

Information, Education, Discussion

# BULLETIN in Defense of Marxism

Published by expelled members of the Socialist Workers Party, Fourth Internationalist Tendency

The Whole International Is Watching .....	1
April 20 Mass Marches — Big Setback to Reagan's War Drive by Bill Onasch.....	3
Call to the Second Emergency National Conference.....	5
Trotskyism Under Attack and What Else Is New by Frank Lovell.....	6
How to Aid the Central American Revolution by Adam Shils.....	8
The SWP's Disorientation on the Labor Party by Jean Y. Tussey.....	10
Setting the Record Straight The SWP vs History: Women's Role in Labor Struggles by Laura Cole.....	15
Behind the Crisis of Leadership in the SWP The Historical and Political Roots by Frank Lovell.....	17
From the Arsenal of Marxism How the Early SWP Fought to Save the Refugees from Nazism.....	22
'Reading Lenin' by George Breitman.....	23
Lenin, Luxemburg, and Kautsky by Leon Trotsky.....	26
Engels and Lenin on the Party by James P. Cannon.....	29
Letters .....	31

BULLETIN in Defense of Marxism, No. 19, June 1985.

Send correspondence and subscriptions to BIDOM, P.O. Box 1317, New York, NY 10009

Closing date May 10, 1985

---

The *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism* is published by the Fourth Internationalist Tendency, founded by members expelled from the Socialist Workers Party because we opposed abandoning the Trotskyist principles and methods on which the SWP was founded and built for more than a half century.

Denied the right, specified in the SWP constitution and by Leninist norms, of a full and free discussion of all programmatic changes, we were subjected first to gag rules and slander and finally to wholesale expulsions. The present leadership has resorted to these bureaucratic methods in order to impose their revisionist political line upon the party without discussion or approval by the membership.

We are now forced to organize and conduct this discussion outside the SWP. Our aim is to encourage discussion and debate within the party by those seeking to defend revolutionary Marxism and to bring about our reinstatement in the party.

We firmly believe that the present leaders of the SWP cannot avoid that discussion through organizational measures and expulsions. The relevant issues will increasingly appear on the agenda as their new course comes into conflict with the reality of the class struggle in the U.S. and around the world.

---

"All members of the party must begin to *study*, completely dispassionately and with utmost honesty, first the essence of the differences and second the course of the dispute in the party. . . . It is necessary to *study* both the one and the other, unfailingly demanding the most exact, printed documents, open to verification by all sides. Whoever believes things simply on someone else's say-so is a hopeless idiot, to be dismissed with a wave of the hand."

—V.I. Lenin, "The Party Crisis," Jan. 19, 1921.

---

BULLETIN IDOM EDITORIAL BOARD: Naomi Allen, Steve Bloom, George Breitman, Laura Cole, Frank Lovell, Sarah Lovell, Bill Onasch, Christine Frank Onasch, George Saunders, Evelyn Sell, Rita Shaw, Adam Shils, Jean Tussey, George Lavan Weissman

---

To subscribe to *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism*, send \$24 for 12 monthly issues or \$15 for 6 issues to Bulletin IDOM, P.O. Box 1317, New York, N.Y. 10009.  
Back issues are \$3 each.



# THE WHOLE INTERNATIONAL IS WATCHING

## A Letter to the Members of the SWP

May 10, 1985

Dear Comrades,

The whole FI is watching to see what the SWP will do about reinstating the many members unjustly expelled in the political purges of 1982-84. At the world congress in February, the delegates to the highest body of our movement, by an overwhelming majority, rejected the SWP leadership's version of events. They declared that we remain members of the FI (to the extent this is compatible with U.S. law), and voted to demand that the membership of the Fourth Internationalist Tendency and Socialist Action be reinstated in the SWP. Comrades around the world are now waiting to see whether the SWP will carry out this decision of the congress.

The National Committee of the SWP has had two meetings since the world congress (in February and in May). So far the NC and PC have refused even to meet or speak with the expelled members or their representatives, and have continued to treat us with unrestrained hostility.

It would be a mistake to think that this case concerns only the members of the F.I.T. and S.A. Actually it is the SWP itself, and the SWP above all, whose future is at stake. The prestige and authority of the SWP in the FI--which even those who disagreed with its views in the past have acknowledged--have been badly damaged in the last few years. At no time in the history of the FI has the SWP delegation been as isolated and discredited as it was at the 1985 congress, and this isolation will continue until the SWP leadership demonstrates a different attitude to the International and the opinions of its members.

On some questions we can see a change in the attitude and approach of the central leadership of the SWP toward the FI. Before the congress, reports were made to party branches implying that the International had "abandoned the turn" and was succumbing to a petty-bourgeois disease; that it was "capitulating to the imperialist war drive," and to third-campism; analogies were

implied with the Second International--the "international of the white race."

Jack Barnes, in his speech "Their Trotsky and Ours," declared that 80 percent of those who consider themselves Trotskyists in the world today (which must include the majority of the Fourth International) are "hopeless, irredeemable sectarians." You certainly know -- far better than we--other things that were asserted as part of this campaign in SWP branches across the country. And the campaign was accentuated through the pages of Intercontinental Press, which printed a steady stream of articles from the newspapers of other sections which could be misrepresented as indications that the FI was degenerating.

But things are different now. After the world congress it was reported that the turn is not so badly off in the International as the party leadership had originally feared. The SWP sponsored a tour of Gote Kilden, a supporter of the FI majority. Intercontinental Press of April 29, reporting on the general strike in Denmark, hailed the work of the Danish section: "The SAP, many of whose members are active unionists, is energetically throwing itself into strike activity." Representatives of the United Secretariat are once again invited to attend NC plenums and conventions, from which they had been excluded for a whole year.

What has caused such a turnabout? The answer is obviously connected with the world congress itself, and the conclusions drawn by the SWP delegation as a result of its experience there. The faction which supported the positions of the U.S. SWP leadership at the congress was a small minority--less than 15 percent--and was essentially limited to delegates from English-speaking countries. The overwhelming majority completely rejected the new political line being advocated for the FI by the Barnes current.

The open war against the majority of the International during the last few



years, the slander campaign against everyone in our world movement--both inside and outside the U.S.A.--who continues to identify with and wants to uphold a Trotskyist program, has had an inevitable result: The SWP leadership now finds itself completely isolated, unable even to engage in a dialogue with others in the FI.

How to solve the problem? It seems that the SWP central leaders have decided to try and mend some fences--ease off on insinuations about capitulation to petty-bourgeois pressures; put a Swedish comrade on tour; even say a few

nice words about other sections of the FI in Intercontinental Press. But it is simply self-deception to think that such a feeble, and purely cosmetic, effort can solve its current dilemma.

This is true because the single most significant feature of the present situation--the one which has most profoundly shaped the attitude of others in the FI toward the Barnes current today--has been the organizational measures carried out in the U.S.A.: the purge of over 100 loyal party members from the end of 1982 through the beginning of 1984. It is this that most clearly and insistently demonstrated to others in the International the depths of the political revisions, and the lengths to which the Barnes leadership would go to avoid a genuine discussion of them.

No quantity of superficial adjustments in the tone and approach of the SWP toward the FI will have the desired effect. Comrades around the world will judge the U.S. SWP's attitude toward the FI--its continued hostility or its willingness to engage in a constructive discussion and dialogue--on the basis of its actions with regard to those who were bureaucratically silenced and expelled to keep them from defending Trotskyism in the party.

Your leadership must change its course--not merely on the surface, but in its fundamentals. The party ranks should intervene in this process to make sure that the necessary change occurs. Reintegrate the expelled members! Open the long-overdue discussion inside the SWP of the new programmatic positions--with a free and democratic atmosphere and the participation of all points of view! We ask this not in the interest of the expelled members alone, but for the good of the entire party--which will only grow and prosper through this discussion. Only this course holds any hope for influencing others within the Fourth International. A leadership which truly had confidence in its perspectives would welcome such a challenge. Only those who fear a democratic discussion need resort to bureaucratic measures in order to avoid it.

Comradely,  
Steve Bloom  
Bill Onasch  
Evelyn Sell

F.I.T. National Coordinators

# International VIEWPOINT

*International Viewpoint*, the official English-language publication of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, is a review of news and Marxist analysis. It comes to you twice a month directly from Paris by air mail.

In addition to providing first-hand reports of the struggles of working people around the world, *International Viewpoint* tells the truth about the positions of the Fourth International and its sections on the Central American and Caribbean revolutions; the Polish Solidarity workers' movement and its supporters around the world; the anti-nuclear and antiwar movements in Europe and America; and other subjects that the SWP leadership systematically distorts or passes over in silence.

*International Viewpoint* has published material by noted Marxist economist Ernest Mandel, Irish liberation fighter Bernadette Devlin McAiskey, former Grenadian attorney general Kenrick Radix, and leaders of Poland's Solidarnosc underground.

1 year: \$42       6 months: \$22

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Send to: *International Viewpoint*,  
Box 1824 New York, N.Y. 10009

Make checks payable to International Viewpoint.



## APRIL 20 MASS MARCHES – BIG SETBACK TO REAGAN'S WAR DRIVE

by Bill Onasch

The April 20 mass demonstrations registered a big growth in the movement against U.S. intervention in Central America: over 50,000 marched in Washington; 50,000 in San Francisco; 10,000 in Los Angeles; 5,000 in Seattle; 1,500 in Houston (in a driving rain); and 1,500 in a support action organized by Canadian anti-intervention activists in Toronto. For thousands of these participants it was their first protest activity of any kind. Thousands were trade unionists, in many cases marching with the official endorsement of their unions. For the first time since Vietnam there were substantial contingents of college students, and mass actions continue on the campuses. Particularly on the West Coast there were big, visible contingents of Koreans, Filipinos, Chinese, Central Americans, and Blacks--proving that this new movement is not limited to white, middle-class protesters.

Coming on the eve of the contra aid vote in Congress, this mass outpouring reinforced the sense of caution felt by an important sector of the ruling class about getting involved in another Vietnam-type adventure. While the liberal Democrats are no friends of the Central American revolutions, and are seeking more subtle ways to strangle Nicaragua, they remember the social crisis produced by the Vietnam War and desperately want to avoid a recurrence of such a challenge to capitalist stability. Exploiting this division among the imperialist rulers gives the Central Americans a little breathing space.

In the absence of imperialist intervention, the Nicaraguan revolution will be able to consolidate itself and the Salvadoran and Guatemalan revolutions will be able to move forward. That is why the best contribution that proletarian internationalists in solidarity with these revolutionary fighters can make is building the strongest possible protest movement in this country against all forms of imperialist intervention.

April 20 confirms the potential for such a movement--and that the best vehicle for expression of anti-interven-

tion sentiment is through mass, legal, peaceful protest in the streets. The success of these actions surprised the leaders of the traditional peace and solidarity groups who had only reluctantly called them. These self-appointed leaders of the movement are pessimistic about mobilizing people in the streets. They favor building a new multi-issue coalition that will lead to either a new political party, or an effective pressure group within the Democratic Party. They seek to change ruling class opinion through tactics such as lobbying and civil disobedience.

These leaders of the April Actions Coalition did little to mobilize their own organizations to build the march on the 20th; they kept the Washington staff on short rations, and twice proposed cancelling the April 20 action altogether. Their emphasis was on the lobbying and civil disobedience activities on April 22. They also gave Central America short shrift, offering a veritable smorgasbord of issues dear to the hearts of various lobbying groups.

But the massive grass-roots sentiment against intervention in Central America asserted itself through dozens of local coalitions that mushroomed around the country. These coalitions, without the help of--and in some ways despite--the Washington leaders effectively mobilized new forces. In most coalitions April 20, Central America, and the fight against apartheid were made the central focus.

New forces were drawn in from the trade unions, campuses, the racially oppressed communities, and from the protest movements of the family farmer. Contrary to the expectations of the "multi-issueists," these new forces did not demand any quid pro quo for their support. Like most conscious people, they recognized the importance of opposing U.S. intervention in Central America and the government's policy of support to the dying regime of apartheid.

The local coalitions expressed enthusiasm and a sense of urgency, and brushed aside any suggestions that April



20 be cancelled or postponed. The results confirmed their optimism.

By contrast, the lobbying and civil disobedience activities on April 22, greatly emphasized by the multi-issue-ists, drew less than a thousand participants. While there was little opportunity for democratic input into the steering committee meetings of the April Actions Coalition on a national level, the masses voted with their feet on April 20. They voted for mass action around the issues of Central America and apartheid. Hopefully the April Actions leaders will draw some positive lessons from this experience.

Despite its diminished credibility resulting from the inept building of the D.C. April actions, this coalition remains the logical authoritative body to call the next round of demonstrations in the fall. But to do this, the April Actions leaders must give up the idea that they can coopt sentiment around Central America and apartheid into some new multi-issue political formation.

What is needed is a national, non-exclusionary, united front coalition to coordinate mass actions on these issues. To be effective this coalition must operate democratically, with full representation from local coalitions. The

leaders of the peace and solidarity groups can play an indispensable role in building such a coalition. If they fail to do so, they will be bypassed. For the sake of the movement, we hope they will absorb the lessons of April 20 and start preparing for mass actions in the fall.

An important step in the process of building the anti-intervention movement will be the Second Emergency National Conference, scheduled for Minneapolis, June 21-23 (see conference call on p. 5). The first Emergency National Conference in Cleveland last September provided a needed push in getting April 20 called. At the second conference, hundreds of activists from around the country will be able to exchange experiences, educate themselves, and discuss building the next round of national, or nationally coordinated, actions; the conference will have no self-appointed leaders. It is called with the perspective of building the movement democratically. Hopefully, the conference will be able to discuss building actions already called by the April Actions Coalition. If such a call is not forthcoming, then the conference will take on additional importance as a vehicle for getting the next round of actions started.

May 2, 1985

---

**REGISTRATION FORM:** Clip and return to:  
**EMERGENCY NATIONAL CONFERENCE**

P.O. Box 14180, Dinkytown Station, Minneapolis, MN 55414

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

- Please add my name to the endorser's list.  Enclosed is a further contribution toward conference expenses of \$ \_\_\_\_\_.
- Please add my organization's name to the endorser's list.  I need private housing for \_\_\_\_\_ people.
- Enclosed is \$10 registration fee
- Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ additional copies of this Call. Please make checks payable to: Emergency National Conference.



---

# CALL

to the

## SECOND EMERGENCY NATIONAL CONFERENCE

### Against U.S. Military Intervention in Central America/ The Caribbean

June 21-23, 1985  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

- End U.S. Military Intervention in Central America/the Caribbean
- Money for Jobs and Human Needs — Not War
- End U.S. Support for the Apartheid Regime in South Africa
- End the Arms Race

Emergency National Conference  
P.O. Box 14180, Dinkytown Station  
Minneapolis, MN 55414  
(612) 331-4147

---

#### CALL TO ACTION

On September 14-16, 650 people from labor, anti-intervention, religious, peace, solidarity, community, minority, women's rights, senior citizens, university faculty and student groups met in Cleveland, Ohio, at the Emergency National Conference Against U.S. Military Intervention in Central America/the Caribbean.

After three days of education, discussion and debate, the Cleveland conference voted to call upon the entire peace and anti-intervention movements to unite and sponsor massive demonstrations on April 20, 1985, in Washington, D.C., and on the West Coast to protest U.S. military intervention policies. The conference demanded that money be spent for jobs and human needs instead of for military adventures and nuclear escalation. The conference also denounced U.S. support for the vicious apartheid regime of South Africa, noting: "The pattern of U.S. intervention around the world is clear. The policy is to support governments that promote U.S. investments by repressing, torturing, and killing trade unionists and other dissenters. This kind of intervention must be opposed by a united movement."

The conference elected a Continuations Committee which joined an existing national coalition that united more than 100 organizations to sponsor and build the April 20 demonstrations. Unity in action of these diverse trade union, anti-intervention, anti-war and anti-apartheid forces in both national and local coalitions is an historic achievement.

THE PURPOSE OF THE SECOND EMERGENCY NATIONAL CONFERENCE IS TO MAINTAIN AND DEEPEN THAT UNITY IN ORDER TO MOUNT EVER LARGER AND MORE POWERFUL MASS MOBILIZATIONS IN THE FALL AND TO FURTHER STRENGTHEN THE ENTIRE MOVEMENT.

