

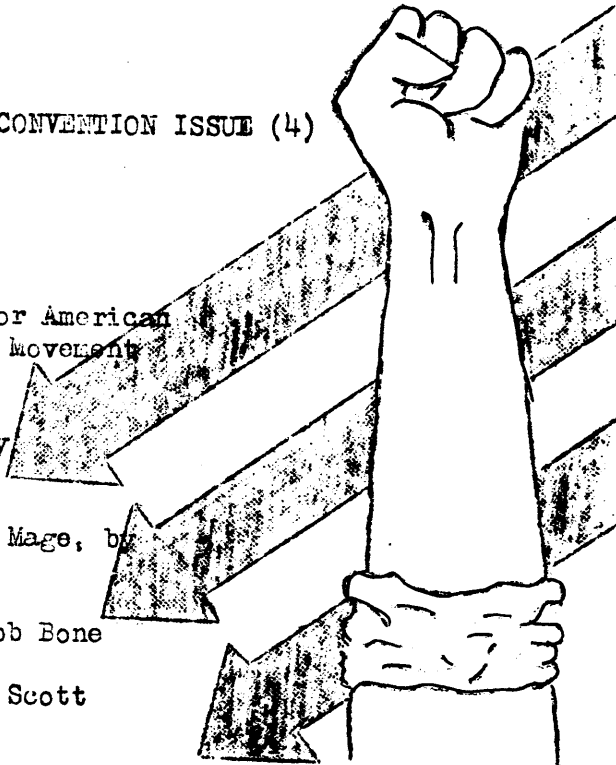
# YOUNG SOCIALIST

# REVIEW

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*Information And  
Discussion Bulletin*

*of*

*The YOUNG SOCIALIST LEAGUE*

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EDITORIAL NOTES

What the YSR is

The Young Socialist Review is the information and discussion bulletin of the Young Socialist League and is prepared by the Chicago unit of the YSL.

The aim of YSR is to constitute a forum for the expression of all points of view within the YSL and is open to all members. Contributions from non-members will be accepted if of sufficiently high interest.

Articles signed by individuals do not, of course, necessarily represent the views of the YSL; "official" material will be clearly labelled as such.

The YSR is published at least bi-monthly, or more often when there is sufficient copy. So, SEND COPY AS SOON AS IT IS READY to 1343 E. 50th Street, Chicago 15, Illinois. All copy must be typewritten, and should be stencilled if possible.

The circulation of YSR is not restricted to YSL members although it is issued primarily for members. For information write the editor of the national office.

This issue

Amazing! We have managed to get out an issue of reasonable length! However this was mostly an accident based on the fact that several very very long documents which we had been promised were lost at the very last moment and so we go to press without Part II of Comrade Shane's 3-part resolution and two long articles by the same. But Comrade Wohlforth, who was to send us the stencils, expresses his regrets at the delay, and we understand that some of these appear in the current Left Wing Bulletin, have been distributed separately, et al so that the delay need not hold up pre-convention discussion. The issue at hand contains 2 convention resolutions or amendments, an extensive article by Comrade Arden, a "third" view by a new contributor, NEC member Bob Bone, and finally an article on a related subject by Debbie Meier and ISL comrade Saul Berg.

The next issue (no. 5 of the pre-convention discussion issues) should appear "momentarily" as we have already been promised several long articles for the very immediate future. Therefore if you have an article you want to appear in the next issue it should be sent in VERY QUICKLY, and please ALSO, RETURN THE YSR QUESTIONNAIRE. So far we have had 3 returns---very inadequate sample!

I hope all have read the statement of YSR policy in dealing with future articles which was sent out with the last issue. In reply to two of the returned questionnaires let me state now that: (1) we do have a Chicago editorial board consisting of Comrades Bill, Scott, Ray and myself, and in case of any ticklish questions arising from this priority arrangement they will be consulted, (2) that all members of the Chicago unit have access to all incoming YSR material as well as to a up-to-date list of all articles and their present disposition, (3) that the editor has no time to correct even simple spelling and grammatical errors so contributors should try to clean their own copy, and (4) that we hope that after the convention we can put out a neater issue.

Finally, REMEMBER TO SAVE THESE PRE-CONVENTION ISSUES AS YOU WILL BE NEEDING THEM IN LESS THAN 8 WEEKS.

Debbie Meier, editor  
May 19, 1957

p.s. remember, make your articles short if you want us to stencil them!

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DRAFT RESOLUTION ON "PERSPECTIVES FOR AMERICAN SOCIALISM

by Shane Mage

III: The Socialist movement in the U.S.

(1) For the first time in decades the regroupment and unification of the dispersed groups of the American left has become the subject of serious discussion among socialists. This corresponds to a pressing need of the American socialist movement and to a radical change in the objective situation confronting socialists on a world scale.

(2) The American socialist movement today is composed of small propaganda groups, isolated from the main stream of the labor movement. This propaganda-group existence, this isolation, flow from the general objective conditions of American society in the present period. The working class passivity produced by the permanent war economy combined with the boom phase of the normal prosperity-depression cycle has dried up the natural arena for socialist political activity.

(3) A significant revival of the socialist movement in America can come about only as a result of a fundamental change in this objective situation. Until economic and social changes sufficient to bring about the general radicalization of the American working class have occurred, no organizational move can lead to the establishment of a mass party of socialism in the U.S., nor will American socialists be able to break out of their present isolated propaganda group existence.

(4) Nevertheless, within the limits of the present social and economic conditions of the U.S., the perennial disunity and fragmentation of the left exerts a very harmful influence. This disunity seriously hampers socialist propaganda and agitation. It restricts to a minimum the possibilities for growth open to American socialism at the present time. It is also an obstacle to a future break-through of American socialism from its present isolation.

(5) Unfortunate as the consequences of socialist disunity have been, the fragmentation of the past period has been absolutely necessary. At the time of the first imperialist world war the world working class movement was torn asunder by the split between reformism, opportunism, centrism, social-patriotism and all varieties of class-collaborationism on the one hand, and revolutionary Marxism on the other. Since that time this split has only deepened, despite (or rather, because of) the epochal defeats suffered by the international working class, and therefore by revolutionary socialism. The political victory of revolutionary socialism over social-democracy remains today the necessary precondition for successful proletarian revolution.

(6) Superimposed upon this fundamental division has been the influence of Stalinism, the counter-revolutionary product of the degeneration of the Russian revolution. The influence of Stalinism and Stalinist ideology has crippled and paralyzed the best, most revolutionary sections of the working class in every country, and has contributed in no small measure to the success of social democracy in its role as the chief prop of the decaying capitalist order.

(7) The great, fundamental change in the world objective conditions of today is the disintegration of Stalinism. The international working class is now well advanced toward throwing off the Stalinist incubus; through the overthrow

of the Stalinist bureaucracy in Eastern Europe and the collapse of its political instruments, the CPs of the "Western World."

(8) Stalinist ideology has, in the course of the last year, been reduced to a shambles and is rapidly losing its grip over elements, both intellectual and proletarian, hitherto held firmly in line. In America it is the crisis of Stalinism; the disorientation of the socialist groups formerly sympathetic to the Stalinist bureaucracy and the emergency within the Communist Party itself of tendencies in the direction of authentic socialism; that provides the context for socialist regroupment at the present time.

(9) The principal task of a regrouped socialist movement in the present period would be to carry on socialist propaganda and agitation inside the working class and among other potentially radical groups of the population. Another necessary function of a united American socialist movement would be to facilitate a free, open, and democratic discussion of all the issues before the American and international socialist movement, in which all the different tendencies within the socialist movement would participate.

(10) The necessary precondition for the creation of such a movement is the agreement of all the socialist tendencies that would compose it on the basic political program of the movement. This is especially obligatory in view of the fact that the American socialist movement cannot be expected to be anything other than a propaganda group in the immediate future. Any movement in these conditions will be defined politically by the type of propaganda it carries on, by its political program. Regroupment cannot result in a durable unity of socialist groups unless it is based on a common and agreed on set of political principles.

(11) American socialists can reach this sort of principled agreement only through a process of free discussion, of open confrontation of views. For this reason the YSL seeks to engage in discussion with all socialist tendencies on all the political issues of our times. We encourage the holding of as many forum-type discussions as possible, including as many divergent views as possible. Specifically, we welcome the formation of the American Socialist Forum, inspired by A.J. Muste. We feel that the ASF can help to provide a setup through which all the important discussion now being conducted within the radical movement can continue and be furthered.

(12) We believe that the political program of a united socialist movement should make a basic and incisive criticism of the most important aspects of the present social order in America. It should offer an attractive socialist alternative to American capitalism as well as to Russian stalinism. The type of political program we advocate for a united socialist movement is illustrated by the following points:

a) A united socialist movement must defend the civil liberties of all victims of the witch-hunt, and it should emphasize the democratic nature of the socialism it advocates.

b) This movement should be for a Labor Party as the necessary next step for the American labor movement, and it should oppose the two capitalist parties.

c) It should oppose the Stalinist bureaucracy in the name of socialism, and should support the Hungarian and Polish revolutions.

d) It should oppose the foreign policy of U.S. imperialism, and support the national liberation movements in colonial countries.

e) It should, of course, be the firmest ally of the Negro people in their struggle for full equality.

(13) A program of this sort is a necessity. These are the most important political questions in the world. The basic purpose of socialist organization is to

advocate socialist politics, and it is impossible to do this without taking a socialist political position on the decisive questions of current politics. At the same time, this socialist political position should be spelled out in terms general enough to allow tendencies with important disagreements on other issues to unite behind it.

(14) As a socialist youth organization, the YSL is primarily concerned with regroupment of socialist youth. We believe that the regroupment of socialist youth must follow the same general political and organizational lines as the general socialist regroupment in the "adult" field envisaged above. However, we recognize that the tempo of youth regroupment need not be the same as regroupment of the existing "adult" socialist organizations. A more or less prolonged period of discussion may well be required before the existing socialist organizations are able to unite. In the socialist youth field, on the other hand, there exists a unique factor which makes it possible to initiate, if not consummate, the process of regroupment before the "adult" organizations are able to unite. This unique factor is the existence of the YSL itself as the only nationwide socialist youth organization in existence in America today.

(15) In addition to its status as the only nationwide socialist youth organization the YSL has certain unique advantages which give it a chance to play a leading role in uniting American radical youth. It is an independent youth group, unaffiliated to any "adult" socialist organization. It conceives of itself as a "broad" group, and can include as members socialists holding many and varied views and can also include members of different "adult" socialist groups. Its program is quite consistent with the suggested 5 point program stated above.

(16) These characteristics; broadness, independence, socialist politics; are those that a united socialist youth organization should have. We do not consider independence from any organic ties to an "adult" organization to be a desirable characteristic for a socialist youth organization under all circumstances, and we believe that a united socialist youth organization should be affiliated to a similarly united "adult" group, under conditions of the widest autonomy. However, under current conditions, when unification of socialist youth is possible before a similar process can take place in the "adult" field, the independence of a united youth movement is a necessary precondition for including within it members of different socialist tendencies.

(17) The YSL possesses the necessary characteristics to serve as a center for the unification of radical youth in the U.S. The YSL therefore rejects all suggestions that it dissolve itself and that its members join some other organization which does not have these characteristics.

(18) Instead, the YSL offers itself as a center for socialist youth regroupment. We desire to unite with all existing radical youth groups who would be willing to discuss unity on the basis of the program stated above. The YSL also invites young members and sympathizers of all "adult" socialist groups to join it. This invitation specifically includes, but is not limited to, the SP-SDF, SWP, Liberatarian League, members and sympathizers of the former LYL, and sympathizers of the magazines American Socialist, Monthly Review, and Dissent.

(19) In all cases where regroupment is not immediately possible, the YSL nevertheless attempts to carry on the widest possible program of discussions and united actions with radical youth of all tendencies. Even if our differences with some group are too great to permit immediate unity, we still seek out all opportunities for common action on those issues which unite us with other radical youth: defense of civil liberties, support to the struggle of the Negro

people, etc. Open political discussion and joint activity can lay a sound basis for a future unity.

(20) In summary: the unification of American socialists into a single political organization would mark an enormous advance for the socialist movement if this unification can be carried out on a socialist political basis. We have suggested the main points of a political program which is broad enough to unite differing socialist tendencies, and at the same time implies a militant socialist position on the main issues of American and world politics. We call on all socialist groups to discuss the political basis of regroupment as widely as possible, and hope to see a united, broad, democratic, militant socialist organization emerge from this process of discussion.

(21) As our immediate perspective as a youth organization we hope to unite with all socialist youth on a basis of socialist politics, and guaranteeing members of all "adult" groups full equality and full freedom of internal and external political expression. We hope to make the unification of all socialist youth our contribution to the process of unification of all American socialists.

- End -

Editors note: This is Part III of a three part resolution. Part I on the International Context was in the last issue of YSR (April 30th). Part II will appear in the next issue of YSR. Part III incidentally also appeared in the last issue of the Left Wing Bulletin. We understand that Part II will or does appear in the current Left Wing Bulletin and has also been circulated privately. Unfortunately the editor of the LWB, who was to send YSR the stencils for Part II, along with the stencils for several other articles on the NAC majority resolutions by Comrade Mage, lost these stencils, thus making it impossible to include them in this issue. They will all appear in the next issue.

