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THEORETICAL JOURNAL OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL IN AUSTRALIA



**Socialist Revolution and the
Struggle for Women's Liberation**

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Introducing Socialist Worker

One of the key decisions of the Fifth National Conference of the Socialist Workers Party held over January 27-31 in Sydney was the decision to launch a new Trotskyist theoretical journal, *Socialist Worker*.

In presenting the Tasks and Perspectives Report to the conference, national secretary Jim Percy pointed out that both the broadened possibilities for the party's intervention in the class struggle and the growth of the party itself demanded an increased propaganda offensive. *Direct Action*, party's weekly newspaper, would be expanded in size, coverage and distribution. But that was not enough. A theoretical journal could supplement the work of *Direct Action* and develop on a new scale the party's theoretical work.

At the time of this decision there was no Trotskyist theoretical journal in Australia. The party had previously published a journal, *Socialist Review*, which ceased publication in mid-1972 after five issues. In many ways this journal was the forerunner of *Socialist Worker*. The party had decided to suspend the journal in order to build *Direct Action*. Early in 1976 *Direct Action* became weekly and during the course of that year was able to consolidate itself sufficiently to allow the projected expansion.

Socialist Worker will promote Trotskyist theory and analysis in a situation where the realm of "theory" has been left until now to the Stalinists of the Communist Party of Australia with their publication *Australian Left Review* and the neo-Stalinists and Althusserians of *Arena* and *Intervention*. As well, *Socialist Worker* will compete with the various specialist journals which have an anti-Marxist direction in the women's movement and other sections of the mass movement.

The Fifth National Conference revealed very clearly the theoretical strengths of the party. An organ was necessary for the expression of these strengths.

Existing journals such as *Arena* and *Intervention* are the product of little elite groups of left intellectuals who without any party and without any intervention in the class struggle are simply unable to fulfill the theoretical needs of the radicalising workers, women, Blacks and migrants. Only a

party which bases itself on the political acquisitions of Marxism and intervenes on a daily basis in the struggles of the oppressed will be able to produce a theoretical journal that is worthy of the name.

Together with *Australian Left Review*, the journal of the CPA which has recently indicated that one of its main thrusts in to the class struggle is the Citizens for Democracy campaign, an across class formation devoted to constitutional reform, these existing publications make for confusion on the key theoretical and practical tasks facing the Australian left. We have even seen the complete degeneration of the Australian Maoists, who in various publications, promote the reactionary outlook of Australian nationalism.

Socialist Worker will be directly counterposed to these publications. Its aim will be to promote clarity on the tasks we face in the class struggle in Australia: our attitude to the Labor Party, our approach to the women's liberation movement, the nature of Australian capitalism and the defense of Trotskyist positions on the national question, on political economy and on philosophy.

As well, it will be an internationalist journal which fights for clarity on the nature of the world revolution and the key tasks of revolutionaries around the globe. This will be an important strength of our journal. No other current can draw on the strength of a genuine international movement and consequently on all the acquisitions of over 130 years of the Marxist movement.

So *Socialist Worker* will not be an eclectic hodge-podge of the latest fashions in philosophy or the intellectual meanderings of self-appointed "experts" in this or that aspect of Australian capitalism. It will take a strong stand. It will be a revolutionary Marxist journal, a product of the political achievements of the *Socialist Workers Party* as part of the Fourth International, the world party of socialist revolution.

At the same time, *Socialist Worker* welcomes letters, contributions and criticisms from our readers. We hope to make debate and discussion a regular feature of our journal. We will publish *Socialist Worker* every two months.

In this issue

Two of the articles we publish in this issue come out of the Fifth National Conference of the Socialist Workers Party. We will publish other resolutions and reports in future issues.

This time we include the resolution *Socialist Revolution and the Struggle for Women's Liberation* which was adopted at the Conference and Alliances and the *Revolutionary Party* which was presented as an educational during the Conference.

The resolution was drafted by Mary-Alice Waters who is the national chairwoman of the United States Young Socialist Alliance in 1968 and has been editor of the socialist weekly *The Militant* since 1971. She edited the book *Rosa Luxemburg Speaks* (1970) and is the author of the pamphlets *GIs and the Fight Against War* (1967), *The Politics of Women's Liberation Today* (1970), and *Feminism and the Marxist Movement* (1972). Waters is currently a member of the political committee of the United States Socialist Workers Party.

The editorial by Nita Keig in this issue spells out the situation in the women's liberation movement in Australia and points the way forward. Her editorial serves as an introduction to the document on women's liberation and indicates that the ideas in the document are in urgent need of application in this country. Keig has been an activist in the Vietnam anti-war movement and a participant in the women's liberation movement since its inception in this country. A former editor of the revolutionary socialist newspaper *Direct Action* and a former national secretary of the Socialist Youth Alliance, Keig is currently a member of the political committee of the SWP and the party's Sydney regional organiser.

Alliances and the Revolutionary Party is the text of an educational presentation by Dave Holmes. It deals with the theoretical bases of the Fourth International's position on the popular front. It counterposes to the popular front of the Stalinists the tactic of the united front as proposed by Trotsky as the way forward in the fight against fascism in Germany. Holmes shows the relevance of this theory to the present time with reference to the current course of Stalinist and Social Democratic currents around the world.

Holmes was active in the Vietnam anti-war movement before joining the Trotskyist movement in 1970. In 1972 he moved to Sydney to work in the national office of the Socialist Workers League (former name of the Socialist Workers Party). Holmes is a former contributor to the old *Socialist Review* and has edited *Direct Action* and is currently the party's national organisation secretary.

Also in this issue we reprint from *Intercontinental Press* (February 23, 1976) an article by George Novack. The article was first presented as a talk as part of an educational program following the

George Novack was born in Boston and educated in Harvard. He is a noted Marxist scholar, editor of *Existentialism versus Marxism*, and author of numerous books including *An Introduction to the Logic of Marxism*, and *The Origins of Materialism*. Novack has been active in the defence of civil liberties since the Scottsboro case in 1932 and was national secretary of the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky which played a major role in securing Trotsky's release from house arrest in Norway in 1936. After joining the Trotskyist movement Novack collaborated with Trotsky in educating the movement in the principles of dialectical materialism.

Novack would be well known to our readers here in Australia both through his books and his successful 1973 tour.

A dedicated educator of the revolutionary movement, Novack in his article in *Defence of Engels* polemics against a whole series of "innovations" in the realm of Marxist philosophy. Under the disguise of an attack on Engels such philosophers as Ernst Fischer, Schmidt, Sartre, Marcuse, Adorno and certain Eastern European oppositionists such as Kolakowski actually attack the fundamental tenets of Marxism. Novack shows convincingly that any attempt to erode the materialist basis of Marxism inevitably allows idealism to come in the back door.

This polemic is a breath of fresh air in an atmosphere poisoned by the philosophy of anti-Marxist "Marxists" who create false dichotomies between "the young Marx" and "the mature Marx" and between Marx and Engels and who conclude that Leninism and Stalinism are one and the same and that both are a result of Engels' philosophy! Many radicals have been hoodwinked by these aberrant theories. Novack's article goes a long way towards clarifying the inadequacies and contradictions of these newly resurrected philosophies.

Socialist Worker hopes through articles of this type to promote discussion on Marxist philosophy in the framework of preserving the tradition of Marx and Engels, later continued by Lenin and Trotsky.

In the review section of this issue we reprint Cindy Jaquith's Brown-miller on Rape: A Betrayal of Feminism. First published in *International Socialist Review* (April 1976) this article was reprinted in *Direct Action*. It is again published because of its enormous significance for the women's liberation movement in this country, the visit to Australia last year of Susan Brownmiller to coincide with the release of her book *Against Our Will*.

Cindy Jaquith is the national women's liberation director of the Socialist Workers Party of the United States. In this review Jaquith concludes that Brownmiller's book... not only fails to answer the very problem it seeks to address, but it represents an obstacle to the fight for the emancipation of women, and a dangerous weapon in the hands of our enemies.

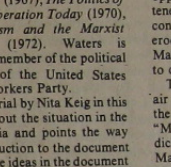
In the section on news of the Fourth International we publish two features. One deals with the January 14 meeting in London organised to repudiate the Healyite slanders against Joseph Hansen and George Novack. The other deals with the progress of the US Socialist Workers Party's suit against the FBI. These articles show the contrast between genuine concern for and proletarian movement that is of ensuring the security of the Trotskyist movement which is expressed by the SWP and on the other hand the Healyite movement's apparent preoccupation with the question of security which is just a cover for its attack on workers democracy.



Mary-Alice Waters



Nita Keig



George Novack



Cindy Jaquith



Dave Holmes

Twenty-sixth national convention of the United States Socialist Workers Party held in Ohio August 17-21, 1975.

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The Crisis in Women's Liberation: the Need for a Socialist Perspective

In recent months a discussion has been going on within the women's liberation movement around the country about the state of the movement at the present time and what direction it is taking. This discussion has taken place in the pages of the various newspapers and journals of the women's movement as well as in meetings and informal conversations. But it is apparent that a great many women are stepping back and looking at the movement. They are asking: What have we achieved? Where is the women's movement heading? What are the most relevant and useful ideas for the movement and what is the way forward? What comes through this discussion of the state of the movement are quite widespread feelings of disorientation and demoralisation.

Obviously sensing the mood of a great many women's movement activists and the interest in where the women's movement is going, even the *National Times* thought it opportune to publish an article by Anne Summers recently, the boldly entitled *Women: Back to the Barricades*. No doubt many women bought and read it with curiosity. But there weren't any great answers to be found here either. Summers did note the turn away by some sections of the movement from total submersion in the various services set up by the movement—refuges, crisis and health centres etc and their realisation that these weren't going to point the way forward for the movement. However, her idea of a return to political activity seemed to consist of a stepping up of various forms of political lobbying. Hardly an optimistic and exciting perspective! But it seems the articles written in the women's movement press are similarly at a loss to provide a perspective for the movement.

What *does* account for the problems of the women's liberation movement at the moment? There is no single, simple answer to this question but one thing remains certain. The objective conditions which have given rise to women's struggles in the past and which gave rise to the new wave of women's struggles around the world in recent years continue to exist. These conditions are rooted in the very nature of women's continuing oppression and the growing will and ability of women to challenge that oppression. Women's struggles remain as real, as pressing and as important as ever and the women's liberation movement remains a potentially very significant force in all the coming struggles for social change.

The various problems the women's movement faces at present—the slowing pace of events, the lack of clear, unifying focuses for action or demonstrable victories are all conjunctural ones. The women's liberation movement does not exist in a political vacuum. It is part and parcel of the day-to-day social and political struggles taking place. It is a part of the overall class struggle and subject to its ebbs and flows. And today in Australia the class struggle is going through a period when it is experiencing some very real setbacks. The entire working class, but particularly its most oppressed layers such as women, Blacks and migrants, are under fierce attack from the ruling class, represented in government by Fraser and his gang. In an attempt to preserve their interests in a period of worsening economic crisis, Fraser and the capitalist class he represents are attempting to drive down the living standards of all working people and push back many of the rights and gains won by the oppressed in previous periods.

the reformist misleaders who do all in their power to prevent the working class from actively defending its rights and challenging the status quo.

