

**THE NEW
INTERNATIONAL
YOUTH
RADICALIZATION**

**young socialist
discussion bulletin**
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This draft resolution on the international radicalization of the new generation was written for the national Young Socialist convention to be held in Chicago at the University of Illinois (Circle Campus), November 30 - December 1, 1968. It was drafted by the National Executive Committee of the Young Socialist Alliance.

Similar resolutions and discussion articles will deal with other activities in which young socialists are involved. These initial draft resolutions along with any others submitted to the convention will be discussed and the general political perspectives outlined in them will be voted on.

The resolutions are being circulated prior to the convention to assure the fullest possible discussion on political perspectives and activities before the convention meets.

Young socialists from around the country are invited to participate in the written discussion and urged to attend the convention. Contributions to the discussion and inquiries should be sent to the Young Socialist Alliance, Box 471, Cooper Station, New York, New York 10003.

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL YOUTH RADICALIZATION

A new generation of revolutionary youth has begun to emerge on the world scene. In Vietnam, Prague, Paris, Mexico City, and Detroit the growing combativity and revolutionary attitudes of large segments of our generation have been proven.

In country after country youth in rebellion against the capitalist system are searching for an answer to the most serious challenge of our epoch: by what means can capitalism be eliminated and the way be opened for mankind to progress toward a socialist future of material abundance, social peace, and personal freedom?

The new wave of radicalization began to emerge more than a decade ago. At the root of this development were the problems and contradictions of the world capitalist system itself.

Our generation has come to political consciousness during the most intense period of social convulsion the world has ever known. We have lived through several of the most savage and brutal wars in man's history. Not a single year of our lives has passed without a major revolutionary upheaval somewhere in the world. Egypt, Lebanon, Guatemala, the Congo, Angola, Poland, Hungary, Indonesia, Vietnam, Cuba, Greece, France, and Czechoslovakia are only the high points of the list. As Lenin described it, ours is truly an epoch of imperialist wars, colonial uprisings and proletarian revolutions.

While the productive capacities of the advanced capitalist countries have gone through an explosive expansion in the last two decades, the world market for these goods has decreased. Successful revolutions in China, Cuba, North Korea, and North Vietnam have removed

vast areas of the globe and hundreds of millions of people from the sphere of imperialist exploitation. Continual explosions and uprisings in one colonial country after another have underscored the instability of the system and hindered an even greater expansion of capitalist investment.

In the context of steadily increasing competition between the major capitalist countries for a share of the shrinking world market, the contradictions of world imperialism have grown. For capitalism to survive, halting the advance of the colonial revolution and turning back the successful socialist revolution of the past five decades is not an option but a necessity.

Understanding full well that the U.S. is the main bulwark of world imperialism, the capitalist rulers of the U.S. have taken on the job of attempting to prevent any further encroachments on the already restricted world market. With the American government acting as world cop, every shiver in the colonial revolution has sharp repercussions in the United States.

These economic and political contradictions of imperialism have been the basic cause of the radicalization of our generation around the world. Growing numbers have come to reject the capitalist system as a whole and turn toward Marxism in search of an answer.

The University Explosions

This radicalization has been particularly extensive and deep-going amongst the students of the industrialized countries. Such youth are highly literate, have access to sources of information, and have time to study. Such factors have unquestionably increased

their sensitivity to the abuses of the capitalist system and they have abundant energy to put their ideas into action.

But a major supplementary factor in accelerating this radicalization among student youth has been the deep dissatisfaction with the educational system itself. This dissatisfaction stems from a rejection of the role of the educational system in capitalist society.

It acquires special importance because it is the avenue through which the general contradictions of the capitalist system touch larger and larger numbers of politically awakening youth directly, in their day to day life.

The tremendous expansion of the productive capacities of the advanced capitalist countries in recent years has been achieved through the development and introduction of highly complex tools and processes. This in turn has created the need for large numbers of highly trained technicians, engineers, and administrators. The old, narrow, elite system of bourgeois education is

no longer sufficient to meet the needs of the capitalist class, which has been obliged to support a large scale expansion in higher education facilities. This process has gone the furthest and fastest in the United States. In Europe the boom in the student population has not been provided for so rapidly, creating even greater social problems in most countries.

The attempt to "modernize" the educational system to meet the needs of the economic system, to streamline it for fast production, and to make it politically safe for the ruling class ideology, runs headlong into the aspirations and needs of students and faculty who are being radicalized by the world events around them, and more and more coming to reject the value system, the moral judgments and the political rationale which underlie the capitalist educational system. At the same time students have a greater social weight than ever before, due to 1) the size of the university population, 2) its high concentration in units larger than most major factories, and 3) the growing number of Afro-American and working class youth who are allowed into college.

All these contradictions and problems are mirrored most clearly in the facts and statistics which sum up California's higher educational system.

In California today more than 60% of all high school graduates go on to some form of higher education, either junior college, a four year college, or university. There are over 100,000 students registered in the nine state universities alone. More than half of California's state budget is devoted to education, and in 1963 the operating expenses for the University alone were close to half a billion dollars, with much less than one-third of those expenditures directly related to teaching. The university employed over 40,000 people.