## A Resolution and A Few Comments

by Mike Harrington

### I

#### Proposed Convention Resolution

The perspective of the YSL on the question of socialist regroupment looks toward a lasting and firm socialist unity. We believe that the tradition of raids and splits is one of the worst consequences of the sectarian isolation and division of the American socialist movement, and we view the unity of the YSL, the ISL, the YPSL and the SP-SDF as a decisive repudiation of that tradition.

We are, of course, in favor of full, free and open discussion of differences within a regrouped socialist movement. But such debate, we believe, must take place within the context of a commitment to the basic notion of a broad, Debsian party. There must be a certain minimal agreement before we can have a fruitful and unsectarian disagreement.

This Convention therefore rejects the conditions of affiliation described by the Steering Committee of the Left Wing Caucus. (LWB 3, p 7)

We are opposed to projecting a unity which would be immediately confronted by a factional struggle on the question of unity itself.

Furthermore, we are for an affiliated youth organization. If an "independent" youth organization were possible (and we doubt it, feeling that a ny youth group must rely on aid from an adult grouping, both politically and materially), such an organization would become a center for raiding and permanent factional struggle. It would not be possible for it to become the basis of a healthy development of the socialist movement.

This Convention instructs the NAC, the NEC, and any negotiating committee set up for the purpose of negotiating unity, to implement the political principles set forth in this statement.

### II

#### Remarks on the Resolution

A brief comment on this motion is in order. It should be read as a post-script to my article on "Splitting the YSL."

The most recent proposal of the "Left Wing" is one more transparent effort to avoid responsibility for the clear and stated attitudes of the caucus. It apparently developed after comrade Wohlforth's votes on the question of YSL unity at the April 2 NAC. Lets review the facts briefly:

(1) Comrade Wohlforth, acting "officially", announced that the "Left Wing" is for settling all questions within the YSL, as long as the YSL remains "as it was founded, as a Third Camp independent youth organization," i.e. comrade Wohlforth is loyal...if his point of view wins.

(2) At the same time, comrade Wohlforth refused to vote in



favor of a motion committing all parties to "remain the YSL, or any successor organization to the YSL so designated by the League" (he moved to strike the underlined passage), i.e. comrade Wohlforth would go to a Convention, fight for a point of view, stay in the YSL if he were defeated - but refuse to be bound by the majority decision.

Comrade Wohlforth apparently understood how untenable his own position was. For the "Left Wing" Steering Committee has now published a statement pledging that it will remain in the YSL, even if unity goes through PROVIDING!!!

(a) that the YSL retain policy-making "independence", particularly with regard to the Third Camp;

(b) that it retains the right to disaffiliate, and tendencies calling for disaffiliation will be considered loyal;

(c) that members of various adult organizations can be in the united organization.

Now this, comrades, is a variant of the gambit already employed by comrade Wohlforth and the "Left Wing". Now they pledge, sincerely, to stay in the YSL through unity as long as...the majority abandons its most fundamental conceptions of unity. They will be committed, not by the majority motion, but by a fantastic motion of their own invention, calling for a semi-unity, perhaps and maybe.

Look at their conditions.

(a) Since the unified organization will probably be Third Camp (but why Tim and Shane, who are Cannonite in politics, worry about that, I don't know), this isn't too much of a dodge. Yet the word "independence", given the other two conditions, probably means that the comrades will stay in as long as unity isn't unity.

(b) The comrades of the majority project a firm, lasting unity of the socialist movement. Above all, we are committed to the notion that raids and splits are not on the agenda, that it would be better not to have unity if unity means further splits and raids. The minority "loyally" pledges to go along as long as they are not bound by the most minimal conditions of membership, i.e. they will join as a "disloyal" (Wohlforth's phrase at the recent N.Y. camp) minority fundamentally opposed to the very basis and perspective of the organization which they are "joining."

(c) This is a real blooper. The minority knows that we propose affiliation to a united SP-SDF and ISL. Presumably they know what affiliation means. They now promise to go along as long as...affiliation doesn't mean affiliation, as long as the youth can be a center for raids from all tendencies.

Should anyone propose unity with the SWP, I commit myself to go along, providing (a) that my tendency can break party discipline; (b) that my membership will be for the purpose of dissolving the SWP; (c) and that I can simultaneously belong to the ISL.

I repeat, the motion of the minority is a hoax and a fraud. It is one more attempt to define a tendency which is moving toward split as if it were moving toward unity by the simple expedient of defining unity as the transition to a split.

The direction of this statement is obvious. The comrades "promise" to go along "providing" that impossible conditions, dia-

metrically, opposed to the clear intention of the majority, are met. By doing this, they are attempting to create the impression that a "loyal" group is being forced out. But these comrades, by their very conditions, are voluntarily defining themselves out of unity. Since that is the fact, they might as well face it.

Some comrades of the minority have asked, "Will you unite if the SP-SDF demands that we are thrown out?" My answer is: I would refuse unity if a condition for it were the exclusion of any YSLer who agrees to the minimal membership rules set up by the majority of the YSL in negotiation with the SP-SDF, i.e. I will fight for the rights of anyone who is for the unity which is becoming a fact and wants to enter it as a loyal member. I would not lift a finger to fight for those who want to "unite" with full rights on a program of anti-unity, split and raid. That is, I am not for working to facilitate the entrance of a raiding party or a splitting tendency into a unity whose most fundamental basis is opposition to raids and splits.

The comrades of the minority still have answered the real question: is the minority, as a tendency, willing to be bound by the majority's perspective on unity when it wins at the Convention?

I do not need motions from the "Left Wing" Steering Committee to inform me that these comrades will go along with their own program. I assume that.

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## WOHLFORTH AMENDMENTS

Amendments Submitted by Tim Wohlforth to the draft resolution on "Perspectives for American Socialism, I, II and III" Submitted to the Left Wing Caucus, YSL, by Shane Mage.

### I. International Context

add, following paragraph 16, the following as paragraph 16a:

In the struggle between Egypt on the one side and the French, British and Israeli imperialist forces on the other, we socialists did not take a "neutral" or "third camp" stand. We stood with Egypt and for the defense of Egypt against imperialism. As a first step toward any sort of just peace in the Near East we stood and stand from the return to Egypt of all territory she possessed prior to the imperialist invasion—including Gaza and the nationalized Suez Canal. We opposed and still oppose any attempt to put Egyptian territory, including Gaza and the Suez Canal, under the control of American Imperialism through the guise of UN control or "internationalization."

### II. The Situation in the United States

add, following paragraph 30, the following as paragraph 30a:

When a "left" union like the UAW does adopt a progressive program and attempts to combat, or claims to attempt to combat the speedup in some manner it is due to the pressure from the rank and file and the existence of opposition, organized or unorganized, in the rank and file. Socialists, therefore, attempt to further this opposition and in the UAW, for example, find themselves not in Reuther's camp but in the camp of the militant opposition which they attempt to organize.

add, following paragraph 32, the following as paragraph 32a

Socialists, therefore, do not offer any support to the labor probe. We urge the labor movement to a man to resist this encroachment of the bourgeois government into the workingclass movement. We do not look to the bourgeois government to "clean" the unions. Neither do we expect the top labor bureaucracy will be able to do this. We look only to the rank and file unionists to carry out the all-important tasks of restoring democracy in the trade union movement: wiping out any accomodation of the bureaucracy to the bourgeoisie whether this is done legally as in the case with a Dubinsky or "illegally" as is the case with Beck; and making the trade unions decent instruments of class struggle.

### III. The Socialist Movement in the United States

add, following paragraph 17, the following paragraph 17a:

The YSL rejects out of hand the concept of "unity within the framework of the SP-SDF." The SP-SDF is a right wing social democratic sect whose politics are fundamentally the same as the State Department. These anti-socialist politics can not be the basis of any sound unity except for those who no longer consider their differences with the State Department to be important. Revolutionary socialists could not in any sense be loyal supporters of such a party and therefore do not offer to join it. Any unprincipled unity between the SP-SDF and

revolutionary socialists who will continue their struggle against American imperialism as well as Stalinism would lead immediately to a split and therefore would not lead to a real unity of militant socialist forces in this country.

add, following paragraph 13, the following paragraph 13a:

Within such a united socialist party it would be the role of revolutionary socialists to struggle for a consistent revolutionary program that would go considerably beyond the minimum program listed above. Revolutionaries feel, however, that such a political discussion can best be conducted within a broader socialist party which is based on enough common political agreement to permit common and principled action. We believe that such a united socialist movement would be more attractive to elements in the process of breaking from stalinism and would therefore be an important step in our overall task of re-establishing revolutionary forces for the building of a revolutionary party in this country and internationally.

###

## FOR A THIRD CAMP REGROUPMENT

By Bob Bone

An infallible symptom of the dissolution and decline of a socialist sect is an ever more imperative campaign on the part of its leaders to sell various "get-rich-quick" schemes of growth to the membership. It is in such a crisis that the Independent Socialist League finds itself today. And because we are the de facto if not the de jure youth section of the ISL, we find ourselves with no lack of youth leaders to advocate various Strike-It-Rich programs of their own. Two such proposals, which stand in obvious dialectical anti-thesis, are being dangled before the YSL today. I will discuss the antitheses first, because it is the easier to dispose of.

### On unity to the "left"

Shane and Tim are chasing phantoms in the direction of the Gates tendency. They are out on a Shnock hunt, beating the political bushes and calling "Here Gates, here Gates." When Foster drives Gates out of the underbrush, they stand ready with a bag labelled "AYS" to pick up their share of recruits. Big game hunters.

The trouble with this perspective is that the game is a little on the putrescent side. With rare exceptions, it has political trichinosis. For Stalinism is a disease which requires more than one fever to burn out of the blood. And more often than not the patient is killed by the cure. Here and there an individual makes a sound recovery, but group therapy is impossible. That's because total submission of the individual to the group is the essence of the disease. Stalinists have first of all to become individuals again.

### On bridges into the swamp

Every time I enter the dinosaur room in the local museum of natural history, I am reminded of my political past. There in the midst of the Mesozoic mud, hip-deep in the slime, stand scale-models of this once energetic species. Now extinct. On the wall a brass plate reads: "A large number have been found in America. They were terrestrial animals, though some, such as Iguanodon, frequented marshy ground. Some seem to have been carnivorous, others vegetarian." Comrades, I have met both types, and frankly, I prefer the crocodiles of Okefenokee.

It is into this noxious effluvium that the majority of the YSL--some with enthusiasm, some reluctantly--proposes that we plunge. To be sure, some comrades who can't abide the odor of marsh gas went to clean things up a little before they wade in. They want to know in advance about such things as (1) party democracy, (2) internal discussion, (3) youth autonomy. Well, I will give them an advance guarantee: in the face of an organized left-wing tendency the SP-SDF leadership will never accept the principle of proportional representation, will never activate Hammer & Tongs, will never tolerate a youth section which consistently adopts positions to its left.

These comrades are chasing a will-o'-the-wisp -- a phenomenon well known to the denizens of bogs. The phantom of easy growth which they pursue is expressed in a mysterious mathematical formula which holds that two plus two equals five. The SP, they argue, has tradition behind it. It can thus provide a bridge to the workingclass, and who is against the workingclass? It offers an opening to the right, and while we are not yet prepared to embrace the right,

we wouldn't object to a mild flirtation.

The trouble with this perspective is that the SP is not a bridge to anything-- not to the workingclass, not to the students, not to the Negro people, not even to the liberals and the ADA. It is just another dying sect. The beginning of sanity on the regroupment question is the recognition of a hard fact which every American socialist should repeat to himself each night before retiring: the party of Debs is dead.

### The crisis in the ISL

So much for the various hallucinations, chimeras, and visionary adventures which have been passing lately for sober politics among the uranium prospectors and would-be television stars of the YSL. Do my objections to the current unity proposals leave us without a perspective of any kind? Not at all. I have a modest proposal not without its own intrinsic difficulties, yet perhaps not without merit. But instead of beginning with the question, "What organization can we latch onto?", and proceeding to find political rationalizations for the move, I propose to discuss our politics, and in the light of these to raise the organizational question.

Hal Draper, in his excellent Forum article, raises the essential question: Is a Third Camp Marxist propaganda group viable today? I want to answer this question both with a yes and a no. In general Draper is correct when, quoting Marx, he spells out the historical justification for the existence of the ISL. In the absence of a labor party development, the small propaganda group has its role to play. Now then, since the Hungarian revolution is there more or less of a need, objectively speaking, for a third camp tendency in America? Secondly, is there more or less opportunity for such a group to grow?

In my opinion both the need and the opportunity are greater than ever before. On the one hand, in the face of the "democratic" phrasemongering of the Gates-ites (why can we see this for what it is in Yugoslavia and Poland, but not in our own front yard?) there is a greater need than ever to draw a sharp line between ourselves and the Stalinists, if only to prevent them from breaking out of their richly deserved isolation under the cover of a new popular frontism. This is the tragedy of Muste's ASF. On the other hand, the cold war is here to stay, and with it the imperative need to attack the permanent war economy and America's reactionary foreign policy with a free hand, that is, without blunting the edge of our criticism for the sake of unity with the SP-SDF. This is the tragedy of Shachtman's perspective.