Leadership and the women's movement

While the women's liberation movement does not have an entrenched reformist leadership of this kind, it does have a crisis of leadership or a crisis of political perspectives. As yet there are not enough women in the women's liberation movement who have a revolutionary consciousness and understanding of the sort of strategy and orientation required if women are to start to wage an effective fight back and continue building the movement in a mass way. Instead a whole range of misleading political ideas prevail.

So the current crisis in the women's liberation movement stems on the one hand from the objective problems of the class struggle as a whole (of which the struggle of women is an integral part) and on the other hand from subjective factors connected with the current weakness of a revolutionary leadership in the women's movement. And this is a serious problem for women wanting to build the women's liberation movement, particularly because the very idea of leadership is an unpopular concept in the women's movement at present. It's a dirty word, in fact. There are a lot of reasons for this, some quite healthy and understandable. For example, it is a reaction against being passive followers in the way that women have always been viewed. It's also a reaction against the undemocratic and cult-type leaderships that were a traditional feature of "new left" politics and which still operate in such areas as the student

movement to a large extent. Needless to say, this sort of scene has always been a male-dominated one. And in part it is also a reaction to the behaviour of various sectarian women in the movement who try to lecture and preach from on high.

What needs to be remembered is that regardless of the claims of those women who are most vociferously "anti-leadership" and generally also anti-any forms of organisation, democratic meeting procedure etc there is almost always a de facto leadership of some sort in existence and usually you don't have to look very far to find it. It's generally precisely those women leading the fight against leadership.

But the point is not really that some women in the movement have to lead others but that the women's movement must play a leading role in relation to women in general, those who are not yet politically conscious of their oppression or ready to fight it. There is a crisis of leadership in the women's movement if those women who are already conscious and active are unable to effectively build the movement and draw more women into political action. The women's movement has to concern itself with leading the women's liberation struggle. The women who comprise the women's liberation movement today have to recognise that they are the vanguard and have a special role in awakening a political consciousness in other women. This role is an organising one which involves working out the most effective ways of developing this consciousness and giving mass expression to the struggle of women.

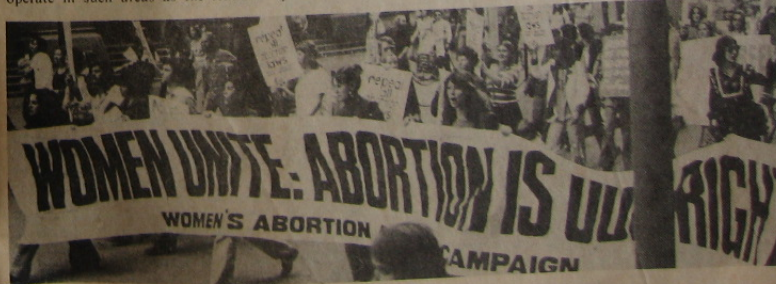
It is also easier to understand the role of leadership when it is looked at in terms of the crisis of leadership currently confronting the working class as a

whole.

The Crisis of Leadership of the Oppressed

Marxists don't believe that the mass of exploited and downtrodden in the world today are going to throw off their oppression without a conscious fight. We don't believe, in fact we know from the lessons of history, that the transition from capitalism to socialism on an international scale is not going to occur spontaneously if only we sit back and wait long enough. The socialist revolution unlike any previous social revolutions in history has to be an extremely conscious one. It is the first revolution in history requiring the *simultaneous* overthrow of the capitalist political and economic order and the establishment of an entirely new society that has only been anticipated and planned for in the form of a revolutionary program or the various demands raised in the interests of the oppressed. In addition to this, in their struggle for socialism the working people have to confront the most powerful, well-organised and class-conscious ruling class in history. A defeat of this ruthless ruling minority is not going to take place unless the working masses are organised and aware of the nature and scope of this task.

And this is where the role of a revolutionary Marxist party, a Leninist party comes in. A revolutionary party is necessary to introduce a political consciousness into the working class, not merely a consciousness of economic oppression but of every single form of injustice and exploitation. In this way it tries to unite the various struggles of all the oppressed in the struggle to abolish





class society. This does not mean that the oppressed have to abandon their own special forms of organisation in this struggle, or dissolve their various movements into the revolutionary party. The special organisations and movements of the oppressed will exist for as long as they need to, before and after the revolution.

But what it does mean is that no single section of the oppressed is capable on its own of making the socialist revolution. Only a mass revolutionary party representative of all these struggles and containing their most conscious leaders and armed with a program for the liberation of all can accomplish this great task.

The objective conditions for socialist revolution have been ripe for a long time now. The First World War and the victory of the Russian Revolution demonstrated very convincingly that the world capitalist or imperialist system was in decline. So why hasn't the working class the world over managed to throw off capitalism by now? Why don't we have a more just and rational economic and political system on an international scale? Precisely because the working class is led by various trade union and parliamentary leaders like Hawke and Whitlam who have made successful careers in reformist politics and have no intention whatsoever of leading the working people who look to them, in a challenge to the very nature of this oppressive system. These people instead play the role of faithful servants of the capitalist class, heading off and dampening down each and every spontaneous attempt by the working class to wage a determined fight for their rights. This process can be seen in operation every day of the year. And these labor traitors are not going to be removed as an obstacle in the path of working people until a genuine class struggle alternative to them can be built.

So how does this relate to the women's liberation movement? It relates to the women's movement because the same general lessons that apply to the working class as a whole also apply to women and to any other group of oppressed people. Winning women's liberation is going to require an organised fight. The women's liberation struggle strikes directly at the capitalist system. The patriarchal nuclear family, the chief institution oppressing women, is a pillar of class society. An attack on the role of women in the family is an attack on this system. Because of this even the most modest demands of women are going to meet with resistance from the ruling class. The women's liberation movement has to be aware of this and prepared to wage a conscious and organised fight for women's rights.

This is also the way that women will be able to roll back the existing sexism and prejudices towards women on the part of men, prejudices that divide and weaken the working class. But it is in the process of becoming involved in struggles around their needs and in running up against the fierce opposition of the representatives of the capitalist state that a great many women are going to be radicalised and are going to see the connection between their oppression and the nature of the society around them.

This is what is so important about the women's liberation movement. It has the potential to awaken in half the population a consciousness of a central aspect of oppression in class society and mobilise it against key institutions maintaining that oppression. Not only does it involve those masses of women with most at stake in the struggle against their oppression as a sex—working class women, but it also brings new allies to the working class from among women of the petty-bourgeoisie and even

bourgeois women. Lenin commented on this in his conversations with Clara Zetkin in 1920 which were preparatory discussions leading up to the drafting of a resolution concerning work amongst women for the Third Congress of the Comintern in 1921. He said: "Our demands are practical conclusions which we have drawn from the burning need, the shameful humiliation of women in bourgeois society, defenseless and without rights. We demonstrate thereby that we recognise these needs and are aware of the humiliation of the woman, the privileges of the man. That we hate, yes, hate everything, and will abolish everything which tortures and oppresses the woman worker, the housewife, the peasant woman, the wife of the petty trader, yes, and in many cases the women of the possessing class."

He also said of the idea of communist women in different countries working to build a broad international conference of women in defence of their rights that this would "ferment and increase unrest, uncertainty, contradictions and conflicts in the camp of the bourgeoisie and its reformist friends . . . The congress would add to the division and thereby weaken the forces of the counter-revolution. Every weakening of the enemy is tantamount to a strengthening of our forces." (*Lenin on the Emancipation of Women*, Moscow Progress Publishers, 1968)

And this consciousness that a recognition of their oppression brings about in women is a profoundly political consciousness. Women come to recognise the myriad of ways in which their oppression is carried out and in whose interests it is perpetuated. A consciousness of their oppression as a sex can bring women very rapidly to radical political conclusions and this can be seen in the widespread interest in ideas and theory within the women's

movement. And when many of the radical feminist theories of female oppression have been explored and found wanting, an increasing number of women turn to Marxism. But many are also turned off by the politics of so many pseudo-Marxist tendencies who try to claim that women are oppressed only as workers, that the women's movement is "petty-bourgeois" or even, counter-revolutionary. The failure to recognise the revolutionary significance of the women's liberation struggle is a test of the bankruptcy of a great many workerist and sectarian currents on the left today. This makes the role of genuine Marxists in putting forward a correct analysis of women's oppression and a strategy for women's liberation all the more crucial.

How do we fight for Women's Liberation?

Because of the extent of women's oppression in all aspects of social, economic, political and cultural life, a full program of women's liberation demands is necessarily very extensive. There are many, many issues that have been thrown up and around which women will and already have begun to fight. It is a struggle that will be fought on many fronts simultaneously. Sometimes certain demands and issues will be more prominent than others. Some will come to the forefront in the heat of particular struggles, and various changes in the objective conditions of the class struggle are going to mean that there will be a greater response from the mass of women to one issue as opposed to another at any particular time. The main thing is that there can be no blueprint for how the women's liberation struggle will unfold.

It is a mistaken and schematic idea to think that a full program of demands relating to women's needs is going to be taken up *in toto* and at once by large numbers of women, just as the working class as a whole is not going to make the revolution on the basis of a struggle around the full revolutionary program. Key demands will emerge that will be instrumental in mobilising masses of people. (The case of the Russian Revolution of 1917 is perhaps the best example. Central demands that the Bolshevik Party agitated around in the course of the revolution were the demands for Land, Peace, and Bread.)

This also explains the limitations of a campaign such as the current Working Women's Charter campaign. This is mainly a piece of propaganda, something to circulate, discuss and gain endorsement for. And it can obviously be quite useful in this capacity. But the charter is itself no real basis for action. It's no shortcut to either building a mass women's liberation movement or developing revolutionary consciousness amongst women. There is no shortcut around patiently mobilising women through particular struggles. There's no way one can address women and say "Don't try to fight around equal pay here, or abortion there (besides, some on the left might add, that's sell-out single-issueism and receives a very low score on our special Evaluate a Revolutionary Struggle scale!) Instead, let us serve it all up to you at once and save some time. Now, instead of dilly-dallying around on all these separate issues you can go out and fight for them all at once."

This obviously isn't going to be the case. A large part of trying to provide the correct leadership and perspective for the women's liberation struggle is to recognise and select those issues that will start to involve and mobilise wider layers of women in struggle at any particular point in time and will push the movement ahead. If this is done the movement will start to grow and gather support, important reforms and victories will be won and the political consciousness of women will be developed in the process.

Part of the problem in building significant political campaigns around issues in the women's movement around the country at the moment is the relatively small numbers of women actually involved. In any given campaign only a handful of activists form the core, but even despite this, modest successes are registered. The Women's Abortion Action Campaign is a case in point. Apart from during its inception in the campaign WAAC since high points in 1972 has functioned for most of the time with some dozen activists in Sydney and the same or fewer in other cities. Of course its base of support is much broader. Despite this limitation it has achieved a considerable amount. But with three or four times as many active women, it could hope for a qualitatively greater impact.