At the same time this enormous business enterprise was closely run and controlled by the biggest monopoly interests in the state who maintain tight control over the Board of Regents. In 1964 thirteen of the 24 regents represented the four biggest banks; two oil companies; three aircraft manufacturers; two shipping lines; two airlines; a trucking line and two railways; two giant utilities; several chain stores; two publishing empires; half the food-packing industry; and the richest agricultural entrepreneurs.

While California is perhaps the most advanced of all the states in the development of an educational system



COLUMBIA STUDENTS OCCUPY UNIVERSITY



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fitted to the needs of big business today, several other states are fast catching up. With 1) an explosive world political situation, 2) a rapidly expanding and politicizing student population, and 3) control over the giant educational factories firmly in the hands of the biggest monied interests in the nation it is hardly surprising that such built-in contradictions have produced the large scale student explosions of recent years, and contributed to the further radicalization of thousands of youth.

Under these conditions it is not by chance that the universities have provided a political laboratory for the discussion and testing of all types of political ideas, theories, and programs of action. For instance, it has largely been the student youth who have promoted, led and organized the antiwar movement and the black power movement. Because students are playing an important role as a political vanguard, we can expect university conflicts to spill over, become popularized and generalized, and taken up by broader layers of society. As the events in France last May and June confirmed, not only can student struggles serve as a catalyst for action by other sections and classes of society, but revolutionary students can also play a certain role as a political vanguard helping to educate others who enter the struggles at a later date and for different reasons.

At the same time, it is important to be clear about the limits of the powers of student activists or the limits of change that can be accomplished in and through the educational system alone. Educational institutions from nursery school through post-doctoral studies programs are designed to play a necessary and vital role in capitalist society. As larger and larger numbers of students are coming to realize, "you can't change the university without changing the system," and by themselves students are not capable of taking power and changing the system.

Those who are seriously interested even in making the educational institutions conform to the needs of the students and teachers, rather than the needs of big business, must make the transition from "student power" consciousness to a socialist consciousness. They must join the revolutionary youth movement, join with other forces in the country who also want to change society and have the potential power to do so. This means helping to build a revolutionary party that can provide leadership for such a struggle. That is the difference between student power politics and socialist youth politics.

Differences East and West

While the basic international factors underlying the current student radicalization have produced many similarities in the movement from one country to another, there are also obvious differences. For example, while the Vietnam war has been the central issue in many countries over the last four years, there are very few countries where it has had the same immediacy and intensity as here in the United States, the aggressor nation. Similarly, student protests in Eastern Europe have much greater repercussions in Western Europe than they do in the United States where they often seem remote to American students.

Specific student grievances also vary considerably from one country to another. In Italy agitation has revolved around excessively large classes, an almost total lack of scholarships, insufficient teaching, staff absenteeism, and the arbitrary powers of the professors. In France, where Napoleon I laid down the lines of higher education, students have protested their lack of any say in the running of the universities, the inadequate facilities and archaic methods of instruction and the perversion of the university system which often fails to provide jobs for them.

In the United States the most frequent causes of protest are the impersonal educational process and wide gap between the students and professors; the stresses and strains engendered by pressures to meet the assigned requirements and secure passing grades; the irrelevancy of a fragmented curriculum which deadens incentives to learn; arbitrary administration which allows students no voice in deciding university operations or the kind of education they receive; the administration restrictions on the personal and political lives of the students; and the compliance of the university with the dictates of the capitalist ruling class, notably in its tieups with the government, military, and big business.

Such differences mean that the general political level of the student movement as well as the specific issues around which protests coalesce, vary from one country to another.

The issues around which students in the post-capitalist countries of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union are mobilizing stand in a separate category. In these countries which have already undergone a basic social transformation with the nationalization of all basic industry and the establishment of a planned economy, student protests are today directed against the political abuses of the bureaucratic layer control-

ling the economic, political, social, and cultural life of the country. Protests are directed against the absence of socialist democracy, the absence of control by the masses of workers over all spheres of public activity.

The protest movements within the workers states not only are anti-capitalist but pro-socialist. Their usual target is against some form of political restriction on the right of communist youth and others to voice their criticisms of the government bureaucrats. Due to the restrictions on political organizing, the outbursts are usually even more spontaneous than similar protests in the West, but out of these experiences the obvious need for organization develops. In this way new nuclei of revolutionary socialists have begun to develop in many of the Eastern European countries.

One of the best examples of this is provided by Poland. The events of the Polish October of 1956 coincided with the revolutionary upheaval in Hungary. During those events, and after, the students, who played a key role throughout, organized political clubs where discussion flourished on how to achieve a democratic socialist society as described and envisioned by Marx and Lenin. The clubs discussed and analyzed the crimes of the Stalin era and how to prevent their recurrence. Out of these clubs came nuclei of young revolutionaries who developed thorough analyses of the degeneration of the Russian revolution and came to see the need for a political revolution to replace the ruling caste with a government based on democratically elected workers councils and full freedom of expression and organization for all socialist tendencies.

Although these political clubs were dissolved in the early 1960's, the political education many students received in these clubs could not be erased. Communist students at Warsaw University like Karol Modzelewski and Jacek Kuron developed their analyses even further, and when they attempted to put their ideas down in writing and submit them to the Polish Workers Party, they were jailed.