Moreover, these moves of Muste's and of Shachtman's, each of which undermines the third camp tendency in its own way, come at a time when the chance of a modest growth was never so strong. Hungary has given flesh and bone and sinew to our "abstract" theories, as they have been called, about the capacity for the independent political action of the workingclass. Individuals who have travelled with Washington in the past are breaking with what Mills calls the military metaphysics, and individuals who have travelled with Moscow in the past are breaking with totalitarianism. So why in hell are we so eager to throw in the towel?

But now to turn to the negative side of my answer to Draper's question. Note that he asks, Is a Third Camp MARXIST propaganda group viable today? thus counterposing to Shachtman's perspective the alternative of "business as usual"--the ISL as it stands today. Now if one asks whether the ISL as presently constituted is capable of taking advantage of the present situation, the answer is

obviously not! The ISL is unable to recruit, as everyone knows. That is why it is in crisis, and why Shachtman's perspective was advanced in the first place. And in seeking a way out of this crisis, the ISLers, both majority and minority, have ignored the one solution which lies under their very nose: the pilot project called the YSL.

For there was a time not so very long ago when the old SYL was equally incapable of growth because of its overly narrow ideological base. Giving up its exclusively marxist character, but retaining its general third-camp orientation, the new organization proved capable of growth under much more difficult circumstances than we face today. If you understand why people like Shirley and myself can function enthusiastically in the YSL, and why we are reluctant on the other hand to join the ISL, you will grasp the difference in growth potential between the two organizations.

The problem then is to accomplish or at least initiate on the adult level a political amalgam of third-camp elements which has already proved successful in the youth field. The immediate problem of the YSL is to intervene constructively in the current debate in the ISL and to counter Shachtman's perspective with something more substantial than "business as usual." This, incidentally, is the essential tragedy of the present factional fight in the YSL. In reacting against the romantic adventurism of Shane and Tim, responsible comrades have stampeded toward the SP, thus abandoning in advance any chance of giving Draper and Haskell some solid support, and of working out with these comrades some sort of viable alternative.

#### The way out

What elements are available for a third camp regroupment on the adult level? A clue is provided, I believe by the present composition of the YSL. We have broadly speaking a Leninist-Trotskyite-tendency, a left social-democratic (Luxemburgist) tendency, and a radical pacifist tendency. Translated into adult terms, that means the ISL, the Howe group, and the Muste group. That is to say, La. Dissent, and Liberation. And this, I think, gives us a clue to the peculiar myopia, if not the utter blindness, of the ISL on the whole issue of socialist regroupment. For reasons of sectarian hostility well known to all, the ISL has proved unable so much as to utter that nasty word, Dissent. In all of its discussions of regroupment, the press of the ISL has maintained a thunderous silence concerning this segment of the political spectrum.

Yet curiously enough, if any unbiased observer of the American left were asked what hopeful signs had appeared during the last three or four years, where a spark of life, where some sign of new blood, he would have to reply: in the publication of Dissent, the formation of Dissent forums, etc. Meanwhile what has life in the sects been like? As everyone knows, pretty bleak until someone passed the word that regroupment was in the air. Well, how has regroupment fared? Or more concretely, how has the third camp tendency fared in the ferment of regroupment? Now, comrades, the answer is disastrously, is it not? Muste is off chasing phantoms in one direction, Shachtman in another, and our own organization is coming apart at the seams -- all the result of a nice, friendly, comradely discussion of regroupment. One more regroupment like this and we'll all be dead. Instead of socialist unity we are more likely to see a few new splinters never dreamed of in our wildest moments.

This is neither the time nor place to initiate a debate on the character and direction of Dissent. But I do want to make one or two points in order to strengthen the general nature of my case. In spite of predictions to the contrary,

Dissent has maintained a firm third-camp orientation, and is now in my opinion less in danger of capitulating to American imperialism than certain elements in the ISL. On the decisive issues of Algeria and Hungary, who can complain of their line? And of course this line will be firmer than ever as a result of Hungary.

Yet not so long ago Max Martin stated to me in private conversation that he preferred even the SDF to the Dissent group! This I offer as an example of how subjective emotions can cause even solid political people, who pride themselves on being scientific socialists, to lose touch with reality. Today such emotions are not only a luxury which the ISL can ill afford, but a crime. Unless and until the ISL finds it possible to make some sort of friendly overtures to Howe, I for one cannot take its professions of "dead sectarianism" very seriously. On the contrary, I can only conclude that it prefers extinction to the simple acknowledgement of what after all is a fact: the constructive socialist accomplishment of Dissent. This is not to admit that they were wrong in their controversy with Howe over the matter of socialist organization, but to admit that just as there is a Shachtman way, so there is a Howe way of being a useful socialist in America.

#### The immediate task

I do not mean to imply that the perspective which I have outlined offers any easy way out. Some factors involved in its adoption are subjective, and perhaps accessible to rational control; others depend on objective circumstances. In the first place there is the Maste group, the ASF. If my analysis is correct, the pacifists are in for a bitter experience there. Nevertheless I think we should enter the ASF, to argue for the perspective of a regroupment on the basis of a principled third camp program. We have in recent years had extremely cordial relations with the pacifists, and I would count on our mutual abhorrence of totalitarianism to win for us in competition with the Stalinoids.

A tougher nut to crack, but not yet so tough in my opinion as the SP-SDF is the Dissent group. What divides us from them is almost exclusively the organizational question, and I confidently predict that in this respect they will move slowly toward our position, that is, toward the need for stronger organizational ties in the coming period than a magazine alone can provide. My reasons are these: their organizational perspective flowed more from a mood of discouragement in a very difficult period than from any anti-organizational principle in their politics. As possibilities for growth emerge, the position based on despair will disappear. Already there are rumblings (which take the organizational form of the Dissent forums -- already one step from a magazine) as Dissentniks, especially those in contact with college students, ask "what can we give them to do?" In the long run, I believe this pressure for an organizational arena will prove irresistible, and precisely to the extent that Howe succeeds in attracting new elements to his magazine.

In conclusion I would like to point out one additional source of expansion for a third camp regroupment: individuals and even tendencies in the left wing of the SP. Obviously people like Sibley and others are restless, or they wouldn't be playing footsie with the ASF. How much more attractive might a third camp regroupment seem to them? In any case, lest I seem too intransigent on the SP-SDF, let me say that the perspective which I offer does not permanently rule out that possibility. If we can succeed in the direction of Maste and Dissent we can bargain with the SP-SDF from strength, and not from the miserable



~~dissolve-and-enter~~ perspective urged upon us by Shachtman.

Meanwhile, instead of casting about wildly for ways to abandon our traditional third camp politics, I suggest we see what can be done to implement them organizationally. The third camp slogan was a good one when the YSL was founded, and it is an even stronger one today. For a Third Camp Regroupment! Against liquidationism of the left or right!

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By Scott Arden

### How the "Unity Discussion Began...

Long before the last presidential election Comrade Shane developed an attitude on the questions involved and produced a document expressing his point of view.

He presented his views to the NAC (National Action Committee), of which he was then a member, at its meeting of Jan. 25th, 1956. The minutes of that meeting show that "A discussion was held on the Shane motion on political action..." and that it was "decided to have further discussion on the following week."

The "following week", on Feb. 1, 1956, Comrade Harrington moved, the minutes indicate, to "table indefinitely". At this point the Shane document begins to fade out of the NAC's minutes -- despite the fact that it was the only (correct me if I'm wrong) document any comrade had presented for the plenum then planned for Spring, 1956.... the plenum which, if my memory serves me correctly, was called off mainly because the "leadership" had not produced its planned documents.

In May, 1956, Joan Morris, then YSR (Young Socialist Review) Editor, sent out a national communication appealing for YSR copy, in which she states that a "Resolution on 1956 Elections For Plenum" by Shane will appear "in the next month" in YSR...

Since all members of the NAC were present at either the Jan 25th or Feb 1st meeting it is fair to assume, I think, that they were aware of Shane's point of view and that they, and others, had more than sufficient time to read his document since it was still kicking around the NO (National Office) at least as late as May.

One might assume, perhaps unfairly, that the "leading comrades" of the YSL NAC had more than sufficient time to weight Shane's ideas and (should they happen to disagree with them) present an alternative point of view to the League well before the elections -- which, after all, were not until the following Fall. Of course they may have been up to their ears in other "documents" from Jan to June but if this is so it is strange that a careful reading of the minutes of the NAC for that period indicates that the exact opposite was the case. If any of these "leading comrades" had a position opposed to Shane's it was kept a careful secret from the membership of the YSL for the better part of 1956.

A short time before the Plenum two things occurred. Shane's document, which was never published by the NO, fell into the convenient category "lost, strayed or stolen" and the NAC deigned to indicate that it held a different position on the election question.

Thus, at its meeting of "8-14-56", <sup>the NAC</sup> opposed the slogan "vote Socialist" for "any of the 3 socialist groups (SLP-SWP-SP)." Even this date, it should be noted, is deceptive since during this period the date printed on NAC minutes had little if any relation to the date (sometimes more than 2 months later) when the minutes were actually published and mailed out so that the membership of the YSL could learn what its "leadership" was thinging and doing.

In short, a couple of weeks before the Sept. Plenum (which according to the minutes of "8-14-56" would "avoid any major controversial issues") the units of the YSL were informed of the NAC's position on the Election Question.

That is, the majority document on this question was published so late as to absolutely preclude serious discussion followed by reasoned decision.

Further, their document was written and presented as though there were no controversial questions involved -- though the minutes of the NAC clearly establish that at least two NEC members (Shane-Tim) opposed the NAC Majority point of view.

Finally, and this is what concerns us now, their document on the elections carried a "rider"... Tacked on, but at the same time seemingly their main if not sole motivation, was the revelation that the NAC Majority favored unity of the YSL with the SP!

Let me make this clear. Now various comrades have a position on the question of Unity between the YSL and SP (now SP-SDF). At that time, however, no discussion whatsoever had taken place in the YSL on a national level. Not a document, not an article, not a footnote, not even a whisper! True, the minutes of the July 17th meeting of the NAC (a meeting from which Tim was absent) outlines a discussion of the NAC Majority's then new line on the SP... but this cannot be counted since the minutes were not mailed out until just before the Plenum and appeared after the discussion had opened.... opened, it must be understood, due to no fault of the NAC Majority.

This brief "history" should establish several points which only the most dishonest supporters of the present Majority would even attempt to deny. (A) Without a National discussion of any sort, and (B) without a single document explaining and supporting (much less even stating it, in more than passing terms) their position, and without (C) even the slightest advance notice that such a notion was batting around in their heads, the NAC Majority attempted to commit the YSL to a specific attitude on the question of unity and regroupment.

They attempted, that is, to pre-judge the whole issue of unity (hardly a non-controversial subject -- and remember, the Sept. Plenum was to avoid "major controversial subjects" -- by committing the YSL to the notion of unity with the SP-SDF at the Sept. Plenum. The discussion, if we were to have one at all, was to take place after the decision had been made... which as even our newest member knows is the logical and proper time for discussion.\*

The purpose of the above "history" is to demonstrate that the NAC Majority initiated the discussion on "unity" in a completely irresponsible fashion -- and very probably wanted to avoid the discussion entirely. Their irresponsibility in this regard has been a generally admitted fact even by their supporters and the desire to bypass discussion is substantiated even further by what has happened since.

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\* Without delving into "ancient history" exhaustively it should be remembered that the Convention which elected the present NAC-NEC was indicative of the same sort of "functioning". That is, the majority documents for that Convention were presented about a month before the Convention, in clear and open violation of the Provision which states that the major majority documents must be presented at least 3 months before the Convention. As a result of this delegates were elected, for the most part, on a "personal popularity" basis... a representative political division having been precluded -- or at the very least seriously hampered. The Martin Clique was heavily over-represented and proceeded to elect an NEC vastly over-weighted in its own favor -- rather than on the basis of the major differences then existing. While supporters of the current NAC-NEC Majority, the one elected by this "packed" Convention, will no doubt disagree with my contention that it was "un-representative" and "over-weighted", etc., they cannot disagree that it was "illegal" in that it violated the democratic safeguards established in the YSL Constitution, and that the handling of the pre-convention discussion (by the very comrades that were for the most part re-elected by the Convention in question) was not such as to assure maximum Convention representation of minority viewpoints.

Two more points before proceeding:

(1) The documentation for the above conclusions is brief only due to considerations of space. Should it be required I will be happy to provide a far more detailed documentation -- based for the most part on the NAC's own documents.

(2) Now that the Left-Wing Bulletin has made the Draper article on SP-SDF "Unity" generally available to YSLers at least one major footnote to the above "history" of the discussion is in order.

According to Comrade Draper the ISL PC (Political Committee) was considering the question of "unity" a long time prior to the opening of the discussion in the YSL... prior, indeed, to the events (Hungary, etc.) which opened the almost universal discussion of unity in the radical world as a whole.