Other issues from time to time draw in greater numbers but the

problem is to create a means by which women coming into the movement can become involved in meaningful political activity. The forms political campaigns can take are infinite provided the initiative is there in the first place and there are enough activists to follow an issue through and build it. Campaigns might be around local issues, such as childcare in a local area, or they might be in defence of industrial action by women in a particular factory, or around a women's studies course in an educational institution, or they might be campaigns that are general and have the potential to be co-ordinated on a State or national basis like the abortion issue. The potential is there if there are sufficient women to play a "leading" role.

What is important in any struggle is firstly the thrust of the demands put forward, that they are genuinely in the interests of all women and are directed against the institutions maintaining this oppression, and secondly the methods of struggle used to defend and fight for these demands. The methods of struggle must be proletarian methods of struggle, that is, methods that teach the oppressed to rely on their own united strength—mass actions independent of capitalist politicians and institutions and organised around clear, principled demands. Only if organised along these lines will the women's movement avoid the pitfalls of reformist politics and the dead-end of apolitical, counter-cultural alternatives.

At present there are many pressures against the women's movement adopting a fighting, mass action perspective. There are a great many tendencies with a different conception of the women's liberation movement and its aims and methods. An organisation like the Women's Electoral Lobby was set up specifically to pressure parliamentarians, for example, and it effectively promotes the idea that women will be liberated through a few changes and reforms in an otherwise satisfactory system.

There are others who see the problems of women being solved through developing alternative life styles for women and an alternative women's culture within this society. They think that women can seek liberation, if not individually, then at least through the auspices of a very narrow group of like-minded friends. The various strains of radical feminist theory also inevitably boil down to these

sorts of conclusions and practice. Women holding to these sorts of ideas have little or no way of relating to the political issues and struggles going on about them and often see no urgency for even reaching out to greater numbers of women. While individual women within this general category hold to a wide range and combination of views, the tendency is generally an apolitical one, and at times can be openly conservative, often expressing antagonism to left-wing ideas and those putting them forward.

On the other hand among those purporting to be putting forward a revolutionary program for women's liberation, you find some tendencies that do Marxism a grave disservice. What most distinguishes these fake Marxists is their fundamental inability to reconcile feminism and Marxism, their inability to understand how the struggle for women's liberation is an integral part of the class struggle. Instead they either hedge around trying to apologise for the supposed inadequacies of Marxism in relation to women or else they condemn the women's liberation movement for somehow not having a fully-developed Marxist program (that is from their own particularly sterile understanding of Marxism).

Perhaps the tendencies that demonstrate these two positions best in Australia at the moment are the Communist Party of Australia on the one hand and the Spartacist League on the other. Both, almost in mirror-image fashion, are extremely uneasy about the relationship of the women's liberation struggle to socialism. Both have a caricatured view of the way the fight against women's oppression fits into the class struggle generally. Each see women's liberation as somehow separate from the "class struggle," peripheral and to be tackled on the side. Neither sees the essential identity of the two. The CPA from the reformist right, and the Spartacist League from the ultra-left sectarian viewpoint, both fail to grasp a genuine rounded Marxist analysis of women's oppression under capitalism. Hence they cannot adopt a corresponding strategy for the women's liberation movement.

The Communist Party, unlike the other main Stalinist party in Australia, the Socialist Party of Australia, which emerged from a split in the CPA in 1971, has managed to respond to the new women's liberation movement, actively

participating in it from the beginning. (The SPA, however, is still trying to pretend it doesn't exist and continues to support the old traditional women's organisations supported by the Stalinist movement such as the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and the Union of Australian Women. In its press it prefers to talk about "discrimination" rather than oppression and decorates its pages with photos of healthy and happy Soviet or East German working mothers.)

While publications of the CPA, particularly *Join Hands*, the journal of the CPA women's collective, can make heavy reading ("confused" is not quite descriptive enough!) they contain useful insights into the way the CPA views women's liberation and socialism and reveal a total absence of any coherent analysis of the women's liberation struggle. One article by Joyce Stevens in the March 1976 *Join Hands* entitled *Tendencies in the Women's Liberation Movement*, in trying to sum up the positions taken on the left towards the women's liberation movement, says: "A small minority see the women's movement as a bourgeois liberal movement, with the class struggle being the only valid arena of political activity. (*read Spartacist League*) Others see it as an arena for mass work, from which the revolutionary party can recruit. (*read SWP—the CPA is very cynical about mass movements and mass action, regarding it as some kind of Trotskyist hobby-horse.*) Others see the movement as being a valid response to the particular oppression of women, which will be needed long after capitalism. (*read CPA*) As such it is necessary to strive to find the relationship between the oppression of women and the class struggle." (my italics—NK) But strive as they might, this relationship persists in evading them!

Narrow view of the class struggle

What is particularly painful is to observe their narrow and crude appreciation of the class struggle. As can be seen in the beginning of the previous quote, they see "the class struggle" as something quite apart from, say, the women's liberation movement. They see the class struggle in terms of economic struggle and the socialist revolution as an economic revolution or alternatively as a "class revolution" somehow unrelated to the problem of solving

women's oppression. The article goes on later: "There are questions, such as nationalism, which cannot simply be explained in terms of economics."

"The theoretical problems suggested by this reach far beyond consideration of the position of women. Changing the economic base of society is only part of the problem. Socialist theory that is unable to come to grips with these questions is not likely to inspire many of today's revolutionaries, or convert others to revolution. Nor can the problems be solved as some feminists suggest by legislation or simply abolishing sexism, the family, bureaucrats, etc.

"If they are, as some suggest, problems for the future, ie for communism, then it is even more important to realise that forms of revolutionary organisation based on the working class, whose basic economic problems will be resolved with the ending of capitalism, will be unlikely to take the revolution into the future. Class revolution (*sic*) will therefore not only need to create a society where other oppressed groups, particularly women, will be able to organise and act, but must realise their revolutionary potential now."

Of course a socialist revolution will not instantly eradicate national, sexual or any other form of oppression. The socialist revolution merely marks the passage of power from one class to another and the beginning of a tremendous revolutionary process stretching over many years until a genuine classless society free of all forms of oppression is established. The working class is the only class capable of making this revolution and unleashing this process. The socialist or proletarian revolution is in its very essence a political revolution. It can only come about through the conscious political action of the mass of the working class.

And this involves a political consciousness beyond a mere economic or trade union consciousness. A socialist revolution will not come about today unless the working class has a consciousness of racism and sexism. Because it is only with a consciousness of these and other political questions that the working class recognises the need for a socialist revolution and the nature of the tasks involved in this revolution. Only then is it equipped to rally women and racial minorities and make their demands its own. The revolution is not going to come about on the basis of a struggle for a \$10 wage

increase. It isn't a case of firstly having an economic revolution and secondly a social revolution which deals with such questions as women's oppression. They are part of an inseparable struggle beginning now and continuing throughout the entire revolutionary process.

This failure to understand the very nature of the socialist revolution and the kind of program and party essential to its success are at the root of the CPA's inability to understand the role of the struggle for women's liberation in the fight for socialism. It doesn't understand what Marxism is and therefore it misrepresents it. This of course, is tied up with the fact of its Stalinist history and heritage. The Stalinist movement betrayed genuine Marxism and Leninism and educated its members in gross distortions of every area of revolutionary theory. There is no room to deal with this in any detail here.

The Spartacist League, likewise sees a contradiction between its "Marxism" and support for the women's liberation movement, this time from the standpoint of petty-bourgeois sectarianism. Members of the Spartacist League obviously believe that if they only clench their fists, shut their eyes tight and repeat their peculiar incantations sufficiently rapidly and loudly all the while holding their breath, that somehow that annoying thing called the women's liberation movement will disappear in a puff of smoke before them. The frustrating world of the sectarian! Things just never turn out the way they're meant to.

For example, why hasn't the women's liberation movement voted to become a "non-male-exclusionist communist women's movement, section of a

Trotskyist vanguard party (*the Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand (section of the International Spartacist tendency) NK*) . . . under the banner of the reborn Fourth International," the way they have so clearly suggested in their press on so many occasions? (*Australasian Spartacist No. 40, March 1977*) And why is it that this just doesn't look like coming about? The real world can sometimes be so maddening!

Members of this tendency have developed to near-perfection the art of so presenting their politics, unfortunately under label of Marxism, that they rapidly drive a great many women's liberation activists into a heated defence of reactionary positions. They contribute in the process to tarring the entire left with the brush of lunacy.

Like all sectarians this group fears the real class struggle. At the slightest evidence of people radicalising and starting to move into action around their needs, these people start squawking in panic. It isn't under their direction and it doesn't fit into their particular schemas and so they berate it, as always, from the sidelines. Their call for a "communist women's movement," for example, is nothing but a cover for abstaining from the real struggles of the women's liberation movement.

Democracy in the Women's Movement

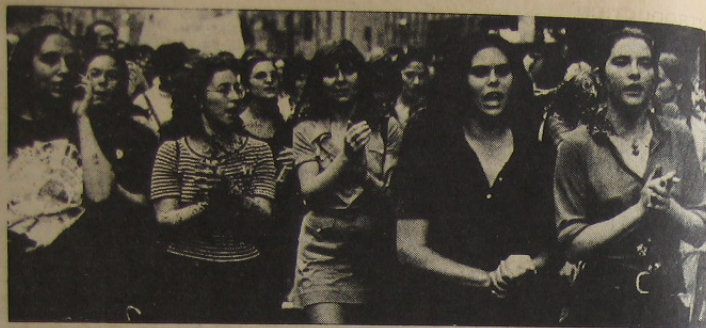
The Spartacist League is the subject of periodic debates in the women's liberation movement over whether its members should be excluded from the movement. (One suspects the Spartacist League derives a certain amount of satisfaction from these frequent dramas for not only do they bring them briefly to centre stage when they are usually only figiting in the wings, but they help to confirm their sad belief that they are being excluded for their "class struggle politics" and confirms their other main contention that the women's liberation movement is an inherently petty-bourgeois movement.) Moves for their exclusion, however, must be completely condemned. Political questions within the women's movement are not going to be clarified through excluding this or that group of women. The women's movement must remain democratic and open to all those who support the liberation of women. A witch-hunt can only divert and damage the movement. This group's ideas, like any other's, have to be debated when necessary so that everyone in the women's movement can judge for themselves their relevance.

The Socialist Workers Party and Women's Liberation

Contained in this issue is the resolution *The Socialist Revolution and the Struggle for Women's Liberation*. This resolution which is being discussed within the Fourth International leading up to its next world congress, was discussed and endorsed by the Socialist Workers Party at its recent conference. This is a unique document in that it sets out in an extremely clear and concise way the Marxist analysis of the struggle for women's liberation. It explains how Marxists view and understand the oppression of women in class society and our program for ending it, in the light of past and present struggles of women and in the light of Marxist tradition.

There is no other resolution circulating on the left today that deals with this important question with such rigor and clarity and which can provide satisfactory answers to the many questions that arise for women who want to be both serious Marxists and committed feminists.





Socialist Revolution and the Struggle for Women's Liberation

INTRODUCTION

The following resolution was originally drafted in 1973 at the request of the United Secretariat in preparation for the February 1974 world congress of the Fourth International. It was published in the International Internal Discussion Bulletin in November 1973.

The women's liberation point was taken off the agenda on the eve of the 1974 congress, but the written discussion remained open and it was agreed to place it on the agenda for the next world congress, now scheduled for early 1978.