During the student demonstrations in Warsaw last March, which began with a protest against the banning of a famous 19th century Polish play (described by the authorities as "anti-Soviet") Modzelewski and Kuron were re-arrested and re-imprisoned along with many others. The protests continued for several weeks with the occupation of the Polytechnic University in Warsaw, and the students gained considerable support from the Polish working class. While their demands -- primarily the abolition of

censorship and a guarantee of free speech for all socialists -- were not met, out of the struggle another new layer of revolutionary Polish youth has developed and continues to work in Poland.

Czechoslovakia is a second example. While all the repercussions of the recent months of increasing political liberty, followed by the Soviet-led invasion, are still far from clear, several important things should be kept in mind. A student struggle at Charles University in Prague last October was the immediate impetus to the final crisis for the Novotny regime. Student demonstrations against the physical conditions at the University were harshly repressed by the police, evoking widespread support for the students throughout the country. This turned out to be one of the last gasps of the Novotny regime.

Second, the youth and the intellectuals have spearheaded the drive for greater political freedom, the abolition of censorship, the right to form political clubs, and other reforms. They have received virtually total support from the Czechoslovakian working class. Under pressure from these forces, the Dubcek regime proceeded with the liberalization. Thirdly, it has been the Czechoslovakian youth who led the resistance to the occupation.

Out of these experiences, it is certain that significant numbers of youth will come to revolutionary conclusions about the limits of reform that the bureaucracies will allow, and the need to organize and struggle for the establishment of a government based on democratic workers councils.

Origins of the "New Left"

In the advanced capitalist countries of Europe and North America the radicalizing youth have often been labeled the "new left." While the phenomenon of the "new left" has been defined in many different ways in recent years, it actually has a very precise origin and political content, and represents a distinct current in the new generation of radical youth.

At the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1956, Nikita Khrushchev gave a speech admitting a small fraction of the crimes of the Stalin era. While these "revelations" came as no surprise to the revolutionary Marxists around the world who had suffered at the hands of Stalin and his agents for more than three decades, they shocked many in and around the Communist parties, who had believed in Stalin as the greatest of revolutionary leaders. They had defended his purges, trials, and executions as just



MEXICAN STUDENTS MARCH BEHIND CHE'S SLOGAN: "CREATE TWO, THREE, MANY VIETNAMS."

and necessary. Within months the Khrushchev speech was followed by the Hungarian revolution, and the Kremlin's bloody suppression of it. The Communist parties around the world lost tens of thousands of disillusioned members and followers.

This was the beginning of the destruction of the Stalinist monolith. In a very short period of time, all questions were up for re-discussion. Thousands of former members and supporters of the Communist parties, disenchanted with Stalinism, began looking for and discussing alternatives.

In Britain a substantial number of intellectuals split from the Communist Party. Their decision to split was a rejection of Stalinism, but instead of recognizing the antithesis between Stalinism and Marxism-Leninism, they falsely established an identity between them and rejected the whole package. They proceeded, under the guise of searching for a new ideology, to revert to some of the most primitive ideas which had been weighed and found wanting

during the earliest years of the socialist movement.

The superiority of spontaneity over organization, the rejection of theory and program in favor of pragmatic action, the practice of "participatory democracy," the theory of the propaganda-of-the-deed, the rejection of the working class as the agency for social change -- all these ideas were as old as the socialist movement.

The British intellectuals of this group became the fountain head of the new left, spurred on by such sympathizers as C. Wright Mills and others who rejected the revolutionary potential of the working class and sought after some new elite grouping to change the world.

The essence of their development was the rejection of Marxism in the sphere of ideology and Leninism in the sphere of organization. They never went back to examine the nature of Stalinism and the degeneration of the Russian revolution and the Communist



MEXICAN STUDENTS MARCH BEHIND CHE'S SLOGAN: "CREATE TWO, THREE, MANY VIETNAMIS."

parties. They never answered the question "why Stalinism?" or differentiated it from Marxism and Leninism.

They never went back to Stalin's program of "socialism in one country" to demonstrate how that led inevitably to the bureaucratic degeneration of the revolution and reduced the Communist parties around the world to serving the Soviet bureaucracy. They never came to realize that you cannot have a Leninist party with a reformist program, that such a party could be nothing but a mockery of a Leninist party.

The experiences of the British "new left" group were repeated in one form or another in much of Western Europe and North America, giving rise, during the decade of the 1960's, to the international phenomenon of the "new left." Today, few of the forces of the "new left" are coming out of the Communist parties, but most of the attitudes, theories, and ideas of the "new left" stem from the history of Stalinism and confused rejection of Stalinism by significant numbers of left-wing intellectuals.

General Characteristics of the Student Radicalization

Despite all the differences which exist from one country to another, and even from one campus to another, several conspicuous features characterize the student struggles in a general sense on an international plane.

First is the highly political character of today's student movements. Gone are the communist and socialist youth organizations that were largely concerned with social activities, sports contests, and colorful uniforms. The best of today's radical youth are attracted to revolutionary youth organizations because of their political programs, their international perspectives, and the actions they engage in around the key political issues of the day.

Secondly, the radicalization taking place today is marked by a genuine rebirth of internationalism, the kind of solidarity in international struggles which was destroyed four decades ago by the narrow bureaucratic nationalism of the Stalinist movement.