The point is this: the last time I was on the NAC (not too many years ago) we had a member of the NAC sitting on the ISL's PC as a Fraternal Representative. One of the major functions of this "rep" was that of informing the NAC of those matters of interest to the YSL being discussed by the ISL PC.

Certainly any possibility of unity between the ISL and the SP-SDF would have an extremely far reaching effect on the YSL and any YSL "rep" at such a discussion would be under a serious obligation to inform the leading committees of his organization, the YSL NAC-NEC. Unless, of course, this "rep" could not function as a loyal member of the YSL due to a primary loyalty to another organization which conflicted with his operating in the YSL in an open and honest fashion.

But no need to guess. A few simple questions are obviously indicated... we can draw our conclusions when they are answered (or not answered). (A) Did the YSL have a "rep" at any of the meetings of the ISL PC where any aspect of "unity" with the SP-SDF (then SP) was discussed prior to the opening of the unity discussion in the YSL? If so (B), did this "rep" report on this to the NAC? If (C) "yes," why was this information not communicated to the NEC in the usual manner (?) and, if "no", why not?  
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### The Personality Mongers and their Ploy...

(subtitle: The Political Content of Bed-Wetting)

Before continuing one thing should be clear. The various claims of its various opponents to the contrary, the LWC (Left-Wing Caucus) is not "anti-unity".

If anyone in the YSL is against the regroupment and unification of left forces in the U.S. that comrade exists somewhere outside of the LWC.

There are very real and deep differences among socialists on "What sort of unity is possible and desirable?" and a host of related questions.

Such questions are more than "legitimate" when we consider what is at stake -- the very future of the organization most of us (Note, Comrade Harris, most of us, not just, or even especially, you.) have devoted a considerable amount of time and energy to building.

Unfortunately the indefensibly irresponsible manner in which the NAC introduced the discussion (see the first section of this article) has engendered an atmosphere charged with tension and hostility in which logical and fruitful discussion is difficult if not altogether impossible.

Rumour, slander, fancy and simple garden variety hysteria have too often served in lieu of political discussion. I won't suggest that all of the excesses in this regard are the exclusive property of the supporters of the NAC Majority but I do

think that any objective reader (which I am not), or even anyone who can add (which I can), after a careful study of the documents involved will be forced to the conclusion that relatively far fewer of the articles written by the "Majority" address themselves directly to the political questions in dispute than do those by members of the "Minority".

This has been "explained" by various supporters of the "Majority" as being due to the fact that they can only discuss serious questions among themselves, the "Independent Socialist Tendency" (which I guess we of the Left have been unofficially expelled from.), and not with their "disloyal" comrades of many years standing who happen to oppose entry into the SP-SDF.

This may explain why Comrade Martin, the National Secretary (and former National Chairman) of the YSL has maintained a remarkable silence on the Unity Question and seems content to leave the conduct of the discussion in less skilled hands.

It may also explain why Comrade Harrington, the National Chairman of the YSL (our political "leader"), can see fit only to attack the LMC on organizational grounds rather than to attempt a positive presentation of his views on the unity question.

It may, further, explain why most of the articulate leading YSL supporters of one variation or another of the Draper-Haskell position have yet to put forth their views in one single discussion article in opposition to the Shachtman position -- which we are told they are against. It's no excuse for their failure to perform this elementary and required (if we are to take their views seriously) task.... but it may be some sort of an explanation. \*

Whatever the "reasons" for the peculiar preference of most supporters of the NAC to avoid political discussion, and however guilty the Left has been of yielding to the hysterical tone established by the NAC supporters, one thing remains clear: The least defensible element in the whole discussion to date has been the personal attacks. These discredit those who stoop to use them.

Let me first explain what I mean. Socialists are for the most part people who are capable of speaking "strongly", and correctly so. That is, they normally can characterize their opponent's points of view in an unambiguous fashion. They sometimes amaze the "general public" by demonstrating that people who term their comrades "reformists", "sectarians", "opportunists", etc. (and by "etc" I mean other terms denoting a political criticism) can still remain in the same organization and work productively together.

This is quite different from personal attack. Let me illustrate. The Stalinist movement in the U.S. (and elsewhere) developed a lovely system of mingling the personal and political. In the "charges" against various individuals expelled from the CP for political reasons the "charge" of "homosexuality", I am told, was sometimes listed. That this "charge" related to the political reasons for expulsion in a somewhat obscure way did not matter. The "charge" aroused prejudice and animosity even when lacking in basis. Other such "charges" used by the Stalinist

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\* If it turns out that there is some secret discussion bulletin being published in which the YSL "Draperites" put forth their views to the "Shachtmanites" I will be only too glad to revise my attitude. Unless such is the case, and it is a trifle unlikely, the "Draperites" in the YSL are clearly guilty of suppressing their important political differences, concealing them from the membership, for the sole reason (an inexcusable reason) of achieving a dubious respectability in the eyes of the openly reformist element in the YSL. I say "sole reason" because I can't think of any possible alternative. Is there another reason, Walker? Arlon? JimB? Etc.????

movement are known to all of us.

Socialists have (or should have) a different attitude toward such matters. In an actual case of homosexuality, for example, should such ever be before us, it would be totally proper for comrades to privately communicate information concerning same to other comrades if such information had a bearing on the YSL or the activity of the comrade in question. In an extreme case, where "legality" or bad publicity seemed to be involved it might be deemed necessary to raise the question officially in the organization. This, under certain circumstances, would ~~be~~ be both reasonable and responsible. However, it would never be excusable to raise the question of this individual's personal deviation to discredit any political proposals he put forth, or supported, within the YSL.

I assume that this differentiation is not obscure. Political proposals or arguments should be dealt with, supported or opposed, on a political basis. Not "disposed of" by personally discrediting their opponents or proponents.

In this regard several of the supporters of the NAC majority have sunk to the lowest conceivable level of discussion and if their arguments have any merit it is obscured by their disgusting personal attacks.

Readers of the YSR are aware of a number of such "attacks"... the last three or so issues have been studded with them. I shall concern myself here with only two such attacks -- one which has not appeared in YSR (yet) but has been circulating "privately", another that I am by way of being a minor expert on.

The first is Comrade Worth. That his previous membership in the SWP should be "used against him" is vile. The comrade in question left the SWP when it pulled its "Chicago raid" on the YSL. That is, when the SWP withdrew its "people" (or attempted to do so) in such a way as to "hurt" the YSL, Worth stayed in the YSL and left the SWP -- thus discrediting the SWP. To now make snide remarks about his "former SWPism" is inexcusably low. Those who do so might well remember that Jimb and other supporters of the NAC Majority (including, note well, our venerable Comrade Harris) also can be "charged" with "former SWPism"... if this "charge" is relevant to the political issues before the YSL today.

The second case is that of the attack in YSR on one Scott Arden. Three parts.

1. Denitch's gratuitous "blows" can be warded off without effort. I suggest that he is unspecific precisely because he has nothing to specify. In answer to his "charge" I refer comrades to the minutes of the NAC for the first 6 months or so of its existence, the period during which I was YSL National Secretary. After reading these minutes, I believe, any comrade, whatever his criticisms of Scott, will disavow the notion that Scott has never been noted for his attempts to build the YSL (or whatever words Denitch used). It is a simple matter of documentary record open to any comrade interested in facts as opposed to fancies. (In passing it should be mentioned that Comrade Worth is at least as much a "leading comrade of the minority" in Chicago as I am... where Denitch hear me "boasting" otherwise I don't know.)

2. Comrade Debbie is another case. She is by no means "fuzzy" (to use a word beloved to her due to its quality of scientific precision) on the Scott Question. To her I am paranoid.\* If this is a medical designation it is not substantiated as such but that should not worry us... it doesn't worry her. Disagreement with

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\* It should be noted that Tim was also a "paranoid" -- until he became a "Cannonite"! It would seem that minority members of the NAC just possess a natural inclination to this particular malady. Shane is the only known immune to date.

Debbie has always been an evidence of "something" to her. It just figures. If you disagree with Debbie, as I have on numerous questions in the five or so years we've worked together in the socialist movement, prepare for a telling psychological insight or two.

As a concrete (and sole) example of my "disorder" she refers to my answer to her article on "Abstaining". Even if the article in question is, let us say, "incorrect" or "wrong" or just plain "bad-thinking" it is still impossible, I submit, to deduce from it that which Debbie "charges".

Perhaps some comrades have forgotten that at the last Convention several delegates abstained on voting for a "bureaucratic collectivist" analysis versus a "state-capitalist" position. Debbie, along with other "majority" supporters was outraged to learn that some of these abstentions were due to the fact that the comrades in question felt that they just did not know enough about the questions involved to vote one way or the other.

The implication then, and in the article I took her up on, was that you don't need to know anything, just vote with the right people regardless of whether or not you understand what's involved. I disagreed with her then and I disagree with her now. This is, I admit freely, a difference. But is it "paranoid" on my part to remember her previous attitude and relate it to her present position?

Fortunately, most of those trained in the field she presumes to pass judgements in require more substantial evidence. As stated, Debbie and I have a long history of differences. She once, to cite only one example, firmly believed that the sole hope of the YSL was to buy Comrade Denitch a white horse and refuse him nothing... the role of the rest of us was to be that of following the white horse with a broom and basket to collect and register the masses of new members. I favored a collective leadership, in opposition to her scheme, and fortunately the majority of the MAC vetoed her "plan" for "pulling the YSL out of its sectarian existence".

She wanted me to "get out" of the YSL at the time of that dispute (a few short months after the founding Convention)! Someone has kindly given her a new "plan" to "pull the YSL out of its sectarian existence" and we are back to where we started. Oppose her ideas? Get out!! Disagree with her? Insane!!

I don't mean to imply that Comrade Debbie isn't, emotionally speaking, the most stable person in the Chicago Unit... she may or may not be -- I'm content to leave her problems of this sort to those professionally equipped to handle them.

For our purposes it is only worth noting that I have found it possible to oppose Debbie, when I disagree with her, on a political basis, dealing with her ideas -- as opposed to publicly broadsiding "insights" into her emotional difficulties as answers to her political ideas. It is unfortunate that she finds it reasonable to give her personal hostilities political content... at least in her own mind.

3. Comrade Harris's personality mongering is of the same order -- if anything even more based on personal antipathy. We are now engaged in a factional situation so this gives him an excuse to climb out of his woodwork and air long-standing personal griefs. This article was delayed carefully to give him time to do so. Debbie and Denitch are pikers next to Don when it comes to "hate" politicking.

At the last Convention, during one session of which it was popular to air criticisms of Scott, Harris had a ball. He topped everyone by attacking me on the one point others avoided carefully... my articles in LABOR ACTION on the Negro Question during the previous year, which were favorably received by most comrades.

That is, Debbie to the contrary, I don't think I'm perfect and while I analysis the attack directed at me at the session of the Convention mentioned in terms of what motivated it Politically I still recognize that certain of the specific criticisms were justified. This was most true, of course, where personal animus was lacking. Harris was not involved in much but,

To the extent that Harris's attacks are ever political (i.e., answerable in political terms) they are so weak as to be barely worth a reply. He is far more comfortable when applying the "Method"... which he has mastered well. In case there are any would be imitators of Harris among the readers of this artilce let me briefly state the "Method" in outline terms. :If you are in opposition to someones ideas (and if you don't like the guy so much the better) don't restrict yourself to discrediting or distroying his ideas... Go whole hog! Destroy him, personally, and then no one will even bother to listen to his ideas.

How can one answer this sort of attack? I am "childish", an irrational leader-hater, my interest in political questions is doubtful, etc. I repeat, how can one answer this sort of attack? And, of course, if it remains unanswered then there is always the possibility of someone believing it.

Part #2 of this article (which will be ready for one of the next issues of YSR) will take up some of the more political arguements Harris raises and many questions posed by Harris and other opponents ("clean" and "dirty") are answered indirectly in the 3rd section of this installment. Since the only reply that would effectively answer the unanswerable parts of Harris's effort would be a two hundred page work citing dozens of articles, several hundred letters, and an assorted mass of minutes, resolutions, etc., I will restrain myself and only remind comrades (especially the newer ones) that they need not take anyone's word for anything... Much is just a simple matter of written record and over half of Harris's "points" are directly in contradiction to that written record. Check it for yourselves.

Enough on this. The three personality-mongers menti oned above stand exposed for what they are to anyone who takes the trouble to read their "articles". That these three are among the "hottest" for "getting rid of" (Expelling?) the LNC should be common knowledge... but this will be discussed in Part #2.

will

I hope the above section be sufficient and that in the future when some one raises a question or makes a point the answer won't so frequently be reducable to "You're a...." and that "personality" attacks will no longer be presented as though they had political meaning.

In conclusion, on this, let me make one thing very clear. That members of the Left have to date avoided the sort of "discussion" refered to above is to their credit. It would be completely erroneous to assume, however, that many leaders of the Right aren't at least as vulnerable to attack on such a level. The vulnerability is extensive and the attacks on us may be "bait" thrown out hoping we would reply in kind. Then we could have a fine discussion in YSR about who wets his bed, beats his wife, who stole which mimeo machine, or whatever -- in short, everything except the important political questions facing the YSL today, which the "leadership" would much rather not discuss at all, as several of them admit.