A number of changes have been made in the current editing of the resolution to take into account the development of the international women's liberation movement during the last three years.

The basic Marxist positions on women's oppression are part of the programmatic foundations of the Fourth International. However, we are discussing and adopting a full resolution on women's liberation for the first time in the international's history. With that in mind, the purpose of the following resolution is to set down our basic analysis of the character of women's oppression, and the place the struggle against that oppression occupies in our perspectives for all three sectors of the world revolution.

Conjunctural questions concerning tactics that guide our work in the women's liberation movement will be "a part of the pre-world congress discussion, reflecting our growing involvement in the movement in many countries. This resolution, however, focuses on the more fundamental questions of analysis and political line that differentiate revolutionary Marxism from the various bourgeois, Social Democratic, Stalinist, and centrist currents against which we contend. Its goal is to provide a basic orientation for the Fourth International as the world party of socialist revolution.

I THE CHARACTER OF WOMEN'S OPPRESSION

The New Rise of Women's Struggles

1. Since the late 1960s a growing revolt by women against their oppression as a sex has emerged. Throughout the world, millions of women, especially young women—students, working women, housewives—are beginning to challenge some of the most fundamental features of their centuries-old oppression.

The first country in which this radicalisation of women appeared in a significant way was the United States. It was announced by the blossoming of thousands of women's liberation groups and in the mobilisation of tens of thousands of women in the August 26, 1970, demonstrations commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the victorious conclusion of the American women's suffrage struggle.

But the new wave of struggles by women in North America was not an exceptional and isolated development, as the spread of the women's liberation movement through the advanced capitalist countries soon demonstrated. In country after country, large-scale campaigns against reactionary abortion and contraception regulations as well as medieval marriage laws rapidly

confirmed that the fight for women's liberation must be regarded as a fundamental component of the new rise of the world revolution.

In many countries this new rise of women's struggles preceded any widespread changes in the combativity of the organised labor movement. In every case, the movement rose outside of and independent from the existing mass organizations of the working class, which were then obliged to respond to this new phenomenon. But the women's liberation movement came upon the historical scene as part of a more general upsurge of the working class, which took many forms, from economic strikes, to struggles against national oppression, to student demonstrations, to an international movement against the imperialist war in Vietnam.

2. This radicalisation of women is unprecedented in the depth of the economic, social and political ferment it expresses and in its implications for the struggle against capitalist oppression and exploitation.

Growing numbers of women are raising demands that challenge the specific forms the oppression of women takes under capitalism today. They are demanding the right to be able to participate with complete equality in all forms of economic and cultural activity—for example, equal education, equal access to jobs, equal pay for equal work.

In order to make this equality possible, women are searching for ways to end their domestic servitude. They are demanding that women's household chores be socialised. The most conscious recognise that society, as opposed to the individual family unit, should take responsibility for the young, the old, and the sick.

At the very centre of the emerging women's liberation movement has been the fight to decriminalise abortion and make it available to all women. The right to control their own bodies, to choose whether to bear children, when, and how many, is seen by millions of women as an elementary precondition for their liberation.

Such demands go to the very heart of the specific oppression of women exercised through the family and strike at the pillars of class society.

3. The rise of women's liberation struggles on an international scale is one of the clearest symptoms of the depth of the social crisis of the bourgeois order today.

These struggles illustrate the degree to which the outmoded capitalist relations and institutions generate deepening contradictions in every sector of society and breed new expressions of the class struggle. The death agony of capitalism brings new layers into direct conflict with the fundamental needs and prerogatives of the bourgeoisie, and brings forth new allies for the working class in its struggle to overthrow the capitalist system.

The fact that the women's liberation movement emerged as an international phenomenon even prior to the exacerbation of capitalism's worldwide economic problems in the mid-1970s only serves to underscore the deep social roots of this rebellion.

4. Women's oppression has been an essential feature of class society throughout the ages. But the practical tasks of uprooting its causes, as well as combating its effects, could not be posed on a mass scale before the era of the transition from capitalism to socialism. The fight for women's liberation is inseparable from the workers' struggle to abolish capitalism. It constitutes an integral part of the socialist revolution and the communist perspective of a classless society.

The replacement of the patriarchal family system rooted in private property by a superior organisation of human relations is the prime objective of the socialist

revolution. This process will accelerate and deepen as the material and ideological foundations of the new communist order are brought into being.

The development of the women's liberation movement today advances the class struggle, strengthens its forces, and enhances the prospects for socialism.

5. Women can achieve their liberation only through the victory of the world socialist revolution. This goal can be realized only by mobilising masses of women as a powerful component of the class struggle. Therein lies the objective revolutionary dynamic of the struggle of women's liberation and the fundamental reason why the Fourth International must concern itself with, and help to provide revolutionary leadership for, women struggling to achieve their liberation.

Origin and Nature of Women's Oppression

1. The oppression of women is not determined by their biology, as many contend. Its origins are historical, economic, and social in character. Throughout the evolution of preclass and class society, women's reproductive function has always been the same. But their social status has not always been that of a degraded domestic servant, subject to man's control and command.

2. In preclass society, where social production was organised communally and its product shared equally, there was no basis for exploitation or oppression of one social group or sex by another. Both sexes participated in assuring the sustenance and survival of all, with women playing a leadership role. The social status of both women and men reflected the roles each of the sexes performed in social production and the activities of everyday life.

3. The origin of women's oppression is intertwined with the growing productivity of human labor based on agriculture and stock raising, with the rise of new divisions of labor, craftsmanship, and commerce; with the private appropriation of an increasing social surplus; with the development of the possibility for some humans to prosper from the exploitation of the labor of others; that is, with the passage from preclass to class society.

Along with the private accumulation of wealth, the patriarchal family developed as the institution by which responsibility for the unproductive members of society—especially the young—was transferred from society as a whole to an identifiable individual or small group of individuals. It was the primary institution for perpetuating from one generation to the next the class divisions of society—divisions between those who possessed property and lived off the wealth produced by the labor of others, and those who, owning no property, had to work for others to live. The destruction of the egalitarian and communal traditions and structures of preclass society was essential for the rise of an exploiting class and its accelerated private accumulation of wealth.

As the exploitation of human beings became profitable for a privileged few, women as a sex became valuable property. Like cattle, they were a source of wealth. They could produce new human beings whose labor could be exploited. Thus the purchase of women by men along with all rights to their future offspring arose as one of the economic and social institutions of the new social order based on private property.

All women, including the wives and daughters of the new possessing class, were progressively deprived of an independent role in social production and relegated to basically domestic chores as men took over the new social

divisions of labor. This brought about the subordinate status of women on which the cohesiveness and continuity of the patriarchal family depends. If women could simply take their children and leave, without suffering any economic or social hardship, the patriarchal family would not have survived through the millennia. Thus the subjugation of women was based on the historical dialectic of economic and social factors, not biology.

Deprived of an independent productive role in society, women's social status was increasingly defined by their reproductive capacities. Like land, livestock, and slaves (both male and female), women became the private property of the men who owned them. Indeed, the word family itself, which is still used in the Latin-based languages today to designate the basic economic unit of class society, comes from the original Latin *famulus*, which means household slave and *familia*, the totality of slaves belonging to one man.

The patriarchal family, based on the subjugation of women, thus came into existence along with the other institutions of class society in order to buttress class divisions and perpetuate the private accumulation of wealth. The state, with its police and armies, laws and courts, enforced this. Ruling-class ideology, including religion, arose on this basis and played a vital role in justifying the degradation of the female sex.

Women, it was said, were physically and mentally inferior to men and therefore were "naturally" or biologically the second sex. While the subjugation of women has always had different consequences for women of distinct classes, all women regardless of class are oppressed as part of the female sex.

4. The family system is the institution of class society that determines and maintains the specific character of the oppression of women as a sex.

5. Through the history of class society, the family system has proved its value as an institution of class rule. The form of the family has evolved and adapted itself to the changing needs of the ruling classes as the modes of production and forms of private property have gone through different stages of development.

The family system simultaneously fulfills different requirements in relationship to classes whose historical interests are diametrically opposed. What could today be called the bourgeois "family" and the petty-bourgeois "family" serve very different social and economic functions. Together, however, they constitute the contemporary form of the family system—an economic and social institution of class rule whose important social functions have remained constant throughout the history of class society. While the patriarchal family system to some extent and in a distorted way allows for the fulfillment of various individual human needs, such as love and companionship, this in no way defines the basic nature of the family system.

a. The family is the basic economic unit of class society. It is the mechanism through which the ruling class abrogates social responsibility for the well-being of the direct producers—the masses of humanity. The ruling class tries, to the degree possible, to force each family to be responsible for its own.

b. The family system provides the means for passing on property ownership from one generation to the next. It is the basic social mechanism for perpetuating the division of society into classes.

c. For the ruling classes, the family system provides the most inexpensive and ideologically acceptable mechanism for reproducing human labor. It enforces a social division of labor in which women are fundamental-

ly reduced to a reproductive role and assigned limited tasks immediately associated with this reproductive function: care of the other family members. Thus the family institution rests on and reinforces a social division of labor involving the domestic subjugation and economic dependence of women.

d. The family system is a repressive and conservatising institution that reproduces within itself the hierarchical authoritarian relationships necessary to the maintenance of class society as a whole. It fosters the possessive, competitive, and aggressive attitudes necessary to the perpetuation of class divisions.

e. It molds the behavior and character structure of children from infancy through adolescence. It trains, disciplines, and polices them, teaching submission to established authority. It then curbs rebellious, nonconformist impulses. It represses sexuality, forcing it into socially acceptable channels of male and female sexual activity for reproductive purposes and socioeconomic roles. It inculcates all the social values and behavioral norms that individuals must acquire in order to survive in class society and submit to its domination. It distorts all human relationships by imposing on them the framework of economic compulsion, social dependence, and sexual repression.

6. Under capitalism, the family system also provides the mechanism for the superexploitation of women as wage workers.

a. It provides capitalism with an exceptionally flexible reservoir of labor that can be drawn into the labor force or sent back into the home with fewer social consequences than any other component of the reserve army of labor.

Because the entire ideological superstructure reinforces the fiction that women's place is in the home, high unemployment rates for women cause relatively less social protest. After all, it is said, women work only to supplement an already existing source of income for the family. When they are unemployed, they are occupied with their household chores, and are not so obviously "out of work." The anger and resentment they feel is often dissipated as a serious social threat by the general isolation and atomisation of women in separate, individual households.

b. Because women's "natural" place is supposed to be in the home, capitalism has a widely accepted rationalisation for perpetuating:

1) the employment of women in low-paying, unskilled jobs. "They aren't worth training because they'll only get pregnant or married and quit."

2) unequal pay rates and low pay. "They're only working to buy gadgets and luxuries anyway."

3) deep divisions within the working class itself along sex lines. "She's taking a job a man should have."

c. This superexploitation of women as a reserve force plays an irreplaceable role in holding down men's wages as well.

d. Capitalism's insatiable drive to incorporate more women into the productive process, in order to increase surplus value, has a limit and built-in contradiction.

The process of drawing women into the competitive labor market brings them a degree of economic independence that begins to undermine the acceptance by women of their domestic subjugation. As a result, the family system is undermined and begins to disintegrate.