The Vietnamese can take considerable credit for stimulating this development by their tremendous courage in resisting American aggression which helped bring a world wide effort in their behalf into being. The Cuban revolution is also partly responsible through the example set by revolutionaries like Castro and Che, their call for "two, three, many Vietnams"

and their understanding that the only way to protect the revolution in one country is to spread the revolution to other countries and continents.

The growth of a strong internationalist consciousness amongst our generation comes from the fact that around the globe we have a common enemy, imperialism. We have had many common political experiences in our still short lifetime. We are tied together by almost instantaneous world-wide communications which serve to unify our struggles and make our actions more effective. This internationalism is one of the most positive and promising aspects of the new radicalization.

A third general characteristic of this student radicalization is its anti-authoritarianism, its willingness to challenge and question most of the norms, rules, regulations and sacred cows of its elders. Our generation is searching for answers and solutions to problems we did not create. We are willing to consider precisely those solutions and answers which are considered heretical. Many feel like the radical German youth of today when they are falsely criticized for creating anarchy and fostering conditions that give rise to fascism. Their answer to their elders is simple: "History proves you are not qualified to teach us how to fight fascism."

Whether it is the authority of the state, school, family, or employer, the tendency is to reject the ready made answers and criticisms and search for new solutions.

Fourthly, the young radicals are groping toward a revolutionary Marxist understanding of world politics. They tend in "new left" fashion to lump reformism, Stalinism, Marxism and Leninism together and dismiss the whole lot. At the same time, however, they are usually trying, in a pragmatic and blind fashion, to fight their way through the decades of lies and distortions built up by the capitalist rulers as well as the Stalinists and social democrats, and rediscover for themselves the basic tenets of Marxism and how to apply them to the world realities of today.

Stalinism

The pro-Moscow Communist parties find themselves rejected in country after country not only because of their history, but also due to their current policies which represent more of the same. Their narrow nationalistic defense of the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy and support to the status quo in the pursuit of peaceful coexistence

with imperialism, continually put them in the right wing of any revolutionary political development.

Events of the last decade have given ample proof of the reactionary politics of the Kremlin. The invasion of Hungary, the economic blackmail of Cuba, the minimal support to Vietnam and the reluctance to call for the withdrawal of U.S. troops or victory for the National Liberation Front, Moscow's opposition to armed struggle in Latin America, the American CP's support to Johnson in the 1964 elections, their opposition to black nationalism, the French CP's betrayal of the May Revolution in France, Moscow's invasion of Czechoslovakia--all these events (and they constitute only a portion of the record) have given abundant confirmation of the consistent policies of the pro-Moscow Communist parties and the fact they do not constitute a revolutionary tendency.

In turning away from the pro-Moscow parties, some revolutionary minded youth have turned toward the pro-Peking Communist parties in hopes of finding an answer. While this is a positive reaction since it indicates a willingness to look to communism for the answers, still large numbers of these have rapidly become disillusioned with Chairman Mao's version of Stalinism too.

Peking's position on Vietnam has been key in helping to clarify the real political nature of Maoism. Sectarian refusal to build a united front internationally, and refusal to participate in united front demonstrations in individual countries (such as Progressive Labor in the United States) has been a serious blow to the Vietnamese fighters. It has given the Soviet leaders the necessary excuse for refusing more aid to Vietnam, and divided the pro-socialist forces in the face of an all-out attack by imperialism.

In addition to Maoism's failure to defend Vietnam, Peking's condemnation of Cuba as the left cover for counter-revolutionary revisionism and the economic blackmail of Cuba (similar to the Kremlin's) have also made many realize that the pro-Peking parties are only a variation on their pro-Moscow counterparts.

While loudly denouncing the Soviet Union as counter-revolutionary, the Maoists have shown that wherever they have significant forces their class collaborationist policies closely resemble Moscow's. In Indonesia, the leadership of the largest Communist party outside the workers states paved the way for its own destruction by collaborating with and relying on the Indonesian capitalist class for more than two decades. As a result, in 1965, the party was totally

unprepared to defend itself against the savage repression of the generals, and over one million Indonesians were slaughtered.

Having learned nothing, the pro-Peking forces in the Indian state of Kerala last year continued the strategy of class collaboration, and formed a coalition government with capitalist parties there.

In the United States, where Progressive Labor represents the pro-Peking line, that organization has also been discredited in the black community by its totally opportunist flip-flops on the question of the Afro-American struggle, first pretending to lead the black struggle, and then condemning nationalism as petty bourgeois.

Added to all this, the Mao-cult, superimposed on the Stalin-cult, gives Maoism a heavy handicap in approaching and winning over large numbers of revolutionary youth.

Social Democracy

The social democracy has won equally severe condemnation from the new generation of radical youth, and the record of the British social democratic Labour Party under Wilson provides a prime example of the reasons for this rejection.

Since World War II the Labour Party has succeeded in accomplishing what the Tories could not have done without much greater force and social strife--they have forced the working class to pay for the decline of British imperialism out of its weekly pay check. The Labour Party's wage freeze, unemployment policies, racist immigration laws, monetary devaluation, servile support to U.S. imperialism, and similar policies have propped up capitalism in Britain--all in the name of protecting the interests of the working class.

