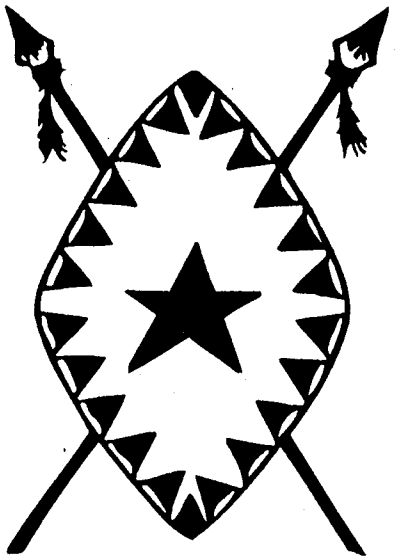

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1340 West Irving Park Road, suite 108
Chicago, IL 60613

Organization Means Commitment

(Commitment Is The Key)

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Spear & Shield Publications
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ORGANIZATION MEANS COMMITMENT or COMMITMENT IS THE KEY

(Anonymous)

Introduction

As the u.s. enters the 70's, some people are beginning to discuss the question of how to build a revolutionary cadre organization. Most of those who are discussing it will never get beyond the point of discussion, while of those who are actually beginning to organize, only a minority will probably be around a few years from now.

This is because it is not at all easy to build a revolutionary cadre organization. It takes a lot of time and patience; a lot of hard work and struggle; a continuing relationship from and to the revolutionary and progressive social forces within your society; a continuing expansion and enrichment of your own revolutionary vision and that of the revolutionary social force; the ability to think independently as well as to accept discipline cheerfully; and unrelenting self-criticism and struggle to overcome your own shortcomings. This work and struggle, this time and patience, this continuing relationship, this expansion and enrichment, this independence and discipline, this criticism and self-criticism, can only come from a continuing commitment in theory and in practice to the conviction that at the heart of (every great revolution) is the urgent need to transform Man/Woman into a new and more advanced form of human beings by means of struggle. **The only justification for a revolution is that it accelerates the evolution of man and woman.** The first thing you need for such a commitment is an unshakable conviction that **Correct ideas matter: and that once the correct ideas are grasped by the great masses of people, they become a material force capable of changing society and the world.** In a country like the u.s. where there is so much

not prevent the eventual breakaway of the person or persons involved; it only postpones the crisis and makes it more painful.

A revolutionary study group should not be organized for the sake of study alone, but for the purpose of laying the basis for a revolutionary cadre organization. Therefore, participation in the group should be restricted to those ready to do the systematic work required for such a study, including reading, leading and recording discussions, disciplined attendance at regularly scheduled meeting, criticism and self-criticism, over a period of approximately six months. During this period some members are bound to raise the question of getting involved in struggle over some burning topical issue. This will be one of the group's first tests as to who, if anyone, in the group really accepts the principle that "without revolutionary theory, there can be no revolutionary practice," and that without commitment to collective and protracted struggle, there can be no successful revolution. Anyone who is not able to refrain from involving the group in topical struggles until it has at least worked out some minimum ideological understanding, some programs of its own and some structure and standards, is not likely to be much good for the protracted struggle.

In this way, not only the material studied, but the way it is studied, is itself preparation for the organization of a revolutionary cadre.

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respect for things and so little respect for ideas, the number of people with this conviction is still very small; and the number whose convictions cannot be shaken is even smaller. When your friends and associates accuse you of having too much faith in ideas or in "human nature," it takes a pretty strong person to hold firm.

One of the most difficult hurdles that a cadre group has to overcome at its first meeting (and often at subsequent meetings) is the feeling among those present that there must be something wrong with them because they are so few. In a country like the u.s., where it is normal and natural to judge the value and importance of everything according to the size (the bigger the better), it is not easy to grasp and hold firm to the historical fact that **every advance that has ever been made by humankind was started by a few people**, often, to begin with, by only one individual, since every beginning can only be A beginning. Someone—it may have been a man or a woman—was the first to use a piece of stone as a hatchet or hammer or ax; in other words, to take the first step in tool-making (two million) years ago, which has now led to the machine age of lathes, punch presses, and dynamos. Similarly, someone—it may have been a man or woman—was the first to mold a pot out of mud...Elsewhere on earth, maybe another continent, or maybe only a few miles away, another man or woman at approximately the same time may have been doing the same things. But the first man or woman to take this first crude step in tool-making or pottery did not know this. Nor did he or she stop to speculate why only he or she or just a few others were taking this step.

The practice of judging a step forward in humankind's productive or political evolution by the number of people involved is a modern, western, and especially amerikkkan prejudice. When a handful of people met in 1921 to organize the Chinese Communist Party which now governs 750 million people, they knew, of course, that the party had to become much larger before it could lead the Chinese revolution to victory over imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucratic capitalism. But those present did not look around at each other and ask, "Why us rather than anyone else?" They

knew that anything which men and women create, any advance which humankind makes, must have a beginning and that every beginning must be made by those few individuals who choose to begin something because they feel it should be begun. Before something can GROW, it must first BE.

A. The Role of Revolutionary Cadre Organization

Building a revolutionary cadre organization is enormously difficult, but there is no mystery about the essential functions of such an organization. Just as the individual human being requires a mind to synthesize the many varied experiences which it receives through the senses, so the revolutionary social forces in a revolutionary period require a revolutionary cadre organization. Just as the mind acts as a **center** for the senses giving and receiving impulses, so the revolutionary cadre organization acts as a **center for the revolutionary social forces.** Neither can replace the other; nor can either develop without continuing interaction with the other. They are the two poles of a developing and dynamic relationship, continually enriching one another in a never ending spiral process of "from the masses, to the masses."

This **dialectical** concept is the key to the building of a revolutionary cadre organization.

The first task of a revolutionary cadre organization is theoretical **analysis** and **synthesis.** That is to say, the cadre organization must first reflect upon the specific social realities within which it is operating, with the aim of arriving at a clear conception of: **A) How this social reality has developed historically,** and **B) Of the contradictions within this reality which are the basis for further development.** The cadre organization must then, **C) Define which of these contradictions are the principal and major ones** requiring solutions if the society is to advance; and **D) Develop a vision of what kind of new reality** will be created by the resolution of those principal or major contradictions. Finally, the revolutionary cadre organization must, **E) Determine which sectors of the society have the greatest potential for the struggles**

knowledge of one another.