But the family system is an indispensable pillar of class society. It must be preserved if capitalism is to survive.

This contradiction leads to periodic attempts to push women out of production and back into the home



whenever the process of integration into the work force has gone too far, forcing the ruling class to assume too large a portion of the social costs normally borne by the family (such as widespread child-care facilities, public cafeterias, etc.).

A cyclical process of drawing women into the labor market, then forcing them back into the home, also results from the fact that women, as a component of the reserve army of labor, are drawn into production at a rapid pace only when capitalism is in a period of accelerated expansion.

c. The subjugation of women within the family system provides the economic, social, and ideological foundations that make their superexploitation possible. Women workers are exploited not only as wage labor but also as a partial labor pool defined by sex. Thus women workers are doubly oppressed.

7. Because the oppression of women is historically intertwined with the division of society into classes and with the role of the family as the basic economic unit of class society, this oppression can only be eradicated with the abolition of private ownership by the means of production and the transfer to society as a whole of the social and economic functions borne under capitalism by the individual family.

8. The materialist analysis of the historical origin and economic roots of women's oppression is essential to developing a program and perspective capable of winning women's liberation. To reject this scientific explanation inevitably leads to one of two errors:

a. One error, made by many who claim to follow the Marxist method, is to deny, or at least downplay, the oppression of women as a sex throughout the entire history of class society. They see the oppression of women purely and simply as an aspect of the exploitation of the working class. This view gives weight and importance to struggles by women only in their capacity as workers, on the job. It says women will be liberated, in passing, by the socialist revolution, so there is no special need for them to organise as women fighting for their own demands.

b. A symmetrical error is made by many anti-Marxists (as well as by some revolutionists). They deny that the struggle for women's liberation is an aspect of the class struggle. They hold that the oppression of women by men

is unrelated to class divisions.

The anti-Marxists who support this view reject the socialist revolution as the road to women's liberation because they deny that women's oppression is rooted in private ownership of the means of production. While they favor women organizing themselves in struggle, they see no need for the working class to take power. They see no need to build a revolutionary party of the working class, male and female, to lead such a struggle for power.

Both of these one-sided approaches deny the revolutionary dynamic of the struggle for women's liberation as a form of the class struggle. Both fail to recognize that the struggle for women's liberation, to be successful, must go beyond the bounds of capitalist property relations. Both reject the implications this fact has for the working class and its revolutionary Marxist leadership.

Roots of the New Radicalisation of Women

1. The women's liberation movement of today stands on the shoulders of the earlier struggles by women at the turn of the century.

With the rise and consolidation of industrial capitalism during the 1880's, increasing numbers of women were integrated into the competitive labor market. The gap between the social and legal status of women inherited from feudalism and their new economic status as wage workers selling their labor in the market, produced glaring contradictions. For women of the ruling class, too, capitalism opened the door to economic independence. Out of these contradictions arose the first wave of women's struggles aimed at winning full legal equality with men.

Revolutionary Marxists played a significant role in these struggles by women to win for themselves many of the democratic rights popularised and institutionalised during the bourgeois-democratic revolutions. In Western Europe and North America, large numbers of working-class as well as upper-class and petty-bourgeois women were involved.

Through struggle the women of the most advanced capitalist countries won, to varying degrees, several important democratic rights: the right to higher education, the right to engage in trades and professions, the right to receive and dispose of their own wages (which had been considered the right of the husband or father), the right to own property, the right to divorce, the right to form and participate in political organisations. In several countries the first upsurge culminated in mass struggles that won the vote for women.

2. Women's suffrage, following or sometimes accompanying universal male suffrage, was an important gain for the working class. It reflected, and in turn helped advance, the changing social status of women. For the first time in class society, women were considered citizens fit to participate in public affairs, with the right to a voice on major political questions, not just household matters.

The underlying cause of the oppression and subordinate status of women lies in the very foundations of class society itself and women's special role within the family, not in the formal denial of equality under the law. Nevertheless, the extension of democratic rights to women helped the masses of women to fight more effectively against all forms of their oppression and helped to expose the deeper roots of their problems.

3. It is not surprising that the resurgence of the women's

movement today first came about in the most advanced capitalist countries—such as the United States, Canada, and Britain—where many democratic rights have been won and where a tradition of militant struggle by women survives. The radicalisation spread rapidly to other advanced capitalist countries.

It was generally the young, college-educated women, those who enjoyed a relatively greater freedom of choice, and those most affected by the youth radicalisation of the 1960's, who first articulated the grievances of women in an organised and outspoken way. This led many economist-Marxists to conclude that women's liberation is basically a middle-class or bourgeois protest movement that has no serious interest for revolutionists or the masses of working-class women. They are wrong.

The early development of the women's liberation movement serves only to emphasise the depth and scope of women's oppression. Even those with many advantages in terms of education and other opportunities were and continue to be propelled into action. The most oppressed and exploited are not necessarily the first to articulate their discontent.

But feminist consciousness spread rapidly into the working class, giving impetus to struggles by women workers and spurring the formation of women's caucuses within the labor movement.

4. The roots of the new radicalisation of women lie in the objective economic and social changes of the post-World War II years, which have brought deepening contradictions in the capitalist economy, in the status of women, and in the patriarchal family system.

a. Advances in medical science and technology in the field of birth control and abortion have created the means by which masses of women can control their reproductive functions with relative safety and ease. Control by women over their own bodies is a precondition for women's liberation.

While such medical techniques are more widely available, reactionary laws, reinforced by bourgeois customs, religious bigotry, and the entire ideological superstructure of class society, often stand in the way of women exercising control over their own reproductive functions. Financial, legal, psychological, and "moral" barriers are literally manufactured to try to prevent women from demanding the right to choose whether and when to bear children.

This contradiction between what is possible and what is affects the life of every woman. It has given rise to the powerful abortion struggles, which have been at the centre of the women's movement on an international scale.

b. The prolonged boom conditions of the post-war expansion significantly increased the percentage of women in the labor force.

To take the example of the United States, in 1950, 33.9 per cent of all women 18 to 64 years of age were in the labor force. By 1974 this had risen to 53 per cent. Between 1940 and 1970, two-thirds of all new jobs created were taken by women. Working women accounted for 29.1 per cent of the total labor force in 1950; 39.3 per cent by 1974.

Equally important, the percentage of working women with children increased dramatically, as did the percentage of working women who were heads of households.

Similar statistics can be cited for other advanced capitalist countries. For example, in Britain between 1881 and 1951 the proportion of women in employment was fairly stable, remaining at about 25 to 27 per cent. By 1965, 34 per cent of all women between 16 and 64 were in full-time employment, 17.9 per cent were in part-time



employment, and a total of 54.3 per cent came within the category of "economically active." Nearly two-thirds of the working women were married.

As this influx of women into the labor force has taken place, there has been no substantial change in the degree of wage discrimination against women. In many countries this differential between the sexes has actually widened.

This is primarily because of the fact that the increased employment of women has not been spread evenly over all job categories. On the contrary, the proportion of women holding low-paying jobs has increased. Thus the growing number of women entering the labor force has resulted in accentuating the discrimination against them relative to male workers.

In 1955 the median income of full-time, year-round women workers in the United States was 64 per cent of that of men who were employed full-time and year-round. By 1975 it had fallen to 57 per cent.

c. The rise in the average educational level of women has further heightened these contradictions. Capitalism's need for more highly skilled labor has resulted in the acceptance of women into institutions of higher education on a qualitatively larger scale than ever before.

Yet, as the employment statistics indicate, the percentage of women holding jobs commensurate with their educational level has not kept pace. In all areas of the job market, from industry to the professions, women with higher educational qualifications are usually bypassed by men with less education.

As they receive more education and their individual expectations are raised, the stifling and mind-deadening drudgery of household chores and the constrictions of family life become increasingly unbearable to women. Thus the heightened educational level of women has deepened the contradiction between women's demonstrated abilities and broadened aspirations, and their actual social and economic status.

d. The functions of the family unit in advanced capitalist society have contracted further. It has become less and less a unit of petty production—either agricultural or domestic (canning, weaving, sewing, baking, etc.). The urban nuclear family of today is a long way from the productive farm family of previous centuries.

As the standard of living rises, the average number of children per family declines sharply, industrially prepared foods become increasingly available, modern technology is applied to many household housekeeping chores. The objective basis for confining women to the home becomes less and less compelling. Yet the needs of the ruling class

dictate that the family system must be preserved. Bourgeois ideology and social conditioning continue to reinforce the reactionary fiction that a woman's identity and fulfillment must come from her role as wife-mother-housekeeper. The contradiction between reality and myth becomes increasingly obvious and intolerable to growing numbers of women.

5. The postwar economic and social changes that have accelerated these contradictions, especially in the advanced capitalist countries, and laid the groundwork for the radicalisation of women have dictated the radical thrust of the demands they are raising.

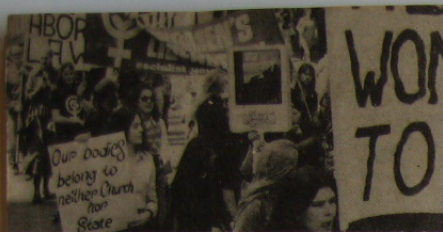
Greater democratic rights and broader social opportunities have not "satisfied" women, or inclined them to a passive acceptance of their inferior social status and economic dependence. On the contrary, they have stimulated new struggles and more far-reaching demands.

6. While the women's radicalisation has a dynamic of its own, determined by the specific character of women's oppression and the objective changes that have been described, it is not isolated from the more general upsurge of the class struggle taking place today. It is not mechanically dependent on other social forces, subordinate to their leadership, or beholden to their initiative; but the women's movement has been and remains deeply interconnected with other social struggles and will share their fate.

From the beginning, the new upsurge of women's struggles has been strongly affected by the international youth radicalisation. The increased questioning of all traditional bourgeois values has had a sharp impact on attitudes toward the family and sexual oppression.

The radicalisation of women has also been fueled by the colonial revolution and the liberation struggles of oppressed nationalities such as the Black struggle in the United States. This has been important in bringing about a widespread awareness and rejection of racist stereotypes. The obvious similarities between racist attitudes and sexist stereotypes of women as inferior, emotional, dependent, dumb-but-happy creatures produced an increasing sensitivity to and rejection of such caricatures.

The women's liberation movement was also deeply influenced by the post-May 1968 rise of working-class militancy in many of the advanced capitalist countries of Europe. The growing combativity of important sectors of the organized labor movement, including women workers, led many to examine the relationship between class exploitation and the oppression of women, and search for perspectives that could lead to an eradication of



both.

The end of the postwar boom and the deepening economic, social, and political problems of imperialism on a world scale, highlighted by the 1974-75 international recession, have not brought about a decline in women's struggles, or relegated them to the sidelines while "more important" social forces came to the fore. Far from diminishing as the struggles of the organised working class sharpened in recent years, feminist consciousness and struggles by women continued to spread. They have been a powerful motor force of social protest and political radicalisation.

Advanced capitalist countries such as Spain that were little touched by the rise of the women's movement in the early 1970s experienced an explosion of feminist struggles in 1976 as the post-Franco era opened. In Italy, mass mobilisations by women for the right to divorce and abortion provoked more than one governmental crisis.

