

3073  
Boston  
October 26, 1972

TO THE COMRADES OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY:

This is to announce our resignation from the Socialist Workers Party.

<sup>Lenin and</sup>  
~~Stalin~~ Trotsky taught that imperialist war was one of the central questions of this epoch, and that a principled task of the revolutionary party was to imbue the working class with proletarian internationalism. Thus the slogan of the revolutionary Fourth International used to be "Only Victorious Socialist Revolutions Can Prevent the Third World War!" The SWP has failed miserably in its propaganda on the Vietnam War. Instead of offering a class analysis and class solution to the problem of war, the SWP offers a non-class analysis and organizes around the proposition that the war can be ended by means other than the class struggle. Instead of teaching the working class to rely upon itself, the SWP preaches an "antiwar alliance" with the petty-bourgeois radicals and the liberal bourgeoisie. This is the essence of pacifism--teaching that war can be ended by means other than the class struggle.

The SWP does not teach the irreconcilability of the class struggle. It does not teach the class struggle in any form. It does not (therefore) teach the nature of the state and the necessity of smashing it. If the SWP ever attempts to take its politics to the working class, it will disarm the workers ideologically (and ultimately physically) by teaching that they can and must end their oppression by means other than smashing the bourgeois state and establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The SWP tells women, blacks, and Chicanos to form their own political parties; it tells them that thus split into many political groups and parties they will, as a result of the successful culmination of their separate struggles, make the revolution. The role of the vanguard party of the working class is thereby dissolved into the many vanguards of the petty bourgeoisie and petty bourgeois parties. This is what we mean when we say that the SWP is a liquidationist organization.

The SWP says the war will end when "the majority" says so, and/or the war will end when the "majority of women . . ." say so. It tells women and blacks that they can end their oppression by organizing as women and as blacks to fight for their rights. Clearly implicit in such positions is the idea that the goal of these protest movements can be achieved outside the class struggle and without a revolution. In other words, under capitalism--within the system. This is what we mean when we say that the SWP is a reformist organization.

The Leninist Faction, basing itself on Leninism, teaches that the struggle against oppression, if it is to be successful, must be waged by a unified working class led by a thoroughly proletarianized democratic centralist party with a revolutionary program. The struggle cannot be successfully waged by a divided working class led by many vanguards with non-class programs. The aim of the vanguard must be to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat over all other classes through smashing the bourgeois state. There is no other way. No oppressed group will achieve emancipation outside the successful struggle of the working class.

1 University Ave. NE  
Mpls., Mn. 55413  
Oct. 26, 1972

Barry Shepard  
SWP N.O.

Barry,

Enclosed is a short report on the resignations of the five members of the Leninist Faction in the Twin Cities Branch.

As indicated in the report, we expect further information on the split to be forthcoming. As we receive it, you will be informed.

Comradely,

Greg Guckenburg  
Twin Cities Branch Organizer

#### ON THE RESIGNATION OF THE LENINIST FACTION FROM THE SWP TWIN CITIES BRANCH

The five members of the Leninist Faction in the Twin Cities branch, Fred Ferguson, Carole Ferguson, Earl Balfour, Vivian Balfour and Steve Stewart, informed me of their resignation from the party twenty minutes before the branch meeting on Wednesday, October 25.

Four of the five comrades came to a meeting originally set up between Fred Ferguson and myself to discuss the question of active participation in party activities by members of the faction. Although Carole Ferguson was not present, I was assured that she was also leaving the SWP.

Fred Ferguson, speaking for the group, said there were two reasons for their action.

1. The party allowed no democracy and no freedom of discussion except during the 90 day pre-convention discussion and was effectively preventing them from airing their views.

2. They stated that the party was petty-bourgeois in composition and that if the party were attracting workers to it they would not be leaving. That the political level had gone down correspondingly with the influx of YSA members into the party over the past several years.

There were no indications that they were joining an opposition political organization or were setting one up.

Steve Stewart and Kathleen Stewart, not a member of the faction but very close to them, are members of the YSA. They were not asked about their membership in the YSA, but the YSA was in the process of dropping them from membership because of inactivity. If nothing changes over the next week in terms of their activity in the YSA, the YSA leadership intends to drop them.

Fred indicated that they would have a statement on their resignation shortly.

They desired not to make a statement at the branch meeting because they didn't want to "disrupt the branch."

The branch voted to accept their resignation at the branch meeting of Wednesday, Oct. 25.

Greg Guckenburg  
Oct. 26, 1972

P.S. Kathleen is still a member of the party.