Other social democratic parties in Europe have played a similar role. The decision by the German Social Democratic Party to enter a coalition with the Christian Democrats has been an important factor in the rising class consciousness of the European radical students.

In some countries, the default of the Communist parties and the social democracy has left openings for various "left wing" social democratic forces such as the United Socialist Party in France (PSU) and the PSIUP (Socialist Party of International Proletarian Unity) in Italy. However, these parties have not attracted the more revolutionary students.

For example, the crucial test of the French PSU came in the May-June events.

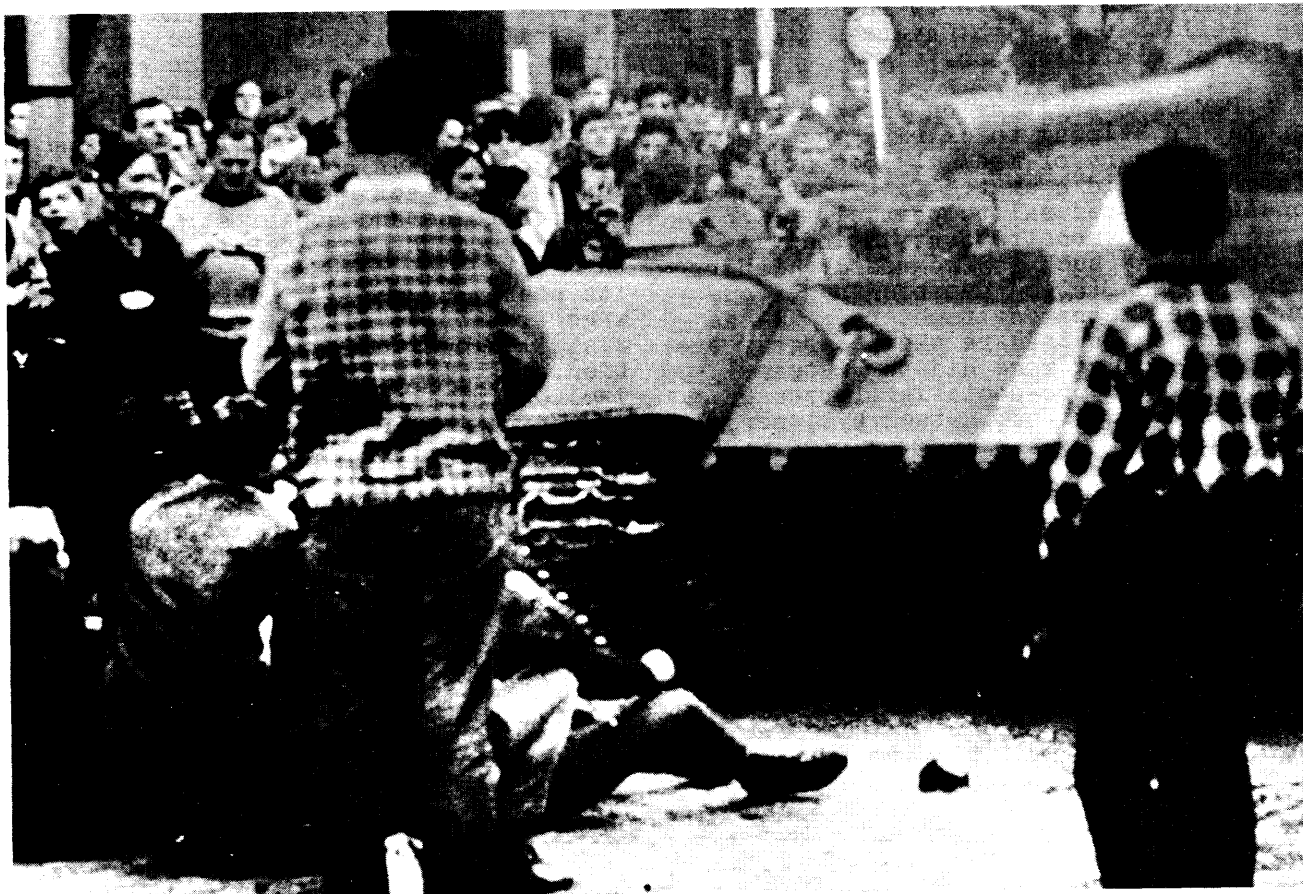
While they were the only left wing party that defended the student revolutionaries --against deGaulle and the CP--the PSU leaders were simultaneously making corridor deals to try and enter any new government formed if deGaulle should fall. The French revolutionaries correctly saw this as a betrayal of the struggle, and Mendes-France, the prima-donna of the PSU, declined to address a rally of 50,000 youth for fear of being hissed out of the stadium.

While the conscious rejection of the social democrats and the pro-Moscow and pro-Peking parties are crucial first steps on the road towards revolutionary politics, they represent only the beginning. After decades of distortions, slanders and lies, it is no simple task to resurrect the real traditions, norms and politics of Lenin's Bolshevik party.