The necessity for continued action after April 20 is clear and urgent. Reagan's brazen threats to overthrow the Nicaraguan government leave no doubt on that score and emphasize the emergency nature of the situation. The U.S. government continues its illegal interventionist wars in Central America, sponsoring terroristic bands of counterrevolutionaries in Nicaragua and intensifying the brutal bombing of civilians in El Salvador. U.S. support for apartheid in South Africa goes on despite universal condemnation. Meanwhile more than ten million American workers are jobless, tens of millions more live in poverty, employers continue to shut down plants here and flee to low wage areas abroad, social programs are cut and 150,000 farmers face foreclosures at a time when hunger and starvation afflict much of the world's population. Yet more and more the country's wealth is squandered on an endless U.S. arms build-up.

The Second Emergency National Conference will examine this critical situation, assess the impact of the April 20 demonstrations, and consider the most effective strategy and tactics for mobilizing masses of people.

Increasing the involvement of the ranks of labor in the anti-intervention struggle is of decisive importance. The Second Emergency National Conference will help show that the struggle of working people in the United States for jobs, a decent standard of living and protection of our unions cannot be separated from the fight against U.S. interventionist policies abroad and runaway military spending at home. Support for the exploding struggle for liberation of the Black masses of South Africa and solidarity with the peoples of Central America/the Caribbean in their fight for self-determination will be prominent conference themes.

The conference is open to anyone interested in attending. All who register will have voice and vote.

**JOIN US!**



## TROTSKYISM UNDER ATTACK AND WHAT ELSE IS NEW

by Frank Lovell

The April 20 antiwar demonstrations in Washington and other cities were more massive than their organizers had expected or dared hope. Among the organizers were representatives of the three main political currents in the radical movement: Social Democrats, Stalinists, and revolutionary socialists. Each tendency has its own goals and seeks to influence the movement accordingly. Social Democrats try to direct the main body of antiwar forces into the Democratic Party, hoping in this way to influence U.S. foreign policy. The Stalinists likewise look to "liberal elements" in the Democratic Party who believe that peaceful coexistence with the Soviet Union is a viable alternative to war. Revolutionary socialists, with a different approach, strive to build a massive antiwar movement independent of capitalist politics and in this way thwart the bipartisan military buildup, expecting that mass demonstrations against war will help educate and convince decisive sectors of the population that war is inherent in the capitalist system.

Organizers of peaceful antiwar demonstrations have learned that success depends on a nonexclusionary policy which welcomes the participation of all political tendencies. This, of course, cannot exclude debate or eliminate political rivalry. What type of leaflet to issue, whether to hold a press conference, which speakers are to be invited to address mass rallies are practical matters to be decided in the antiwar coalitions. Debates over such mundane matters, often resolved by compromise and consensus, can take many forms and produce results that are sometimes familiar and other times unexpected or bizarre.

In the New York coalition that helped mobilize antiwar protesters for the April 20 march in Washington, the Stalinists were represented by Bruce Kimmel who introduced himself as a member of the Communist Party. He is a public representative of the party, a member of the editorial board of the CP's Daily World, and also chairs the party's Peace and Solidarity Commission in New York.

The CP looks to ambitious young functionaries like Kimmel to regain its lost hegemony in the radical movement. One way to do this, they think, is to vilify their political opponents. Accordingly, Kimmel signed two articles in the Daily World attacking "Trotskyites" in the New York coalition (April 9 and 18). The first claimed "Trotskyites oppose the united front," and the second professed to explain "lessons for today" of the Vietnam War. Both were loaded with familiar Stalinist lies about the anticapitalist politics of revolutionary socialism.

"Trotskyite doctrine is based on the writings of Leon Trotsky, who split with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in the 1920s and later tried to undermine the Soviet government from exile," says Kimmel. He adds that "there never has been a successful revolution led by Trotskyites," forgetting about the 1917 October Revolution in Russia which was led by Lenin and Trotsky above all others. In those days the "Trotskyites" were known as Bolsheviks, the exponents of revolutionary socialism.

Among those bearing Kimmel's "Trotskyite" brand in the New York coalition were the Socialist Workers Party, Young Socialist Alliance, Workers World Party, and "several newcomers," including Socialist Action. Kimmel argues that "Trotskyites are interested in the unity of only those organizations with an explicitly socialist orientation." He says, "For instance, they call for a victory of the left forces in El Salvador, while the most important demand and the one with the widest appeal is the call for no U.S. intervention in El Salvador." Kimmel concludes that "Trotskyites are against -- as a matter of principle -- working with any Democrat." He says, "This includes the Congressional Black Caucus, a leading force in the struggle for peace in Congress."

None of this is true about any of the groups or organizations on Kimmel's "Trotskyite" list. Some are opponents of Trotskyism. All of them, without exception, are ready and willing to work with elected officials in Congress and others who can contribute to the political struggle for withdrawal of all U.S.



troops from El Salvador and all other countries in Central America and elsewhere in the world.

In order to prove his false contentions Kimmel invokes the history of the antiwar movement of the 1960s and early 1970s against the war in Vietnam, the burden of his second slanderous article. In it he sprinkles grains of truth. 1) "Unity was the key then." 2) "At least a million marched and rallied on a frigid November day in 1969.... The activity never stopped. And all of it was around a single demand: U.S. out of Vietnam." 3) "...the people, not the president and the generals, know what's best for the U.S." But he falsifies the history of the major participants in this movement, claiming that "Trotskyites and Maoists diverted attention from the main enemy in the struggle: the U.S. administration."

The SWP and the YSA were the leading political organizations in the anti-Vietnam War movement, not the CP. In that movement--and in the student movement of those years -- the SWP and YSA were the authentic voice of Trotskyism, the effective exponents of revolutionary socialist politics. Their policy in the antiwar movement was for nonexclusion, for the single-issue demand "Out Now," and for the right of the Vietnamese to conduct their own defense as they saw fit without interference from the antiwar movement here or elsewhere. The SWP never at any time condemned the Vietnamese for negotiating with the U.S., any more than Trotsky ever condemned himself for leading the Soviet negotiations for peace with the German invaders in 1918 at Brest-Litovsk.

Fortunately the history of Trotskyism which is synonymous with the revolutionary socialist current in working class politics throughout the world is well documented. The true history of the U.S. movement against the Vietnam War is recorded in the 750-page book, Out Now, by Fred Halstead, a leading participant. It was published in 1978 and is distributed by Pathfinder Press, available to anyone seeking the truth about this movement and how it was successfully organized.

There is no evidence whatever for Kimmel's charge that the Trotskyists ever "diverted attention from the main enemy in the struggle: the U.S. administration." During the Vietnam War there were two U.S. administrations, Johnson's and Nixon's. Both were brought down by the antiwar movement. When Johnson was elected in 1964 he received support from the CP as "the progressive, antiwar

candidate" against Goldwater the war-monger. In 1972 the Stalinists tried to defeat Nixon in the election, but he won at the polls only to be defeated in the streets by antiwar demonstrations that helped to expose corruption in the administration and eventually to force the withdrawal of U.S. troops.

Halstead summarized the role of the CP in all this. "Its line of conduct was at bottom determined by its ideological centerpiece that all struggles must be subordinated to the diplomacy of the Kremlin vis-a-vis Washington, which at this juncture meant the quest for what came to be called 'detente.' The CP therefore constantly had its eye on the liberal sector of the U.S. Establishment, and on the elections. (All for naught, as it turned out, for when the ruling class decided the time was opportune, it was Nixon who initiated 'detente.')" (p. 722)

It is true that a major debate developed early in the antiwar movement (in 1965) over the question of a negotiated settlement, but not in the way Kimmel puts it. Halstead explains that the debate at the time "centered around 'negotiations' versus 'immediate withdrawal,' or some form of it like 'Bring the Troops Home Now.' SANE, backed by other liberal-oriented forces including the CP, insisted on adopting the demand for 'negotiations.' Most of the radical pacifists, including Dellinger and Muste; the Trotskyists; and the representatives of the campus committees supported 'immediate withdrawal.'" (p. 80)

The fact that this difference was definitively resolved in favor of what finally became the "Out Now" demand contributed more than anything else to the survival and growth of the anti-Vietnam War movement.

Although Kimmel's arguments, when examined in light of the facts, must appear both surprising and bizarre to activists in the antiwar movement today, there is surely some purpose to them. This is not new. It has characterized the CP's "Trotskyite" phobia since 1928 when the Stalinist bureaucracy took complete control of the party in this country. It is ironic, however, that the present SWP leadership, the once proud defender of Trotskyism, no longer wishes to be identified with its Trotskyist past. It has, in fact, adopted some of the organizational practices and ideological methods of the labor bureaucracy, the Social Democracy, and Stalinism. And that's what's new.



# HOW TO AID THE CENTRAL AMERICAN REVOLUTION

by Adam Shils

For socialists, the Central American revolution is the most important development in the world today. Here we see a real revolution taking place under our own eyes--in Nicaragua, where the first democratic elections in an ongoing revolution since the Russian revolution have taken place; in El Salvador, where a popular movement confronts the reactionary Duarte government. These countries are faced with the reality of U.S. organized counterrevolutionary war and the prospect of a serious escalation of U.S. military intervention.

This poses for us, American militants, a very simple question: What are we going to do about this situation? For in the words of the Communist Manifesto, we "have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat." That means no interests separate and apart from the Central American revolution. What can we do to help these revolutions win?

The answer is simple: Build a united front bringing together in action all those who support the slogan "End U.S. Intervention in Central America," a movement that has the potential to change the political situation in this country and to stay Reagan's hand.

The potential for this movement is strong: a late February Washington Post/ABC poll showed 70% of the American people opposed to U.S. intervention in Nicaragua. In San Francisco, seven AFL-CIO Central Labor councils have endorsed the April 20 demonstration, showing deeper labor opposition to U.S. intervention than existed during the Vietnam War.

## BASIC TASKS OF UNITED FRONT

How can we channel this sentiment into a strong movement? Our demands should be clear ones, that large numbers can support. "End U.S. intervention in Central America" is such a demand. This

---

Adam Shils, Bulletin in Defense of Marxism editorial board member, gave this speech in Chicago on March 22. It was his presentation in a debate with Rusty Gilbert, of the Anti-Imperialist Group, on how socialists should work in the antiwar movement. It sums up our commitment to united front policies.

slogan both captures mass support and reflects our clear opposition to any and all forms of U.S. imperialist intervention in Central America and the Caribbean.

Our form of struggle should be one that can exert pressure on the ruling class; one that bases itself on the working class and its allies and that large numbers of trade unionists can and will participate in today--large scale street demonstrations.

Our structure should be a non-exclusionary one, bringing together all, whatever their views on any other issue, who wish to march down the street together to demand "No U.S. Intervention." Our structure should also be democratic -- mass, open meetings and conferences, not wheeling and dealing at the top.

Our movement must orient to those with the social power to end intervention--the U.S. working class. This is the way to build a strong united front that is independent of the Democratic Party, based on a clear anti-imperialist slogan, and can actually change the American political situation. Such a movement was built by the National Peace Action Coalition during the Vietnam War, in which the Socialist Workers Party played a central role in this process.

Journalist Neil Sheehan in his introduction to the New York Times edition of the Pentagon Papers said, "The restraints, the limits of action perceived, are what the body politic at home will tolerate and the fear of clashing with another major power, the Soviet Union or China." That's the bourgeoisie's way of saying that the political balance of forces determines what the ruling class is able to get away with.

I sense a feeling in the room-- shouldn't revolutionists be demanding something more? Is this enough? Let's now turn to this argument. Lenin saw the revolutionary party as the first of a system of cogs--each moving larger forces. The movement against U.S. intervention in Vietnam was an example of real aid to the world revolution. Our movement was able to change the balance of forces. What we did was a much greater aid to the world revolution than any amount of "anti-imperialist" propaganda in the U.S., though of course real anti-



imperialist and socialist propaganda is also important.

We must view the problem as internationalists. If the anti-Vietnam War movement had concentrated its efforts on anti-imperialist/socialist propaganda there might be two or three thousand more radicals in this country today. Compare that to the defeat of imperialism in Vietnam. One looms so much larger as to make further comparison a joke.

### MAKEUP OF THE UNITED FRONT

What about the participation of bourgeois forces in the anti-interventionist united front? Our movement should be focused around a slogan that defends the interests of Central American workers and peasants--end U.S. intervention. If some bourgeois figures will lend their support to a movement that objectively weakens their class, if their lending support strengthens our movement by making it easier to attract those who still have illusions in these bourgeois political figures, if we do not compromise the political basis of our movement in order to get such support, so much the better. There is no contradiction with socialist principles involved, no contradiction with common sense--only a contradiction for the bourgeois forces themselves.

Some may object that this orientation means making an alliance with trade union bureaucrats and reformists. This is absolutely true. The one small problem we have is that the mass of the American working class and oppressed follow these leaders. This is the whole basis for the united front--united action with workers and activists who follow reformists and trade union bureaucrats. Through this we can demonstrate why revolutionists have a practical, winning policy.

If Kirkland, Jackson, Harold Washington were not the leaders of the labor and Black movement we would have no problem. We would just organize a mass socialist movement. But they are. And we must build a movement that can draw those who follow them into action, drawing their followers into experiences and actions that can change their ideas profoundly, more so than any amount of radical leaflets and speeches.

This poses another problem: Is it possible in the U.S. today to build a strong movement, one of the cogs that we talked about earlier, around slogans such as those the Anti-Imperialist Group

(AIG) put forward for the Emergency National Conference in Cleveland last fall? Of course not. We would end up with only a handful.

### OVERALL SOCIALIST STRATEGY

Is all of this, the fight to build a united front around ending U.S. intervention, enough to defeat the trade union bureaucracy, to build a revolutionary movement that can achieve fundamental social change? Obviously not. A revolutionary party is needed to explain the entire situation, to organize those who want not only to end U.S. intervention in Central America but also the end of all oppression and the victory of the working class in the struggle for power.

Such a party must do more than just talk about why imperialism should be combatted. It must take up the key political questions of world politics, the key lessons of past debates in the workers' movement, and develop a program that can answer the questions of how to advance the interests of the working class in the imperialist countries; how to fight for proletarian democracy in the USSR, China, and the other bureaucratized workers' states; the development of the colonial revolution; why the working class is the key agency of social change and how one advances toward a revolutionary international today. In short, it means taking up the banner of revolutionary Marxism and the Fourth International.

Our perspective is to build a strong movement against U.S. intervention in Central America uniting all who can be united, while at the same time taking steps toward building a revolutionary party. These are different, but related tasks. Most of all, they are not in contradiction with each other. Those who confuse the two, or try to treat them as if they were one and the same, can only hinder both. The objectives of the AIG are too narrow to be the basis of a united front, yet they are too vague to constitute the program of a revolutionary party.

What does all this mean today? It means doing our utmost to make the April 20 demonstration a success. The very existence of this demonstration is a success for a mass action perspective, and we should all throw ourselves wholeheartedly into every aspect of building this demonstration. Building April 20! That's the key task today; one all should devote their energies to.



# THE SWP'S DISORIENTATION ON THE LABOR PARTY

by Jean Y. Tussey

Since 1938 the Socialist Workers Party has been the most conscious, consistent, and creative advocate of an independent labor party based on the trade unions. On the whole, the SWP has avoided the classic shortsighted errors of sectarianism and opportunism, of sideline critics and self-serving careerists, in its use of the labor party slogan.

The labor party has been explained as a concrete form of independent political action to protect workers' economic gains and their rights and unions from the overt and covert tactics and strategies of capitalist management designed to keep organized labor economically and politically powerless.

It has been presented, together with other timely and relevant parts of the SWP's transitional program for social change, as an alternative to the class collaborationist political programs which protect company profits rather than workers' jobs, income, social security, and democratic rights.

However, the current SWP political resolution, "The Revolutionary Perspective and Leninist Continuity in the United States" (see New International, Spring 1985, pp. 7-97), represents a serious break with revolutionary socialist perspectives and continuity on the crucial question for American workers today, the need for a labor party. The result can be disorientation both for those who support the SWP's basic goals and program for social change, and for those who must be convinced of the correctness of that program if it is to have any impact on the course of human events.