Entering or maintaining an existence in a reformist group is, for the revolutionary organization, a tactical question the answer to which must be based on a sober analysis of many complex factors, including not just the program of the reformist organization but its traditions, political direction (including the nature of other political groupings within), the regime, both national and international, social composition, organizational norms, and more. Before deciding to sever relations with the Socialist Workers Party we considered all these factors but two were decisive. These were democratic centralism and social composition.

Democratic Centralism. The first thing any Marxist revolutionary wants to do with his program is to explain it, teach it, and recruit to it. This is a formal-legal impossibility in the SWP. Whatever propagandizing the Leninist Faction has been able to do, it has had to do knowing that if caught--caught talking politics to the ranks of the party--the party leadership would have it expelled. Aside from the few we have been able to reach, the ranks of the SWP must of necessity know the Leninist Faction only through rumors and hearsay. To our knowledge the SWP hierarchy has not informed the membership of the political nature of the Leninist Faction. This could have been easily accomplished by printing and circulating our documents or, at the very least, printing and circulating our statement of faction sent to the National Office last spring.

The objective fact of the matter is that there is an organized group within the SWP which has political differences on everything from democratic centralism to the antiwar movement, a group which designates the SWP as reformist, and the SWP leadership has not even told the party ranks that the group exists, let alone inform the party membership as to the nature of the groups politics. This could not have happened in the party of Lenin. This is a mockery of Leninism. This is not democratic centralism, but bureaucratic centralism.

In considering whether or not we should stay in the SWP, the Leninist Faction has had to ask itself what are its prospects of fighting for our program, taking our program to the rank and file of the party. The Leninist Faction submitted four major documents to the SWP, but these documents will not be printed for the party membership, to whom they are addressed. These documents are in the hands of a bureaucratic leadership which does not believe in the freedom to struggle for revolution program within the vanguard party. Based on this consideration alone, we would be better off outside the SWP if we intended to reach people inside the SWP. If we had had the channels available to us that exist in a democratic centralist organization, that would have inclined us more in the direction of staying in the SWP to fight to win the ranks to our program. In itself that would not have been decisive, but it would have been a factor.

Social composition. The inability to legally put forth and defend our ideas would have been something we might have temporarily endured if the composition of the party were sufficiently working class. In other words, if we could have reached a significantly large layer of workers through the limited effectiveness of the underground methods forced on us by the SWP, that would most certainly have delayed our resignation until

we had exhausted that possibility one way or another.

As it is, of course, there are no workers in the SWP worth speaking of nor any contact with the class except through the union bureaucrats the SWP so loves. Nor is it likely that the SWP will take its reformist program to the class in the near future.

The petty bourgeoisie who are in the party have been recruited to a non-class program. They do not and never have had any relationship to the class. As a result they are at best disinterested in the class and often exhibit hostility to the working class, whom they picture, often as not, as white mindless honkies.

Political composition of the ranks. Another factor the Leninist Faction would have considered, had it indeed been a factor, was the existence of large leftward moving groups within the party which we could have influenced. Such is not the case, however. We are not ruling out the possibility of future left-wing developments and splits. As long as the SWP poses as a revolutionary party there will be those on whom the dawn will come. But for the time being, the dissidents in the party are in disarray with no program and, unless they want to "violate party discipline" they have no way of developing a program. Unless they put the political question of developing a program ahead of the organizational question of staying in the party they will never develop a program. We say to the leftward leaning dissidents remaining within the party that unless you violate those oft-referred to party "norms" (as opposed to Leninist norms) and write and circulate documents, hold meetings, discussions and yes, even conventions (you cannot ratify a political program without one), you will never develop politically. Because the SWP party norms are expressly designed to make political development impossible.

Observing our apparent lack of activity some in the SWP have surmised that we were becoming demoralized and dropping away from politics. Nothing could be further from the truth. We have been very active in putting together a Leninist organization under difficult conditions. We have carried on a full scale discussion in the course of hammering out our program. We have had regional meetings, a convention, and in the process have produced and distributed internally over 60,000 pages of literature. At the same time we held regular business meetings and educationals. We scrutinized the politics of every political grouping in the Trotskyist spectrum, and most importantly, began the systematic, nationally directed task of industrial colonization. In addition we have established a periphery of contacts and recruited from it. This, without the advantage of one full or even part-time staff member is no small accomplishment, and is not the behavior of a demoralized group on its way out of politics.

We are undeniably small but have every reason for optimism. Our optimism is first of all based on the revolutionary potential of the working class. We have no desire to separate ourselves from the class while giving lip service to its revolutionary uniqueness. We are now and will continue to be a physical part of the class as well as aspiring to become its revolutionary leadership. The two are

inextricable. Opinions to the contrary, we have no intention of "turning our backs on the students." We will instead go to the students with a working class program and an organization firmly rooted in the class, not the other way around.

The Leninist Faction