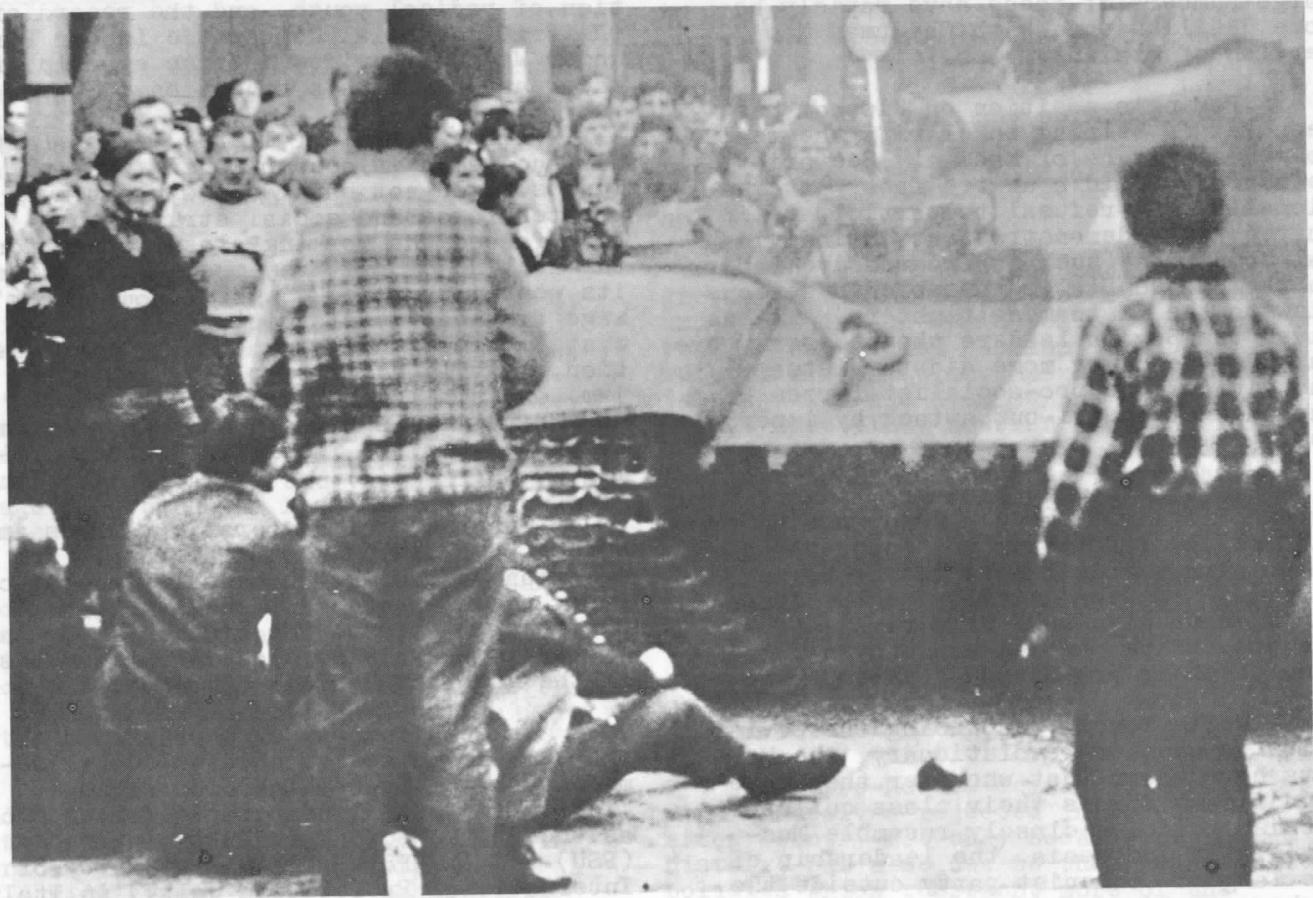
There are many problems inherent in this often pragmatic and empirical process of reconstruction from partial history and limited experience. All types of misconceptions and errors arise.

Without clarity on a revolutionary socialist political orientation, it is impossible to chart a strategic course or analyze tactical needs. Vital and basic though this is, such a program is not alone sufficient. There is another major, fundamental requirement along side this revolutionary socialist orientation. That is the need to build a politically homogeneous combat party, with full internal democracy and the will and confidence to act unitedly in carrying out its decisions--in short the need for a Leninist party to successfully carry through the fight against the most powerful, strongest, and deadliest ruling class the world has ever known.

This is precisely the question on which the new radicals have the least understanding. Yet, without this key element, no matter how correct their comprehension of other questions, they will not be able to act effectively or carry out a revolutionary policy. They must go back to Lenin and learn how to build such a party. Events like the May revolution in France are bringing revolu-



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tionary youth daily closer to the realization that building such a Leninist party is the most difficult task before us, and the most crucial. Over time, the best of these revolutionary youth will be convinced that the policies and programs of the Trotskyist movement, on a world scale, continue the real program of Marx, Engels, Lenin and the other great revolutionaries of our past.

The Dynamics of the World Struggle

The world revolution is on the advance in all of the three basic sectors. It is on the advance in the colonial world, where the struggle in Vietnam stands as the focal point and the symbol. It is on the rise in the advanced capitalist countries where, after twenty years of subdued class struggle, the French workers and students suddenly burst their bonds and renewed the march towards a socialist revolution. And it is on the advance in those countries which have already rid themselves of capitalist property relations, as the Czechoslovakian workers and students are demonstrating by their unwillingness to accept anything short of full socialist democracy.