Resistance by women to being driven out of their newly acquired places in the work force, and broad female opposition to social cutbacks such as the closing of childcare centres, have created unexpectedly thorny problems for the rulers in many countries. Imbued with a growing feminist consciousness, women have been more combative and less willing than ever before to shoulder a disproportionate burden in the current economic crisis.

Women's Liberation in the Colonial and Semicolonial World

1. Women's liberation is not a matter of interest only to relatively privileged women of the advanced capitalist countries, as some have contended. On the contrary, it is of vital concern and importance to the masses of women throughout the world. In its own distorted way, even the International Women's Year proclaimed by the United Nations in 1975 brought this fact home.

2. In many colonial and semicolonial countries, women have not yet won some of the most elementary democratic rights secured by women in the advanced capitalist countries in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Even where the formal legal equality does exist, the masses of women suffer crushing oppression. They are often the most reactionary, stifling prejudices, and are often considered scarcely human. In some countries women are still sold into marriage and denied the right to divorce; they can be murdered with impunity for violating the "honor" of their men. From cradle to grave they are ruled over, first by father and brother, then by husband or in-law. For many women the only alternatives are prostitution or suicide. Their life is one of hard domestic labor. They are totally dependent economically, denied

access to education, unacquainted with modern contraceptive methods, and often bear child after child in the hopes of finding economic security in old age. Because of the dangers of pregnancy and childbirth, especially without adequate medical care and proper diet, women suffer a significantly higher mortality rate than men.

3. Centuries-old traditions and conditions remain relatively unchanged for the masses of peasant women who comprise the bulk of the female population in most of the semicolonial world. In this they are not unlike the Russian women in 1917. But the pressure of the world capitalist market is bringing changes that are affecting the situation of more privileged layers of women. The demand for more skilled labor has meant an increase in the number of young women who gain access to education and jobs. The student radicalisation, as well as the women's liberation movement in other parts of the world, has encouraged those women to begin to challenge their oppression as women. The spread of birth control methods, even where prompted by reactionary goals, has brought a measure of relief from unwanted pregnancy to a section of women able to take advantage of the advanced medical technology.

These changes in the status of some layers of women, and the ever greater penetration of the capitalist market, mean that movement by women against their oppression and superexploitation will be an increasingly important part of the fight for national liberation and social revolution in the semicolonial and colonial world.

4. The importance of the struggle for women's liberation in the colonial world has long been a distinguishing feature of the program of revolutionary Marxism in those countries. This was stressed in the resolutions of the third and fourth congresses of the Comintern, which drew special attention to the exemplary work of the Chinese Communists in organising and leading the mobilisations of women that were part of the second Chinese revolution.

5. The role and importance we ascribe to the fight for women's liberation and the program we put forward for achieving it separate us from nonproletarian forces contending for leadership of the colonial revolution.

The struggle for women's liberation has always been intertwined with national liberation struggles. Large numbers of women invariably come forward to participate. Their active role is crucially necessary, and in the process of the developing struggle, women begin to break down the old barriers excluding them from political activity and greater social freedom. The deep contradictions they live with can only stimulate the revolt by women against their oppression as a sex, and trigger demands for greater equality within the revolutionary movement as well.

In Vietnam, Algeria, Cuba, Palestine, and elsewhere, struggles by women to end the most brutal forms of the oppression they suffer have been closely intertwined with unfolding revolutions. But attitudes and policies concerning the demands and needs of women are inevitably one of the acid tests of the revolutionary caliber, perspective, and program of any leadership.

Revolutionary Marxists pay special attention to women and aim to play a leading role in mobilising them to fight for their needs because our goal is to overturn private property relations and reconstruct society on a socialist basis. We know this cannot be done without women playing a conscious and leading role.

6. The crushing weight of women's oppression in the colonial and semicolonial countries gives struggles by women a particularly explosive character. Struggles

beginning around elementary democratic rights can rapidly evolve to encompass additional demands relating to the broad range of urgent social needs of the masses of proletarian and peasant women. This process was clearly evident in China, for example, where the struggle for liberation of women from both feudal traditions and the effects of imperialist domination became an important component of the revolution. Even the demand for freedom to cut their hair provided a starting point for the radicalisation of women, leading to struggles of increasing social weight and political impact.

7. The direct involvement of sections of the Fourth International in women's struggles in the semicolonial countries has been limited. The initiatives taken by the Indian Communist League, the literature published by the Argentine PST, the analytical work done by the Iranian Sattar League, together with the early experiences of the Chinese Trotskyists, provide a starting point and useful guide for developing our women's liberation work in the colonial and semicolonial countries.

In 1972 the Communist League Central Committee adopted a resolution concerning the struggle for women's liberation on the Indian subcontinent. It emphasised the importance of this question in the construction of a revolutionary Marxist party in India today.

The resolution pointed to a number of factors that have brought changes in prevailing attitudes toward women on the Indian subcontinent and a rise in the self-confidence of educated and employed women in particular. These factors included the expansion of women's education since 1947; the expansion of opportunities for the employment of women; the rising cost of living, which forces wives to take employment; the possibility of family planning; and the existence of a political framework that permits women to hold elected public offices.

The resolution noted:

"The struggle against the social oppression of women will develop around the demands of free education for women, free hostels for women students, hostel facilities for employed women, child-care centres and cheap hostels for married women, reservation of jobs and the end of discrimination in employment and promotion, a lighter workload, fewer working hours, liberal conditions of work, including transfer only on demand. As the struggle develops, more basic and fundamental questions will be taken up, including the abrogation of Hindu and Muslim personal laws on marriage, inheritance, and divorce; the right to free marriage and divorce, especially in cases of physical and mental torture and restrictions on personal freedom; the right to free legal abortions and women's control over their own bodies."

To help lead women's struggles to their logical anticapitalist conclusion, the resolution called for the formation of independent, mass-based, and democratically controlled women's groups, organised as united fronts on a concrete action program.

Women in the Workers States: Liberation Betrayed

1. The October 1917 revolution in Russia and each subsequent socialist victory brought significant gains for women, including democratic rights and integration into the productive labor force. The measures enacted by the Bolsheviks under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky demonstratively showed that the proletarian revolution meant immediate steps forward for women.

Between 1917 and 1927 the Soviet government passed a

series of laws giving women legal equality with men for the first time. Marriage became a simple registration process that had to be based on mutual consent. The concept of illegitimacy was abolished. Free, legal abortion was made every woman's right. By 1927, marriages did not have to be registered, and divorce was granted on the request of either partner. Antihomosexual laws were eliminated.

Free, compulsory education to the age of 16 was established for all children of both sexes. Legislation gave women workers special maternity benefits.

The 1919 program of the Communist Party stated: "The party's task at the present moment is primarily work in the realm of ideas and education so as to destroy utterly all traces of the former inequality or prejudices, particularly among backward strata of the proletariat and peasantry. Not confining itself to formal equality of women, the party strives to liberate them from the material burdens of obsolete household work by replacing it by communal houses, public eating places, central laundries, nurseries, etc." This program was implemented to the extent possible given the economic backwardness and poverty of the new Soviet Republic, and the devastation caused by almost a decade of war and civil war.

A conscious attempt was made to begin combating the reactionary social norms and attitudes toward women which reflected the reality of a country whose population was still overwhelmingly peasant and in which the dead weight of feudal tradition still hung over all social relations.

2. The decimation and exhaustion of the working class vanguard, and the crushing of the postwar revolutionary upsurges in Western Europe, laid the basis for the triumph of the counterrevolutionary bureaucratic caste, headed by Stalin, in the 1920s. While the economic foundations of the new workers state were not destroyed, a privileged social layer that appropriated for itself many of the benefits of the new economic order grew rapidly in the fertile soil of Russia's poverty. To protect and extend its new privileges, the bureaucracy reversed the policies of Lenin and Trotsky in virtually every sphere, from government based on soviet democracy, to control by the workers over economic planning, to the right of oppressed nationalities to self-determination, to a proletarian internationalist foreign policy.

By the late 1930s the counterrevolution had physically annihilated the entire surviving Bolshevik leadership and established a dictatorship that to this day keeps hundreds of thousands in prison camps, psychiatric hospitals and exile, and ruthlessly crushes every murmur of opposition. For women, the Stalinist counterrevolution led to a policy of reviving and fortifying the family system.

Trotsky described this process as follows: "Genuine emancipation of women is inconceivable without a general rise of economy and culture, without the destruction of the petty-bourgeois economic family unit, without the introduction of socialised food preparation and education. Meanwhile, guided by its conservative instinct, the bureaucracy has taken alarm at the "disintegration" of the family. It began singing panegyrics to the family supper and the family laundry; that is, the household slavery of women. To cap it all, the household slavery of women, restored criminal punishment for abortions, officially returning women to the status of pack animals. In complete contradiction with the ABC of communism, the ruling caste has thus restored the most reactionist and benighted nucleus of the class regime, i.e., the petty-bourgeois family" (*Writings of Leon Trotsky, 1937-38, 2nd ed., 1976, p. 129*).

3. The most important factor facilitating this retrogression was the cultural and material backwardness of Russian society, which did not have the resources necessary to construct adequate child-care centres, sufficient housing, public laundries, and housekeeping and dining facilities to eliminate the material basis for women's oppression.

But beyond these objective limitations the reactionary Stalinist bureaucracy consciously gave up the perspective of moving in a systematic way to socialise the burdens carried by women, and instead began to glorify the family system, attempting to bind families together through legal restrictions and economic compulsion.

As Trotsky pointed out in the *Revolution Betrayed*, "The retreat not only assumes forms of disgusting hypocrisy, but also is going infinitely farther than the iron economic necessity demands."

The bureaucracy reinforced the family system for one of the same reasons it is maintained by capitalist society—as a means of inculcating attitudes of submission to authority and for perpetuating the privileges of a minority. Trotsky explained that "the most compelling motive of the present cult of the family is undoubtedly the need of the bureaucracy for a stable hierarchy of relations, and for the disciplining of youth by means of forty million points of support for authority and power."

As part of this counterrevolution, the old racist laws against homosexuality were dusted off and reintroduced. The conditions created by the proletarian revolution and Stalinist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union have not been mechanically reproduced in every workers state formed since 1917. Important differences exist, reflecting historical, cultural, economic, and social variations from one country to another, even one region to another. But maintenance of the economic and social inferiority of women and bolstering of the family institution as the norm of social relationships is official policy in all the deformed workers states from China to East Germany.

4. The promotion and glorification of the family system have resulted in perpetuating the traditional burden of women, the double day's work, inside and outside the home. According to the official 1970 Soviet Union census, 90 per cent of all urban women between the ages of 16 and 54 hold jobs outside the home. Yet the average Soviet woman spends four to seven hours a day on housework in addition to eight hours on an outside job.

The perpetuation of the responsibility of women for the domestic chores associated with child-raising, cooking, cleaning, laundry, and caring for the personal needs of other members of the family unit is the economic and social basis for the disadvantages and prejudices faced by women and the resulting discrimination in jobs and wages. This deeply affects the way women view themselves, their role in society, and the goals they seek to attain.