The labor party question needs to be singled out from other theoretical and programmatic revisions of the past five years by the current SWP administration for two reasons: 1) the objective situation in the class struggle in America requires clarity on what kind of independent political action is necessary and possible today; 2) the changes on the labor party question graphically demonstrate the effect of theoretical revision on a working class program for struggle.

The test of what the Socialist Workers Party has learned from the lega-

cy of more than fifty years of American Trotskyism is how it responds to the most urgent question being discussed throughout the working class and in the labor movement: "Why are we taking a beating and what can we do about it?"

This is the question around which the SWP and its members in industry and in their unions can earn -- or forfeit -- credibility. This is the test of every political current in the American working class today.

## THE UNION BUREAUCRACY'S APPROACH

The AFL-CIO Executive Council's answer was contained in a committee report at its February 1985 meeting, "The Changing Situation of Workers and Their Unions." The report "pin-pointed problems of rapid change, outlined a program to overcome them, and found 'the seeds for a resurgence of the labor movement,'" according to the March 2 AFL-CIO News.

"It sets forth a series of specific recommendations for renewed growth through innovative organizing strategies and techniques, new categories of membership, effective use of the media, stronger union structures, expanded services, and other steps to improve traditional union programs."

The report noted the "failure of federal laws to protect workers who exercise their right to organize." It also observed that unions now face employers who are bent on avoiding unionization at all costs and who are left largely free to do so by federal laws and enforcement bodies. But there is no attempt to explain why this is so. There is a glaring absence of any critical examination or discussion of the ineffectiveness of the labor leadership's political action program.

## RULING CLASS ADVICE

The class-conscious Wall Street Journal, in its February 21 issue, provided a more acute assessment of the problems facing the labor leadership. Under a succinct one-column headline-- "Realizing Their Power Has Eroded, Unions Try Hard to Change" -- staff writers observed:



"As the AFL-CIO's executive council meets this week in Bal Harbour, Fla., labor's leadership is doing some serious soul-searching. Stung by their own diminishing clout and the overwhelming defeat last fall of their favored presidential candidate, Walter Mondale, the labor chieftains will get a special report today on the changing nature of work and their own future role. The basic message: Unions must seek major innovations in the way they recruit, educate, and lead.

"For the ailing labor movement, retooling for the future may be less a matter of choice than one of survival."

After posing the dilemma of the labor bureaucracy, the Journal writers join the chorus of bourgeois comment, predictions, and advice to the unions on how to stay in business under capitalism by collaborating with employers to compel workers to accept more concessions to improve profitability.

Communist Party currents and the various social-democratic tendencies in the labor movement provide answers that are only variations on the liberal/labor theme of the need to reform capitalism by maneuvering within the Democratic Party.

#### REVOLUTIONARY ALTERNATIVE

In 1979 the Socialist Workers Party adopted a resolution which clearly explained that the American workers are taking a beating which can only continue and get worse as long as they remain chained, economically and politically, to the false capitalist theory that without private business profits there can be no jobs or democracy. The resolution also indicated that to stop the "beating" of the workers it is necessary to break the chains to form an independent labor party based on the unions to fight for the needs of working people today and to see to it that the revolutionary new technology and scientific advances guarantee the future of humanity, not its degradation and destruction.

"Building a Revolutionary Party of Socialist Workers" was the title and focus of the 1979 resolution. In that context it summed up the historically developed SWP position on the objective need for a labor party in the United States and the tasks of the Socialist Workers Party in helping bring it about. (See The Changing Face of U.S. Politics, edited by Jack Barnes and Steve Clark, Pathfinder, 1981, pp. 160-210.)

"Our labor party proposal," it said, "helps draw together the working-

class solutions we put forward around the threat of war, unemployment, inflation, race and sex discrimination, the energy crisis, and so on. It explains the kind of mass political vehicle workers and their allies need to put labor on the path toward fighting effectively for those solutions. It helps point to the goal of workers, not capitalists, organizing and governing society and implementing policies that benefit the great majority.

"To challenge the rulers' monopoly over governmental power, or even defend the immediate interests of the workers, a narrow trade union framework is by itself increasingly insufficient. From the time of Marx, socialists have explained that the fight for a shorter workweek, to cite just one example, is a political fight. It cannot be effectively conducted through union action alone --least of all if the unions are tied to the parties of the employing class, which squeezes profits from lengthening the workweek. The same is true of the fight for other immediate, democratic, and transitional demands....

"Thus the SWP election campaign explains that a labor party based on the unions is a pressing objective need of American working people.

"Socialists do not call for a labor party as a substitute for specific action proposals to defend workers from the antilabor onslaught. Strikes, demonstrations, and other forms of mass action are indispensable in advancing the interests of labor and its allies. But through these struggles, trade unionists are confronted with the need for independent political organization and action."

"It is impossible to understand or to combat the class collaborationism of the union bureaucracy without grappling with its political expression....

"A powerful base for a labor party already exists: the unions. They have millions of members, established newspapers, and financial resources. They have more of a ready-made base than either the Democratic or Republican parties had at the time of their founding in the nineteenth century. It's a realistic perspective.

"A labor party will not come into being simply because it is objectively needed, however, or because it already has a potential organized base. Some section of the union movement, a vanguard, must act to get a labor party started....

"The first steps toward a labor party can occur ... as an independent



labor campaign based on a particular union or union local, or in a particular city. Yet if such an initiative has a clear perspective, it will have the potential to set an example that can spread to other unions and other parts of the country....

"A revolutionary working-class party cannot be built in this country apart from the fight for a class-struggle left wing in the unions, which includes the perspective of an independent labor party [my emphasis--J.Y.T.]. Workers who support the labor party idea today will be attracted to the SWP as the most vocal and clear-sighted advocate of independent working-class political action. The actual initiation of a labor party would dramatically shift the relationship of class forces in this country, opening the way to more rapid growth of the revolutionary-socialist party."

The resolution's concluding section reaffirmed the SWP's confidence that "the American workers can defeat the capitalist war drive, the austerity and antilabor offensive, and crackdown on rights. They can win governmental power and use it to organize the revolutionary transformation of society on a socialist basis."

It expressed the optimistic perspective that "The Socialist Workers Party is well on the road to becoming a party composed in its vast majority of worker-Bolshevik cadres who will earn the respect and confidence of the working class and its allies in the most important class battles in history. We will contribute to the arsenal of our class the lessons of the revolutionary workers' movement handed down by Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Trotsky and the legacy of uncompromising political clarity and leadership in class combat of more than fifty years of American Trotskyism."

Further: "The cadres of the Fourth International -- armed with the program, strategy, and methods of the Transitional Program, and determined to build proletarian parties to lead the workers to political power in each country--have an irreplaceable role to play in resolving the crisis of working-class leadership by helping to forge a mass international party out of the revolutionary parties and currents that have arisen and that will continue to arise as the global class struggle accelerates."

#### A DIFFERENT OUTLOOK

The January 1985 political resolution of the Socialist Workers Party,

"The Revolutionary Perspective and Leninist Continuity in the United States," presents a totally different picture. Exuding pessimism from every pore, it reverses the positive perspectives in the 1979 resolution on everything from the capacity of the working class in this country to change the relationship of forces in the class struggle to the validity of the program, role, and tasks of the Socialist Workers Party and the Fourth International of which it is a sympathizing section.

The 1985 resolution records a retreat from the party's revolutionary socialist perspective and Leninist-Trotskyist contributions for the United States, to strange non-Marxist concepts of spontaneity that provide no clear guide for action to transform the unions nor for building a revolutionary party of socialist workers.

The resolution opens with the defeatist assessment that "a growing number of class battles, combined over time with a deepening social crisis, uprisings in the colonial and semicolonial countries, and imperialist wars will transform politics and the labor movement in this country. We have entered the initial stages of a preparatory period, which will lead in coming decades to a prerevolutionary upheaval marked by revolutionary struggles of a kind that workers and farmers in the United States have not waged in more than a century" (emphasis added).

The reason for this dim view of the prospects for the American revolution?

"Combative workers see no political perspective that bridges the gap between today's conditions and the qualitatively changed situation in which the revolutionary battles will be fought that will culminate in the establishment of a workers' and farmers' government in the United States."

However, the schema continues, "as young workers go through experiences in struggle of setbacks and advances, of victories and defeats under those radically altered conditions, a growing number will acquire revolutionary combat experience and their consciousness will be transformed. A new class-conscious vanguard will emerge. ... These workers will carve out [sic] a class-struggle left wing within the labor movement. They will chart a course toward transforming the unions from instruments of class collaboration with the employers and their government into instruments of revolutionary struggle for the interests of working people of city and countryside, and of all the oppressed," the resolution predicts.



"Under these conditions, and only under these conditions, will the mass revolutionary working-class party be built that is needed to lead the struggle for a workers' and farmers' government."

What does the Socialist Workers Party do in the meantime?

"Opportunities are being created for the Socialist Workers Party to influence a still small but important layer of the working class and the labor movement, and to recruit to the party the most politically conscious workers. This deepening proletarianization and political education of the party is decisive not only in rising to today's challenges and meeting its pressures, but in preparing for what is coming."

What is coming?

"As the social and political situation heads toward a showdown, life under capitalism will become more and more intolerable. Working people will wage mighty class battles, which will be met by the rise of mass fascist movements and a drive toward dictatorial solutions by the rulers. Under such conditions, tens of millions among the oppressed will turn for leadership to a proletarian party with a strategy to lead the workers and farmers to conquer power by whatever means necessary."

To prepare for such a grim perspective, obviously, a transitional program for a class-struggle left wing and serious advocacy of an independent labor party based on the untransformed unions are not needed, so they are unceremoniously dumped.

Instead, the concept of a labor party is disposed of in a polemic against the "Stranglehold of Electoralism."

"In order to represent a real step forward for labor and its allies," we are told, "independent working-class political action cannot be reduced to a question of organizational separation from the Democratic and Republican parties."

While "support for the candidates of the two capitalist parties is one of the primary forms taken by class-collaborationist politics at election time," a labor party alternative to the two capitalist parties is not too important since "this is only a small part of the trap of electoralism."

Similarly, "the emergence of a labor party with a reformist program in the United States would place a new barrier in the path of independent working-class political action," we are told. "But the fight to form a labor party here can be bypassed only at the

peril of heading off into a sectarian dead end, removed from the line of march of the U.S. working class. And a refusal by Marxists to organize this fight would increase the odds that a labor party would not develop as a revolutionary vehicle."

## GUIDE TO INACTION

What, then, is a Marxist to do?

Unfortunately, the 1985 "Revolutionary Perspective" resolution is a lengthy guide to why Marxists should not do any of the things the 1979 resolution said rather than to what they should do; for example:

1979: "When socialist candidates speak before powerfully organized components of the industrial unions, they explain that a labor party is a realistic and necessary step that could begin in this union, in this city, and today. When the union misleaders claim that the only realistic course is to support a Democrat, they are holding back the use of union power, just as they do on the shop floor and at the bargaining table.

"Our candidates explain to Blacks, Latinos, women, farmers, antinuclear activists, and others how the goals they are fighting for could be advanced if the labor movement broke from the parties of the exploiters and struck out on an independent political course. We explain how it is in their interests to champion this idea and propose it to the unions, as they solicit support for their struggles."

1985: "Our socialist election campaigns are an important political tool to help advance class consciousness by explaining the need for independent political action of labor and its allies...."

"The elections provide a platform from which to explain our revolutionary perspectives and proposals to working people. We help spread the truth that genuine social change will not be brought about through the elections."

In a subsection labeled "Strategy for independent working-class political action" the resolution inadvertently reveals why the SWP is not succeeding in building a party of socialist workers despite its occupational turn to industry.

"What is most difficult for broad layers of our co-workers and other working people to accept as realistic about our political strategy today is not the need for a mass independent Black party or labor party based on the unions, but the revolutionary task we propose for such an independent Black party or labor party."



Instead of trying to convince co-workers, therefore, to break with the Democratic and Republican parties, SWPers "need to explain that the labor movement can lead its allies in the fight to take power out of the hands of the exploiters and establish a government of the exploited classes."

The example of the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions will help co-workers "understand the kind of mass Black party and labor party that the working people in this country need, because they will better understand what such a party will have to accomplish."

In the SWP's 1985 concept of the labor party, what's true is not new, and what's new is not true. It is untrue that a break from the Democratic and Republican parties through the formation of an independent labor party based on today's unions would not be a major advance in class consciousness toward revolutionary consciousness by the American workers.

It is wrong (in the Marxist historical materialist view) to tell industrial workers in the United States to give up their political heritage from the Revolutionary War for independence and the Civil War that ended chattel slavery; that a labor party without a clear program for a revolutionary workers' and farmers' government is a bourgeois electoralist trap and an obstacle to "real" independent political action. It is especially unrealistic to tell

Black workers who have fought so hard so recently to assert their democratic right to vote that an independent Black party without a revolutionary program would not help shatter "the two-party capitalist monopoly."

It is incorrect to substitute for the transitional program and method the pragmatic and vulgar materialist notion that North American industrial workers will have to continue to take a beating until they are reduced to conditions analogous to those of the Nicaraguans under Somoza or the Cubans under Batista before they will "acquire revolutionary combat experience and their consciousness will be transformed."

Leninist continuity, above all, calls for the American workers, like the Russian workers and peasants, the Cubans, and the Sandinistas to look to the real conditions of capitalist decay and relationship of forces in their own country and the lessons of their own history in developing the specific program, strategy, and tactics, and the organizations necessary to advance their international class interests in solidarity with the workers of the world.

For the Socialist Workers Party to help fill the vacuum of leadership that retards the revolutionary process, it must return from the revisionist detour of theoretical backsliding and sectarian rhetoric and abstentionism. It must return to the tasks and perspectives of building a revolutionary party of socialist workers.

#### PREPARATORY WORK ON THE CAMPUSES

I bet if a statistical record could be made, a large percentage of their [the American Communist Party's] most dynamic and influential people [in the unions of the 1930s] had had some experience on the colleges, as well as in the Unemployed Councils.

I always think of that whenever I hear this chatter of the sectarian groups who make a hue and cry about leaving the campus and getting into the factories. Theoretically, it's all right in the long run, because you certainly can't make a revolution on the campuses. For one reason, they don't have the industrial power. But workers recruited and convinced of the historical trend toward socialism and committed to it -- and who have also had the benefit of a college education and experience in college organizations -- can become very effective leaders in the mass movement of the workers....

I think we should think of our work on the campuses as preparatory work for the coming upsurge of the workers movement, in which the people who were recruited and trained as socialists can play a great role.

From an interview with James P. Cannon, "Youth and the Socialist Movement," March 15, 1974, reprinted in James P. Cannon, A Political tribute (Pathfinder Press, 1974)



## SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

### The SWP vs History: Women's Role in Labor Struggles

by Laura Cole

Rereading the "'Gender gap' myth" section of the SWP 1985 political resolution (New International, Spring 1985, pp. 69-71), I am reminded of My Fair Lady's Henry Higgins: "Women are irrational; that's all there is to that. Their heads are full of cotton, wool and rags." Left to their own devices, stuck at home with the kids, in "mind-deadening isolation," unable "to participate in working-class organizations and class battles out of which progressive ideas are formed," women are more likely than men to get taken in by the likes of Jerry Falwell, for the resolution claims that "a higher percentage of women than of men are susceptible to reactionary 'solutions' and right-wing demagogy, which is aimed against the class interests of the proletariat."

Maybe if more of them had to work for a living, instead of just sitting around all day painting their nails and watching TV, they'd shape up. But, as the document says, "they are less likely than men to have the opportunity to work a job," so there's not much hope for them in that direction. Some of them do drift in and out of jobs, or take one on part-time, but that doesn't get anyone anywhere. They are "still denied opportunities equal to men to participate in the unions or to learn from and be part of the class struggle against the employers on the job." I don't see why working part-time in a low-paying job should keep women from being class conscious, but I guess that just shows how backward women must be.