One way to do this is to form a revolutionary study group, in order to study previous revolutions and the specific contradictions in the united states which require resolution by revolution. The study of the theory and practice of previous revolutions is for the purpose of learning from them what is and what is not relevant to the specific contradictions of the united states [i.e., the relevance of a party and cadre organization]. Through study of previous revolutions, we can gain an appreciation of the way in which revolutions have advanced the evolution of humankind, and therefore, a profound conviction that [our] revolution must also advance the evolution of man and woman. At the same time, through the study of previous revolutions, it should become clearer to us that **every revolution is unique**, the specific product of specific energies of specific masses, specific organizations and specific leaders in a specific country under very specific conditions, all of which have been developed over a number of years, at a particular time, in a particular historical period, and which therefore cannot possibly be repeated at another time and in another place. This general truth is of crucial importance in seeking to determine the specific contradictions requiring resolution in the united states, the first country in human history to face problems posed by economic abundance, the first people in human history to have discovered from their living experiences that material well-being does not necessarily bring happiness and therefore the people who have the privilege of pioneering the revolutions of the Twenty-first century.

In forming a revolutionary study group, the purpose, procedures, schedules and responsibilities of each member, should be clearly worked out and accepted by all the participants at the first meeting. It is never a good idea to leave your purposes and procedures fuzzy in the hope that thereby you will keep some people with you who might otherwise be scared off by a straightforward statement of your goals and what will be expected of every participant. Nine times out of ten, this kind of liberal attitude does

with these groups to get a better idea of the stage of development of the social forces as well as to influence the direction of the social forces. In this interpenetrating dialectical relationship, they never lose sight of their primary commitment to the revolutionary cadre organization and the protracted struggle, no matter how pressing may be a particular issue nor how desperately a particular community or organization may want to turn over to the cadre members the main responsibility for leading that particular community or organization.

Conclusion

In the foregoing we have outlined the fundamental dialectical principles and some of the most important concrete practices of a revolutionary cadre organization as a developing reality. If the members of a revolutionary cadre organization are not constantly striving to **internalize** the dialectical principles motivating their practices, the organization sinks into routinism. On the other hand, if they are not constantly striving to **externalize** the dialectical principles in concrete practices, the principles turn into empty rhetoric.

Many of those reading this pamphlet may vigorously disagree with what it sets forth. Others may draw from it the conclusion that a revolutionary cadre organization is necessary if there is going to be a successful revolution in the united states. Not all those who arrive at this conclusion are ready to build or join such an organization. Some may be against a revolution altogether. Others may say that they agree with the ideas theoretically, but that building or joining such an organization is a job for someone with the patience and the capacity to think more grandly.

If, on the other hand, some readers decide that they do want to commit themselves to a collective and protracted struggle, they probably know one or two or a few other people who have arrived at the same point. These few people need some way to arrive at some kind of basic agreement on fundamental ideas and some

necessary to resolve these contradictions and create this new reality.

These theoretical concepts together constitute the **ideology** of the cadre organization.

After deriving its ideology **from** reflections upon the social realities, the cadre organization must devise **concrete programs** to go **to** the revolutionary social forces (masses, people) in order to mobilize them in struggles to create new reality through resolving the major contradictions of the society. In devising and projecting these concrete programs, the cadre organization must be concerned not only to increase the momentum of struggle and the physical power of the revolutionary social forces. It must also be concerned to bring about a **transformation** in these forces. That is to say, it must seek to increase their initiative, their critical, political consciousness, their sense of collectivity and responsibility, and the structures with which they can not only bring about the collapse of the existing oppressive society, but also create a new society.

The cadre organization, in other words, must be concerned not only with the **quantitative** but with the **qualitative** development of the mass struggle and of the revolutionary social forces. It must take seriously the fact that all the people within a given society, including the revolutionary social forces, are shaped by the dominant values of the society. In the light of the revolutions that have taken place all over the world in the past half century, beginning with the Russian Revolution of 1917, anyone claiming to be a revolutionist must be willing to look beyond the question of power to what happens after the taking of power. Hence, s/he must be concerned not only with increasing the anger and militance of the oppressed but also their determination and capacity to transform themselves. Otherwise, willfully or not, s/he is only preparing them for despair and hence for the leadership of demagogues, and s/he himself/herself is not a revolutionist, but a rebel or a demagogue.

At the same time the cadre organization is also providing the **framework** within which the cadre members themselves can

be constantly transforming themselves into more conscious, more responsible, more creative and more critical human beings—to who the revolutionary masses can increasingly look for leadership because they can recognize in them actual, living witnesses to the possibility of creating new men and women.

If the **ideology** of the cadre organization is sound; if its **program** meets the needs of the revolutionary social forces; if the cadre themselves are in a close and continuing relationship with these forces, then the revolutionary social forces will begin to struggle around these programs.

In turn, these struggle will bring about new situations, involving new contradictions and new conflicts. This means that the cadre organization must be continuously prepared to re-evaluate its ideas of the social reality and to devise new programs to take to the revolutionary social forces.

Thus constantly deepening and enriching both their ideas and their relationship with the revolutionary social forces, the cadre never lose sight of their primary commitment to the revolutionary cadre organization. It is the center from which they go outwards and to which they return. It provides the framework within which they can be continuously re-evaluating their theory and practice and continuously transforming themselves so as to be better able to live up to the historic task for which they accepted responsibility.

B. The Amerikkkan Political Background

The difficulty in understanding the role of the revolutionary cadre organization does not stem from any intrinsic mystery in this role. Rather, it stems from the lack of experience of amerikkkans in the political process of continuing commitment to the kind of systematic, collective, dialectical, theoretical and practical struggle which is at the heart of a revolutionary cadre organization. For historical reasons, the approach of most amerikkkans to social

vidual members can simply join with other organizations in a **United Front** as a member of the Front, like any other organization in the Front. This usually happens over a single, limited, momentarily very popular mass issue, usually a defense issue. In this kind of united action, the Front usually disappears as rapidly as it appeared, i.e., it is a sporadic or episodic unity that usually does not require the leadership of a revolutionary cadre organization.

2) The revolutionary cadre organization and/or its individual members can take the initiative of bringing together a number of various organizations in a United Front to carry on extended struggle for positive goals, e.g., the community control of schools in a particular district and eventually over a much wider area. In this case, because the United Front has extended time and geographical perspective, the revolutionary cadre organization must undertake to build it only after it has conducted careful advanced preparation of the constituency and has carefully trained cadres who will be able to influence the United Front and keep the struggle from disintegrating, without, however, assuming actual leadership positions.