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SWPism and Unity (subtitle: "The Viper in Our Midst")...

In opening this section one small point must be made. This article is written by me (Scott Arden only, no Committee or Caucus or Sewing Circle, etc.). Views expressed may or may not be shared \*by others in the LNC. Such a statement is



required only because some of our less scrupulous opponents delight in assigning to the Left as a whole every view expressed by any individual member of the Left on any question up to, but not yet including, Bee-Keeping.

It may come as a distinct shock to those comrades who read what they want to see rather than what is written -- and to those who have not carefully followed the discussion -- but it is a plain unsanded, unvarnished, ordinary fact that Caucus members have common views on certain questions and vastly varying views on sixty other topics. Is there anyone who still doesn't understand this? If so I would suggest that such a person skip the section below since it will only confuse him.

First. I am for unity of the left, in the U.S. & elsewhere. At present I see no possibility of a "mass" socialist movement in the U.S. in the immediate period. I would be delighted to be proven wrong on this but it must be noted that no one has presented a serious argument demonstrating that the immediate period in the U.S. will be marked by massive working-class unrest, upheavals, etc.

I see, as does Shane and everyone else I know of, the next major progressive political development in the U.S. as the formation of some form of labor party. I look forward to functioning in such a party, as a socialist, but until then (barring only unforeseen developments which cannot now concern us) it is my view that the "sect" nature of socialist existence in the U.S. cannot be basically changed.

Let me make this clear. I am for the biggest, best, most influential and effective "sect" possible. I'm not for "narrow sects" versus "broad sects" or "weak sects" versus "strong sects", etc.

Politically? All I require is the minimal socialist basis. By "socialist" I mean, in this case, what is generally called revolutionary or proletarian socialism. Briefly, this includes all socialists of whatever particular bent who favor a fundamental transformation of both Stalinism and Capitalism, by the working-class primarily, and the creation (whatever the terminological differences) of worker's power internationally -- and recognize that this will not come about through any form of "gradual reform" or modification of the existing social orders.

This would include almost the entire memberships of the present YSL, ISL, SWP, and a large section of the SP-SDF Left, as well as elements now (or recently) in the CP, LYL, around such magazines as Dissent, Monthly Review, American Socialist, and others.

It would exclude (by its politics) Stalinists and Reformists -- and I would define, briefly, the latter category as applying to those who support the "West" or "Free World", however critically, internationally and/or support class collaboration domestically.) Of course all socialist organizations have and do include some members who are members by mistake and who really aren't socialists at all -- this would be even more true of a broader, healthier, more attractive "unified" organization. And nothing excluded groups as such which hold certain conscious differences as long as they are willing to operate in the context of a broad (perhaps YSL style) "discipline".

But is the above basis, loosely stated as it is, "too narrow"? Hardly. It is minimal to the extent that more minimal you can't be and still term the end product "socialist".

An organization of some sort could, it is true, be formed on a "more minimal" basis but then those who form it should be honest and call it a "liberal league" or "anti-monopoly coalition" or "anti-Stalinist coalition" or whatever is most appropriate to whatever it actually is.

At various times, in various countries, it has been essential that any group seriously contending for power include "socialist" in its title in one form or another. Even Hitler found this useful. This, however, is the U.S., year 1957, and no group should find it necessary to call itself that which its political position contradicts.

But back to the unity I'm for. The alternatives to a unity along the general lines stated above are several. Most likely are those which would seem developing at present... A "Stalinoid" regroupment on the one hand and a "Reformist" regroupment on the other.

While either or both of these may come into being in any event, the existence or non-existence of a socialist regroupment is crucial. In its absence many presently socialist will "adapt" themselves to one or the other pro-imperialist group ("anti-monopoly coalition" or "anti-Stalinist coalition"). Should a real socialist unity be achieved, however, it could, and in all likelihood would, recruit heavily from both the Stalinists and Reformists and would be in a strong position to attract the bulk of "new" socialists who in the past have gone for the most part to the Stalinists.

In any case it is absurd to imagine a "unity" which would have no program. The "unity" of the YSL and ISL into the SP-SDF would have a program... the program of the SP-SDF... which to Shachtman is not a bad idea at all -- and this is not a "slander" but rather an actually worked out part of his position!

Can the sort of unity I'm for be achieved? While nothing is for-sure it is at least as realistic as Shachtman's proposal. Though there is a great deal of hostility (a good part of it irrationally motivated) between some members of the ISL and SWP, the two main "adult" forces which would be involved, it is not so great that it cannot be overcome in the interest of that which we all (I hope) hold in common -- our revolutionary opposition to both Capitalism and Stalinism. This common ground we lack with the SP-SDF, and as to "hostility" there is about as much to overcome in one direction as the other.. and less political basis for so doing with the SP-SDF.

Just what are the "Cannonites"? Is the SWP the boogey-man collectively personified? Is it "objectively Stalinist?" (which I guess is something like calling the social-democracy "objectively fascist".)

In my view, (which I don't doubt differs from Shane, Tim, Martin, Harrington, etc.) the SWP is a revolutionary socialist "sect". with a position on the Russian Question which logically leads to "Pabloism" and other "Stalinoid" developments. Fortunately, however, the present SWP majority is not "logical" in regard to this position and as a result has maintained an essentially vigorous (with some inconsistencies) opposition to Stalinism.

Much more can be said. Differences exist on a number of other questions. The SWP's tactical approach to Stalinism is certainly open to question. As to the charge of "SLPism" ("DeLeonism"), it is not entirely without merit. That is, the SWP can become the new SLP... incapable of adapting itself to new conditions, dogmatic and inflexible, etc. Certain evidences of a tendency in this direction are known to all of us. Still other criticism can be leveled on the "Monolithic Party" theory and related matters involving internal party relations, "discipline", etc. All of this and more.

But, unless we hold to the view that the SWP is already "Stalinist" or incurably "sectarian", and must be written off without further discussion, then we must

(if we are not to be the "sectarians") not exclude from our unity perspective the largest single revolutionary socialist grouping in the U.S.

Comrades should not forget (while dreaming of the "hundreds" of new members that Santa Shachtman has promised them) that the present SWP, by a reasonable estimate, is at least equal to the YSL-ISL and SP-SDF combined, in terms of actual (i.e. the "book" membership of the SP-SDF -- which, to state matters mildly, is wildly exaggerated and has nothing in common with real membership) membership.

Can any of the above be read to mean that I'm "sympathic" to the SWP? Hmmm? I would suggest "No" but rather than attempt to argue the question in advance I'll content myself with stating some facts which might just be related.

I am in favor of recruiting comrades of the SWP away from the views they hold on the Russian Question and on other questions where I do not agree with them. It is a matter of record that I attempted to do so, with some small degree of success (as perhaps comrade JimB may still be willing to admit), when the SWP "invaded" the Chicago Unit several years ago. My position on this has not changed in any major sense. Comrades should note, however, that even then I did not attempt to recruit SWPers to "burocratic collectivism" (which may be what the "independent socialist tendency" is all about) but rather used "state-capitalism" as an alternative theory to the "Degenerated Worker's State" notion.

Needless to say I oppose socialists joining the SWP as it now stands... just as I oppose them joining the ISL as long as that organization's sole aim is the consummation of a "Republican marriage" with the SP-SDF and continues to adapt its political views to that end.

My disagreements with Shane are no secret to anyone, especially not to Shane, and the more perceptive readers of this article might note certain more than minor differences between my position and Tim's. Further, at any time that Shane, that devil, or anyone else, attempts to "capture" the YSL for the SWP (politically or organizationally) I will be only too happy to bloc with any comrades who share my opposition to such an attempt.

Clear enough? Is more required?

My attitude toward working with SWPers (actual type) is no secret and I've practiced it consistently. I will work with any comrade in the YSL in those areas where we have common agreement on important questions, unless I am convinced (Harrington being convinced isn't good enough for me) that the comrade in question is disloyal to the YSL. And by disloyal I mean to the YSL, organizationally, not to some so-called "independent socialist tendency" (which seems to have come to mean the specific views of the ISL on every question, and no matter how they change, in so far as they differ from other organizations -- including, logically, the YSL).

Concretely, this means "spys", "plants", "wreckers", "raiders", and assorted other fiends. As to Shane and Tim it is my opinion that they are none of these.

As to the "leadership" of the "Cannonite" Caucus and its "Cannonite" spokesmen, the present leadership is composed of a five man Steering Committee. Its members are Worth, Jim R, Scott, Shane and Tim -- with Tim as Secretary of the Steering Committee.

Is Tim, if I may anticipate a slander, Secretary because he is closer to the viewpoint of the SWP on certain questions than is the majority of the Committee? As far as I am concerned the exact opposite is closer to the truth. It remains a matter of recorded fact that Tim just happens to be living in the National Center,

and is the only member of the Left on the current MAC. In addition, of course, he just happens to be talented, energetic, and loyal to the YSL, despite his difference with the majority point of view. These latter points I just throw in for their educational value -- the first two, location and political post, -- are sufficient to make any other choice of Secretary unlikely.

Shane, like Tim, is articulate and writes constantly. Some of what he writes I agree with, some I disagree with -- some are Caucus documents, some are individual documents. Certainly no one would be so rash (not until all file copies of back issues of YSR are destroyed at least) as to deny that there is no other member of the YSL (not one) whose literary and theoretical output comes near to matching Shane's. It is possible to disagree with him on every question but the fact remains that he has established himself as the most serious theoretically inclined comrade the YSL has produced. No one denies that he belongs on the NEC, whatever his views (that NEC which has room for comrades who have not written one single article for YSR in all the time they've been in the YSL).

Despite the fact that both Tim and Shane clearly deserve their NEC seats far more than do many supporters of the present majority -- despite this fact -- it remains to be established that if the Caucus were given two seats (only) to fill on the NEC that the comrades in question would be the two chosen.

I mention this, in passing, because along with other "points" the vulnerable Comrade Harris makes their NEC membership a charge against the left -- a "proof" of our "Cannonism". The argument goes, I guess, something like this: Tim-Shane are those in the Caucus leadership closest to our "Canonism", they are the only two Caucus members on the NEC, this makes them the representatives of the Caucus on the NEC, therefore (conclusion): the LNC chooses "Cannonites" as its NEC representatives. The only trouble with this "proof" (which appears on page 20 of his opus) is that Shane-Tim were elected to the NEC at the last Convention, long before the LNC was formed, and are not responsible to the Caucus for their NEC seats. Harris knows this full well but since he can contrive to put this "charge" across "ambiguously" (i.e., in such a way that he can attempt to claim it didn't really say the only thing it could possibly mean) he slips it in with his other half-truths and inventions.

The point should be clear to the most backward cretin. When any Caucus member presents a point of view on a non-caucus matter he does so as an individual member of the YSL and Shane and Tim are the only two leading members of the Caucus on the present NEC precisely because they were elected to it by the supporters of the present NEC majority at the last Convention -- not because they were the two comrades singled out above all others by the LNC to sit for the LNC on the NEC,

Does this clear up any confusion? I assume that no one accuses Ed, Jim or myself of being "Cannonites" (Except, of course, "objectively" like "social-fascists"), yet we are all spokesmen of the LNC in exactly the same sense, and to the same degree, as are Shane and Tim.

One last point on "Cannonism". Denitch states that the Chicago members of the LNC have "also been active of late, suggesting SWP speakers for the YSL". Two things are involved here, the first of which can be disposed of with dispatch. This is the implication (and Debbie to the contrary its there) that the sole or main activity of LNC supporters in Chicago is SWP oriented. By any count we are at least as active as the other members of the YSL in Chicago in terms of general ordinary "non-unity" YSL work -- so this implication is as unfounded as it is snide.

More important is the question of "suggesting SWP speakers". Since I view the SWP as one of the main groups which should be involved in socialist unification I

am naturally in favor of breaking down irrational and artificial barriers to contact with the SWP. Other YSLers must, from my point of view, learn for themselves that SWPers are fellow socialists and not "monsters from the cess-pool of Stalinism". This is my reason for proposing, or voting for, an occasional SWP speaker. It should be noted that the LWC, neither nationally nor in Chicago, has a position on this -- we in Chicago acted strictly as individuals.

Never-the-less only two SWP speakers were proposed by LNC members in Chicago when Denitch made his charge. One was Vincent Dunn, described by the bourgeois press as "the man who made Minneapolis a Union Town", at a public campus meeting on the topic of the Teamster's Union, of which he formerly was an outstanding leader. Dunn gave his talk, did not give a recruiting speech for the SWP and did not attack the ISL or YSL. The viewpoint he presented was one with which members of the YSL could agree or disagree regardless of their position on SP-SDF "Unity". It was an interesting meeting and the YSL has sponsored speakers with whom it had far less in common.

The other SWPer was a member of the State-Capitalist, non-defensist (on the Russian Question) minority in the SWP. She debated an ISLer on the Role of the Party at an unpublicized meeting. The point of view she presented was the traditional Leninist view (whatever one may think of it) which otherwise would not have been expressed. Since the purpose of this meeting was educational, involving outside speakers, it was perfectly proper and was approved by the majority of the Chicago Unit -- as was the Dunn meeting. Note -- approved by the majority of the Chicago Unit, not "slipped over" by the LWC.