Then finally the document makes a big point about how "unless the workers' movement puts forward ... a program answering the needs of the masses of women, ... even working-class women will either be mobilized on the side of reaction ... [or] neutralized as potential supporters of the proletariat." Makes it seem like women don't even have sense enough to know what class they've been born into or how to take their struggle into their own hands. However, there is hope, for with more and more women out there working, "the bosses are less able

than in the past to mobilize support among wives and families of union members for 'back to work' movements during strikes." [Emphasis added.]

I have to confess, though, I do get a little confused by some of this. For week after week I've been reading in the Militant about the British miners' strike and how the wives and families of the miners not only supported the strikers, but went on speaking tours -- all over the world! -- to keep that strike going. The articles did say that this was something new for those women, that in the past their support had been more traditional, but they didn't say that in the past women generally had urged their husbands back to work.

International Viewpoint, the bi-weekly magazine published by the Fourth International, described the role these wives and mothers played as follows: "Because of the tight knit communities in which the miners and their families live, the women have in fact played an active role in supporting previous strikes. Even during the 1926 general strike, the women were organized in support. And in the 1972 and 1974 miners' strikes the women were organized, but as many point out now this was only to work in the kitchens or to help with the food parcels. In this strike everything is very different." (3/11/85, p. 14)

And the New York Times (12/4/84) quoted a scab on what kept some of the strikers out: "They're frightened. My mate, who's done 35 years down in the pit, he's frightened. His wife says if he goes back to work she'll leave him."

But perhaps these women and what they do are not typical. What other evidence is there that women historically had a sense of working class consciousness and loyalty? Alice Kessler-Harris, in (catch this title) Women Have Always Worked (The Feminist Press, 1981) says, "In mixed unions of men and women, women often led men in militant actions. Iowa cigar makers reported in 1899 that some striking men had resumed work, while the women were standing pat. Female boot and shoe workers in Massachusetts in 1905



were reported to be tough bargainers. 'It is harder to induce women to compromise,' said their president, 'they are more likely to hold out to the bitter end...to obtain exactly what they want.' ...When 20,000 mostly young Jewish women walked out of New York City's garment shops over the initial objections of the male union leadership, predictions that they could not hold out abounded. With the help of the publicity generated by the Women's Trade Union League, they maintained ranks for three long months. By then most manufacturers had signed union contracts and the 'girls' breathed life into the floundering International Ladies Garment Workers Union." (p.91) (Imagine if NOW had mounted a campaign to help the families of striking miners in Great Britain -- sparked by activist SWP/NOW members.)

Of course, those were women workers, not wives. But remember Labor's Giant Step by Art Preis (Pathfinder Press, 1972)? He seemed to think women played an important role in supporting the 1934 truckers' strike in Minneapolis. "From the start, the strike leaders summoned the whole working-class populace to their support. The very active unemployed organization responded at once. A [Local] 574 Women's Auxiliary, with a large membership, plunged into the strike, doing everything from secretarial work and mimeographing, to running the huge strike kitchen and manning picket trucks." (p. 25)

Then I recently read an article by Carole Turbin about how the predominantly female laundry and collar workers union supported the male ironworkers union in Troy, N.Y. (a major industrial city in the 19th century) by scheduling strikes sequentially. Thus there was always a section of the population earning wages and bringing money into the working community. In fact, her research suggests that although the women in Troy, like most women, worked part-time or temporarily, they nevertheless spent their lives in and out of the workforce and always considered themselves part of the working class and the working class community, even when they were home being wives and mothers. ("Working Women in Troy, 1860-1890," Review of Radical Political Economics, Vol. 16, No. 1, Spring 1984.)

It is not my intention to romanti-

cize women, whether working in the home or for wages. Unquestionably, women as well as men have sometimes lacked courage, loyalty, or wisdom. But why should a political statement, which is the basis for projected work, raise only base, pessimistic generalities about women and none of the proud, optimistic ones?

A review of Militant articles seems to reveal a double standard about women's revolutionary potential. In a Sept. 21, 1984 column, for example, Andrea Gonzalez discussed the situation of women in the Dominican Republic as follows: "It is not surprising that women should enter the struggle today in a big way. Working class and peasant women are among the hardest hit by the austerity program.... In the cities, women workers are concentrated in the restaurants, bars, and light industry where they have no protection from the bosses...."

"In a country where only 13 percent of the work force is unionized, the development of a women's rights movement serves to raise women's consciousness on the importance of unions and opens the door to fight to organize those industries where women are concentrated.

"The organization of women is most advanced in the countryside. The process of organizing rural women was begun more than 20 years ago by the government, the church, and imperialist organizations like the Agency for International Development (AID).

"The aims of these early organizations was to reinforce the traditional role of women in order to create a bastion of reaction in the countryside. But this effort failed. [Emphasis added.]

"The capitalist crisis in the rural areas has increasingly caused the pauperization of the peasants. More women have gotten jobs outside the home. Today, 50 percent of rural women work in agriculture, mainly in temporary jobs during planting and harvesting."

If women in the Dominican Republic are able to "enter the struggle in a big way" even though they work in marginal industries or at temporary jobs, and are appealed to by the forces of reaction, why is the potential of the American woman working in a similar situation dismissed? Has the SWP fallen victim to the media projection of women as generally mindless, middleclass consumers?



# BEHIND THE CRISIS OF LEADERSHIP IN THE SWP

## 1. The Historical and Political Roots

by Frank Lovell

Revolutionary socialism in the United States is represented by the Socialist Workers Party, a sympathizing section of the Fourth International, along with expelled members who seek readmission and are presently organized in separate groups as the Fourth Internationalist Tendency and Socialist Action. From the moment of its founding in 1938 the SWP has embodied the programmatic and organizational principles of Marxism as developed and applied by Lenin and Trotsky in the 1917 Russian revolution. It was founded in the struggle against the counterrevolutionary bureaucracy in the Soviet Union and for the organization of an international socialist movement. This struggle was organized and led by Trotsky after the death of Lenin. Trotsky considered the founding of the Fourth International in 1938 his greatest achievement. After his assassination by an agent of the Soviet bureaucracy in 1940, the SWP in collaboration with revolutionists throughout the world continued the work of building the international movement begun by Trotsky.

Despite government persecution during World War II the SWP survived and gained influence in the wartime unions. In the postwar resurgence of union militancy the party grew rapidly both in influence and numbers as a vanguard organization. Its weekly newspaper, The Militant, quickly built up a large subscription list. But with the receding tide of union militancy in 1947 and the onset of the government-inspired witch-hunt the SWP, like other radical organizations, suffered losses in membership and influence. Nevertheless, through sustained activity in civil liberties and civil rights struggles the SWP was the first of the radical parties to recover from the adversities of the witch-hunt period.

---

Readers are invited to submit articles or letters about the questions raised in this two-part discussion article. The second part, "The Loss of Confidence and the Abandonment of Marxism," will be printed next month.

The SWP was in the forefront of the struggle in this country to defend the Cuban revolution, and in so doing it attracted some of the radicalizing youth of that time who were influenced by the events in Cuba. As a result the party was then in a position to become the leading political participant in the student uprisings and early anti-Vietnam War demonstrations of the 1960s.

At the conclusion of U.S. military intervention in Vietnam and with the victory of Vietnamese revolutionary forces in 1975, the SWP had become the most prominent of the major political currents in the U.S. radical movement. It reached its growth peak in 1977. But at this point a new economic and political mood was beginning to take hold in the capitalist world, and this would generally affect the labor and radical movements in this country, the SWP in particular.

### THE NEW LEADERSHIP ARRIVES

By the time of the 1974-75 world economic depression and the coincidental defeat of U.S. imperialism in Vietnam, the youthful SWP recruits of the 1960s had graduated to positions of party leadership. They had acquired organizational and political experience in the antiwar movement and had tested their abilities in organizing and leading the Young Socialist Alliance. They looked forward with confidence to the coming radicalization of the U.S. working class and a new resurgence of the union movement. They inaugurated a "turn to industry" at the 1975 party convention. But the radicalization did not happen in the way they expected it would, and not as quickly as they thought it should.

After a brief period of organizational experimentation with new forms of party branches (small community units), schematized union colonization, and poorly conceived national campaigns (in defense of school busing and other civil rights issues), the new generation of party leaders headed by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes began to look around to see what was wrong. A decline



in party membership began in 1978, just at the time when prospects of party growth appeared brightest. The party was unable to attract and assimilate working class youth, and by this time the leadership had stopped paying much attention to young people in the high schools and colleges.

Shortly thereafter the party leadership began to question the revolutionary potential of decisive sectors of the working class. The white workers in basic industry showed no perceptible signs of radicalization. Even though the U.S. economy in 1978 was in a downward spiral, with interest rates and unemployment climbing, the Carter administration urging its "partners" in the unions to hold the line on wages, a bipartisan attack on "big labor" gaining momentum in Congress, and the emergence of an organized farm movement to protest high interest rates and low grain prices, still there was no massive fight-back movement among the organized sector of the working class. The unions remained dormant in the face of the mounting anti-union offensive by the employing class.

At this juncture the SWP leadership decided that what the party needed was a general shakedown and testing of the cadres. This took the form of what was later described officially as "the second stage" of the turn to industry: to arbitrarily concentrate all rank-and-file members in a few selected industrial unions, and to create national fractions in those unions that would carry out the party's political campaigns. This perspective was adopted at a meeting of the National Committee in February 1978 and endorsed by the 1979 convention. The stated anticipation at the time was that those who emerged as leaders of the newly created national industrial fractions would soon become the secondary leaders of the party, replacing some on the National Committee who were then serving as functionaries in the party's educational, publications, and financial departments, or in other "non-industrial" capacities.

#### WORLD EVENTS IMPINGE

Other things happened in 1979 that would have a profound effect on the future of the SWP. In February the shah of Iran was dethroned and driven out. In March a revolutionary group on the island of Grenada replaced the corrupt neocolonial regime there. And in July the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua was finally overthrown. These world-shaking

events, coming in rapid succession in different corners of the globe, again interjected into world politics the smoldering force generated by the second imperialist war: the colonial revolution. For the anti-imperialist struggle 1979 was another banner year.

One of the distinguishing characteristics of the post-World War II period is the decline of imperialist rule in the colonial world and the series of successful colonial revolutions. This process began in China in 1949 when Chiang Kai-shek's puppet government was driven out. It spread to Korea and the U.S. military invasion in 1950-52 was unable to reverse it. It erupted again in the victories in Cuba in 1959 and in Algeria in 1962. And again in 1979 colonial uprisings and revolts were bringing down old regimes and installing new governments of workers and peasants.

U.S. imperialism has been enmeshed in these colonial uprisings and revolutions since 1945 when the most devastating war in history was ended by the barbaric explosion of the atomic bomb over Hiroshima. The colonial revolution came with the military victory. It is part of the spoils the U.S. rulers reaped. For 40 years they have spent their military energy and stretched their diplomatic credibility in vain efforts to extinguish the fires of colonial revolt.

The colonial revolution is fanned by the inherent contradictions of the capitalist system, not all of which are directly connected to the dependency of the underdeveloped sector of the world on the industrial centers. The ever present economic and political crises in colonial and semicolonial countries, particularly in Latin America, are aggravated and often caused by monetary instability and commodity overproduction in the imperialist countries. These are the insoluble contradictions of the capitalist mode of production and distribution. The U.S. government and its economic advisers, in all succeeding administrations from Truman to Reagan, imagined that these contradictions in the capitalist system would disappear if only the colonial revolution could be made to disappear. They devote major time and attention to this problem.

Organizers and conscious political leaders within the working class everywhere in the world have been strongly influenced by the post-World War II colonial revolution as it flared up and spread from Asia to Africa to Latin America. The organized labor and radical movements in the U.S. and Europe have



responded in different ways. The Social Democrats have not understood the colonial revolution much better or differently than the capitalists have, even though they sometimes express sympathy rather than hostility. The Soviet bureaucracy and their sycophantic Stalinist-type parties in the capitalist world also fear and distrust the colonial revolution because it disrupts Soviet economic and diplomatic relations with world imperialism more often than not, and it is always an unpredictable factor in their overall strategy "for the peaceful coexistence of capitalism and socialism."

Of the three major working class political currents, only revolutionary socialists hailed the colonial revolution, supported it without reservation, and sought to extend it in every way possible. The Fourth International was founded to extend the revolution that began in Russia throughout the colonial world and to bring down the governments of imperialist oppression. In the industrial countries all sections of the FI identify their struggles against capitalist injustice at home with the struggles of colonial peoples against the crimes of imperialism abroad. The bonds of international solidarity within the FI are strengthened by successful colonial revolutions. The International has gained ideological and organizational influence in the working class movement throughout the world as a result, but not without prolonged ideological struggle to understand and explain the dynamics of these revolutions.

#### IDEOLOGICAL CLARIFICATION

The understanding and assistance that derives from the study and application of Marxist methodology did not automatically accompany the victories of the colonial revolution. The war had changed almost everything. The world of 1945 was vastly different from 1939 when Hitler's legions began their march across Europe. The victories of the colonial revolution occurred with different social and political forces involved than had been present in the 1917 Russian revolution, triggered by the first world war. In addition, the victories, occurring separately and at intervals of one and two decades, were different. They did not seem to follow the same pattern despite their similarities with the Russian precedent and with each other. The Chinese revolution in 1949 was led by the Stalinized Communist Party of China despite the opposition of

the Stalinist bureaucracy in the Soviet Union. The Cuban revolution a decade later was led by Fidel Castro and Cuban nationalists completely independent of the Stalinist CP in Cuba.

All great historic developments that bring such profound changes in the economic, social, political, and military relations among the nations of the world as these did are bound to force those who aspire to replace the world capitalist system to rethink earlier concepts and to understand the latest events. Such reviews of history and theory produced differences of understanding and opinion, and organizational differences leading to splits in the major political currents of the working class and to the fracturing of the radical movement in most countries. This was especially the case in the U.S. where the radical movement was weakest and already fragmented.

The first responses of U.S. radicalism to the Chinese revolution were a rash of ultraleft sects, claiming to understand the Maoist prescription for revolutionary success and to be disciples of Chairman Mao. With the rise of the civil rights movement, the youth radicalization, and the emergence of the women's liberation movement throughout the 1960s, the radical elements were strongly influenced by Maoism. The "new left" phenomenon, limited largely to university students, rejected as old fashioned the "Marxism" of the 1930s (Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism) and embraced the new Maoism of many forms and expressions.

Beginning in the mid-1950s, gaining ground after the 1956 Khrushchev revelations of Stalin's crimes, and extending through the 1960s and 1970s, the SWP came to be generally recognized among liberals and independent radicals as the most viable organization in the U.S. radical movement. One reason was the way the SWP seriously undertook to understand and explain in Marxist terms the post-World War II colonial revolution. The leading educators and theoreticians of the SWP were uniquely equipped to do this because they were armed with Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution which explains the general laws governing the relationship of class forces in the revolutionary process leading to the transference of power from the bourgeoisie to the working class. This essentially educational undertaking was initiated by the Fourth International, and its form in the beginning was a discussion and debate within the FI on the meaning of the Chinese revolution



and the nature of the new Chinese state.

The Chinese revolution presented serious theoretical problems for Marxists to think about and try to solve. In the first place the Chinese revolution was not led by a party that consciously represented the historic interests of the working class, and that proclaimed a socialist program. That is how the Russian revolution developed under the leadership of the Bolshevik party.

The leaders of the Russian revolution, Lenin and Trotsky foremost among them, had taught that proletarian revolutions are very unlikely to succeed without the conscious leadership of a socialist vanguard party. One of the basic conditions of success, Trotsky wrote, is "a clear program and a firm leadership of the proletarian vanguard."

The Chinese revolution seemed to disprove that contention. Here a predominantly peasant army, led by Mao's organization which was thoroughly Stalinist in its ideology, had brought down the government of the reactionary Chiang Kai-shek who had the support of U.S. imperialism. Moreover the victors came to power proclaiming a capitalist program for the future development of China. How could this lead to the establishment of a workers' state, however deformed from birth?

This question was not resolved soon. The debates over this and other questions led to splits in the FI. The answer had to be given by further developments in China and by the advance of the colonial revolution in other countries. The discussion and further understanding of these events continued, and not only within the ranks of the FI. The revolutionary process became the subject of intense debate in the entire radical movement. This was especially so after the successful Cuban revolution because the facts were better known, the course of the revolutionary development clearer, and the desire to discover the secret of success and spread the revolution more intense.