3) Individual members of the organization can be assigned to join one or more of these organizations, not to take over the leadership, but to influence them in a revolutionary direction or even in some cases to bring about their disintegration (if they are not playing a progressive role in the general movement), meanwhile recruiting some members from the group to the cadre.

4) Individual members can sometimes be assigned to help form a group for a particular purpose, e.g., for revolutionary study or to act as a revolutionary current within a general movement.

In all these relationships, the revolutionary cadres are always conscious of their interpenetrating role, i.e., "from the masses, to the masses." In other words, they are using their contact

nication to the potentially rebellious sections of the society.

Because of this general self-structuring by the masses which is going on all the time, and because this self-structuring gathers momentum in a revolutionary period, the revolutionary cadre organization's relations are basically not with single individuals and never with abstract generalized masses. Instead they are usually with particular groups of various kinds which can range from political to recreational to ethnic to economic. Usually most of these groups are going in their own separate directions which may be parallel or diverging but which rarely converge. However, again because of the revolutionary character of the period, there are many reasons why these groups should or could converge to go in a particular direction together or to conflict on particular issues. Usually a particularly raw issue is enough to bring them into conflict, although sometimes a counter-revolutionary or revolutionary group may for reasons of its own seek to bring about a clash. On the other hand, it is unlikely that the many groups which have within them the potential for united action in a revolutionary direction will work for any extended period of time unless under the open or quiet leadership of a revolutionary cadre organization.

Therefore, the more rapidly various sections of the population are in the process of self-organization, the more important is the role played by the revolutionary cadre organization. In anticipation of this increasing momentum towards self-organization as the crisis deepens, it is never too early in a revolutionary period for the revolutionary cadre organization to begin the painstaking task of organizing. In fact, all previous history (including that of the u.s. in the 60's) shows that once the dam of public confidence in existing institutions begins to break, the centripetal tendencies in the population far exceed the cadre organization's ability to provide leadership.

Relations between the revolutionary cadre organization and other organizations fall into several distinct categories:

1) The revolutionary cadre organization and/or its indi-

problems has always been a pragmatic or problem-solving approach which is essentially anti-intellectual. In what has been described as the "headache syndrome," they react to and try to resolve each problem as it arises, as if each were a sporadic, isolated or accidental problem in a system which is fundamentally sound, and therefore capable of quick and easy solutions.

In the recent period, confidence in the soundness of amerikkkan institutions has plummeted, chiefly under the impact of the revolutionary struggles of Vietnamese people and the revolt of blacks...The result is that a great many amerikkkans, black and white, no longer think of amerikkkan problems as isolated or accidental. They have traced their roots to the "system" of "capitalism and racism" and concluded that a revolution is necessary in the u.s. They have further identified the chief revolutionary social forces to make this revolution as the blacks and other non-white (so-called) minorities.

However, for the most part, these people still strongly resist the ideas of committing themselves to the kind of collective and protracted struggle in the dialectical relationship to the revolutionary social forces outlined above. They no longer look at the problems of this society in a piecemeal fashion, to be solved one by one. But they still regard the revolutionary struggle as a series of isolated events, "happenings" and "experiences." The result is that they do not have a framework within which to do the continual evaluation that is necessary, and their angry attacks on the system turn into abstractions and rhetorical denunciations.

Always "on the go," attracted to whatever or whoever turns them on, they jump from one activity or group to another, judging the revolutionary content of that activity or group by its militancy or by the excitement and relief which it offers from boredom and frustration, i.e., quantitatively and subjectively. In the past few years, white youth, rebelling against the materialism and individualism of their middle-class parents, have been drifting in and out of communes and collectives. They claim to be seeking collectivity but they are unwilling to make the long range commitment to any

one group which is the prerequisite to collective struggle and collective learning. As a result, the collectives and communes springing up and disappearing all over the country are little more than aggregates of subjectivities in which each individual is still doing his or her "own thing."

These young people have substituted for the pragmatic, anti-intellectual attitudes of their forebears, a new anti-intellectual attitude which is the unique product of the post World War II society. Raised in a world of unceasing novelty and mobility, of revolutions in production and abundance in consumption, of instant communication and space-ship transportation, they have been culturally deprived of the experience through protracted struggle which has been the good and bad fortune of every previous generation, if only in the productive arena. As a result, they have an existentialist philosophy or the conviction that life consists essentially of momentary experiences.

In the 1960's, this lack of experience in protracted struggle was not a serious handicap. In fact, in retrospect, it was an enormous advantage since it enabled young people to leapfrog the old radical organizations with their obsolete theories and programs (still stemming from the experience of 1917 revolution in Russia), and to create instead a new and unique style of politics. This "new style of politics" centered around the dramatization of confrontations which were then carried into every living room through television. Staging these confrontations and using the mass media with enormous skill, the movement leaders of the late 50's and 60's, black and white, were able to overnight bring home to the entire society the barbarism of u.s. racism and the genocidal war in Vietnam. Radicalized by these methods, young amerikkkans particularly young black amerikkkans, exploded in the streets of practically every major city in the country, creating by the late 60's a social crisis of unprecedented magnitude with the entire society.

However, while the social crisis was obviously maturing, no cadre organization was being created to evaluate the new reality and to give direction to the emerging social forces. The result is that

weaknesses one by one, week in and week out, through criticism and self-criticism in the course of the protracted struggle.

A (6): Relationship With The Masses

Up to now, we have been discussing the revolutionary cadre organization's relation with the "masses" or with the "revolutionary social forces," as if these masses were "faceless masses" or as if these social forces were units of undifferentiated physical energy out in space somewhere. This is the way most radical groups talk and think of "the masses" and the "revolutionary social forces." Fortunately, their conceptions do not correspond to the way things actually are.

Actually, "the masses" and "revolutionary social forces" already are bound together in varying degrees and in different ways, sometimes in actual organizations, more often by loose structures of various kinds. For example, people live in particular geographical areas, work at particular places, join together because of ethnic, age, sex ties, or because of common cultural, religious, political, professional, recreational, economic or community interests that can range all the way from bowling to Community Control of Schools. They may organize rapidly in response to particular issues and then separate, each going his or her individual way, or they may try to find ways and means or reasons for staying together.

Particularly in a revolutionary period like ours [the 60's], when large sections of the population have lost faith in existing institutions, the prevailing tendency in the country is **centripetal**. This takes organizational form in the tendency to form all kinds of groups. Some groups spring together as a result of spontaneous eruption or in order to make the struggle over a particularly burning issue more effective. Others are formed chiefly in order to give individuals a sense of belonging to some collectivity because they have lost faith in the nation. Others exist for no other reason than that the power structure needs them as channels of commu-

ness which enables the maximum lessons to be learned by all concerned; hesitating to take issue with or criticism of the leaders; hesitating to criticize themselves for fear of undermining confidence in the organization (emperor protection); "selling" ideas to others rather than discussing and debating issues in such a way that members can make responsible choices; making excuses for oneself or for others when mistakes are made (not enough time, something else came up, conditions beyond our control, etc.), thus being "understanding" and "sympathetic" rather than demanding on oneself and others.