While 50 per cent of the wage earners in the Soviet Union are women, they are concentrated disproportionately in lower-paying, less responsible jobs, and in traditional female sectors of production and services. For example, 43.6 per cent of all women still work in agriculture, while another quarter are employed in the textile industry. Eighty per cent of all primary and secondary-school teachers, and 100 per cent of all preschool teachers, are women. In 1970 only 6.6 per cent of all industrial enterprises were headed by women. According to 1966 statistics, average women's wages were 69.3 per cent of men's up from 64.4 per cent in 1924!

More than 40 per cent of all scientists are women, but only 3 out of 243 full members of the Soviet Academy of

Science are women. In the national political arena, only 8 of the 287 full members of the Communist Party Central Committee are women. There are no women in the Politburo.

In the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, as in the advanced capitalist countries, sufficient material wealth and technology today exist to significantly alleviate the double burden of women. Yet the distortions introduced in economic planning and the productive process because of the absence of democratic control over production by the workers and the domination of the privileged bureaucratic caste are a source of resentments. Women feel the dead weight of the bureaucracy in this respect even more than men because they are forced to compensate for the distortions in the economy through the double day's labor they perform.

In the last decade, these potentially explosive resentments have forced the bureaucracy to plan expanded production in consumer goods and increased social services. But the supply of consumer goods continues to lag behind the needs and growing expectations of the masses of Soviet women. Social services also remain sorely inadequate. For example, while child-care facilities are more widespread than in advanced capitalist countries, creches in Leningrad are able to accommodate only 13 per cent of the children of preschool age. According to the official 1970 statistics, this figure rises to two-thirds by the level of kindergarten.

The Stalinist bureaucracies have also repudiated the view of Lenin and other leaders of the Russian revolution that unrestricted access to abortion is a woman's elementary democratic right. While legal abortion is generally available in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the ruling castes have repeatedly curtailed this right, frequently placing humiliating conditions as well as economic penalties on women seeking abortions (such as denial of paid sickleave time to obtain an abortion or refusal to cover abortions as a free medical procedure). The more reliable birth control methods are generally unavailable. Women's right to abortion is subordinated to the twists and turns of bureaucratically conceived economic plans and social policies.

5. Women in the deformed and degenerated workers states will not win their full liberation short of a political revolution that removes the bureaucratic caste from power and restores workers democracy. Although there are as yet few signs of any rising consciousness concerning the oppression of women, the differences between the advanced workers states, especially Europe. Women in the affected by the radical demands they are raising.

The struggle of women is a significant component in overturning the privileged, establishing socialist socialisation of domestic labor, an important aspect of the coming political revolution.

In some respects, in advanced capitalist countries, the economic position of women in the workers states is better. But Soviet history also shows that the family institution is a source of oppression of women. As long as the family institution is maintained as an official policy, as long as women are kept under by superior social and economic integration of women in production, the full taking of social and economic life by women is impossible.

affairs is impossible.

The Stalinist counterrevolution on women and the family, and the continued inequality of women in the workers states, today comprise one of the obstacles to winning radicalised women elsewhere to revolutionary Marxism. As with all other questions, the policies of Stalinism are often equated with Leninism rather than recognised for what they are—the negation of Leninism. Women fighting for their liberation elsewhere often look to the workers states and say, "If this is what socialism does for women, we don't need it." Many anti-Marxists tried to the situation of women in the workers states as "proof" that the road to women's liberation is not through class struggle. Thus the fight to win the leadership of feminists in other parts of the world is interrelated with the development of the political revolution in the deformed and degenerated workers states.

II. THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL AND THE STRUGGLE FOR WOMEN'S LIBERATION

Our Perspective

1. The Fourth International welcomes and champions the emergence of a new wave of struggles by women to end their centuries-old oppression. By fighting in the front lines of these battles, we demonstrate that the world party of socialist revolution can provide a leadership capable of carrying the struggle for women's liberation through to its conclusion. Our goal is to win the confidence and leadership of the masses of women by showing that our program and our class-struggle policies will lead to the elimination of women's oppression along the path of successful proletarian revolution and the socialist reconstruction of society.

2. This perspective of the Fourth International stands in the long tradition of revolutionary Marxism. It is based on the following considerations:

- a. We recognise that the oppression of women is indispensable to the maintenance of class society in general and capitalism in particular. The struggle by masses of women against their oppression therefore has an anticapitalist thrust.
- b. We recognise that women fighting for their liberation are a powerful ally of the working class as a whole in the struggle to overthrow capitalism. Without the socialist revolution women cannot achieve their liberation. Without the mobilisation of masses of women in struggle for their own liberation the working class cannot accomplish its historic tasks.
- c. We recognise that the struggle for women's liberation touches some of the most basic needs of women, especially those of the most exploited and oppressed layers. It is an avenue to reach and mobilise them.
- d. We recognise that educating the masses of workers through propaganda, agitation, and action around the needs of women is an essential part of the struggle to break the stranglehold of reactionary bourgeois ideology within the working class. It is an indispensable part of the

politicisation and revolutionary education of the workers vanguard and the construction of a mass revolutionary party of the working class.

6. We recognise that it is only by consistently championing the demands and needs of the most oppressed and exploited layers of the class—the women, the oppressed nationalities, the immigrant workers, the youth, the unorganised—that the full power and united strength of the workers can be brought to bear. Part of the fight to transform the trade unions into instruments of revolutionary struggle in the interests of the entire working class is educating the organised labor movement to fight for the demands of women.

In other words, our goal is not only to lead the women's liberation movement in a revolutionary direction but also to convince the working class as a whole and its organisations to recognise and champion struggles by women as their own.

f. The struggle against the oppression of women is not a secondary or peripheral issue. It is a life and death matter for the workers movement, especially in a period of sharpening class polarisation.

Because of women's place in class society and the hold of the ideology that buttresses their inferior status, women as a whole are a special target for all clerical, reactionary, and fascist organisations. Whether it is the Christian Democrats, the Falange, or the opponents of abortion rights, reaction makes a special appeal to women for their support, claiming to address women's particular needs, playing upon their economic dependence under capitalism, and promising to relieve the inordinate burden women bear during any period of social crisis.

From the "kinder-kirche-kueche" propaganda of the Nazi movement to the Christian Democrats' mobilisation of middle-class women in Chile for the march of the empty pots, history has demonstrated time and again that the reactionary mystique of motherhood-and-family is one of the most powerful conservativising weapons wielded by the ruling class.

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win the demands being raised by the women's movement, the revolutionary party can mobilise broad fighting layers of women on the side of the revolution. The new radicalisation of women and the changes in consciousness and attitudes make it more difficult for reaction to prevail. But the Social Democrats, the Stalinists, and the centrists are incapable of showing the masses of women how to escape the reactionary trap, to give them a perspective of struggle in alliance with the working class. The lessons of the rise of fascism in Germany and the bankruptcy of the Stalinists and others must be absorbed by the new generations of the workers movement.

g. We recognize that the struggle for women's liberation is a form of the class struggle. Yet it extends beyond the working class, touching women of all classes to one degree or another, because all women are oppressed as a sex. Struggles around specific aspects of women's oppression necessarily cut across class lines in the sense of potentially involving women from different classes and social layers.

Whatever concessions the rulers may be forced to grant, the bourgeoisie as a class must oppose the struggle for women's liberation because it challenges basic institutions of class rule. But even bourgeois women are oppressed on the basis of their sex. Some revolting against their oppression as women, will break with their class and be won to the side of the workers.

As Lenin pointed out in his discussions with Clara Zetkin, action around aspects of women's oppression has the potential to reach into the heart of the enemy class, to "foment and increase unrest, uncertainty and contradictions and conflicts in the camp of the bourgeoisie and its reformist friends...Every weakening of the enemy is tantamount to a strengthening of our forces."

Even more important from the point of view of the revolutionary Marxist party, however, is the fact that resentment against their oppression as women can often be the starting point in the radicalisation of decisive layers of petty-bourgeois women, whose support the working class must win.

By definition, a mass women's liberation movement is one that is basically working-class in composition and leadership.

3. Our class-struggle strategy for the fight against women's oppression, our answer to the question of how to mobilise the masses of women on the side of the working class, has three facets: our program, our methods of struggle, and our class independence.

Our Program

Through the totality of the system of demands we put forward—which deal with every issue from freedom of political association, to unemployment and inflation, to abortion and child care, to workers control and the arming of the proletariat—we seek to build a bridge from the current needs and struggles of the working masses and their level of consciousness to the culminating point of socialist revolution. As part of this transitional program we put forward demands that speak to the specific oppression of women.

Our program points to the issues around which women can begin to struggle to loosen the bonds of their oppression and challenge the prerogatives of the ruling class. It recognizes and provides answers for all aspects of women's oppression—legal, economic, social, sexual.

Our interlocking system of demands includes immediate, democratic, and transitional demands. Some

can and will be wrested from the ruling class in the course of the struggle leading toward the socialist revolution. Such victories bring inspiration, increasing confidence and self-reliance. Other demands will be partially met. The most fundamental will be resisted to the end by those who control the property and wealth. They can be won only in the course of the socialist reconstruction of society.

In fighting for these demands—both those providing solutions to the specific oppression of women and those answering other needs of the oppressed nationalities and working class as a whole—masses of women will come to understand the interrelationship of their oppression as a sex and class rule.

Our demands directed toward eliminating the specific oppression of women are centred on the following points:

1. *Full legal, political, and social equality for women.* No discrimination on the basis of sex. Equal rights for women to vote, engage in public activity, form or join political associations, live and travel where they want, engage in any occupations they choose. An end to all laws and regulations with special penalties for women. The extension to women of all democratic rights won by men.

2. *The right of women to control their own reproductive functions.*

A woman has the sole right to choose whether or not to prevent or terminate pregnancy. This includes the rejection of those population-control schemes which are tools of racism or class prejudice and attempt to blame the evils of class society on the masses of working people and peasants.

a. An end to all government restrictions on abortion and contraception.

b. Free abortion on demand; no forced sterilisation or any other government interference with the right of women to choose whether or when to bear children.

c. Free, widely disseminated birth-control information and devices. Education on sex and birth control in the schools and clinics.

3. *An end to the hypocrisy, debasement, and coercion of bourgeois and feudal family laws.*

a. Separation of church and state. Marriage to be a voluntary process of civil registration. An end to all forced marriages and the buying and selling of wives. Abrogation of all laws against adultery. An end to all laws sanctioning legal penalties, physical abuse, or even murder of wives and daughters for so-called crimes against male "honor."

b. The right to automatic divorce on request of either partner. State provision for economic welfare and job training for the divorced woman.

c. Abolition of the concept of "illegitimacy." An end to all discrimination against unwed mothers and their children.

d. The rearing, social welfare, and education of children to be the responsibility of society, rather than the individual parents. Abolition of all laws granting parents property rights and total control over children. Enactment and strict enforcement of laws against child abuse and wife-beating.

e. An end to all laws victimising prostitutes. An end to all laws reinforcing the double standard for men and women in sexual matters. Elimination of laws reflecting the assumption that female victims of rape are the guilty party. An end to all legislation victimising homosexuals. An end to all laws and regulations victimising youth for sexual activities.