Throughout the years of study and debate over the colonial revolutions and their relation to the capitalist system and to the U.S. government, a preoccupation of radicals at the universities in the 1960s and 1970s, the SWP was a contributing participant. The weekly publications The Militant and Intercontinental Press, the monthly magazine International Socialist Review, and a series of books by Pathfinder Press developed and presented to the radical public the positions of the SWP on the questions under debate and the nature of

the debate itself. The SWP was, of course, interested in the organizational conclusions and how these would affect the work of revolutionary parties here and elsewhere. It published the resolutions adopted by the party and by the congresses of the FI. Among the books it published were Dynamics of the Cuban Revolution by Joseph Hansen and The Leninist Strategy of Party Building, also by Hansen.

This body of published material, along with the basic writings of Lenin and Trotsky, constituted the programmatic and theoretical grounding of the SWP. But the 1979 revolutions in Iran, Grenada, and Nicaragua, occurring at a time of economic crisis and social instability in the U.S., had a profoundly different effect upon the SWP and its new leadership than any previous events. The reason was the failure of the U.S. working class to respond as anticipated by these impatient leaders, in contrast to the inspiring advances in the nearby Caribbean basin. It was hard for them to understand why the workers in this country were not challenging their capitalist tormentors here when puppet governments of the U.S. ruling class were being overthrown next door. Confidence in the revolutionary potential of the slow-moving working class in the citadel of world imperialism was shaken, just as was the case with an earlier generation of "communist leaders" who opted for Stalinism when the working class movement in this country seemed to falter in the 1920s.

## THE ROLE OF CASTROISM

The victories in Grenada and Nicaragua came at a time when the Barnes leadership had already begun to reevaluate all their previous positions, especially their understanding of the Cuban revolution and its ramifications in the Caribbean and in Central America. The successes of the Castro government in Cuba for 20 years and Castro's influence in the colonial world seemed like living proof that Castroism represented a new political current in the working class movement more viable than any other. It had inspired the Grenadian and Nicaraguan revolutions, and insured their victory.

The program and practices of the Fourth International were seen to be less successful (and less attractive) than the bold thrusts organized by Castroist "revolutionists of action." At the 1979 world congress of the FI Barnes



and others in the SWP delegation disguised their doubts about the program, organizational concepts, and leadership of the International. They criticized some organizational practices of the FI leadership, urged a "turn to industry" as the central task of all sections (adopted by the congress), and expressed an abstentionist attitude toward the work of the International.

In less than a year, at the beginning of 1980, the previously projected SWP "leadership school" was launched. Its purpose, according to Barnes, was "to really learn Marxism, absorb it in a way not possible in previous periods." One year later these newly trained "Marxists" were prepared to intimate publicly for the benefit of alert party members that "the international working class has no mass international organization with a revolutionary Marxist perspective," noting that "all parties that attended the world congress of the Fourth International in 1979, including the SWP, remained small propaganda organizations." This, of course, was no new revelation. It was a well-known matter-of-fact statement. But this statement of well-known fact served a new purpose: to shift the SWP's focus away from the FI to the undefined "process of forging closer links with the developing revolutionary currents in Central America and the Caribbean." In retrospect it is now clear that the scheme to repudiate Trotskyism was secretly prepared long in advance of the 1981 SWP convention.

#### DOUBTS AND BLUNDERS

Programmatic doubts lead to organizational blunders. This combination threw the Barnes leadership into a deep quandary, prompting a search for self-identity and new role models. The result within the SWP was an attempt to prepare the party for drastic changes without first defining these changes or trying to understand the consequences. Contending political tendencies began to find expression within the broader leadership of the party.

These tendencies were represented at the 1981 convention, the differences being largely confined to the characterization of Castroist politics. The majority tendency represented by Barnes argued, mostly by implication, that Castroism was the same as revolutionary Marxism. Convention sentiment concurred in this assessment. However, the leaders of this tendency concealed the full scope of their new thinking until after the convention.

At the convention they were mainly interested in purging the National Committee of all members who were regarded as potential opponents of the planned revision of the party's program. Every one of those purged were supporters at that time of the majority's characterization of Castroist politics. But some of them later became oppositionists when they discovered what the orientation to Castroism really entailed.

The planned repudiation of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution was initiated -- in stages -- immediately after the 1981 convention through a campaign to make the study of Leninist thought the party's central project in the next period. Public notice that Marxist theory was under attack came in November 1981 when the Militant published an article by its editor on the anniversary of the 1917 Russian revolution, counterposing Lenin to Trotsky and endorsing Lenin's discarded governmental concept of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry.

#### THE BUREAUCRATIC METHOD

Having gained control of the party apparatus at the 1981 convention the Barnes leadership, operating as an undeclared faction in the National Committee, moved swiftly to outlaw opposition tendencies in the party. It then deprived the party membership of open discussion and debate on the programmatic changes it had introduced.

Unsure of what would develop in a preconvention discussion, it arbitrarily postponed the constitutionally required national convention in 1983. At the same time it bureaucratically expelled the four opposition members of the National Committee on fictitious charges.

At the start of 1984 the Barnes faction purged the membership of more than 100 suspected oppositionists, decimating the ranks of the party and crippling it organizationally as well as programmatically. Such was the depleted condition of revolutionary socialism in the U.S. at the time of the 1984 presidential campaign, a result of the combined effects of the anti-labor offensive of the employing class and the loss of confidence in the will and ability of the working class to fight back. A section of the vanguard, the majority leadership of the SWP, had given up and placed its hope for the future in another leadership.

Subscribe to: **Bulletin in Defense of Marxism**



## FROM THE ARSENAL OF MARXISM

### How the Early SWP Fought to Save the Refugees from Nazism

The Abandonment of the Jews: America and the Holocaust 1941-1945 by David S. Wyman (Pantheon, 1984) is the latest study showing how the U.S. and British governments and ruling classes turned their backs on the Jewish victims of Nazism, with the complicity of most Jewish organizations and leaders of that period.

But there were voices raised and battles fought in this country, even before World War II began, to help the victims and refugees from the Hitlerite terror by opening the doors of the United States for their asylum. Prominent in this campaign was the newly founded Socialist Workers Party, which worked to mobilize labor and liberal support for pressure on Washington to admit the refugees. Examples of their work, cited below, are taken from the Socialist Appeal (as the SWP newspaper was then called), Nov. 26, 1938, shortly after a mass pogrom known as "Krystallnacht" had been carried out in Germany.

In Minneapolis, the Appeal reported, the executive board of General Drivers Union Local 544 adopted a resolution to strengthen the drive to lower U.S. immigration restrictions so as to permit asylum for the hounded refugees from fascism in Europe. This important Teamsters local, which was led by SWP members and supporters, called on President Roosevelt to back up his expressions of sympathy with real aid to the refugees. The resolution said:

"The working thousands enrolled under the general banner of General Drivers Union Local 544 extend their keen sympathy to the victims of the repulsive and abominable fascist terror in Germany.

"Fascism is the most reactionary form of capitalism. The senseless cruelty of these outrages demands more than sympathetic statements. The people of the world must study conditions in order to root out the causes for such pogroms as are now being let loose daily in Central Europe. They come only when the working class of people see their organizations destroyed and become enslaved. Such outrages inflicted upon helpless minorities have never happened where a strong independent labor movement exists to defend human rights."

Another article in the same issue had an interview with Carl Skoglund,

president of Local 544. A founder of the SWP and the Fourth International, he was quoted as saying:

"I am fully in accord with your demand that America's doors be opened to these victims of race hatred.

"As the workers increasingly engage in struggle against the employing class, there will undoubtedly be a systematic attempt made to incite racial hatred. Anti-Semitism and anti-Catholicism will be part of the arsenal of American fascism. We see this already in Minneapolis, where the Silver Shirts are organizing, combining anti-Semitism with anti-unionism. Our union is ready to fight this reactionary movement with every means at our command. We have organized a Union Defense Guard for this purpose, which is engaged in rooting out fascist activities wherever they can be unearthed."

A third article in the same Appeal reported a promising development among unemployed workers who, according to capitalist propaganda, would be deprived of jobs if the immigration bars to refugees from Europe should be lowered. In Newark, N.J., the joint executive committee of the Workers Alliance of Essex County, representing thousands of organized unemployed, refused to swallow the capitalist propaganda. It unanimously adopted a resolution (introduced by George Breitman, an SWP member) calling on "the U.S. Congress and Roosevelt to open the doors of America to the refugees from Nazism. The resolution demanded that all quota restrictions be lifted for all refugees from fascist countries." The article concluded by saying that the Workers Alliance's action "demonstrated that the jobless are becoming increasingly wise to the fact that it is capitalism and the capitalists who are responsible for taking the jobs away from millions of American workers, and not other workers. Barring the refugees from America will not give the unemployed jobs.

"Organizing the workers to fight for the opening of the shut down factories, for huge public works, for housing projects, for the reduction of the work-day and work-week with no reductions in weekly earnings--these are the things which will provide jobs for American jobless and the refugees as well."



## 'READING LENIN'

by George Breitman

Lenin's Struggle for a Revolutionary International. Documents: 1907-1916, The Preparatory Years. Edited by John Riddell. Monad Press, 1984, 604 pp., \$10.95 paper. (Distributed by Pathfinder Press, New York.)

The Stalinist government of the Soviet Union is the world's biggest publisher of Lenin's writings. Why does it publish Lenin's works in so many copies and in so many languages when it is fundamentally opposed to most of his revolutionary teachings? Because the Stalinists, who pretend to be Leninists for historical reasons, consider this a way to demonstrate Leninist credentials and benefit from the prestige of association with Leninism.

Or take a non-Stalinist example -- New Park Publications of London. This is the publishing arm of the Healyite cult that collaborates with the bourgeois courts in harassing and undermining the security of the Socialist Workers Party in this country. Yet they too want to be known as Leninists, and have published in English translation some excellent Leninist literature, such as the Second Congress of the Communist International (minutes of its proceedings), 1903 (minutes of the second congress of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party), etc.

This shows that publishing Lenin's writings does not prove you are a Leninist; it may only mean you want to be taken for one.

The case of the SWP leadership is quite different. Until a few years ago, around 1979 or '80, they could be counted on as staunch defenders of Leninist politics in this country and abroad, and it is correct to say that they still think of themselves as Leninists. But a change has taken place in their politics, and this accounts for their publication at this time of the new book cited above.

Until around 1980, the SWP leaders thought of themselves as Leninists and Trotskyists. That is, they did not see any contradiction between Leninism and Trotskyism. They thought that "Trotskyism" was just a name for Leninism after

Lenin's death and the degeneration of the Soviet workers' state; that the "Trotskyists" were the continuators of Leninism in the post-Lenin period. Typically, the two books of Lenin articles published by the SWP press in the 1970s (Lenin's Fight Against Stalinism, 1975, and Kronstadt, 1979) also contained articles by Trotsky and listed both Bolshevik leaders as coauthors.

But a change occurred five or six years ago. Losing confidence in the capacity of the SWP and the Fourth International to fulfill their revolutionary mission on the basis of their traditional perspectives, the SWP leadership decided that their future rested on some kind of linkup with the Castroist current in a "new International." Castro had displayed no interest whatever in any kind of International, and he was not likely to welcome a linkup with Trotskyists so long as Cuba was dependent for its existence on aid from the Stalinists in Moscow. The answer to this dilemma devised by the SWP leadership was that the SWP should disassociate itself from its Trotskyist program.

Not all at once -- that might provoke a rebellion from SWP members who had been educated in the Trotskyism-equals-Leninism tradition. The objective was not to suddenly depict Trotsky as nonrevolutionary, but gradually to reeducate the SWP members to the idea that Trotsky was responsible for many sectarian errors (permanent revolution, political revolution, etc.) even while he was making useful contributions to the movement. Trotsky was not to be rejected altogether, but he was to be downgraded or demoted as an authority for the SWP, especially in relation to Lenin, who was now to be accorded a special status.

The SWP members were never told by their leaders that this campaign was going to be conducted and that it would change the party in many respects. Instead, the leaders proceeded on their new course immediately after the SWP's 1981 convention, whose delegates had been given no inkling of the changes that were in store. The members were instructed that the whole party must begin to "read Lenin," and simultaneous-



ly they were supplied with study guides whose unstated aim was to counterpose Lenin to Trotsky.

### ORIGIN OF THIS BOOK

It was also announced that the party would begin to publish writings of Lenin and the first five years of the Comintern, in order to "reknit" the SWP's continuity with Leninism (which had allegedly been sundered by the sectarianism of Trotsky and our movement from 1928 on). That was the origin of the present book. The primary purpose of its publication at this time is to promote the factional goals of the SWP leadership, which seek to make the SWP programmatically and organizationally more acceptable to Castro and other non-Trotskyist or anti-Trotskyist revolutionaries.

That doesn't mean that it is a bad book or one devoid of all value for revolutionaries and students. Whatever the motives behind the book, it still must be judged objectively, just as we have to do with the Lenin literature published by the Stalinists and others. Awareness of the motives will help some readers to understand why the editors made a particular selection for the contents of the book, why they omitted other selections, why they slanted their introductory remarks a little here or there, etc. But most readers will not be conscious of the special motives behind the book or able to detect subtle editorial bias, and will judge the book on the basis of whether or not it expands their knowledge and understanding of Leninism and Lenin in the decade before 1917. On that basis, it can be rated a good book.

It is the first in a series of several books with the overall title "The Communist International in Lenin's Time." It covers a nine-and-one-half-year period -- seven years before World War I and two-and-one-half years of that war (prior to the Russian revolutions of 1917), during which the foundations of the Third International were being laid by the Bolsheviks and other revolutionary tendencies emerging from the Second International. A second book, about the founding congress of the Comintern in 1919, has been announced for 1985.

### FOUR MAIN PARTS

The first book starts with the Second International's 1907 congress at Stuttgart, where debates between revolutionaries and reformists took place over

colonialism, immigration policy, and war. It follows disputes over these and related questions in the International up to 1914, when most of its sections betrayed the workers by supporting World War I. It then traces the development of the different tendencies during the first part of the war, when the revolutionaries tried to mobilize the masses to end capitalism as well as the war and to build a new International and new parties to replace those of the Second. Included in this part are documents from the 1915 Zimmerwald conference and debates among its participants. Most of the material is from the Russian and German movements, which were representative of the main tendencies in the Second International at that time.

The 600-page book is divided roughly as follows: One quarter consists of articles by Lenin, fully reprinted or excerpted. A second quarter is made up of articles or excerpts from other revolutionary leaders, such as Trotsky, Luxemburg, Liebknecht, Radek, Zinoviev, etc. (Before 1917 most of these were not part of the Bolshevik tendency.) A third portion of the book, less than a quarter of the total, is articles and excerpts from revisionist and opportunist elements in the Second International. A fourth part, more than a quarter of the total, is given to an ample editorial apparatus -- a general introduction by editor John Riddell, separate introductions to most of the documents in the book, notes at the end of its 12 chapters, an excellent glossary of people and organizations cited in the texts, a brief bibliography, and a good index.

All the Lenin selections are in English in Moscow's Collected Works; the advantages of the present book are that it spares the reader the objectionable Stalinist notes in the Works and that it collects articles from several volumes in a single place; the context and background of Lenin's writings are much easier to follow when they are accompanied by the texts he is discussing or answering. Some of the Trotsky-Luxemburg-Zinoviev selections have been translated before, some are in English for the first time; retranslations of items first done many years ago certainly improve their readability. Most of the revisionist/opportunist material has not been in English before, and neither have the lively excerpts from the Zimmerwald movement. The chief attraction of this book is undoubtedly the translations and retranslations which expand our store of historical information about the Marxist movement in the early



part of this century. It would be worth getting for this reason even if there were no other.

### SERIOUS DEFECTS

Counterposing Lenin and Leninism to Trotsky and Trotskyism since 1981 has inevitably led the SWP leadership to develop new concepts about Lenin and Leninism. Larry Stewart, shortly before his death, called attention to what he called a tendency to put Lenin and the early Comintern "on a pedestal." (Bulletin IDOM, No. 18, May 1985, p.6) At the very least, the SWP leadership is engaged in a process of glorifying and idealizing them. Lenin is presented almost as a superhuman, who apparently never had to correct anything he had said or done, and the texts of the Leninist Comintern are treated almost like sacred documents (which doesn't stop them from being "poorly read and poorly assimilated," as Stewart noted).