All these are manifestations of **liberalism** which is part of the very air we breathe in the u.s. Liberalism or the evasion of responsibility is what most amerikkkans mean by "freedom." Freedom is the right not to be held responsible or accountable for one's actions. Since this tendency is so powerful in the society, it is inevitable present in the organization. In the past the u.s. has been able to survive liberalism because of the unique historical conditions of this country, particularly the "wide open space" which have allowed people to pick up and leave the scene of their mistakes. Finally, however, the chickens are coming home to roost in the country. In a revolutionary cadre organization, they come home much sooner.

Liberalism leads to the covering up of mistakes and therefore to the weakening of the organization. When mistakes are covered up, they also pile up to the point where it becomes impossible to isolate and correct the specific mistakes, and the organization is in danger of breaking up in demoralization and bitter antagonisms.

The above list of liberal weaknesses, incomplete as it is, is familiar to everyone who has ever been in any kind of organization. When one realizes how many of these have characterized one's own practices in the past, it is easy to become discouraged, unless you keep in mind at all times the goals and methods to which you are committed and the collective commitment to this goal which will enable the organization to grapple with and overcome these

today the great majority of amerikkkans, both those who feel oppressed by the system and those who support the system because of the benefits they have received from it, are completely bewildered. They feel as if they were being tossed about in the eye of a great storm with no idea where they should go or how to get there. Likewise, in the absence of a revolutionary cadre organization, most young people who played such an important role in creating the movement of the 60's have been without any framework within which they could collectively evaluate the situation and make new projections to the country, let alone transform themselves into more responsible, more conscious, more dedicated and more critical cadres. Left to their own individual devices, the great majority of them have drifted out of the movement or have gone the way of left or right opportunism. This is to say, many have become pure **adventurists**, making isolated and desperate attacks on the power structure or anyone who they think supports the power structure. Others have become **careerists**, "on the go" in one way or another, as consultants, project directors, or staff persons supported by federal, city and state agencies and by churches and universities in order to co-opt the "heavies" of the movement.

C. Commitment Is Key

Against this background, it should be clear why the first step of any group of people seeking to build a cadre organization, must be the decision of each individual in the group to commit herself or himself to a collective, protracted struggle in a dialectically developing relationship with the revolutionary social forces [people]. Those who are convinced of the need for revolutionary social change and who, out of sober reflection on the concrete experiences of the recent past, have become convinced that spontaneous rebellions, revolts and confrontations—no matter how many or how spectacular—lead not to revolution, but to despair and confusion, should be ready to make this commitment out of

their own volition.

If, among those who have come together to discuss the question, only two people are ready for this commitment, these two must resist the temptation to continue meeting with the others in the hope or illusion that by doing so, they will persuade the others to stop wavering and make a commitment to this temptation, they will discover in the end that they are left either with the same two people, or that they themselves have begun to waver, since the waverers are the ones who have behind them the pressure of the way things are, rather than of the way things should be.

The decision by a group of people, no matter how few, to commit themselves to this collective and protracted struggle and to reject "on the go" politics, shapes everything that follows. If their commitment is to become more than rhetorical "testifying," they must now embark on the concrete steps necessary to create a collectivity out of their separate selves. As it is, they are still individuals, with their own very different ideas about what is and what should be, what they should do and how they should do it, what they can expect from each other now and what they should be able to expect from each other as they begin to struggle together.

In order for the group to start **transforming their separate subjectivity's**, they must first arrive, through organized discussion and an agreed-upon method of decision-making, an agreement on the following:

1. Their ideology.

2. A program or programs for activity within a prescribed period, long enough for them to complete some projects, and yet short enough so that they can see the end at the beginning.

3. A structure within which they can carry out these programs and which will also provide for the continuing growth and developing of the group as a whole and for every member in it.

of objectivity is the recognition that the mistake is not just an accidental one, i.e., that it is not unique to the particular individual or to the particular occasion. On the contrary, it probably relates to the particular historical environment or to the social background of the individual involved, e.g., intellectualism, technocratism, male chauvinism, permanent rank-and-file-ism. This objectification enables the entire group to raise its consciousness and helps others with the same background to be on the alert against specific weaknesses.

In the amerikkkan social and political environment at all levels, it is very difficult to make this kind of objective criticism/self-criticism a real part of daily life and practice. This again is for the very deep historical reasons already referred to, especially the tendency of amerikkkans to look upon problems as nuisances and headaches, to be gotten rid of by some external means (e.g., pills), rather than as challenges from which one can learn. Therefore, the tendency is to cover up mistakes rather than to admit or grapple with them. Amerikkkans are also very preoccupied with their own personalities or individualities and inclined to develop guilt feelings about their own mistakes or as a result of hurting other peoples feelings, by pointing out mistakes. For example, an individual may apologize for making a mistake because he feels guilty, thinking that he or she is criticizing himself or herself when s/he is really just expressing subjective or personal feelings. Often what is put forward as self-criticism is simply self-protection, e.g., when an individual rushes to admit a mistake to avoid criticism or further examination of the mistake by others.

Subjectivity assumes many forms, e.g., the protection of one's feelings or those of others; fear of hurting feelings or discouraging people by pointing out their mistakes; attacking those who hurt your feelings by criticism; fear of taking issues with others; not pointing out the person who makes a mistake or not pointing out a mistake at once but waiting until the persons involved are less emotionally caught up in their mistakes and then dealing with the question only as an abstraction and therefore without the sharp-

the revolutionary movement all over the world was dominated by the D-day concept of revolution (which had been borrowed mechanically from the example of the 1917 Russian Revolution), criticism used to take the form chiefly of post-mortem analysis. For example, one group or individual would insist that a particular setback in revolutionary developments in a particular country was the result of a mistaken policy and therefore of the group or individual sponsoring the policy. Simultaneously, the claim would then be made that if those in charge had pursued the policy of the critic instead, then there would have been success rather than failure. This kind of arrogant subjectivism and hypothetical afterthinking is completely foreign to the concept and practice of revolutionary criticism and self-criticism.