Thus for this "charge" of Denitch. I'm also in favor of including the SWP in such events as unity symposiums and united May Day celebrations. This last point arose when one of the leading (local and national) members of the Right opposed inviting the SWP to participate in sponsorship of a united May Day meeting along with the YSL, ISL, SP-SDF, Lib's, Bund, IWW, etc.

His main argument was "this is a democratic socialist May Day celebration and they don't belong." When it was suggested that the SWP was also "democratic socialist" and that this particular celebration, in any case, was a "radical", as opposed to "democratic socialist", May Day meeting, as the inclusion of the anarcho-syndicalist IWW (not "socialist" at all) made clear, he stubbornly maintained that the IWW was a "democratic socialist organization" and the SWP was not. Fortunately the comrade in question was voted down and the Chicago Unit went on record favoring a UNITED May Day Meeting.

I cite this case not primarily to give Denitch fuel for another distortion but because it is indicative of the ~~stupidity~~ stupidity, politically speaking, that flows from the position of the NAC-NEC Majority, and because it demonstrates that those comrades not in the Left but at the same time not fanatically committed to "Unity at all costs" are capable of casting their ballots in an intelligent and decisive manner.

The balance of power in the YSL rests in the hands of these comrades and so long as they persist, however inconsistently, in confounding the Right by casting their ballots in a reasoned and critical fashion this exhaustive discussion is well worth while.

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In conclusion of this somewhat long article I should like to take this occasion to report to you that the supporters of the NAC-NEC majority here in Chicago have formed a faction, meet, plan tactics, etc. In contrast to the manner in which the LWC has functioned this "faction" has yet to inform the unit, officially, of its very existence -- let alone its political basis, membership, who's allowed to join, etc.

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THE VANGUARD PARTY

By Saul Berg and Debbie Meier

The following article was written originally for FORUM (ISL discussion bulletin) and will, in only a very slightly altered form, appear there very shortly. However, since the issues it raises are of pertinence in the present YSL discussion we are also submitting it to YSR. Since this is the work of two authors (in actual fact it is based primarily on an article by Berg with "additions" by Meier) it has some of the defects of such a conglomeration. We hope it will stimulate the thoughts of some others along these lines....

It would be presumptuous for us to state that in this article we are presenting the views of the League. We have adopted in the past resolutions on the social democracy, resolutions on our Labor Party perspectives and on developments in the British Labor Party which, in our opinion, stem from the sort of attitude we express here. These resolutions and related discussions did not pretend to deal broadly with the whole concept of a vanguard. Nevertheless our guess is that what we are going to say is in general in accord with the current views of most of our members. Even most of those whose first reaction will be to disagree should stop to examine whether they are merely hanging on to traditional baggage that is in conflict with their own attitude toward present-day problems.

EARLY WP-SWP DIFFERENCES ON VANGUARD

Without a doubt the position of revolutionary socialists with regard to the vanguard party has undergone changes in the past 10-20 years. At the time of the split in the SWP, certain indications of these changes showed themselves. One difference, crucial in the early WP-SWP relations, was with regard to internal democracy within the party and the relationship between the party and the public. The Workers Party developed a position, quite different than the "orthodox Trotskyist" one, that it was a perversion of Leninism, or in other words of sound socialist practice, to exclude the public and therefore the working class also, from party discussions by holding them behind closed doors and presenting only the conclusions--the majority opinion and its analysis--openly. The WP held that since the task of a revolutionary vanguard was also to educate the working class, this meant that all the activities of the party should, if possible, be carried on where all could see and hear. That meant that members should have the right to defend their positions publicly prior to the "final" decision, and also to continue to argue publicly for their defeated position in order to attempt to change the party's position and to educate the working class in the process. In terms of action, the WP held, of course, that this did not affect the responsibility and obligation of all members, minority and majority, to implement the majority's decisions, and to differentiate oneself from the organization when one felt it necessary to put forth the minority's viewpoint.

To the SWP this was considered heresy--a breach of the basic conceptions of a vanguard. Such a vanguard, they held, could not lead the workers if it came before them in a divided intellectual and theoretical state, if all its members did not act and talk like a single unit, always putting forth the correct position as determined by the party as a whole in its internal, private discussions. A vanguard must through its press, its meetings and its members individually act at all times as a single body, functioning under the tightest discipline and most single-minded direction. It was only in this manner that they could hope to lead the workers, and only thus that they could, with their small numbers, combat the capitalists, they argued.

The differences between us and the SWP are even greater today however. For from this early break with traditional orthodoxy, the W P moved, gradually and not always with such conscious clarity, to break with other orthodoxies.

#### THE NEED FOR REVOLUTIONARY LEADERSHIP

In approaching the subject of a vanguard party, let it be clear that we are not denying that the working class, in order to take power, needs to be under the leadership of revolutionary socialists. As our views have altered we have never ignored the need for a party with a revolutionary program. There has to be made at some point a connection between the simplest strivings of the mass of the people and a conscious struggle for a fundamental change in the social order. "Conscious" obviously implies that the class has come under the leadership of people whose strategic aim is workers power, and workers power for the sake of achieving the abolition of exploitation.

#### THE HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION AS AN EXAMPLE

We are not arguing, in other words, for spontaneity. Amazing upheavals have taken place, it is true, that were unforeseen by the very elements that found themselves in the forefront of them. The Hungarian revolution was an example of this. It didn't spring from nowhere, but it came from what was intended merely as a protest open air rally. Nevertheless, if the Hungarian revolution had been able to develop free from Russian intervention, the successful consolidation of workers' power on a socialist basis would have depended on the conscious aims of a leadership whose socialist education came from two main sources: (1) among the student youth, the intellectuals and the CP rank and file from their practical lessons in the contradictions between life under the bureaucratic dictatorship and its stated aims and propaganda, (2) among a big section of the working class from its traditional attachment to the aims and methods of democratic socialism, reinforced and concretized by its experience of life under Stalinism. In short, if the Hungarian revolution was socialist in outlook this was the result not only of material factors but also of a lengthy educational process, which brought to the fore conscious democratic socialists who had evolved to their present state of consciousness from different backgrounds as the result of their experiences.

If Russian intervention had not taken place, political differentiation might have taken place in the workers councils and other organs of revolutionary power and the most advanced socialist elements in these councils would probably have organized nationally to further their aims. Such a revolutionary leadership could be called a vanguard, but it would have absolutely nothing in common with the idea that we held in the 1930's and through most of the 1940's as to the building of a vanguard party.

#### THE CONCEPT OF A VANGUARD

These ideas revolved around the basic concept that the revolutionary marxists (self-styled, of course!) should at all times function as a disciplined body guiding the masses and utilizing their experiences to educate them away from their reformist and Stalinist betrayers. Whether this involved a formally independent party could vary according to circumstances, but even when inside a reformist or centrist party, the revolutionary marxists would have their own binding discipline.

We should state at once that we are not against discipline; that is the bowing of a minority to a majority in order to be united in action. Simple examples of discipline that all socialists should consider necessary can be given. The execution of a strike by all the union members, once decided by their majority, is the

most obvious example. The necessity for unity of the vote of a Socialist parliamentary group and subjection of the parliamentary group to the will of the membership expressed in party conventions, should be easily seen.

These examples, however, are all examples of the use of discipline to unite the working class or its party against its class enemies. The idea of a disciplined vanguard operating as such over a rather lengthy period of time can only be justified if a clear line can be drawn between this vanguard and other political parties and tendencies in the working class; that is, if you can say, the members of the vanguard are trained, educated, experienced, qualified, scientific socialists--other tendencies are not; the members of the vanguard base themselves on the interests of the working class and are not transmission belts for alien class interests and ideologies--the other tendencies are all corrupted by these hostile class pressures to one extent or another.

#### THE BOLSHEVIKS AS A VANGUARD

Has such a situation ever existed and can it ever exist? The most common example given is, of course, the Bolshevik Party. The Bolshevik Party is, however, in most respects, a poor example to learn from for various reasons. To begin with its origins are altogether different from those of the Trotskyist sects or the presently existing American sects. At their very formation they represented a major tendency in intellectual and working class life. Outside of the Russian Social Democratic Party there was no other mass institution of working class allegiance. At the time of the Bolshevik-Menshevik split there were simply created two, instead of one, small, but equally influential tendencies which continued to compete, relatively equally, until the time of the Revolutions of 1917. Together they constituted, along with the SRs, the intellectual, and also the socialist and radical leadership of Russia. In other words, they were a real vanguard, acknowledged as such not by themselves but by their role and relationship to other forces in Russian society.

Besides this important distinction, and leaving aside also the interesting and not so easily answered question of just how closely even the Bolshevik Party comes to satisfying the requirements of a vanguard party (trained, scientific, consistent and steadfast in its devotion to the working class and its understanding of its needs in contrast to all other tendencies), we must immediately suspect an experience that has never been repeated in the 40 years of subsequent history.

#### THE COMMUNIST PARTIES OF THE '20s AS VANGUARDS

The Bolshevik Revolution and the years of mass butchery in the trenches of World War I had between them produced a mass Communist movement. This movement then degenerated as the regime in Russia degenerated. Our explanation for the degeneration of the Russian Revolution we still base fundamentally on the exhaustion of the Russian proletariat faced with the years of World War I, the civil war, the famine, the failure of the revolution to spread to more advanced industrial countries. No working class could fight off for many years in a primitive country the emergence of privileged strata under these circumstances.

But does this adequately explain the ease with which the rest of the Comintern went Stalinist? We know that the prestige of the Russian Communist leaders was naturally tremendous and the tendency to accept their ideological authority therefore strong. But, after all, the Russians didn't hold state power in France, Germany, Czechoslovakia and all the other countries with important Communist Parties. If their victory and the Stalinization of these parties could take place so easily



what does this tell us about the pretensions of these mass Communist parties of the 1920's to being the Marxist vanguard? We are not denying that these parties, before they were Stalinized, did actually represent the left wing of the European workers' movement, but this left wing was fundamentally as heterogeneous and confused ("unscientific" if you will) as it had been before the Russian Revolution. Where before the war, the left of the labor movement varied in strength from country to country, in some cases mainly anarchist or syndicalist, in other Marxist but with a tremendous variety of views on such subjects as parliamentarianism, spontaneity, economic analysis of capitalism and many other questions, now, after the war, the bulk of all these tendencies were captured for Leninism and Leninist views by the overwhelming impact of the victorious October Revolution.

What was fundamental to all these tendencies was that they were genuinely devoted to revolutionary proletarian interests, unlike the Social-Democratic leadership that had been the product of a gradual adaptation to the status quo of a comfortable parliamentary and trade union existence. But after the Russian Revolution all these tendencies adopted, superficially, all the political and organizational notions of the Bolshevik party without really understanding or sympathizing with them. Far from setting up a vanguard party, the devoted revolutionists of all varieties who built the Third International threw away the ideas and traditions that had been developed over many years in their own participation in the class struggle and became mechanical followers of what was supposed to be Leninism. Not having become Leninists out of a study of their own experiences, they became easy marks later in the 1920 's for whatever the Russian leadership of the Comintern told them.

In a way the famous 21 points required of any party wishing to join the Comintern show most conclusively how artificial was their programmatic unity. By making affiliation conditional upon acceptance of every single point, the Comintern was not actually keeping out reformists and centrists, but just those principled enough not to conceal their position! In France people like Cachin and Frossard, with a record of shameless opportunism, unblushingly accepted all 21 points. Were they demonstrating their revolutionary Marxist convictions, or their willingness to serve the Comintern if allowed to lead the French party?

If we will but recognize that valuable as Marxist theory is, most of it (certainly in its application) is still in the realm of theory in a field--the field of social science--that has not come anywhere near the point where it can really be called a science at all, in the sense of a science with exact, verifiable laws, then we should favor, as far healthier for the labor movement than anything that has existed since, the kind of "revolutionary pluralism" (plural tendencies, not plural parties) that existed throughout the European labor movement before World War I, in which the interplay of various types of left wing tendencies made it impossible really to think in terms of a disciplined vanguard.

#### THE VANGUARD VS. "REVOLUTIONARY PLURALISM" IN THE 1920's

This does not mean that, looking back at the crisis in the social democracy brought to a head by World War I, we are opposed to the splitting of the pro-war reformist parties and the establishment of revolutionary parties. As disgust with the war and enthusiasm for the Russian Revolution grew, confinement of mass revolutionary tendencies within the structure of parties whose leaders sat in the War Cabinets of the imperialist powers would have been absurd. The workers movement could not go back to the status quo of pre-1914. But on the other hand the free development of revolutionary parties after the war was distorted by the pressure for artificial acceptance of a centralized, disciplined international with a finished program.