Each of these struggles is closely related to the others, and any defeat or victory in one sector is sharply registered in all three. The dynamics of these interlocking struggles is of fundamental importance to revolutionaries everywhere.

The Colonial Revolution

From the end of World War II until the late 1950's, the colonial world was the most dynamic center of revolutionary struggle. The fight for national independence and land reform in the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America played a key role in awakening the consciousness of our generation as it came to political life in the late 1950's and early 1960's. Central amongst those struggles were Algeria, Cuba, and Vietnam. The youth of those countries themselves played a decisive role in molding the direction of the struggles and providing the manpower, enthusiasm and determination.

It was this spirit and overwhelming courage of the liberation fighters of these countries that caught the imagination and idealism of youth around the world. Their identification was frequently romantic and moralistic, but it tends to become more and more an act of political solidarity, more and more an identification not only with the colonial revolution as such, but an understanding that it is an integral part of the world socialist revolution. The tendency toward "third worldism," the substitution of the colonial struggle for worldwide struggle, including struggle in the advanced capi-

talist countries, is receding under the impact of the events in France, Czechoslovakia, and the black ghetto explosions in the U.S.

The Algerian revolution of 1954-1962 played a key radicalizing role in Europe, and France in particular. The brutality of the war waged by France, and the polarization of French society which resulted from the war, had an impact on French youth that affected much broader layers than the conscious radicals.

It was around public meetings, rallies, and demonstrations in favor of an independent Algeria and against the fascist threat posed by ultra-rightist organizations like the Secret Army Organization (OAS), that the nucleus of the left opposition inside the French Union of Communist Students was formed. The communist students decided to oppose the line of the CP and lead the students and young workers in street actions. Those were the beginnings of the revolutionary student movement in France.

The victory of the Cuban guerrillas and the continued deepening of the revolution overlapped in time with the final years of the Algerian war. The Cuban example was both an inspiration to the Algerians and a further political lesson on the necessity for a successful revolution to take a socialist direction. In Che's words, "it's either a socialist revolution or a caricature of revolution." In Algeria, the Boumedienne military coup in 1965 was a negative confirmation of that lesson.

In the U.S., the Cuban revolution had greater impact than the Algerian war, primarily because of the U.S. government's deep involvement in trying to crush the revolution, and its geographical proximity to the U.S. Hundreds of radical American youth visited Cuba in the first years of the revolution and returned to spread the truth and build organizations like the Fair Play for Cuba Committees. For the first time in over a decade, significant numbers of youth, inspired by the Cuban revolution, began to join the revolutionary movement in the U.S. Defense of the Cuban revolution became one of the lines dividing the revolutionaries from the faint-hearted radicals.

The Vietnam experience came on top of the lessons of Algeria and Cuba--as well as the developments in the Congo, Santo Domingo, and other places. The intervention of the U.S. government collided with the determination of the Vietnamese to assure the victory of their revolution against staggering odds, and set the stage for Vietnam to become the focal point of the world revolution for an extended period.

The impact of Vietnam accelerated revolutionary developments all over the world, from Bolivia to Palestine, from Cuba to Warsaw, from New York to Paris. This summer's massive and militant demonstrations in Mexico City, Brazil, and Uruguay were only the latest examples of such crucial developments to Latin America. The emergence of an international movement against U.S. aggression in Vietnam, led and organized by the revolutionary youth of country after country, has laid the basis for profound changes in the international balance of forces, and a new rise in the world revolutionary struggle.

The importance and depth of the new period opening up can be judged by the events of recent months in France and Czechoslovakia.

The Workers States

For the first time in 12 years -- since the Hungarian revolution and the Polish October of 1956 -- mass pressure for the establishment of socialist democracy has developed in one of the deformed workers states. That is the basic significance of the political reforms that were carried out in Czechoslovakia between January and August of this year. Opposition to the establishment of socialist democracy and fear of its spread were the main reasons for the Soviet-led invasion of that country.

The political reforms against which the Soviet bureaucracy directed its fire were the abolition of press censorship, freedom of political organization for all Socialist tendencies, and the recognition of the rights of political tendencies to exist within the Communist Party. Those three reforms which simply return to the norms of the early Bolshevik Party constituted a deadly threat to the bureaucrats of the Kremlin and the other Eastern European countries.

Freedom for revolutionary communists to discuss, project, and work towards the formation of elected workers' councils as the basic democratic units which would organize the economic and political life of the country would spell the end of the usurped power of the bureaucrats. (In some respects this is similar to the bureaucratic control of the unions in this country. If political freedom in the unions were reestablished, the bureaucrats would not be long for their posts and privileges either.)

While the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia has brought a temporary halt to the democratic reforms, it will be more difficult to reverse the basic process set in motion. 1968 is not 1956. A world-wide radicalization of youth has been underway for more than a decade; the workers

states and Communist Parties are divided and following separate policies; the pressures for socialist democracy exist in strong currents in every Eastern European country and the Soviet Union. Young revolutionary communists in Czechoslovakia and the other Soviet-bloc states will be able to make major contributions to the world struggle if they continue to spearhead the drive for socialist democracy in their country. By reaffirming the fact that socialism means greater freedom than ever before in man's history, they will aid the socialist revolution in all spheres.