Revolutionary criticism and self-criticism is based, first and foremost, on the dialectical concept of development through collective and protracted struggle. It involves the clear recognition that in every situation there is a contradiction which requires a choice between two roads, that no one is immune from making a mistake or wrong choice, but that the entire group, the individual making the mistake, and indeed everyone concerned with revolutionary struggle, can learn from the mistakes and wrong choices that have been made by the individual or group. Moreover, the recognition, the examination, and correction of mistakes and weaknesses all provide additional energy for the advancement and acceleration of revolutionary struggle. This is the dialectical concept of the "dynamic of error."

In order for this "dynamic of error" to develop, the group must be united by certain common principles and ideas. All the members must be committed to common perspectives or a common ideology; they must share common standards, must be committed in time, and they must share a fundamental recognition of the role that struggle itself plays in developing. Without these common principles, criticism/self-criticism cannot rise above subjectivity and get to the essence of what is wrong in any particular situation, i.e., the **objectivity** of the mistake. Essential to the concept

4. Standards of membership.

5. Methods for continuing evaluation of their activities and themselves.

Some or all of these may be modified in the course of the organization's continuing development. Particularly in a revolutionary period, situations change very rapidly, and the ideas of the revolutionary organization must change accordingly. As situations change, different views over what should or should not be modified may at such time lead to such opposing proposals that those holding these opposing views cannot continue to co-exist in the same organization, and a split becomes unavoidable. But unless these changes or differences have developed in relationship to an original set of basic ideas, they cannot be dealt with as political differences, but will instead be interpreted as subjective or personality differences, with all the bitterness that usually accompanies such interpretations.

A (1): Ideology

For the last 50 years most radicals in the united states have thought that it was sufficient to define the amerikkkan historical reality in terms of Marx's 19th century analysis of european capitalism and Lenin's pre-World War I analysis of european imperialism, simply adding to these the analysis of amerikkkan racism, usually interpreted as a manifestation of capitalism or domestic imperialism. In the past ten years, the New Left radicals have continued to define the amerikkkan historical reality in these terms. However, in recognition of the post World War II struggles of Third World peoples inside and outside the united states and the increasingly middle-class character of the amerikkkan workers, they have simply substituted Third World peoples for the working class which Marx and Lenin regarded as the revolutionary social

force to destroy capitalism and imperialism.

None of these radicals, either in the past or recently, ever took seriously the fact that Marx and Lenin were both developing their theories in systematic reflection upon their specific historical reality, a totally different historical reality from what exists in the united states today. Marx was writing at the beginning of the industrial revolution in europe 100 years ago, and Lenin in backward Russia over 50 years ago, in periods when rapid development of the productive forces was the urgent concern of europeans and Russians respectively. Today the united states is the most technologically advanced country in human history, producing goods and developing the productive forces with such rapidity that every politically conscious, socially-responsible person is trying to think of how to slow development down. Far from being in material want, even the poorest layers of the population are constantly being courted by capitalism to buy, buy, buy; and state agencies subsidize these layers so their publicly-financed purchasing power can keep the economy going.

Yet, instead of analyzing this new social reality with the seriousness with which Marx and Lenin analyzed theirs, most radicals have simply reacted to the revolt of Third World peoples by casting them in the role which Marx and Lenin gave to the working class. Subsequently, as if vying for the leading role on the stage of this social drama, other groups, victimized and alienated within the society (women, youth, prisoners) have begun to substitute themselves for blacks. Now, some radicals, reacting to the chaos and absurdities into which this kind of rivalry to take the center of the stage is plunging the movement, have fallen back on the working class as hero, hoping against hope that spreading unemployment, inflation, taxes and other economic miseries may yet turn the working class into the revolutionary class which Marx's 19th century analysis called for.

Instead of just reacting to rebellions and to each other as these organizations are doing, the revolutionary cadre organization must make its own serious analysis of the unique historical

of rhetoric, their predisposition to spectacular confrontations, and their hunger for continuing emotional excitement. Engaging in activities for the sake of activism, and not in order to test clear convictions in social practice, they have rarely worked out clear programs with purposes, methods, schedules and processes, clearly defined, and therefore are incapable of careful evaluation. Hopping from one issue to the next, they have not even stayed together long enough to develop a sense of commitment to one another or to particular constituencies, which is a prerequisite to the practice of evaluation. Reared in an economy of abundance, they have little or no idea of how many working people (who have had to sweat for every dollar) judge a political organization by the seriousness with which the organization handles the questions of finances.

When one realizes how deeply ingrained these helter skelter attitudes and practices are in the objective environment and historical tradition, one realizes how futile it is to depend on rebukes and reprimands to correct them. Rather, through understanding the historical and philosophical roots of these practices, the revolutionary cadre organization can arrive at a firm appreciation of why, by contrast, it must build itself step by step on completely different philosophical foundations, based essentially on the dialectical method of development through collective and protracted struggle.

The theoretical acceptance of this dialectical method, however, by no means guarantees that the attitudes and practices so deeply rooted in the history of the country will immediately disappear. To uproot and correct these attitudes and practices on a continuing basis, the revolutionary cadre organization must include a place for criticism and self-criticism on the agenda of every meeting.

The concept of criticism/self-criticism has become a popular phrase in the "movement" only in the last few years as a result of the role that it played in the protracted struggles leading to the victory of the Chinese Communists and which it continues to play in the building of a new society in China and in revolutionary struggles elsewhere in Asia, Africa and Latin America. As long as

out? If some steps of the process were left out, was this harmful to the project or were some of them superfluous from the beginning? What were the achievements and shortcomings of the project, and what lessons can the group learn from it? What were the reasons for the breakdown or failure of the project at any point? Which of these were outside the control of the group and which might be anticipated and prepared for in the future? What were the expense and income from the project? Was strict accounting kept at every point and made available to the group as part of the final evaluation? Was every member clear about his/her responsibilities at every stage of the project? Were the resources of the group (skills, contacts, equipment, time) adequate to the project as planned, or did the group exhibit over-confidence and impatience in the planning?

This kind of methodical evaluation is a concrete manifestation of **politics in command**. In other words, it stems basically from the philosophical conviction that in all relations between human beings and their environment, human beings must assume conscious responsibility for their actions and not resort to the vulgar materialism of always blaming others or outside conditions and thus seeing themselves as passive victims.

All this may seem very elementary and common-sensical, but it is far from being obvious, either in the general overall political atmosphere of this country, or in the particular atmosphere of the "movement's" helter skelter, on-the-go politics. Amerikkkans generally tend to have a technical approach to every project, to try to overpower those whom they are seeking to influence or to defeat, by the sheer weight of their know-how and equipment. Or they have a "new frontier" approach: if something doesn't work out so well, or things go bad, just abandon the project, or the place or the people involved in it, and go on to something or somewhere or somebody else. They are always running off to a new beginning.