## THE TROTSKYISTS AS A VANGUARD

In the 1930's, the Trotskyists, starting by considering themselves merely an expelled opposition tendency seeking readmission to and reform of the Comintern, within a few years set up the 4th International, on paper a disciplined world body (after a brief stay in the Social Democratic Parties to pick up some left-wingers.) It must be remembered that what the Trotskyist movement tried to do in the '30s was tried in an unprecedented situation. The Stalinist degeneration of the Comintern meant that the mass revolutionary wing of the socialist movement had been destroyed at the very time when world capitalism was in the throes of its deepest crisis. The Trotskyist concept was that, small as their cadres were, if they held up the banner of Marxism, tirelessly exposed the betrayals of the reformists and Stalinists in their daily application, and predicted the results of class collaboration and Stalinist zig-zags, when the illusions of the masses had been dispelled by experience they would come to the Fourth International.

Although their hopes were proven false, these revolutionary optimists of the '30s did have as justification, as mentioned above, the fact that they were confronted by an unprecedented situation. But for us today, there is a wealth of experience available and no excuse for making the same mistakes. Since 1929 we have witnessed a steady succession of social convulsions. The traditional workers parties in Western Europe were almost wiped out by a series of events: 1) capitulation to fascism by the movement in Germany, 2) defeat in civil wars in Austria and Spain, 3) disillusionment because of the failure of the Peoples Front in France, 4) the Hitler-Stalin Pact, 5) the conquest of most of Europe by the Nazis. Yet, when Europe emerged from World War II, was there any significant independent revolutionary international? No - everywhere the masses were swept into the ranks of the Social Democracy and the Stalinist parties. Despite the essentially correct predictions of the parties of the Fourth International (at least in comparison to any other organized tendency) during the 1930's, despite their discipline and unity, and despite the abysmal betrayals and failures of the social democrats and Stalinists, the Trotskyist parties picked up at most scores. They never established themselves as a major tendency in the working class. Thus was demonstrated for all but the blind to see the stubborn, conservative attachment of the workers to the traditional organizations, despite all their disillusioning experiences.

In describing these experiences we have referred to the "failure of the Peoples Front," the "disillusionment with social democracy," etc. Why not as well speak of the failure of the small revolutionary parties? Class collaboration propping up a rotten system, demoralized the workers movement. But, even if on a different scale, didn't the failure of the efforts of these opponents of the Peoples Front organized in the Fourth International also serve as a disillusioning experience to most of the limited number of people that participated in them? Perhaps the most damning refutations of any claim of the Trotskyist movement to have been the Marxist vanguard are two simple facts: (1) that never did a movement suffer from more splits, break offs, expulsions and defections of tendencies, and (2) there were more leaders of this movement who left it and embraced other ideas than was the case with any other tendency. You could examine the Trotskyist movement from 1930 to 1939, especially in Spain, France, Germany, Greece, Great Britain and the Netherlands and find overwhelming confirmation of this. We understand that the leadership of a sect is under tremendous pressure to conform, to go over to ideas and organizations that are more respectable and more powerful. But if the bulk of the leadership, one at a time, drifts away in this manner, can their sect realistically think of itself as fulfilling the role of a vanguard? And certainly it must recognize the demoralizing impact that has upon others who might be considering viewing it as a vanguard.

## THE ALL-INCLUSIVE TYPE PARTY

The conclusions we draw are simple enough. We favor the broadest interplay of ideas within the socialist movement. We favor participation in mass socialist parties not just for the purpose of a slow raid instead of a quick one, but until and unless masses of socialists demand a separation as an ineluctable reflection of directly counterposed positions held by reformists and revolutionaries in a period of social crisis. We favor functioning as an integral part of such parties, not "working in" them. We tend to discourage the idea of a well-organized revolutionary faction within broad socialist parties during "peaceful" times. In certain circumstances, e.g. when confronted by a bureaucratic leadership and the need for revolutionary action, a well-organized and disciplined left wing opposition might be required—but this is not at all the same thing as the traditional vanguard which develops itself and its cadres as an entity in order to leap into the breach in the future and distant crisis.

In Great Britain today, for example, the party of the Fourth International functions "within" the Labor Party, organized as a disciplined vanguard and cadre organization with its own decision-making bodies, etc. In other words, they are a separate entity engaged in a separate task—the building of a revolutionary vanguard party out of elements of the present Labor Party. Such an organization assumes a crystallization of firmly-held views on a variety of problems. One's views should be presented and defended, of course, but for the purpose of an exchange of views and for the purpose of constant effort at clarification as further experience unfolds, not as a campaign to win everyone else over to the only scientific Marxist view. For example, we would identify our views with those within the British Labor Party who consider themselves revolutionary socialists, third campers, etc.; who function as part of the vague "Begin tendency," publishing their own magazine, pressing their own views and trying to build a more consistent left wing with a sound program which can attempt to contest for leadership of the Labor Party on this basis, but which makes no boasts to representing the vanguard of the future socialist revolution, and which imposes no tendency discipline.

## THE POSITION OF REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALISTS

We repeat—the old concept of a vanguard, based on our conception of Bolshevik organizational theory—has proven inadequate. As socialists who recognize the advantage of not being weighted down by a conservative, sentimental attachment to traditional orthodoxies, it is time we recognize not only the truth of this in terms of current application, but in terms of its broader implications. We are not merely suggesting that in the U.S.—1957—in our primitive organizational state—the concept is irrelevant; rather we are suggesting that as a basic, generally applicable concept it is and was invalid. While recognizing the fallacy of this theory, it is not necessary to ignore the importance of organization, of discipline (correctly applied) and the possible need in crucial moments for a more tightly organized left wing to combat a bureaucratic right wing leadership, and of course, to combat the direct class enemy.

We are today a long way from facing either of these problems. Today our task is to build a force capable of aiding the working class in its necessary transformation from bourgeois to working class politics. In performing this task we continue to put forth our revolutionary politics, not only because of course we believe they are correct (!), but because it is precisely in this way that we can put ourselves in the best position to work for that vital change—from reformist to revolutionary politics. And also because our revolutionary politics help us to interpret the needs and demands of the workers today and to understand how to intervene and function in their present struggles.

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DRAFT RESOLUTION ON "PERSPECTIVES FOR AMERICAN SOCIALISM"

Submitted by Shane Mage

(Note: Part I of this resolution, "The International Context", was published in YSR, Vol. 4, No. 3. Part III, "The Socialist Movement in the U.S.", was published in the LEFT-WING BULLETIN, Vol. 1, No. 3. Part II, "The Situation in the United States", was submitted for publication in YSR, Vol. 4, No. 3, but it did not appear. Since we feel that this resolution should reach the membership as soon as possible to contribute to the pre-convention discussion, we are printing it here. The Left-Wing Caucus has not taken a position on this resolution.)

II. The Situation in the United States

1. The objective conditions which have faced American socialism for the last decade remain in force today. American capitalism remains prosperous. Full employment continues to exist, with rare local exceptions. The capitalist class is enormously self-confident in its unheard-of power at home and in the world. The labor movement is politically and socially quiescent, and on the defensive in the class struggle. Nevertheless, the economic and social forces pointing toward a qualitative transformation of the present objective situation are building up within the confines of the present prosperity.

The Economic Conjuncture

2. The enormous capitalist prosperity of the past decade has been nourished and sustained by four major factors: a continuing high level of military expenditures, a high rate of investment in new plant, large-scale housing construction, and large consumer expenditures, principally for durable goods.

3. The war economy continues to be a basic aspect of American capitalism. However, the level of military expenditures has been stabilized at slightly below Korean war levels, while the economy as a whole has continued to expand. Military expenditures are therefore becoming relatively less decisive as an economic factor. However, if these expenditures are to aid capitalist expansion they have to expand themselves, not contract relatively. War production today thus represents a floor beneath the economy, not a sustaining factor in the present prosperity, certainly not a dynamic factor for further economic expansion.

4. As in every capitalist boom, the dynamic force behind the present prosperity is capital investment, the production of the means of production. Over the past decade American capitalism has completely renewed its industrial plant, and is now embarking on the "second industrial revolution" of automation. As long as American capitalism can maintain its current rate of investment it will not have to face a major crisis.

5. The long term maintenance of a high rate of investment depends on two factors: the ability of capitalism to produce a sufficient quantity of surplus value to maintain a high level of investment, and its ability to realize the surplus value produced. In other words, the capital for investment must be provided either by present or past profits (reserves, bank loans), and there must be a market for the eventual product of the new industrial plant.

6. American capitalism has not yet used up the resources for expansion available to it. However, there are indications that the point of exhaustion is approaching. In 1956, despite the full employment and continued growth of the national income, not only did the rate of profit fall, but the mass of profit declined slightly. The threat of inflation and the related high interest rate both indicate a relative scarcity of investment capital. The chronic crisis of the farmers, retail merchants, and small business, as indicated by the decline in farm income and the increase in business failures, is another manifestation of the fall in the rate of profit. The super-profits necessary to the great monopolies can only be maintained at the expense of the small producers share in the global mass of surplus value.

7. Despite record high wages, the tremendous rate of consumption which has been an outstanding feature of this prosperity has only been maintained by a tremendous expansion of consumer credit. The installment plan represents a mortgage on future markets for present advantage. The outstanding consumer debt cannot be expanded indefinitely. At a certain point it becomes inflationary, i.e., represents a drain of capital resources away from production into consumption. However, any attempt to restrict this credit would immediately mean a sizable reduction in the market for consumer goods, with spiraling effect on the rest of the economy.

8. The nature of this process is shown in embryo by the present troubles of the housing industry. Like consumer goods in general, the production of homes has to a decisive extent been financed by credit, particularly by "GI loan." The recent increases in the interest rate were motivated by the pressing necessity for American capitalism to avoid inflation -- a necessity which all responsible spokesmen for the capitalists stress above all else. But the increase in the interest rate on GI loans and home loans in general had the effect of a sharp slash in consumer demand. The rate of housing starts has fallen off by 1/3, to well under the 1,000,000 mark.

9. An important incidental aspect of the "automation" boom is the reappearance of absolute unemployment, of a permanent reserve army of unemployed. This is most conspicuous in Detroit, where 100,000 former auto workers were unemployed even though auto production was at capacity levels. The spread of automation will reproduce this situation in many places. It can be expected to have a double economic effect: as in all instances of technical progress involving a radical change in the organic composition of capital, the reduction of the industrial working force will involve a diminished base for the production of surplus value, resulting in an intensification of the present tendency toward decrease in the rate of profit; more immediately, the existence of a reserve army of unemployed will narrow the consumer goods market both absolutely and relatively, because the unemployed will have much less to spend and at the same time will exert a depressing influence upon wages. The social effects of this phenomenon are obvious -- it will place a strong pressure upon the employed working class to fight for radical measures, and at the same time threaten to create a mass base for a fascistic movement if the proletariat fails to give important assistance to the unemployed, all this even within the context of a "prosperity"!

10. Another important factor in the present boom is the position of U.S. capitalism as the dominating force on a diminished capitalist world market. This has had its share in maintaining U.S. prosperity in the post-war period, but under conditions of incipient crisis it could become a negative factor.

Already the U.S. is facing serious competition from the rebuilt capitalist economies of Western Europe and Japan. Should the shaky economic systems of these countries approach collapse it would mean serious economic difficulties for world-oriented American capitalism.

11. Thus all the "classical" tendencies toward capitalist crisis are in full operation at the very height of the current boom. It is, of course, impossible to predict the exact date of the onset of a crisis, nor its depth and scope. It is nevertheless true that a crisis is inevitable, and that the longer it is delayed by various artificial inflationary expedients the more "hair curling" it will be, as Secretary Eumphries has remarked.

12. It is completely false to think that the "Permanent War Economy" represents a formula by which capitalism can escape the boom and bust cycle. All that military expenditures will do in the event of crisis is to provide a floor under employment, which would prevent the existence of unemployment on relatively as large a scale as in the 30s. Even this "blessing" would be secured only at a frightful cost in inflationary tendencies.

13. The War Economy will above all mitigate none of the social and political consequences of capitalist crisis. The American economy, the American workers, the American people as a whole, the American role in the capitalist world, are all geared to relative full employment. The emergence of mass unemployment would not have to reach the relative levels of the 30s in order to pose the choice of socialism or fascism to the capitalist class, and to the proletariat as well.

14. It is probable that the full-blown capitalist crisis will be preceded by very serious economic tensions. This is particularly true if the capitalists react to the beginning of a recession by an intensification of inflation. In such a case the working class would be immediately menaced by a sizable decline in living standards. In that event an epoch of radicalization and stormy social struggles could open well before the capitalist crisis had assumed its classical form. The "harmony" of today's prosperity covers over the explosion which seethes below its surface.

#### The Political Scene

15. American politics in the year 1957 presents a picture of complete stagnation. The two capitalist parties have as complete monopoly on political life as they have ever had. The differences between them have faded beyond the vanishing point, so that it has become a commonplace of what passes for political thought in America that the real difference is not between Democrats and Republicans but between "liberals", Democrat and Republican, and "conservatives" in both parties.

16. The tradition of "liberalism" in particular has long since become completely meaningless. The liberals of today represent neither social protest nor civil libertarianism of any sort. The New Dealers never were a positive force for social change or in defense of civil liberties; the New Deal represented a concession by American capitalism to working class pressure and an adaptation to changed historical circumstances. Since the beginning of the war, not a single new piece of socially progressive legislation has been enacted. Since the same time, starting with the Minneapolis

trial, the liberals have been in the vanguard of witch-hunting and police state actions. Today the "liberals" of the Democratic Party are virtually indistinguishable from the sophisticated big business Republicans. The result is the phenomenon of "New", "Modern", "Liberal" Republicanism. In proportion as the liberals have adapted themselves to the needs of big business, the direct spokesmen for capital have adopted the "liberal rhetoric."