The Advanced Capitalist Countries

In France, during May and June, 1968, the revolutionary upsurge in the advanced capitalist countries reached its highest point in three decades. While that struggle had a dynamic of its own, it was not unrelated to the struggles in the colonial world and the workers states, even on the most basic level. The student revolt began when police tried to arrest a member of the Revolutionary Communist Youth (JCR) for organizing a demonstration against the Vietnam war; and one of the earliest resolutions passed by the students' general assembly at the University of Nanterre was in solidarity with the Polish revolutionary students in general, and Modzelewski and Kuron in particular, in their fight for socialist democracy.

In the May revolution the students, by taking their struggles into the streets and forcing the de Gaulle government to retreat, and by setting the example of courageous action in the face of unprovoked police brutality, inspired the French working class to act also. They set in motion social forces which could have led to a victorious socialist revolution in an advanced capitalist country, if there had been a mass revolutionary party to lead those forces.

The students quickly began to establish ties with the working class youth of their generation and developed common forms of organization and action with them. But the French revolt made crystal clear once again that without a revolutionary party uniting the most class conscious and most combative representatives of the workers, students, small farmers, and oppressed minorities, the revolution will not be able to defeat either the capitalist rulers with all their armed might, or their Stalinist and social democratic agents in the working class.

Student youth, through their own organizations, can play a key role in winning the best of our generation to the perspective of building such a party and helping to educate the cadre for that party.

The United States

The developments in the U.S. constitute an important element in the dynamics of the world revolution today. Precisely because the U.S. stands as the citadel of world imperialism, every action, every event that builds the revolutionary movement in this country has profound repercussions around the globe.

Foremost amongst these developments in the U.S. is the growing and deepening black nationalist consciousness of the Afro-American population. The struggle for self-determination inside the U.S. places Afro-America in direct and irreconcilable opposition to the rulers of this country. More and more, elements in the conscious vanguard of the black community are turning toward Marxism and coming to recognize the perspective of a socialist revolution as the prerequisite for national self-determination for Afro-America. Every step in that direction, every new indication of the revolutionary potential and combativity of the black masses in America brings new inspiration and encouragement to revolutionaries around the world.

The second struggle in the U.S. today which has international revolutionary importance is the movement against the Vietnam war. For the first time in U.S. history a mass movement has emerged against a war that is actually being fought.

The mass actions against the Vietnam war began in the U.S. and their example inspired the movement internationally. The first teach-ins and mobilizations came as a response to calls for action from North American youth. Now we are able to respond to calls from other sections of the international movement,

such as the call for October 21-27 actions from the Japanese students and the British Vietnam Solidarity Campaign.

The knowledge that a revolutionary opposition is growing within the U.S. itself and preparing for the most difficult and decisive of all struggles -- the struggle against the American ruling class -- is a major source of inspiration to revolutionaries around the world. They know, and we know, that only when the destructive power of U.S. capitalism is eliminated can there be world peace and prosperity under socialism.

This places an exceptionally heavy but crucially important burden on the new generation of revolutionary youth in the U.S. today. We are fighting not just for ourselves, not just for other Americans, but for the cause of the oppressed and exploited throughout the world.

Our political debates and activities are directed toward a conscious, specific goal -- to win the best members and largest number of our generation to revolutionary Marxism and build a party that can lead the struggle for socialism to a successful conclusion. This is no easy or single task. It cannot be accomplished without serious debate by critical-minded students over all the current issues as well as the theory, strategy and history of revolutionary struggles in the past.

The Young Socialist Alliance is attempting to build a revolutionary youth organization based on these concepts. We discuss and decide our political objectives, and we act on our decisions. We want all American youth who are working for a socialist America and a socialist world to join us in this struggle.



YOUNG SOCIALISTS LEAD SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN WITH FRENCH STUDENTS AND WORKERS



YOUNG SOCIALISTS LEAD SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN WITH FRENCH STUDENTS AND WORKERS

ATTEND THE NATIONAL YOUNG SOCIALIST CONVENTION CHICAGO NOV. 29-DEC. 1, 1968

A National Convention of young socialists from throughout the United States will be convened in Chicago over the Thanksgiving weekend. It will meet in the midst of a year of unprecedented revolutionary activity—from Prague to Paris, from Vietnam to Bolivia, and from Columbia to Berkeley. The Convention will discuss: the international revolutionary youth movement; the Vietnamese revolution and how to defend it; the 1968 election campaign waged by the Young Socialists for Halstead and Boutelle and the Young Socialist Alliance; the Afro-American struggle for the right to self-determination; the perspectives for the revolutionary socialist youth movement in this country, and the fight for a socialist America.

Reports will be given at the Convention by representatives of revolutionary socialist youth abroad, by antiwar and socialist GIs, and by participants in the Afro-American struggle, the antiwar movement, and campus rebellions across the country.

If you are interested in attending the Convention, fill out the coupon below.



Young Socialist Alliance
P. O. Box 471, Cooper Station
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... I plan to attend the Convention. Please send me details on housing, transportation, etc.

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