Because "movement" people have failed to make serious examination of the amerikkkan philosophical environment, they have simply carried these same attitudes into their own activities, simply adding their own special contempt for ideas and their love

development of the united states and of the new social tasks which have been uniquely posed as a result of its unprecedented material development. It should then be able to recognize that the major contradiction in this country is not an economic one, but rather the contradiction between this country's extremely advanced technological development and its extreme political and social underdevelopment. This contradiction is manifested in the pre-occupation of its people with their own private pursuits and their material comforts and in their lack of political consciousness and social responsibility, as well as of genuine self-governing institutions which could encourage the development of political consciousness and social responsibility. It can then be seen that the chief purpose of the [revolution] is to accelerate the rapid growth of political consciousness and social responsibility in the...people so that they can **put politics in command of economics**, instead of being ruled by economics as they are today.

A (2): Program

Most movement groups are reactive, issue-oriented groups who are constantly plunging into activity around the innumerable issues, usually defense issues, which are constantly surfacing in this period, such as "Free the Prisoners," "Free Angela Davis," "Abolish Stress," "Bring the Boys Back from Vietnam." The result is that most of them disappear as rapidly as they appear. What usually continues is: A) either one of the Old Left organizations (CP-USA), SWP, PLM, etc.) or B) cliques of individuals who are often clustered around a particularly charismatic individual or one who is particularly gifted at fund raising or C) social groups of alumni or veterans of various struggles in the 60's.

Few of these, if any, have ever sat down to work out a program that a half dozen people could carry out over the period of a year in order to build themselves into a viable organization with their own collective identity and specific contribution to make to the overall movement. Most of the so-called revolutionaries in

the u.s. can rap about the need for a planned economy or for the reorganization of the entire united states from top to bottom. But they never have taken the time to think through the **program** for even a small cadre organization: a clear conception of the **purposes** the group is trying to achieve, the **methods** by which they propose to achieve these purposes, a proposed **time schedule**, including deadlines for each step of the program, and the specific step-by-step **processes**.

When an organization works out clearly such programs, it also establishes a basis for the evaluation of its programs. Thereby it does one of the most important, yet deceptively simple, things that a revolutionary cadre organization can do: Learn from experience or develop its theory from social practice. No-where more than in the u.s., is it so necessary to recognize and emphasize the importance of learning and the development of theory through a continuing relationship of your theory to practice. This is the only way to combat the powerful tendencies in this country to empty rhetoric (or talk without practice), and mindless activism or reactionary militancy, i.e., militancy to prove one's militancy or because it is fashionable to be militant, rather than to act because one has some deeply felt convictions about the way man/womankind can and should advance, and realizes that these convictions can only be tested in social practice.

Therefore, in the initial period, the main programs of a revolutionary cadre organization should be **internal programs**. That is to say, they should be consciously aimed at transforming those who have come together on the basis of commitment to a collectivity, with a powerful sense of their developing and continuing collective identity and purpose. The first year programs of a cadre organization should center chiefly around the following:

A) The theoretical strengthening of the members (political education).

B) The development of the literature of the organization and

In affirming the indivisibility of ethics and politics, the revolutionary cadre organization is breaking consciously with the political tradition which has dominated western thought since Machiavelli, five hundred years ago, created the science of politics as a question of strategy and tactics. Marx did not challenge this Machiavellian concept chiefly because politics was, secondary to what was happening in the process of production. There he believed, the very development of the productive forces and the struggles of the workers against exploitation, were creating in the workers the highest standards of collectivity, discipline and social responsibility. For Lenin, politics was much more important than it had been for Marx, but Lenin had conceived the revolutionary party chiefly as a means to increase the hostility of the masses to the system as a whole so that they could then be mobilized in struggle to overthrow the system.

Today, however, in the u.s. in the last quarter of the 20th century, our historical conditions and therefore our responsibilities cannot be the same as Marx and Lenin. In the revolutionary forces with whom we are the most concerned, there is no lack of hostility and antagonism to the system as a whole. What they lack is a concept of: A) transformation of man/woman which must be at the center of revolutionary struggle; and B) protracted struggle. Together these require a new concept of the indivisible relation between politics and ethics.

A (5): Methods of Evaluation—Criticism and Self-Criticism

After the completion of every project, no matter how small, there must be a thorough-going evaluation of the project by the revolutionary cadre organization. Were the purposes of the project fulfilled? Were they clearly defined and understood by everyone involved in the first place and were they kept in mind throughout the project? Were the methods effective? Were they the best methods or the only ones that could have bee chosen? Were schedules maintained and was every step of the process carried

product of objective and historical conditions and therefore outside their control. They point to the post-war world of abundance and electronic media which have provided instant gratification of every physical and psychological want to the youth generation; to the barbarism of racism and the genocidal war in Vietnam which have demoralized young people by exposing the dehumanized character of amerikkkan capitalism and imperialism and the amerikkkan political-economic-academic power structure; and to the failure of the older generation over the years to resist this barbarism and inhumanity.

However, in citing objective and historical conditions as an excuse for the negative rebellions and rebelliousness of young people, these liberals and the rebels themselves are evading the crucial contemporary contradiction: that, on the one hand, these young rebels in their rebellions are the most complete expression of a corrupt value-free society; while on the other, they are the ones with the greatest potential to bring this system to an end. In other words, the revolutionary cadre organization cannot wait upon the revolution to change the objective conditions that have produced these social forces as they are. It must find ways and means, within the present, to bring about the revolutionary transformation of these young people in order to make the revolution, i.e., in order to bring about changes in the objective institutions and conditions.

One of the most important ways that the revolutionary cadre organization can do this is by projecting and embodying in its own ideas and practices, the values which have proved most universal and enduring throughout the development of humankind; in other words, the revolutionary cadre organization itself must insist on the **indivisibility of politics and ethics.**

This indivisibility of politics and ethics is also indispensable to the development of the revolutionary cadre organization for the protracted struggle which lies ahead of it. Without the above standards, it is impossible for the cadre to develop trust in one another and from those whom they seek to lead. Without trust, no protracted struggle can possibly be successful.

the skills of the membership to enable them to take the ideas of the organization to the masses (propaganda).

C) The increase of the organization's members (recruitment).