17. The political role of the organized working class has been that of spear-carrier for the heroes of the Fair Deal. Consequently, the political influence of the labor movement has fallen to an all-time low. Labor is incapable of putting through a single one of its minimal demands for progressive legislation. Labor is without political defense against the attacks of the most militant reactionary sections of American capitalism, as shown by the current "rackets probe." The campaign for "Right to Work" laws has broken through in the industrialized state of Indiana, and is spreading.

18. If labor is to become an effective force politically it must do in the political field what it has done in the industrial: present itself as an organized and independent class force. That is why for two decades the central point in the socialist program for the labor movement has been the formation of a labor party. The first step toward the rejuvenation of American politics must be the break of the labor movement with all varieties of capitalist politicians, and most particularly the "liberal" variety, and the establishment of the independent class party of American labor.

19. Only in one sphere of American life does there exist a strong and radical movement for progressive social change. This is the awakened mass movement of the Negro people for full social and political equality. It is symbolized most dramatically by heroic actions like the Montgomery and Tallahassee bus boycotts, and by even more heroic struggles for school integration and voting rights throughout the South, in the face of organized physical and economic terrorism. On a deeper level, it represents a new consciousness in the broad masses of the Negro people of the possibility of successful struggle under present conditions, and relying upon their own resources. It represents the tendency of the Negro people to create their own organizations of struggle, often thru the channel of the NAACP, but also in entirely new and original forms like the "mass meetings" of Montgomery.

20. At every stage of the Negro struggle, it comes up against the political domination of white-supremacist capitalism. The industrial and agricultural capitalists of the South require Jim Crow in order to divide the white and Negro workers and farmers. Thus they perpetuate often miserable and always substandard wages and working conditions for all the southern workers, of town and country, of both races. The political representatives of southern capitalism, in Washington as on the local level, are both the most rabid white-supremacists and the worst enemies of the labor movement. Northern capitalism requires the alliance with the Southern racists against labor, and is absolutely unwilling to disrupt this alliance by doing anything to help the Negroes beyond what is extorted from it by the pressure of the colonial revolution.

21. The destruction of Jim Crow requires the destruction of the open-shop system of the South. Both require the destruction of the political supremacy of southern capitalism. Here also, the creation of an independent labor party is the indispensable first step, indissolubly linked with an all-out class struggle

campaign to unionize the South. In this sense, the Negro struggle of today represents the vanguard struggle of American labor. The failure of the official labor leadership to give the Negro people more than platonic sympathy, and their knifing the Negro struggle in the back by their political alliance with the Southern racists (through the intermediary of the "liberal" Democrats) represent a direct betrayal of the immediate needs as well as the higher interests of the labor movement.

22. The need for independent political action is even more pressing for the Negro people than for the labor movement. By supporting the Democrats, the Negroes join hands with the Eastlands. Eisenhower and the Republicans have proven their unwillingness to give the slightest aid to the freedom fighters of the South. The next step for the Negro struggle is to enter the political arena in the great Northern cities even in advance of the labor movement. By breaking drastically with both capitalist parties the Northern Negroes would give the most effective possible aid to their embattled brothers in the South. In addition, a mass breakout from the two-party system by American Negroes would represent an enormous and irreversible step toward a labor party. Encouragement of such a breakout should be a central aspect of socialist electoral activity in the next period. Where the struggle has reached the level at which there is an independent Negro candidate on the ballot, socialists should give all-out support to such a candidate. Where the leadership of the Negro movement has not gone this far, socialists should, wherever possible, run their own campaign, offering themselves as a center for Negro protest against white supremacy and the two party system.

#### The American Labor Movement

23. The labor movement is potentially the greatest organized force in American social life. The merger of the AFL and CIO produced a united movement 15,000,000 strong, dominating all the key centers of the industrial life of the U.S. The merger strengthened the labor movement, or at least removed old divisions and disputes that had weakened it. Yet, in the period since the merger, American labor has been continually on the defensive. No new groups of workers have been unionized, no great social advances have been made, important strikes have been lost. The capitalists have taken advantage of labor's political impotence to pass anti-labor laws and to strike at the labor movement at its weakest point, the issue of corruption.

24. The actual weakness of labor, contrasted to its potential strength, is a result of the domination of the labor movement by a stratum of privileged bureaucrats. This phenomenon is a universal characteristic of the labor movement under imperialist capitalism. It has reached its highest point in the American labor movement. This is so because the world predominance of U.S. imperialism and the unexampled prosperity of the past decade have enabled U.S. capitalism to "bribe" enormous sections of the working class. The rising standard of living has made the big majority of American workers relatively contented with the system and their place within it. A labor movement virtually devoid of radicalism, interested only in immediate economic gains and not compelled to engage in militant struggle for most of those gains, has been the ideal culture medium for the growth of a swollen bureaucracy.

25. Every union, virtually without exception, is marked by this self-sustaining bureaucratic apparatus, controlling all positions from President of the International to organizer or business agent. In virtually no union does the rank and file have a controlling voice in the selection of its officers; the



apparatus decides, by its sheer weight or, when necessary, by force and fraud, Members of the bureaucracy are generally drawn from the workers in the shop, but they universally enjoy better wages and immeasurably superior working conditions than the rank and file. The threat of being forced to return to the shop is a powerful cement binding the bureaucracy together under the control of its top leadership.

26. The labor bureaucracy plays a dual role. All its power and privileges are drawn from its institutional position within the union, and its control of the union. It must therefore preserve, and, in its fashion, seek to strengthen the union. It must also defend the immediate economic interests of the workers, in order to retain their allegiance and membership. In this sense the union leadership is the actual leadership of the class struggle in its concrete reality.

27. At the same time, the labor bureaucracy is a stratum whose privileged position and way of life have integrated it into the structure of American capitalism. Just like the labor leaders of most countries, the entire perspective of the American labor bureaucrats is one of reforming capitalism, of merely improving conditions within the confines of the capitalist system. Unlike the social-democrats of other countries, however, the American labor leaders defend the capitalist system openly and avowedly.

28. The basic principle of the labor bureaucrats is the principle of class collaboration. The union leaders consider themselves "industrial statesmen" on a par with the representatives of capitalism, and their slogan is "mutual trusteeship". As a result their function is not to promote the interests of the working class as against the capitalists, but to attempt to reconcile the two, to their own advantage. Thus they seek to avoid any militant rank and file action, to suppress "wildcat" strikes. In return, they receive the economic concessions made possible by the boom.

29. Politically, the description of the union bureaucrats as "labor lieutenants of capitalism" fits perfectly. The union leaders were responsible for permitting the extension of the witch-hunt into the factory. Most of them have, indeed, played a shamefully active role in purging union militants on charges of "Communism" and "subversion", in order to strengthen their own control of the unions as well as to assist the capitalists. The political equivalent of "mutual trusteeship" is the servitude of the labor movement to the "liberal" leaders of the Democratic Party.

30. The social role of the labor bureaucrats, in relation to the rank and file, is a conservative one. In a time when the working class is passive, at present, it might appear to some that the bureaucracy is "to the left" of the membership, because it stands above the membership and therefore has to deal directly with social issues using a "left" variety of the "liberal rhetoric." However, the moment a real struggle is undertaken, the bureaucracy appears in its true colors as a right wing force, holding back the workers. This is obviously true of the efforts of the labor leadership to confine the Negro struggle within the prison of the Democratic Party. It also appears each time the workers attempt to act spontaneously over any local issue of class struggle. Every struggle against speedup must first overcome the resistance of the bureaucracy of even so "left" a union as the UAW before it is possible even to begin to fight the companies.

31. The lines of differentiation within the labor movement between "new" and "old" style unionists, "industrial" and "craft" unionists are largely being overcome. The merger of the AFL and CIO, and the bloc of Meany and Reuther at the head of the united movement, symbolize this process. The main line of differentiation within the labor bureaucracy today seems to be the issue of corruption. The corrupt sections of the bureaucracy are clearly a liability to the union movement as a whole, and therefore to the honest bureaucrats, under the conditions of today. The anti-labor forces are cleverly exploiting this fact by attacking the labor movement first in its rotten section. The "clean" bureaucrats seem to be conceding important ground to the reactionary offensive. The AFL-CIO executive committee has already surrendered the principle that the Fifth Amendment implies no guilt. This can, in the future, do enormous harm to the union movement.

32. The basic class-collaborationist orientation of the labor leadership has led it to react to the McClellan committee investigations as a legitimate legislative inquiry into corruption, not as the anti-labor smear campaign it is. The corrupt elements in the labor movement must certainly be eliminated. But the labor movement runs a terrible risk if it allows itself to forget for a single moment that the most dangerous enemies of labor involved in the current investigation are not at all the Becks and Hoffas but the McClellans and Mundts, and even more, the men behind the McClellans. The labor movement cannot protect itself from the small devils by an alliance with Satan!

33. While it is impossible to find principled differences within the top leadership of the labor movement today, it is highly likely that under conditions of social stress such a differentiation will develop between "left" and "right" wing elements of the bureaucracy. This differentiation will follow the lines of radicalization of the working class base of the bureaucracy. The decisive fact is the change in the working class consciousness; the change in the bureaucratic tops will be a secondary manifestation of this change. A section of the bureaucracy that moves to the left will not by that fact cease to represent a block to the working class struggle. Rather, it will be preparing itself for the historical role of the labor bureaucracy in all countries, as the last prop, the last defender of the decaying capitalist social order.

34. Within the context of the present boom there are pressures at work upon the working class capable, under certain conditions, of bringing about a measure of radicalization and the beginning of a break with the labor bureaucracy. Foremost among these is the tendency toward technological unemployment stemming from automation, referred to earlier. Going along with this are the phenomena of the runaway shop and decentralization, both placing strong pressure on employment and on wages in the already industrialized areas. Also of great importance is the tendency toward increasing intensity of labor (speedup) by which capitalism, faced with the falling rate of profit and intense competition characteristic of the mature phase of the boom, seeks to increase the rate of exploitation.

35. These problems cannot be solved by the traditional methods of unionism, concerned primarily with questions of wages, hours, and working conditions; and those "traditional" type demands which can be of some use, like "30 for 40", represent a concession far beyond the willingness of the capitalists to pay, and would have to be fought for with the most militant methods. In essence, the workers can meet the problems posed by automation and speedup only by a struggle

for power, only by realizing the necessity for workers control over the productive process. The labor bureaucracy is of course incapable of posing the question in these terms. As it fails to solve the most important problems because of its class collaborationist policy, the workers who will have to pay the cost of this failure can be expected to look for some other solution than that offered by the bureaucracy.

36. There are at the present slight signs of a molecular process leading toward radicalization of the working class. Of particular significance in this regard are the recent "Dues Revolt" in the Steel Workers Union and the defeat of pro-Reuther slates in many recent elections in formerly pro-administration locals of the UAW. In no sense do these represent a present change in the working class consciousness. Whether or not the tendencies represented by them develop into such a change in the near future will be determined by the extent to which they are reinforced by the development of a recession, by the advance of the Negro struggle, by international socialist victories.

37. The creation of a labor party is not an immediate likelihood. The labor bureaucrats have no intention of breaking their alliance with the capitalist politicians, and the responsible leaders of capitalism have no intention of forcing them to such a break by an all-out attempt to smash the unions. The present stagnation of American politics is essentially satisfactory to the labor bureaucracy, because it allows them to enjoy their privileges with peace and a good measure of public esteem. It is more than satisfactory to big business, which is able to weaken and domesticate the unions while enjoying unchallengable political supremacy. The natural tendency of the labor bureaucracy is to "grow together" with big business and with the capitalist state. Tremendous social and economic changes will be required to drive them apart.

38. It is, of course, impossible to predict in advance the exact and detailed steps by which the labor party will be formed. It is sufficient to realize that it can be formed only under conditions in which the policy of class-collaboration has become an intolerable burden upon the labor movement. In such circumstances the spontaneous class struggle of the workers will continually tend to exceed the limits laid down by the labor bureaucracy, in the political as in the industrial field. The labor bureaucracy will certainly attempt to place itself at the head of a labor party development, and will probably succeed in this. It will be attempting at every stage to restrain the movement. The force pushing the labor bureaucracy to the left will be the actuality or the threat of rank and file opposition; the stronger is that opposition, the more radical will be the program of the labor party.

39. The role of socialists in this process is to be the firmest and most consistent opponents of both the capitalists and the labor bureaucrats. The socialist tendency within the working class must be prepared to take a leading role in the rank and file opposition to the union bureaucracy, and must be prepared to fight for the leadership of the left wing of a labor party on the basis of a clear and militant socialist political program. The ability and freedom of socialists to play this role in the future must be a guiding principle in the process of regroupment in the present.

Editors note: We are happy to be able to get this into this issue--it was sent to Chicago fortunately just before this issue was collated and thus we are able to include it at the last moment.