Some of the products of this "reading Lenin" campaign are quite blatant. Doug Jenness, for example, goes so far as to belittle the seriousness of the support that most Bolshevik leaders were giving to the capitalist Provisional Government in March 1917, before Lenin returned from exile and mobilized the party ranks against what would have been a fatal error.

The book we are reviewing avoids such excesses. It seeks to achieve its Lenin-Trotsky counterpositioning by more circumspect methods -- by stressing the differences between the Bolsheviks and the other revolutionary forces before 1917 at the expense of the things they agreed on, which led to their unification in 1917-19. The Bolsheviks certainly did have differences with German revolutionaries like Luxemburg and Liebknecht and Russian revolutionaries like Trotsky. But these were differences that can and must be expected among revolutionaries (and were to be found among the Bolsheviks themselves). Some of these differences were over tactics, some over more fundamental things. This book's overemphasis on these differences distorts the picture of the real relations that led to the formation of the Third International.

Another kind of distortion occurs through inadequate explanation. The treatment of the national question is one example. Lenin's position on this was undoubtedly superior to that of all other tendencies, including a big minority of his own party. But the other tendencies did not all have the same

position. Luxemburg, Radek, and Bukharin were opposed to the right of self-determination, while Trotsky was for it. He was wrong in underestimating the potential of oppressed nations and nationalities, but he was on Lenin's side in supporting their struggles unconditionally. Yet many of the readers of this book will leave it thinking that Trotsky was in the camp of Lenin's opponents on this question, when the contrary was true.

Bolshevism was the most advanced tendency of the Marxist movement, more correct on more questions than any other -- which is why it drew the best elements of other tendencies toward it in the revolutionary years that began in 1917. But there is no need to gild the lily, or depict the Bolsheviks as wiser or more far-seeing than they actually were. This book tries to buttress the idea being promoted inside the SWP that the Bolsheviks never made a mistake, never were taken by surprise, never had to rethink questions. That's an idea that will not help revolutionaries to reach or surpass the Bolshevik level, or to achieve the correct relation between membership and leadership.

### LENIN'S DEVELOPMENT

Following this review we are re-printing two articles -- by Trotsky and James P. Cannon -- which deal with aspects of Lenin's thought and their development during the first part of the period covered in the Monad book. We think their approach is far more enlightening and fruitful than the one being introduced by the current SWP leadership. (It is, by the way, the same approach that Trotsky and Cannon tried to apply when they drew lessons from their own experiences in the movement.)

The key word is development. Lenin grew, he did not appear on the scene fully formed, with all the answers in his pocket. He became the principal scourge of opportunism in this century, but it took him a number of years to recognize the opportunist character of the Bebel-Kautsky wing of the German Social Democracy, which Rosa Luxemburg opposed and fought long before Lenin did. It was not until the big betrayal in 1914 that he came to grips with Kautskyist opportunism and definitively rejected the idea that it was inevitable that the Marxist party would always have an opportunist wing and a revolutionary wing right up to the revolution. Lenin created a new kind of workers' party but for several years he thought he was only



building a Russian equivalent of the Bebel-Kautsky party in Germany, which he viewed as the model for the International.

These kinds of things are not compatible with the "Lenin" that emerges

from the SWP leadership's "reading Lenin" campaign. But they happen to be part of the real, the historical Lenin. That's the one to learn from if you want to continue along the path he helped the early Comintern to chart.

## LENIN, LUXEBURG, AND KAUTSKY

by Leon Trotsky

Stalin's article, "Some Questions Concerning the History of Bolshevism,"

... [asserts] that Bolshevism from the day of its inception held to the line of a split with the Kautsky center, while Rosa Luxemburg during that time sustained Kautsky from the left. I quote his own words: "... long before the war, approximately since 1903-04, when the Bolshevik group in Russia took shape and when the Lefts in the German Social Democracy first raised their voice, Lenin pursued a line toward a rupture, toward a split with the opportunists both here, in the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party, and over there, in the Second International, particularly in the German Social Democratic Party." That this, however, could not be achieved was due entirely to the fact that "the Left Social Democrats in the Second International, and above all in the German Social Democratic Party, were a weak and powerless group, ... afraid even to pronounce the word 'rupture,' 'split.'"

To put forward such an assertion, one must be absolutely ignorant of the history of one's own party, and first of all, of Lenin's ideological course. There is not a single word of truth in

---

This is excerpted from a 1932 essay, "Hands Off Rosa Luxemburg!" which was printed in full in two Pathfinder Press books: Writings of Leon Trotsky (1932) and Rosa Luxemburg Speaks, but our excerpts are from a revised translation by George Saunders. The article by Stalin that Trotsky answered here can be found in Stalin's Works, Vol. 13. It accused "some Bolsheviks" of "rotten liberalism" because they continued to view Trotskyism as "a faction of communism" rather than as "the advanced detachment of the counterrevolutionary bourgeoisie."

Stalin's point of departure. In 1903-04, Lenin was, indeed, an irreconcilable foe of opportunism in the German Social Democracy. But the only tendency he regarded as opportunist was the revisionist tendency led theoretically by Bernstein.

Kautsky at the time was to be found fighting against Bernstein. Lenin considered Kautsky his teacher and stressed this everywhere he could. In Lenin's work of that period and for a number of years following, one does not find even a trace of criticism in principle directed against the Bebel-Kautsky tendency. Instead one finds a series of declarations to the effect that Bolshevism is not some sort of an independent tendency but is only a translation into the language of Russian conditions of the Bebel-Kautsky tendency. Here is what Lenin wrote in his famous pamphlet, Two Tactics, in the middle of 1905: "When and where did I ever call the 'revolutionism of Bebel and Kautsky' opportunism? ... When and where have there been brought to light differences between me, on the one hand, and Bebel and Kautsky, on the other? ... The complete unanimity of international revolutionary Social-Democracy on all major questions of program and tactics is a most incontrovertible fact." [Collected Works, Vol. 9, p. 66] Lenin's words are so clear, precise, and categorical as to entirely exhaust the question.

A year and a half later, on December 7, 1906, Lenin wrote in the article "The Crisis of Menshevism": "...right from the very beginning we declared (see One Step Forward, Two Steps Back): We are not creating a special 'Bolshevik' trend; always and everywhere we merely uphold the point of view of revolutionary Social-Democracy. And right up to the social revolution there will inevitably always be an opportunist wing



and a revolutionary wing of Social-Democracy." [CW, Vol. 11, pp. 361-2]

Speaking of Menshevism as the opportunist wing of the [Russian] Social Democracy, Lenin equated the Mensheviks not with Kautskyism but with [Bernsteinian] revisionism. Moreover he looked upon Bolshevism as the Russian form of Kautskyism, which in his eyes was in that period identical with Marxism. The passage we have just quoted shows, incidentally, that Lenin did not at all stand absolutely for a split with the opportunists; he not only admitted but also considered "inevitable" the existence of the revisionists in the Social Democracy right up to the social revolution.

Two weeks later, on December 20, 1906,\* Lenin greeted enthusiastically Kautsky's answer to Plekhanov's questionnaire on the character of the Russian revolution: "He has fully confirmed our contention that we are defending the position of revolutionary Social-Democracy against opportunism, and not creating any 'peculiar' Bolshevik tendency...." ["The Proletariat and Its Ally in the Russian Revolution," CW, Vol. 11, p. 373]

Within these limits, I trust, the question is absolutely clear. According to Stalin, Lenin, even from 1903, had demanded a break in Germany with the opportunists, not only of the right wing (Bernstein) but also of the left (Kautsky). Whereas in December 1906, Lenin as we see was proudly pointing out to Plekhanov and the Mensheviks that the tendency of Kautsky in Germany and the tendency of Bolshevism in Russia were -- identical. Such is part one of Stalin's excursion into the ideological history of Bolshevism. Our investigator's scrupulousness and his knowledge rest on the same plane!

Directly after his assertion regarding 1903-04, Stalin makes a leap to 1916 and refers to Lenin's sharp criticism of the "Junius pamphlet," written during the war by Rosa Luxemburg. To be sure, in that period Lenin had already declared war to the finish against Kautskyism, having drawn from his criticism all the necessary organizational conclusions. It is not to be denied that Rosa Luxemburg did not pose the question of the struggle against centrism with the requisite completeness -- in this Lenin's position was entirely superior. But between October 1916, when Lenin wrote about the Junius pamphlet, and 1903, when Bolshevism had its inception,

\*[Trotsky had the wrong date, which was December 10, 1906.]

there is a lapse of thirteen years; during most of this period Rosa Luxemburg was to be found in opposition to the Kautsky and Bebel Central Committee, and her fight against the formal, pedantic, and rotten-at-the-core "radicalism" of Kautsky grew sharper and sharper as time went on.

Lenin did not participate in this fight and did not support Rosa Luxemburg up to 1914. Passionately absorbed in Russian affairs, he observed great caution in international matters. In Lenin's eyes Bebel and Kautsky stood immeasurably higher as revolutionists than in the eyes of Rosa Luxemburg, who observed them at closer range, in action, and who was much more directly subjected to the atmosphere of German politics.

The capitulation of the German Social Democracy on August 4 was entirely unexpected by Lenin. It is well known that the issue of the Vorwaerts with the patriotic declaration of the Social Democratic faction was taken by Lenin to be a forgery by the German general staff. Only after he was absolutely convinced of the awful truth did he revise his judgment of the basic tendencies in the German Social Democracy, carrying out this task "in the Lenin way," that is, he finished it off once for all.

On October 27, 1914, Lenin wrote to A. Shlyapnikov: "I hate and despise Kautsky now more than anyone, with his vile, dirty, self-satisfied hypocrisy. ... Rosa Luxemburg was right when she wrote, long ago, that Kautsky has the 'subservience of a theoretician' -- servility, in plainer language, servility to the majority of the party, to opportunism." (Lenin Miscellany, Vol. 2, p. 200, my emphasis) [CW, Vol. 35, pp. 167-8]

Were there no other documents -- and there are hundreds -- these few lines alone could unmistakably clarify the history of the question. Lenin deems it necessary at the end of 1914 to inform one of his colleagues closest to him at the time that "now," at the present moment, today, in contradistinction to the past, he "hates and despises" Kautsky. The sharpness of the phrase is an unmistakable indication of the extent to which Kautsky betrayed Lenin's hopes and expectations. No less vivid is the second phrase, "Rosa Luxemburg was right when she wrote, long ago, that Kautsky has the 'subservience of a theoretician.' ..." Lenin hastens here to acknowledge Rosa Luxemburg's "correctness," something he had not previously seen, or at least had not fully recognized.



Such are the chief chronological milestones of this question, which are at the same time important milestones in Lenin's political biography. It is an indisputable fact that his ideological orbit took the form of a constantly rising curve. But this only means that Lenin was not born Lenin full-fledged, as the icon painters of Suzdal might have depicted him, but that he made himself Lenin. He constantly broadened his horizons, learned from others, and raised himself to a higher plane than that of yesterday. It was in this stubborn determination to constantly rise above himself that his heroic spirit found its true expression. If Lenin in 1903 had understood and formulated everything that was required for the times to come, the remainder of his life would have consisted merely in repeating himself. In reality this was not the case. Stalin is simply Stalinizing Lenin, breaking him down into the small change of cliches with numbers on them.

In Rosa Luxemburg's struggle against Kautsky, especially in 1910-14, an important place was occupied by the questions of war, militarism, and pacifism. Kautsky defended the reformist program: limitations of armaments, international court, etc. Rosa Luxemburg fought decisively against this program as illusory. On this question Lenin was in some doubt, but at a certain period he stood closer to Kautsky than to Rosa Luxemburg. From conversations at the time with Lenin I recall that the following argument of Kautsky made a great impression upon him: just as in domestic questions, reforms are products of the revolutionary class struggle, so in international relationships it is possible to fight for and to gain certain guarantees ("reforms") by means of the international class struggle. Lenin considered it entirely possible to support this position of Kautsky, provided that he, after his polemic against Rosa Luxemburg, turned upon the right-wingers (Noske and Co.). I do not undertake now to say from memory to what extent this circle of ideas found its expression in Lenin's articles; the question would require a particularly careful analysis. Neither can I take upon myself to assert from memory how soon Lenin's doubts on this question were settled. In any case they found their expression not only in conversations but also in correspondence. One of these letters is in the possession of Karl Radek.

I deem it necessary to give testimony as a witness on this question in order to attempt in this manner to save a document of exceptional value for any theoretical biography of Lenin. In the autumn of 1926, at the time of our collective work on the platform of the Left Opposition, Radek showed Kamenev, Zinoviev, and me -- probably also other comrades as well -- a letter of Lenin to him (1911?) which consisted of a defense of Kautsky's position against the criticism of the German Lefts. In accordance with the regulation passed by the Central Committee, Radek, like all others, should have delivered this letter to the Lenin Institute. But fearful lest it be hidden, if not destroyed, in the Stalinist factory of fabrications, Radek decided to preserve the letter till some more opportune time....

What happened to it? Is Radek hiding it even now from the Lenin Institute? Hardly. Most probably, he turned it over as he was supposed to, as a tangible proof of an intangible devotion. And what fate has befallen the letter since then? Is it preserved in Stalin's personal archives alongside the documents that compromise his closest colleagues? Or has it been destroyed as many other most precious documents of the party's past have been?

In any case there cannot be even the shadow of a political reason for the concealment of a letter written two decades ago on a question that now has only a historical interest. But it is precisely the historical value of the letter that is exceptionally great. It shows Lenin as he really was, and not as he is being re-created in their own semblance and image by the bureaucratic dunderheads, who pretend to infallibility. We ask, where is Lenin's letter to Radek? Lenin's letter must be where it belongs! Put it on the table of the party and of the Comintern!

If the disagreements between Lenin and Rosa Luxemburg are viewed in their entirety, historical correctness is unconditionally on Lenin's side. But this does not negate the fact that on certain questions and during particular periods Rosa Luxemburg was correct as against Lenin. In any case, the disagreements, despite their importance and at times their extreme sharpness, developed on the basis of the revolutionary proletarian politics common to them both....



## ENGELS AND LENIN ON THE PARTY

by James P. Cannon

Los Angeles, Calif.

January 14, 1955

Dear Vincent,

... I have been spending a lot of time with Engels. Previously, some of his letters to Sorge and others in the United States were included in the Selected Correspondence of Marx and Engels. They are now all brought together in the new volume, Letters to Americans by Marx and Engels, published last year by International Publishers. During this lull in production I have taken advantage of the opportunity to make a thorough study of them. This volume really should be required reading for all party activists, including especially the students of the Trotsky School.

Engels's letters are the original and best prescription against sectarianism. They are more than that, however. Engels, in his letters to Sorge, combined his pot-shots against the sectarian socialists in the United States and Britain with withering blasts against the British Fabians and the petty-bourgeois opportunists in the German party. The innovators and neo-liquidationists--who are all referring to Engels these days--quote only the first part and ignore the second.

I can see a big controversy blowing up around this volume of letters and I intend to take a hand in it. It seems that all the ex-revolutionists, reformed Trotskyists, backsliders and runaways are leaning on Engels. They didn't get their impulse to capitulate from him; that originated in their own bones, and

---

This letter to Vincent R. Dunne in Minneapolis is reprinted from the SWP's Discussion Bulletin, A-19, June 1955, where it was entitled "Engels on the American Question." The SWP had recently experienced a split by a liquidationist group (the Cochranites) and was combating liquidationist elements in the FI. The Trotsky School was the SWP's highest educational institution at the time; the present SWP Leadership School is sometimes referred to as the "anti-Trotsky School." Cannon did not succeed in writing his projected "Theses on the Party."

they are seeking corroboration from Engels after the fact.

They claim his support for their contention--the one thing they all agree on -- that it is wrong to try to create a revolutionary party under the present conditions when the number of conscious revolutionists is so limited. This, they all say, is sectarian -- not merely the policy and practice of such a party, but a small party's claim of the right to exist, regardless of its aims and actions.