The **Propaganda Program** of the organization is crucial to the development of the revolutionary struggle since as it cannot too often be repeated, once the correct ideas are grasped by the masses, they become a material force capable of changing society and the world. Particularly at this stage in the struggle, the major emphasis of the organization's propaganda must be on expanding the vision and increasing the critical political consciousness of the people, i.e., inspiring them with the broad purposes of the struggle and developing their capacity to de-mythologize and de-romanticize. To mobilize the masses in struggle or to increase their militancy without at the same time expanding their consciousness of their responsibility and capacity to create "new men and women," is only to lay the groundwork for their despair.

In mapping out the **Recruitment Program** of the organization, great care should be taken to make the process of recruitment a selective one, aimed at slow and **qualitative** growth, rather than rapid expansion, taking care not to judge the growth of the organization by the numbers of its members, rather than by their commitment to the ideology and programs of the organization.

In the matter of recruitment, the cadre organization has few models to go on. In the past, it was ridiculously easy, particularly for a worker or a black person, to acquire membership in the CP-USA or the Trotskyite parties. The organizations, except for relatively brief periods right after the Russian Revolution had so little contact with the workers, and even less with blacks, and so few workers or blacks were attracted to these organizations, that each one became a kind of "prize"; so that if he or she showed any sign of being willing to join, the organization virtually subsidized them, sending them around the country on tours for the party so that the

party could present a public image of black or worker membership.

Since the 60's, on the other hand, thousands of young people have been attracted to the new political organizations of all persuasions, ready to drift into (and out of) these organizations with the same lack of commitment as they have given to ad hoc organizations, particularly if the mass media has given these organizations any publicity. In turn, these organizations, living for the moment and for the spotlight, have recruited furiously in order to give the impression of a large public following. In the recent past we have had some instructive experiences with organizations who have expanded rapidly for the sake of and with the help of the media. Often they have discovered that they were recruiting many police agents. Even when this was not the case, they have still been at the mercy of their new members, most of who were attracted to the organization in the first place by the image of confrontation which they got from the mass media and who have therefore led the organization into confrontation after confrontation, until its entire energies and resources were exhausted in defense activities.

For all these reasons, it is important that the revolutionary cadre organization seek to avoid both rapid expansion and any kind of publicity, in full recognition of the fact that any rapidly expanding or publicity-oriented organization has no chance to do the learning and developing which are absolutely essential to preparation for rapid growth at a later stage of the protracted struggle.

For the same reasons, a cadre organization must acquire its basic finances from dues paid by its members and from the strictly political activities of the organization (sales of literature, public meetings, etc.), and not from grants or funds from private or public agencies. The danger is not that these agencies will put direct pressure on or try to dilute any militant activities which the organization may want to engage in. The corruption is much more insidious, arising from the fact that external funding deprives the organization and the membership of the opportunity and the responsibility to develop and test their own commitment and their

discipline, self-reliance, and **accountability; care and development of one's body as well as of one's mind.**

Young people in the u.s. today, both black and white, and particularly black, are potentially the chief revolutionary social force for the overthrow of the present society. They are the ones most hostile to the present system and the ones with the maximum energy for fundamental social change. At the same time, these young people both black and white (the latter especially in so far as they have become alienated from their communities and are imitating black radical youth), are the ones most deficient and lacking in the above values. Hence they are "now" people for the most part, standardless and valueless. Hence their "revolutionary" energies are most likely to explode in rebellions and rebellious activities of the most negative kind: dropping out, copping out, freaking out, "ripping off" and other helter skelter, individualistic and adventuristic actions. Rebels without a positive cause, they have no vision of what the struggle must be for and therefore no concept of the "new woman/man" who must be created through revolutionary struggle.

Typical of their inability to put the development of humanity at the center of their thinking is their endorsement and encouragement of "ripping off" merchants (as representative of the capitalist system) as if this could possibly leave unaffected the humanity of those doing the ripping off.

The result of these negative rebellions is that large sections of the population are becoming completely alienated from the perspective of revolutionary social change, either becoming passive and despairing, or in many cases, actively counter-revolutionary. Thus, instead of increasing the revolutionary potential, these potentially revolutionary social forces are actually decreasing its potential.

Most liberals, and these young rebels themselves, are reluctant to face the new reality which is being created by these negative rebellions. Instead, they excuse these rebels by saying that their attitudes and actions are "only" or "in the final analysis" the

members is contrary to the role of leadership, and so forth and so on.

In all these ways, through living and often painful experiences in the correct and the incorrect handling of the very demanding relationships between leadership and members, the members of the revolutionary cadre organization and the organization as a whole begin to internalize the rhythms of **the dialectical as contrasted to the administrative method**. This internalization becomes decisive in the handling of contradictions between the organization and the revolutionary social forces; both in the struggle for power and in the even more important and awesome responsibilities that ensue after seizing power.

A (4): Standards

Every collectivity of any kind, whether an organization, a class, a race, or a nation, must establish standards, i.e., those values and patterns of behavior which all members are expected to strive to embody in their daily thinking and practice, chiefly in order to advance the collectivity. A revolutionary cadre organization, on the other hand, establishes its standards not only to advance the group but in full consciousness of the group's responsibility to advance the evolution of humankind.

Starting from the fundamental premise, a revolutionary cadre organization at this time must establish its standards in the light of two major realities: 1) the peculiar and contradictory character of the chief revolutionary social forces; and 2) the protracted struggle that will be necessary to bring about the revolutionary transformation of this society. These realities make it essential that the revolutionary cadre organization adopt as its standards those values which have proved to be most durable and universal in the course of humanity's millennia of development. Such values must include: **love and respect for one's own people**, not for their sake alone but as a springboard to love and respect other people; **respect for ideas; dedication; dependability;** and

own ideas.

A (3): Structure

Regular meetings at least once a week and always **starting on time**, the keeping of minutes at every meeting and the reading of these minutes ate the subsequent meeting, and a clearly-organized agenda for each meeting, are the elementary structural requirements for a revolutionary cadre organization. If it seems strange to emphasize what should be obvious, it is because these are not at all obvious in the "on the go" political atmosphere of today's movement, which is more likely to call meetings when the spirit moves it, to disdain the keeping of minutes and to regard presentation of an agenda as incipient bureaucratization or elitism.

Through regularly scheduled meetings, each member begins to internalize the structure of the group as part of his or her own living routines. Through the promptness with which every member arrives at the meeting, the unity of every one starting together is established. Through minutes a group takes responsibility for its programs and procedures from week to week and begins to get a concept of its own development as historical. Through a clearly organized agenda, the essentials of which should be the same from week to week, every member can be preparing between meetings for his or her participation at the meeting, thus creating a framework for the maximum participation of each member.

