlem or Bedford Stuyvesant, but nevertheless represent majority concentrations of Puerto Ricans. They are often closer or contiguous to black areas and with the changing ethnic composition of New York City point to a stage at which these two minorities will constitute a majority of the population of the city.

The much-touted public housing program of New York City has been built largely on the dislocation of Puerto Rican or black residents, of which the majority just move to other overcrowded slums while a minority get placed in inadequate city housing. These projects although more desirable than the slum to live in, have an atmosphere of a company town, with their myriad regulations and inspections of premises by the Housing Authorities. Allowed to deteriorate for lack of proper care, they are architectural monstrosities designed without any of the foresight and conveniences found in some of the middle-class cooperatives throughout the city.

The clinical impression of physicians who treat Puerto Rican patients, the high incidence of new cases of tuberculosis, and the high admission rate to mental hospitals reported for Puerto Ricans suggest that the general susceptibility to illness is high among Puerto Ricans in New York City as compared to other segments of the metropolitan population.

The recent (1969) Puerto Rican Community Conference reported that the number of Puerto Rican lawyers in the entire city of New York was 60, for a population of about a million. Even when a Puerto Rican speaks English, the chance of his being acquitted or his word being accepted against a cop's is practically nil. In addition, the New York City cop, with his generally prejudiced mentality, constantly provokes incidents against the Puerto Rican youth especially. It is well to keep in mind that the 1967 East Harlem "riot" was triggered by the shooting of a Puerto Rican youth by a cop.

It is among the Puerto Rican youth (those under 25), who constitute over 60 percent of the Puerto Rican population of the city that the growing Puerto Rican rebellion is most deeply felt. Most of these youth were raised or born in the city. Their memories of Puerto Rico are dim and most of them are more at home in the ghettos of the city than in Puerto Rico. In addition, like their Chicano counterparts, many of them don't speak Spanish or find themselves ill at ease in Spanish except for the most elementary type of discussion.

Although programs to help Puerto Ricans go to college exist, like the ASPIRA, they barely make a dent in the population of ghetto youth. At the same time, the poverty programs that began under the Kennedy administration merely whetted the appetite of an aspiring petty-bourgeois leadership, cultivated and controlled by the Commonwealth government. What the programs did do was to derail some potential leaders for a period of time and get them involved in the fight for the diminishing poverty funds or to provide jobs for the "professionals." They helped to train a core of individuals in the mechanics of running an organization, and in mobilizing community support for limited aims. However, these programs also demonstrated how little they could do to resolve the problems of the ghettos.

The growing disillusionment has reached into the students who have reached college through the ghetto programs. Instead of looking upon the college degree as their own way out of poverty, they have initiated struggles at the city colleges alongside their black brothers and sisters. These struggles will provide future leaders for the larger struggles of the Puerto Rican community.

An important new phenomenon is the tendency of the black and Puerto Rican students to joint efforts. The struggle programs are for "black and Puerto Rican" students. This has occurred in spite of some establishment desires to divide the two groups, most graphically illustrated by the fights over "position" by poverty program administrators.

At the same time, the Puerto Rican students have raised demands peculiarly their own, such as the demand that Spanish and Puerto Rican history be taught to all education majors. The Puerto Rican "liberated" hall at the City College of New York was named after the Puerto Rican nationalist martyr, Don Pedro Albizu Campos. Juan Mari Bras of the Movement for Puerto Rican Independence was invited to speak to the students at Albizu Campos

Hall. His revolutionary outlook and concepts of the third world struggle brought the ideas of the OLAS directly to the ghetto youth at City College.

The sympathy for the independence movement is another interesting development among the Puerto Rican youth. Rejection by "American" society has forced them to look for their identity in their past. That "past" is five hours and \$90 away and is a "present" involved in struggle against the U.S. ruling class. The rise in consciousness of Puerto Rican youth in the U.S. confronts the Puerto Rican radical movement with an opportunity they had not expected so early. Their early formulations of the problem, i.e. "internationalize New York City," indicate a lack of understanding of the role revolutionary Puerto Ricans can play in the struggles in the U.S. At the same time, Juan Mari Bras' formulation, "the miners of West Virginia are part of the third world struggle for liberation," indicated that U.S. revolutionaries must help clarify thinking about the role of the Puerto Rican in the U.S. revolution.

Other political trends within the Puerto Rican community are not clearly visible. At the 1969 Puerto Rican Community Conference the left wing, composed in the main of MPI supporters and New York City campus youth, completely routed the establishment Puerto Ricans who had hoped to use the conference for the bourgeois candidate Herman Badillo, in his bid for the Democratic party nomination for mayor. It was largely a symbolic victory because of the lack of programmatic substance in the conference. It did reveal, however, the shallowness of the roots the Commonwealth government and its liberal allies in New York have been able to put down.

The conference also revealed the potential for organizing the Puerto Rican youth on the college campuses and in the high schools. Whatever tendency is able to capture these radicalizing youth will have a powerful lead in winning the leadership of the Puerto Rican community as its struggles become wider and more profound.

Another factor at the conference was the absence of any open CP-oriented individual among the adults or the youth. In earlier meetings among the youth DuBois Club members had tried to push the candidacy of Badillo. The sharp hostility of the radical Puerto Rican youth made such a move clearly impossible. Had the CP thrown its small cadres on Badillo's side it would have caused an even greater loss of prestige for itself. Its prestige has declined among radicalizing Puerto Ricans due to its position on the Cuban revolution, black nationalism, and Democratic party politics.