The Shachtmanites, as well as the Cochranites, refer to Engels on this point. I also noticed an article in the same sense in the new literary-political magazine called Dissent, published by a group of graduate Shachtmanites, professional abstainers, homeless socialists and other political vagabonds who call themselves intellectuals. These birds of passage vary the theme by quoting Marx, having first checked to make sure he is safely dead and unable to take them by the throat.

\* \* \* \* \*

Well, as you know, I am on the warpath against any sign or symptom of sectarianism myself. I intend to write about it too, in a "preventative" way, and to appeal to Engels for help. I know that sectarianism -- in one form or another--is an ever-present danger to any small organization of revolutionists condemned to isolation by circumstances beyond their control, regardless of their original wishes and intentions. The moment such an organization ceases to think of itself as a part of the working class, which can realize its aims only with and through the working class, and to conduct itself accordingly, it is done for.

The key to Engels's thought is his striking expression that the conscious socialists should act as a "leaven" in the instinctive and spontaneous movement of the working class. Those are winged words that every party member should memorize. The leaven can help the dough to rise and eventually become a loaf of



bread, but can never be a loaf of bread itself.

Every tendency, direct or indirect, of a small revolutionary party to construct a world of its own, outside and apart from the real movement of the workers in the class struggle, is sectarian. Such tendencies can take many forms, and we should not delude ourselves that the well known illustrations exhaust the possibilities.

We have come a long way, I think, from the adventures of the earliest American socialists with separate, self-sufficient colonies of their own outside the prevailing economy, and the experiments of the SLP with pure socialist unions outside the existing labor movement, with all its imperfections. But a self-perfecting "political colony," attempting to live a life of its own in a world of its own devising, would not be any better.

Engels's words of wisdom on this subject deserve discussion and application to modern conditions. But when I enter the controversy around Engels's letters, I am not going to limit myself to the question of sectarianism. The real issue, as it is evolving, is the attempt to use the authority of Engels to liquidate the conception of a party of socialists, based on a definite program -- a party which under present conditions can only be a small one -- in favor of some prospective "big" party, to be constructed some time in the future by some people whose names and addresses are unknown, as a result of further development of the spontaneous process. That is dead wrong because the very idea of a party -- large or small -- presupposes a program and therefore consciousness.

Incidentally, this misunderstanding and misuse of Engels is not new. It is a striking commentary on the belatedness of American political thought that Engels's letters to Sorge, which were published in Germany 49 years ago and translated into Russian a year later -- and became the subject of controversy in the Russian movement as far back as 1907 -- are only now available in full in this country, and are now becoming a factor in the same controversy here!

Lenin's introduction to the 1907 Russian edition of these letters (reprinted as an appendix to the new American edition) is a sustained polemic against the opportunists who cited the authority of Engels for their proposal to liquidate the Social Democratic Party, based on a strictly defined program, in favor of an amorphous "Labor Con-

gress." That in essence is what all the assorted ex-es and revolutionists-turned-opportunists are trying to do in the United States today.

My polemics against the present-day liquidators will restore Lenin's defense of Engels against the Russian liquidators of half a century ago, but will not stop there. Engels did not say the last word on the question of the party, and neither did Lenin in 1907. A great deal happened since, and if one wishes to be true to the spirit and method of Engels, these events of living history must be noticed and appraised; and the appraisal should add something to what was said then.

Sixty years have elapsed since Engels laid down his pen. From what he saw and knew at the time he thought the German party of Bebel was good enough, by and large. On the other side, Lenin, in 1907, was content to take the Bebel party for a model. He said -- in One Step Forward, Two Steps Back -- that he was "not creating any special variety of Bolshevik tendency" but simply adapting "the viewpoint of the revolutionary Social Democracy," as represented in the Second International, to Russian conditions.

But the German Social Democratic Party proved inadequate to its historical task and collapsed ignominiously in the test of 1914. Can there be any doubt that Engels would have drawn some radical conclusions from this catastrophe? Lenin, for his part, was compelled later to recognize that his concept of the vanguard party, which he had originally intended as nothing more than a Russian version of the German party, was in fact something new -- a development and application of the Marxist theory of the party in the epoch of the actual struggle for power.

This conception was vindicated positively in the Russian Revolution, and negatively by the defeat of the revolution in other countries where the old forms held sway. The leit-motif of Trotsky's great struggle in the post-Lenin epoch, summed up and restated in his thesis on the crisis of leadership in the Transitional Program of 1938, was precisely this Leninist contribution and extension of Marxism in the theory and practice of the party.

If one merely wants a "big" party, just to have a party, then any kind of a party will do; but nothing less than a Bolshevik party is good enough for war and revolution. That, I think, is the conclusive verdict of historical experience. Moreover, the construction of



such a party cannot be postponed until everybody recognizes its necessity. The project has to be started by those who are ready, willing and able. That's the way it was done in Russia, and nobody has yet discovered a better way.

We have plenty of ammunition for polemical warfare against the liquidators in the controversy around Engels's letters to Sorge; and the subject should certainly have an absorbing interest for the new generation entering the movement at a time when theory and

practice have a good chance of being telescoped. It may be that our projected "Theses on the Party" will gradually evolve first in controversy before they are formally codified. That is certainly the most interesting and perhaps the most effective way to prepare the Theses. I wonder if this subject could not be profitably added to the curriculum of the Trotsky School.

As ever,  
J. P. Cannon

## LETTERS

---

### A WELCOME VOLUME

Some projects of the SWP leadership are of more value, are better conceived, and better executed than others. Lenin's Struggle for a Revolutionary International falls in that category. It is a good book. A wide range of documents are presented for the first time in English; many of those that have been published before, such as articles by Lenin, are here included in context; and the narrative introductions succeed in connecting events and documents in an intelligible way.

In this first volume, the writings and speeches of the radical left in the Second International are included alongside those of other currents, the revisionists for instance, as they were in real life. The debates at the Stuttgart congress of 1907, with which the book opens, give a real sense not only of the different policies of the several currents, but of the clash of ideas and personalities in the years leading to the founding of the Comintern. This sense of dialectic is maintained throughout the book.

Lenin's own writings, naturally enough, form the backbone of this collection. These can now be seen in relation to the wider debates in which Lenin participated. This is a far healthier approach than has recently been recommended by the SWP. Only a few years ago SWP leaders explained that Lenin could best be read in splendid isolation without resort to the works of his collaborators or opponents. The reality is that Lenin emerges most clearly when seen against the background of his own times.

Of real value are the narrative introductions each piece in the collection receives. I say narrative because the introductions do succeed in connecting the wildly disparate texts and speeches into a whole. The result is that Lenin's Struggle becomes not merely a reference collection of documents, but a genuine history that can be read cover to cover.

It would be surprising if the book were so good that it rose completely above its origins, but of course it does not. While the introductions do succeed as narratives, sometimes important information is withheld from the reader, because of the ideological bias of the editor. One example: In chapter 9, "Russia: Toward Revolution," Lenin's famous article "On the Two Lines in the Revolution" is included. But the editor supplies no hint that this piece aimed ostensibly against Trotsky was, according to Karl Radek, actually aimed at a current among the Bolsheviks. This grouping held a theory (different from Trotsky's) of the permanent revolution, and included Bukharin, Pyatakov, and Radek himself among its supporters. In this article, therefore, Trotsky becomes a straw man made to mouth the words of those he agrees with no more than Lenin does. John Riddell, the editor, has not been candid here.

One more criticism. The Comintern was the result of a fusion of many different currents, tendencies, and organizations from around the world. Surprisingly, we are used to thinking only about those currents that came out of the Second International when the "preparatory years" are being discussed.

This is especially surprising be-



cause the two main "Trotskyist" reminiscences of the Comintern were written by an ex-anarchist (Victor Serge) and an ex-syndicalist (Alfred Rosmer). Much of the early history of the Comintern can only be understood as an effort to fuse together those whose past had been in the Socialist International and those who had been outside it. At any rate, it is unfortunate that the anarchist and syndicalist antecedents of the world communist movement were left out.

In the end, despite its weaknesses, this is a welcome volume, rich in the world of left-wing socialism before the Russian revolution.

Max Beckett  
Los Angeles

### PROF. SUNY'S VIEWS

In recent advertisements for the book Lenin's Struggle for a Revolutionary International in New Left Review, Science and Society, and Slavic Review, as well as in an article in the April 5 Militant, Pathfinder Press has quoted University of Michigan Professor of History Ronald G. Suny as to the book's merit: "an extraordinary debut for what promises to be a distinguished series of books. If the remainder of this series maintains the high standards of this initial volume, this publication will be used with confidence by scholars and students interested in the experience of the Third International."

Prof. Suny is indeed an authority on the Russian revolution, Leninism, and the Comintern who writes from a Marxist perspective, and his remarks are testimony to the intrinsic value of this collection. Nevertheless, most members of the SWP are probably unaware that Suny holds views about the nature of the October Revolution completely at odds with those of the Barnes leadership of the SWP and Stalinist scholars, who claim that the revolution was a vindication of Lenin's original call for a "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry" and therefore a confirmation of "stagist" theory. For example, in the introduction to his most important book, The Baku Commune, 1917-18: Class and Nationality in the Russian Revolution (Princeton University Press, 1972), Suny writes of Lenin: "in 1905 and again in 1917 he began to flirt with the notion of 'continuous' or 'permanent' revolution, a theory first expounded by the Social Democrats Helphand-Parvus and Leon Trotsky. ... [When Lenin returned to Russia in April he ap-

pealed] to the Bolsheviks to break decisively with the Provisional Government and adopt the slogan 'All Power to the Soviets.' The implications of this slogan were clear: immediate transition to the socialist revolution" (pp. viii, x).

This analysis, validating the "permanent revolution" interpretation of October, is essentially in harmony with the writings of Trotsky, Deutscher, and Mandel, as well as the whole tradition of the SWP prior to 1981 that is being defended by the Fourth Internationalist Tendency, Socialist Action, and the United Secretariat today. Hopefully the SWP's publication of previously unavailable writings on the preparatory years of the Third International will encourage SWP members and sympathizers to turn to books by the new generation of Marxist scholars on the subject. They will have a difficult time finding any responsible ones who will endorse the Stalinist interpretation that October 1917 disproved rather than confirmed Trotsky's theory.

Alan Wald  
Ann Arbor, Mich.

### HOW MINNESOTA SWP 'BUILT' APRIL 20

For the first time since the mass purge of oppositionists from the SWP in January 1984, expelled members in the F.I.T. had the opportunity to work alongside SWP members in a mass movement in the Minnesota Spring Mobilization for Peace, Jobs and Justice. This local April Actions coalition did an effective job in obtaining an impressive endorser list, raising funds, and mobilizing over 200 Minnesotans to make the long journey (over 24 hours one way!) to the D.C. actions. F.I.T. members played a leading role in this effort in staffing the office, obtaining endorsements from their unions, heading up fund raising, publicity, and logistics efforts.

The SWP assigned a few people to the coalition and they did some effective work on endorsements but the party fraction seemed most concerned about trying to personally discredit F.I.T. members and trying to inject multi-issueism into the coalition. Three weeks before the April actions, the SWP invited leaders of the American Indian Movement to a poorly attended coalition meeting. There the SWP demagogically demanded that support to Indian treaty rights be added to the list of official demands of the actions. In a display of race-baiting intimidation borrowed from the Stalinists, the SWP rammed through a



motion adopting this demand and providing that all endorsers be contacted and any who couldn't accept it be dropped from the endorser list.

The effect of this irresponsible maneuver, whether it was the SWP's intention or not, would have been to split the coalition on the eve of the April actions. The resulting scandal would have made it very difficult to obtain endorsements for any future actions. Such shenanigans are no service to either Indian treaty rights or the movement against imperialist intervention in Central America.

The next meeting of the Spring Mobilization Committee was much better attended and more representative. The committee coordinator, who had been absent from the previous meeting because of a death in the family, gave a report explaining that the SWP motion was out of order. The Mobilization Committee had been established to build a specific national demonstration, which had a call and a specified theme. It was on this basis that local endorsers had agreed to give their names and money. It was unfair to try to change the rules during the last inning of the game. To do so would make many fearful of ever endorsing future actions since they might be faced with "upping the ante" later.

He reported on discussions he had had with AIM leaders who assured him that while they were anxious to gain support for treaty rights, it was not their intention to split the coalition. The coordinator proposed that the issue of treaty rights could be raised by carrying it on banners in the Minnesota contingent in Washington and by requesting that an AIM speaker be given the platform in DC.

This approach was accepted by the overwhelming majority and the SWP had to beat a hasty retreat, even denying that they had made their motion at the previous meeting. This time, at least, pernicious factionalism was stopped before it could do much damage.

Bill Onasch  
St. Paul, MN

#### CORRECTION

We made an error in Bulletin No. 14, December 1984, when we said James P. Cannon's talk on September 6, 1966 ("Reasons for the Survival of the SWP and Its New Vitality in the 1960s") had been given in Los Angeles. It was actually given at an educational encampment of the San Francisco SWP.

#### UPDATE

Larry Stewart's article, "Permanent Revolution and Black Liberation in the U.S.," said that the National Black Independent Political Party had never printed its 1981 charter, which the SWP leadership considered NBIPP's main asset. (Bulletin IDOM, No. 17, April 1985)

This was true at the time Stewart died, in November 1984. Since then, a split in NBIPP, following the expulsion of members and sympathizers, has resulted in the emergence of two factions, each calling itself NBIPP. One of these has now published the 4-year-old charter. For a copy, send \$1 to Manhattan NBIPP, c/o Yvette Montero, 106 W. 143rd Street, Apt 6E, New York, NY 10030.

New  
Publication

## CRISIS IN THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

An Answer to Jack Barnes

BY CLIFF CONNER

F.I.T., P. O. Box 1947  
New York, N.Y. 10009

60¢



# Free subscriptions for fighters

In previous issues, we reported the launching of a defense fund for 150 British miners jailed by the union-buster Thatcher government. The imprisonment of large numbers of union activists, however, is not something specific to Britain under a regime determined to revive the "old-time virtues." It is becoming a sign of our times, the epoch of international capitalist economic crisis and of a general offensive against the rights and living standards of working people.

Two unionists are still in prison in Denmark on charges arising out of the dockers strike two years ago. The main leader of the dockers union was held for many months on frame-up charges before being finally released as a result of a large-scale campaign of solidarity in Denmark and internationally. In the current protests against the Schlueter government decreeing more deep cuts in real wages for Danish working people, many union activists have been arrested and face trial. Many others have been fired already from their jobs.

Today, when the great majority of people are wage earners, firings, denying "troublemakers" who live from wages their means of livelihood, is a more and more widespread method of repression — sort of an outdoor imprisonment. This device is used with the same brutality by Stalinist regimes and a government like Thatcher's, which proclaims its dedication to "individual liberties."

Both fired and imprisoned class struggle fighters need material support to survive and keep on fighting. But not the least material need they have is for revolutionary publications to keep them aware of the broader picture of the class struggle, both to maintain their morale and to help them fight more effectively when they get the chance.

Over the past two decades, it has been a usual thing for revolutionary publications in the developed countries to get requests from political prisoners asking for free subscriptions. We began to get such requests from our first issue, from

countries as far apart as Ireland and Israel. Obviously, under the impact of the economic crisis, even a few free subscriptions are a serious expense for a publication such as *International Viewpoint*. We have the same economic problems as any small capitalist enterprise, with the difference that we cannot retrench in hard times; that is precisely when we have to make the biggest effort.

Now, we not only have to try to meet requests for free subscriptions from political prisoners in the strict sense, but we have to try to respond to the needs of more and more imprisoned and victimized union activists, even local union leaderships whose funds have been drained by strike-breaker governments.

For example, local leaders of the British National Union of Mineworkers have asked us to send them a number of copies of *International Viewpoint*. We look forward to many more such requests from Britain and countries around the world. Fourth Internationalists throughout Europe, moreover, have proposed sending *International Viewpoint* to NUM members and other victimized unionists they have worked with. Some have already begun doing this on their own.

So, it has become obvious that we need a special fund to finance sending *International Viewpoint* to activists who cannot pay because of capitalist victimization. This is the only way that we can ensure that such comrades who have already been sent *International Viewpoint* will get it regularly and that we will be able to meet the growing demand for complimentary subscriptions. We simply cannot afford to do this without the help of our readers and supporters.