At the beginning of each meeting, the Chairperson is the one responsible for preparing the agenda. This can then be revised by the membership who must accept the agenda in its final form before the meeting proceeds. This apparently simple situation is an example of the leadership-membership relationship which is essential to the development of a revolutionary cadre organization.

The establishment of structure with which leadership and membership can be developed is a very difficult problem inside the united states. On the one hand, there is a strong tendency in ordinary non-political working people to hold back and wait for

direction from those who they may consider to be more capable or experienced, i.e., to see themselves as permanent rank and file. Coupled with this is the tendency to rally around and rely upon charismatic leaders to lead them out of the wilderness of oppression.

Movement people, including young blacks, also tend to be caught up in this "cult of personality." But there is an even more widespread tendency among young people to regard any leadership as "elitist" and "bureaucratic" and to insist instead on what they call "participatory democracy" or the uninterrupted rule of the rank and file. Although apparently contradictory, both the "cult of personality" and the "ultra-democracy" of young people actually stem from the same existentialist, ad hoc approach of movement people to revolutionary struggle. Constantly on the go from rally to rally, living for the psychological impact of each meeting on their feelings, they are not concerned with the development of collective struggle, but rather with their own momentary feelings as individuals.

The structure of the revolutionary cadre organization, on the other hand, is created to develop a dialectical, i.e., a developing, relationship between the leaders and members of the organization analogous to that between the organization and the revolutionary social forces. The important difference is that the members of the revolutionary cadre organization elect their leaders out of their own ranks, choosing those who they believe to be the most capable of guiding and directing the organization, and holding them responsible for giving such guidance and direction.

This is one of the many ways in which the revolutionary cadre organization is constantly making creative use of the dialectical interplay and tension between the two opposites, Democracy and Centralism, for its own collective development. Or, to put it another way, it is precisely because collective development is so critical to the essence of the revolutionary cadre organization that it is able to make conscious and creative use of the interplay between the two opposites, Democracy and Centralism.

hand, a chairperson who is not constantly listening to the members of his or her committees will soon be speaking only from her or his limitations and will be unable to project to the members a unity which has the richness of variety embodied in it.

A chairperson must be efficient at running meetings, but she or he must also be willing to do "propaganda work" among the members of the committee individually, in order to develop a common language with them. A leadership which resorts to agitation and exhortation of the membership is usually one which has failed to fulfill its responsibility of projecting programs and positions which embody the relationship between what the organization is doing from day to day and the long-range role of the organization in the acceleration of the evolution of humankind.

If the leadership does not fulfill its role of projecting, creating and innovating but is only reacting to the membership, then the tendency is for weaknesses of individual members to surface, i.e., for individual members to "act up." In this situation leadership feels threatened, is tempted to overact, reminding the members of their duties and of its rights, i.e., of the chain of command, and sometimes even to mobilize those members whom it considers more loyal and supportive against those who are "acting up." But this type of administrative, disciplinary, commandist and subjectivist behavior on the part of the leadership cannot possible restore the moral authority of leadership, since by definition the role of leadership is not a defensive but a creative one.

The organization must be constantly on guard against the tendency of members on all levels to self-cultivation, i.e., the use of the organization's resources only for the development of the individual. On the other hand, if the leadership is not playing its proper role of encouraging the independent creativity of the membership, the tendency of membership is to slip into passivity, merely receiving and supporting instructions from the leadership. As the organization then begins to stagnate, leadership again is tempted to exhort the membership to greater efforts and liveliness. But this exhortation is futile, since by definition, agitation of the

Commitment Is The Key

Most amerikkkans find it difficult to understand the principles and practices of **Democratic Centralism** because amerikkkans, generally speaking, proceed not from the concept of **roles**, but from the concept of rights versus privileges and prerogatives. This concept of rights, embodied in both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, predisposes amerikkkans to regard any relationship between individuals and leaders as an antagonistic contradiction and to look at every situation from the viewpoint of the individuals preserving his or her right from external infringement.

The concept of **roles**, on the other hand, involves looking at relations in terms of the development of the collectivity, whether this be the organization, the society as a whole, or any institution in the society. At the heart of Democratic Centralism is the question: "What functions must be performed by each part of the structure if the collectivity is to be able to act as and continue to develop into a strong nucleus of revolutionary leadership and as a framework for the continuing development and transformation of every member?"

It is necessary to have leadership within the structure of a revolutionary cadre organization because it is necessary to have some persons or a Central Committee that is playing the role of projecting and generalizing, unifying and coordinating. If there is no chairperson within a particular committee, or no Central Committee within an organization with a number of committees, who is playing this role as "center," then there is only the plurality, the specificity and the variety of the members on the constituent committees. On the other hand, if the various members and the various committees who are responsible for specific programs, are not constantly developing their programs, are not increasing their contact with the revolutionary social forces, are not discussing issues and programs of the organization, and not developing their ability to think independently, then the unity of the organization turns into homogeneity.

This, **Discipline and Democracy** are both part of the prin-

Organization Means Commitment

ciples of the daily practice of a revolutionary cadre organization, not because they have been imposed or because they are guaranteed by statute, but because of the deep conviction of each member that these are both necessary to the development of the organization. Every member is bound by the decision of the organization because every member realizes that without discipline, everybody and anybody could go his or her own way, do his or her own thing, and the organization would fall apart.

On the other hand, the leadership is constantly encouraging and seeking to create situations in which there is full discussion by the membership because it knows that if decisions are arrived at without the full democratic discussion and even debate of the members, the organization cannot penetrate to the issues involved in any decision or the dualities that are implicit in every unity. Leadership knows that agreement reached through a process of full discussion and debate is always more effective than agreement reached through unquestioning ascent. Leadership and membership both know that liveliness of mind must go hand in hand with **Unity of Will** if the organization is to develop. Structure should be the basis of flexibility, not rigidity.

Both leadership and membership in the revolutionary cadre organization is an art, in the sense that both leaders and members must learn to play creative roles in the development of their mutual relationship. There are no exact rules for the behavior of either leaders or members as there is in a scientific experiment, or in learning an athletic skill, where uniform conditions can be artificially set up and repeated again and again. However, experience has shown that certain procedures and attitudes can be immediately recognized as contrary to the general dialectical principles of Democratic Centralism.

For example, the "rotating chairperson" (which is often proposed in the name of "participatory democracy"), destroys the possibility of leadership playing its essential role as "center." A chairperson must hold office for a period of time long enough so that s/he can develop the responsibilities of this role. On the other