If you can help, please send you check or money order to *International Viewpoint*, 2 rue Richard Lenoir, Montreuil 93108, France, accompanied by a note saying that it is for the *International Viewpoint* for Fighters Fund. The checks should be made out to *International Viewpoint*. ■





## PARTIAL CONTENTS OF PREVIOUS ISSUES OF THE "BULLETIN IN DEFENSE OF MARXISM"

### No. 1 — December 1983:

- *Sound the Alarm* by four suspended National Committee Members (9/83)
- *The Political Purge in the American SWP* by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International (10/83)
- *Resolving the International Crisis of Revolutionary Leadership Today* by four suspended NC members (8/83)
- "New International" Slanders FI

### No. 2 — January 1984:

- *Concerning Our Expulsion* by seven members of the Twin Cities SWP branch
- *Democratic Centralism and the Building of the Revolutionary Combat Party in the USA* Resolution by the Fourth Internationalist Caucus in the NC (2/82)
- *New Norms vs Old: The Erosion of Proletarian Democracy in the SWP* by four suspended NC members (8/83)

### No. 3 — February 1984:

- *Call for the Fourth Internationalist Tendency* by Naomi Allen, George Breitman, and George Saunders
- *Platform of the Fourth Internationalist Caucus in the NC* (12/81)
- *On the Question of Regime in the Revolutionary Party*
- *Why Steve Clark* [in his introduction to *Maurice Bishop Speaks*] *Can't Really Explain What Happened in Grenada* by Steve Bloom
- *The Revolution in Central America and the Caribbean and Its Place in the International Class Struggle* by Fourth Internationalist Caucus (4/83)
- *A Platform to Overcome the Crisis in the Party* by the Opposition Bloc in the NC (5/83)
- *28 Theses on the American Socialist Revolution and the Building of the Revolutionary Party* by Opposition Bloc (5/83)

### No. 4 — March 1984:

- *Fourth Internationalist Tendency Is Organized Nationally*
- *Why We Are Building the F.I.T.* by Adam Shils
- *The Purge in the SWP:*
  - 1) *Statement of the SWP Political Bureau* (1/84)
  - 2) *Who Is Responsible for the Split in the Party* by Steve Bloom
  - 3) *What Happened at the California State Convention* by Evelyn Sell
  - 4) *Report on the Expulsion of Gerardo Nebbia*
- *Suppressed Documents:*
  - Remarks on Party Norms and Appeals* by Frank Lovell (3/82)
  - Letter by James P. Cannon* (2/66)
  - Letter and Statement to the NC* by Steve Bloom and Frank Lovell (8/83)
- "Permanent Revolution in Nicaragua" by Paul Le Blanc — reviewed by George Breitman

### No. 5 — April 1984:

- *For a Democratic Discussion in the Party* Letter from the F.I.T. to the SWP National Committee

- *Platform of the F.I.T.*
- *Appeals to the SWP* by Adam Shils, Larry Stewart, George Lavan Weissman
- *How the Opposition Tried To Prevent a Split* (3/83)
- *A Phony Hue and Cry over the Term "Public Faction"* by George Breitman
- *The SWP's New Policy of Exclusion Letters* from the Twin Cities and New York
- *A Life We Can Learn From: Carl Skoglund (1884-1960)* by David Riehle
- *Toward an Understanding of Working Class Radicalization* by Frank Lovell
- *Democracy in Today's Revolutions* by Adam Shils

### No. 6 — April 1984:

- *Theses on the Workers' and Farmers' Government* by the Fourth Internationalist Caucus (11/82)
- *The Workers' and Farmers' Government and the Socialist Revolution* by Steve Bloom (11/82)
- *Socialist Strategy for a Class Struggle Transformation of the Unions* by Frank Lovell and Steve Bloom (8/83)
- *Appeal of Expulsion* by George Breitman

### No. 7 — May 1984:

- *SWP National Committee Calls Convention* by Steve Bloom
- *NBIPP Purges SWP Members* by Larry Stewart
- *Contribution to the New York/New Jersey District Convention* by Naomi Allen, Dorothea Breitman, Larry Stewart
- *On the 1984 Presidential Election Campaign* by Frank Lovell
- *Memoirs of a Veteran SWP Election Campaigner* by Evelyn Sell
- *Perspectives for the 1984 Election* suppressed document by Bloom and Lovell (1983)
- "The Founding of the Socialist Workers Party" — reviewed by George Lavan Weissman

### No. 8 — June 1984:

- *The Most Peculiar Discussion the SWP Has Ever Had* by Frank Lovell
- *Rita Shaw Speaks at SWP Rally*
- *An Open Letter to Mel Mason* by Larry Stewart
- *A Dangerous Escalation of Slander Against the F.I.T.* by Steve Bloom
- *The Transitional Program and the Fight to Save the Family Farmer* by Christine Frank Onasch
- *The Radicalization and the Socialist Workers Party* by Evelyn Sell
- *The Revolutionary Marxist Movement and the Iran-Iraq War* by David Williams
- *James P. Cannon on the Control Commission and the SWP Constitution* (11/66)

### No. 9 — July 1984:

- *Where the SWP Preconvention Discussion Stands* by Frank Lovell
- *A Far Cry from the Bolsheviks* by George Breitman
- *The SWP's New Policy of Exclusion and Slander* by David Williams
- *Some Questions SWP Members Would Like Answered*

- *The U.S. Working Class Needs a Revolutionary Party and the Party Needs a Program* by Steve Bloom
- *James P. Cannon on the SWP's Great Tradition* (6/67)
- *Suppressed Documents from the December 1982 SWP NC Plenum*
- "Maurice Bishop Speaks" — reviewed by Adam Shils

### No. 10 — August 1984:

- *Emergency Conference Against U.S. Intervention Called* by Jean Y. Tussey
- *Poland: KOR vs Bureaucracy* by Carl Jackson
- *The Case of the Tardy Political Resolution* by George Breitman
- *A Few More Steps Away from Marxism* by Steve Bloom
- *Governmental Slogans: A Brief History* by Evelyn Sell
- *Return to the Party-Building Methods of the Transitional Program* by David Williams
- *James P. Cannon on the 1928 Expulsions* (11/28)
- *James Kutcher Appeals to the Convention* (10/83)
- *Support Socialist Campaign* — leaflet of F.I.T.
- *Letter to Mexican PRT by F.I.T. National Coordinators on the U.S. Elections*

### No. 11 — September 1984:

- *The 32nd SWP Convention* by Bill Onasch
- *Comment on the SWP Draft Political Resolution* by Carl Jackson, David Williams, Steve Bloom, and Evelyn Sell
- *The Interests of the Masses in the Iran/Iraq War* by Robert Sorel and David Weiss
- *The Fourth International on Grenada*
- *Doug Jenness Mangles the Carl Skoglund Story* by George Breitman
- "In Defense of Revolutionary Continuity" by Dianne Feeley and Paul Le Blanc — reviewed by Adam Shils
- "Handbook for Marxist Studies" — reviewed by Sarah Lovell

### No. 12 — October 1984:

- *Expelled SWP Members Appeal to World Congress for Reinstatement* by Steve Bloom
- *Emergency Conference Calls for Anti-Intervention Actions in Spring* by David Williams
- *The Gender Gap — and What Women Can Do About It* by Evelyn Sell and Rita Shaw
- *The SWP's Evolution on Farm Question* by Dorothea Breitman
- *Gerardo Nebbia Expelled from the F.I.T.*
- *A Suppressed Document: Frank Lovell on the Motivation Behind the Party Purge* (2/83)
- *James P. Cannon on the Birth of American Trotskyism*
- "The Left Opposition in the U.S. 1928-31" by James P. Cannon — reviewed by George Lavan Weissman

### No. 13 — November 1984:

- *First F.I.T. National Conference* (Oct. 6-8, 1984)
- *Delegates Pledge Continued Fight to Reform SWP* by Steve Bloom
- *Where We Stand After the 1984 SWP Convention*



*Fourth International, World Congress, and F.I.T.*

*Our Present Organizational Tasks  
State of Anti-Intervention Movement*

- *Why "Guardian" and "Militant" Distorted Cleveland Antiwar Conference* by Dave Riehle
- *Lost Opportunities: the SWP's 1984 Election Campaign* by Frank Lovell
- *Nicaragua: A People Armed* by Haskell Berman
- *James P. Cannon on Permanent Revolution: Notes for a Lecture in 1932*
- *"Leon Trotsky and the Organizational Principles of the Revolutionary Party,"* by Dianne Feeley, Paul Le Blanc, and Tom Twiss — reviewed by Adam Shils

**No. 14 — December 1984:**

- *Reasons for the Survival of the SWP and Its New Vitality in 1960s* a talk by James P. Cannon (9/66)
- *Larry Stewart — Proletarian Fighter for 45 Years* by the Editorial Board
- *Larry Stewart's Appeal to the World Congress*
- *Results and Meaning of the 1984 Election* by Frank Lovell
- *Letter to the "Militant" It Didn't Print* by Jerry Gordon and Jim Lafferty
- *Open Letter to Fred Halstead* by David Williams
- *SWP Calls Special Convention in January*
- *Discussion Begins on the Wrong Foot Again* by Steve Bloom
- *Opposition Bloc's Platform Finally Published* by David Williams
- *Women and the SWP: 1979-1984* by Laura Cole
- *This Preparatory Period* by Frank Lovell
- *Through the Looking Glass with Barnes and Sheppard* by Naomi Allen

**No. 15 — January/February 1985:**

- *Tasks of the World Congress* by Steve Bloom

- *For an Accurate View of the World Revolution* by Adam Shils
- *Central America and the Fourth International* Articles by David Williams, Alain Krivine, Ernest Mandel, and the F.I.T. National Organizing Committee
- *What Does 'New International' Mean Today* by Chester Hofla
- *War and Revolution in Iran* by Robert Sorel and David Weiss
- *Letter to the SWP Convention Delegates* by the F.I.T. National Coordinators
- *Few Participants in SWP's Pre-World Congress Discussion* by Laura Cole
- *Larry Stewart Memorial Meeting Boycotted* by SWP
- *In Tribute to a Great Socialist Educator* by Tom Bias
- *SWP Publishes 'Theses' After 25 Months*
- *What Happened to the Unions in 1984* by Frank Lovell
- *Zimmerwald (1915) and Cleveland (1984)* by George Breitman
- *New Trotskyist Alliance Formed in English Canada* by Barry Weisleder
- *How Trotsky and Cannon Saw the Fourth International* (10/38)

**No. 16 — March 1985:**

- *Fourth International Charts Revolutionary Orientation and Rejects Expulsions from SWP* by Steve Bloom
- *All Out for the April 20 Antiwar Demonstrations!* by Bill Onasch
- *SWP Decides to Support April 20 Actions* by David Williams
- *What Abstentionism Usually Conceals* by Dave Riehle
- *Why SWP Should Have Backed L.A. Antiwar Referendum* by Evelyn Sell
- *The Nuclear Freeze and the Revolutionary Marxist Movement* by Frank Lovell
- *Fourth International Solidarity with British Miners* by Adam Shils
- *Problems of the Palestinian National Congress* by David Williams

- *Revolutionary Theory and Method* by Paul Le Blanc
- *Understanding (and Misunderstanding) the Nicaraguan Revolution* by Steve Bloom

**No. 17 — April 1985:**

- *Reports on the World Congress of the Fourth International* by Steve Bloom  
A Step Forward for the FI; Notes of a Delegate; In Defense of the Workers' and Farmers' Government Concept; How to Resolve Split in the U.S.; The 'Crisis in the Fourth International'
- *F.I.T. Calls Second National Conference*
- *Is the SWP Making a Turn Away from Abstentionism?* by David Williams
- *Permanent Revolution and Black Liberation in the U.S.* by Larry Stewart
- *When 'Political Revolution' Replaced 'Political Reform'* by Chester Hofla
- *Women, Technology, and the Changing Workforce* by Laura Cole

**No. 18 — May 1985:**

- *F.I.T. Asks Reinstatement in SWP*
- *Black Liberation and the Comintern in Lenin's Time* by Larry Stewart  
Appendix: *The Forging of Oppressed Nationalities in the U.S.* by Jack Barnes
- *The SWP's New Position on the Labor Party* by George Breitman
- *April 20: A Test for the SWP* by Evelyn Sell
- *George Lavan Weissman (1916-85)*  
*49 Years in the Struggle for Socialism* by the Editorial Board
- *Why Working People Need Solidarity* by Bud Schulte
- **FORUM:**  
*On the Workers' and Farmers' Government*  
*The Need for a Serious Discussion* by Paul Le Blanc  
*A Letter to Paul Le Blanc* by Steve Bloom
- *The 'Militant' and 'Socialist Action' Report on the World Congress*
- *From an Adaptation to Castroism to an Adaptation to Stalinism* by David Williams

**CLIP AND MAIL TO:  
BULLETIN IDOM, P.O. BOX 1317, NEW YORK, NY 10009**

Please send me the following back issues of the *Bulletin In Defense of Marxism* (\$3 per copy):

ISSUE NO.	QUANTITY	\$
-----------	----------	----

Please send me a complete set

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

**International Viewpoint**

1984 collections of *International Viewpoint* are now available in limited numbers only. Please send your orders in now. The cost for each collection including surface postage is 100 French Francs. Send orders to: IV, 2 Rue Richard Lenoir, 93108, Montreuil, France. ■



## TWO NEW PAMPHLETS

**Permanent Revolution,  
Combined Revolution,  
and Black Liberation  
In the U.S.**

by Larry Stewart

**\$1.25**

**George Lavan Weissman's  
Last Three Articles**

**85c**

WRITE: F.I.T., P.O. Box 1947  
New York, N.Y. 10009

### F.I.T. DIRECTORY

**Bay Area:**  
P.O. Box 971  
Berkeley, CA 94701

**Boston:**  
George Saunders  
RFD 1, 7 Liberty  
Sandwich, MA 02563

**Chicago:**  
P.O. Box 148321  
Chicago, IL 60614

**Cleveland:**  
4510 Warrensville  
Center Rd. #114B  
Cleveland, OH 44128

**Los Angeles:**  
P.O. Box 480410  
Los Angeles, CA 90048

**Twin Cities:**  
P.O. Box 14444  
University Station  
Minneapolis, MN 55414

**New York:**  
P.O. Box 1947  
New York, NY 10009

**Philadelphia:**  
P.O. Box 28838  
Philadelphia, PA 19151

**Pacific Northwest:**  
P.O. Box 17512  
Seattle, WA 98107-1212

## SUBSCRIBE TO THE **Bulletin** In Defense of Marxism

12 Issues: \$24       6 Issues: \$15

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: *Bulletin IDOM*  
Mail to: P.O. Box 1317  
New York, N.Y. 10009



## BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS FROM THE F.I.T.

*Leon Trotsky and the Organizational Principles of the Revolutionary Party*  
by Paul Le Blanc, Dianne Feeley, and Tom Twiss     **\$5.00**

*Permanent Revolution in Nicaragua*  
by Paul Le Blanc     **\$3.00**

*Platform of the Fourth Internationalist Tendency*     **75¢**

*The Cuban Revolution, the Castroist Current and the Fourth International*  
by the International Executive Committee, FI     **75¢**

*Why We Oppose the SWP's New Line on Castroism*  
by Steve Bloom     **75¢**

*The Iranian Revolution and the Dangers That Threaten It*  
by Steve Bloom and Frank Lovell     **\$1.00**

*Poland, the Fourth International, and the Socialist Workers Party*  
by Steve Bloom     **75¢**

*Theses on the Workers' and Farmers' Government*  
by the Fourth Internationalist Caucus  
and

*The Workers' and Farmers' Government and the Socialist Revolution*  
by Steve Bloom     **\$2.00**

*Crisis in the Socialist Workers Party: An Answer to Jack Barnes*  
by Cliff Conner     **60¢**

*Permanent Revolution, Combined Revolution, and Black Liberation in the U.S.*  
by Larry Stewart     **\$1.25**

*George Lavan Weissman's Last Three Articles*     **85¢**

Write: F.I.T.  
P.O. Box 1947  
New York, N.Y. 10009