4. *Full economic independence for women.*

a. Right to receive and dispose of their own wages and

property.

b. Equal pay for equal work.

c. No discrimination against women in any trade, profession, job category, apprenticeship, or training program.

d. Guaranteed jobs at union wages for all women who want to work, coupled with a sliding scale of hours and wages to combat inflation and unemployment among men and women.

e. Preferential hiring, training, and job upgrading of women and other superexploited layers of the labor force in order to overcome the effects of decades of systematic discrimination against them.

f. Paid maternity leave with no loss of job or seniority.

g. Paid work leaves to care for sick children to be given to men and women alike.

h. The extension of beneficial protective legislation (providing special working conditions to women) to cover men, in order to provide better working conditions for both men and women and prevent the use of protective legislation to discriminate against women.

i. Compensation at union rates throughout periods of unemployment for all women and men, including youth who cannot find a place in the work force, regardless of marital status. Unemployment compensation to be protected against inflation by automatic increases.

5. *Equal educational opportunities.*

An end to education and conditioning that reduces women to an inferior status.

a. Free, open admissions for all women to all institutions of education and all programs of study. Special programs to encourage women to enter traditionally male-dominated fields.

b. An end to all forms of pressuring women to prepare themselves for "women's work," such as homemaking, secretarial work, nursing and teaching.

c. An end to portrayal in textbooks and mass media of women as sex objects and stupid, weak, emotionally dependent creatures. Courses designed to teach the true history of women's struggles against their oppression. Physical education courses to teach women to develop their strength and be proud of their athletic abilities.

d. No expulsion of pregnant students or unwed mothers, or segregation into special facilities.

6. *Reorganisation of society to eliminate domestic slavery of women.*

a. Free, government-financed twenty-four-hour child-care centres and schools, open to all children from infancy to early adolescence regardless of parents' income or marital status; child-care policies to be decided by those who use the centres.

b. Free medical care for all and special child-care facilities for children who are ill.

c. Systematic development of low-cost, high-quality social services such as cafeterias and take-out food services

available to all; collective laundry facilities; house-cleaning services organised on an industrial basis.

d. A crash, government-financed development program to provide healthful, income-waged housing for all; no rent to exceed 10 per cent of income; no discrimination against single women or women with children.

We counterpose such demands to propaganda and agitation for the "abolition" of the family. The family as an economic unit cannot be "abolished" by fiat. It can only be replaced over time. The goal of the socialist revolution is to create economic and social alternatives that are superior to the present family institution and better able to provide for the needs currently met, however poorly, by the family, so that personal relationships will be a matter of free choice and not of economic compulsion.

These demands indicate the issues around which women will fight for their liberation, and show how this fight is interrelated with the demands raised by other oppressed sectors of society and the needs of the working class as a whole.

The women's liberation movement raises many issues. The development of the movement has already demonstrated that not all will come to the fore with equal force at the same time. Which demands to raise at any particular time in any particular struggle, the best way to formulate specific demands so that they are understandable to the masses and able to mobilise them in action, when to advance new demands to move the struggle forward—the answer to those tactical problems is the function of the revolutionary party, the art of politics itself.

Our Methods of Struggle

1. We utilise proletarian methods of mobilisation and action in order to achieve these demands. Everything we do is geared to bring the masses themselves into motion, into struggle, whatever their current level of consciousness. The masses do not learn simply by being exposed to ideas or by the exemplary action of others. Only through their own direct involvement will the political consciousness of the masses develop, grow, and be transformed. Only through their own experience will millions of women be won as allies in the revolutionary struggle and come to understand the need to get rid of an economic system based on exploitation.



working class against capitalism. We strive to make that link a conscious one on the part of women and of the working class. But we do not reject support from bourgeois figures or politicians who voice their agreement with our demands or goals. It strengthens our side not theirs. It is their contradiction not ours.

3. We reject the reformist perspectives of the Stalinist and Social Democratic parties. The policies and conduct of both these petty-bourgeois currents within the working-class movement are based on defending privileges and preserving the capitalist system, regardless of any lip service they may pay to the struggles of women against their oppression. Both are ready to subordinate the needs of women to whatever class-collaborationist deal they are trying to negotiate at the moment. The Stalinists, for example, never tire of telling women that the road to happiness through "advanced democracy" or the "antimonopoly coalition." They advise women not to demand more than "democracy" (i.e., capitalism) can give.

The Stalinists have a special stake in defending the family institution and reinforcing the reactionary grip of bourgeois ideology on the working class: They must defend the fact that the family unit is extolled in the "socialist" countries as the ideal framework of human relationships.

The reactionary positions adopted by the Communist parties in countries like Italy and France on such issues as divorce and abortion, and the American CP's opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, are such blatant betrayals of the needs of women that their stance opens up possibilities for us to make headway amongst their members and the layers they influence. Both the Stalinists and Social Democrats initially abstained from or were hostile to the new rise of women's struggles. But we can expect them to attempt to capture leadership as the women's movement develops, in order to divert these struggles into reformist channels.

4. It is only through an uncompromising programmatic and organisational break from the bourgeoisie and all forms of class collaborationism that the working class and its allies, including women struggling for their liberation, can be mobilised as a powerful and self-confident force capable of carrying the socialist revolution through to the end. The task of the revolutionary Marxist party is to provide the leadership to educate the working masses through action and propaganda in this class-struggle perspective.

Tasks of the Fourth International Today

1. The ideas of women's liberation have had varying degrees of impact throughout the world. The speed with which revolutionary ideas and lessons of struggle are transmitted from one country to another, and from one sector of the world revolution to another, ensures the further spread of women's liberation struggles. Widespread questioning of the traditional role of women creates an atmosphere conducive to Marxist education, propaganda, and action in support of the liberation of women. Through our press and propaganda activities we can explain the source and nature of women's oppression and the revolutionary dynamic of women's struggle for liberation.

2. In addition to participating in organisations and groups of radicalised women where they exist, we should integrate women's liberation propaganda and activity

into all our areas of work, from the trade unions to the student milieu. It is especially among the youth—student, young workers, young housewives—that we will find the greatest receptivity to our ideas and program.

3. Our experience thus far has shown that considerable potential exists for helping to organise and lead action campaigns around issues raised in the struggle against women's oppression. The Fourth International encourages international solidarity in the women's movement, and where possible, international coordination of action campaigns around common issues.

4. To organise and carry out systematic women's liberation work, sections of the Fourth International should establish commissions or fractions of those responsible for this work, which might include male comrades as well as female.

5. Systematic education about the history of women's oppression and struggles, and the theoretical and political questions involved, should be organised within the sections of the Fourth International.

We have no illusions that sections can be islands of the future socialist society floating in a capitalist morass, or that individual comrades can fully escape the education and conditioning absorbed from the very struggle to survive in class society. But it is a condition of membership in the Fourth International that the conduct of comrades and sections reflect the principles on which we stand. We fight to educate the members of the Fourth International to a full understanding of the character of women's oppression and the pernicious ways in which it is expressed. We strive to create an organisation in which language, jokes, and other acts expressing chauvinist bigotry towards women are not tolerated, any more than acts and expressions of racist bigotry would be allowed to pass unchallenged. We strive to build a party in which the full and rounded political development of women comrades is promoted and maximised.

The process of internal education will take place along with and be facilitated by the growing involvement of our sections in the struggle for women's liberation. The impact of this struggle on the consciousness and attitudes of comrades has been profound. The transformation of the women cadre of the international, reflecting our involvement in the struggle for women's liberation, is a development of historic significance. The new self-confidence, political maturity, and leadership capacities of the women comrades of the Fourth International constitute a significant expansion of the effective forces of revolutionary leadership on a world scale.

The new rise of women's struggles internationally and the emergence of a strong women's liberation movement prior to revolutionary struggles for power is a development of prime importance to the world party of socialist revolution. It increases the political power of the working class and the likelihood that the revolution will be successful in carrying through to the end its task of socialist reconstruction. The rise of the women's liberation movement is an additional guarantee against the bureaucratic degeneration of future revolutions.

The struggle to liberate women from the bondage in which class society has placed them is a struggle to free all human relationships from the shackles of economic compulsion and to propel humanity along the road to a higher social order.

Alliances and the Revolutionary Party

By Dave Holmes

Our fundamental strategy for achieving the socialist revolution is the construction of mass-based revolutionary workers parties. What I want to discuss tonight is a very important area of the tactics of the revolutionary party: the question of its alliances with other political parties of the working class, the petty bourgeoisie, and even the big bourgeoisie.

The revolutionary party does not begin with majority support from the working class and the oppressed; it has to win it. In the course of this struggle it has to relate to the existing political parties and organisations based on the various social classes and fractions of those classes.

In his work, *Left-wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder*, Lenin explains that capitalism doesn't occur in "pure" form, where a homogeneous working class confronts a homogeneous capitalist class. On the contrary, as we know, capitalism engenders a multitude of social, class and political divisions. The working class itself is divided on craft, sex, age, religious, national and territorial grounds. Between the capitalists and the working class are numerous intermediate layers. Even the ruling class may have more than one part corresponding to its different fractions.

From all this, Lenin said, "follows the necessity, the absolute necessity, for the vanguard of the proletariat, for

its class-conscious section, for the Communist Party, to resort to manoeuvres, agreements and compromises with the various groups of proletarians, with the various parties of the workers and the small masters.

"The whole point lies in *knowing how* to apply these tactics in order to *raise*, and not lower, the *general* level of proletarian class consciousness; revolutionary spirit, and ability to fight and win." (Selected Works, Vol. III, p. 421.)

United Front

With these considerations in mind, I first want to deal with the question of the united front. Very briefly, the united front is an alliance formed between different organisations to fight for a specific concrete objective, such as the withdrawal of imperialist troops from Vietnam, or the repeal of the abortion laws. Each participating organisation retains its full political independence and freedom of action.

For the revolutionary party the tactic of the united front answers two broad needs. On the one hand, the need of the proletariat to unite in defence of its class interests irrespective of political divisions. And on the other hand, the need of the party to reach out to broad

One of Franco's concentration camps



masses of the oppressed and win their allegiance in the course of the struggle and expose the misleaders of the working class. We'll go into this in more detail later on.

Communist International

The united front tactic was first formulated explicitly under this name by the Communist International in the early 1920s. But the tactic was in fact extensively utilised by the Bolshevik Party in its struggle against Tsarism and later the Kerensky government. In *Left-Wing Communism* Lenin says that "the whole history of Bolshevism, both before and after the October Revolution, is full of instances of manoeuvring, making agreements and compromising with other parties, bourgeois parties included!"

The background to the adoption of the united front tactic by the Comintern was the general postwar situation and its evolution. Arising out of and following the First World War, there was a tremendous revolutionary upheaval in Europe. By 1921 this wave was definitely ebbing. Only in Russia had the proletariat actually won and held state power.

The upsurge of the masses was powerful enough to overthrow the old order but it lacked adequate leadership. The traditional social democratic leaderships of the mass organisations exerted all their efforts to save the capitalist regimes. The construction and tempering of the new communist parties did not keep pace with the revolutionary development of the mass movement.

Either the communist parties were too weak or their leaderships were not sufficiently tempered and audacious at the critical moments. Revolutionary situations were wasted in Germany, Hungary and Italy.

Trotsky
and
Lenin



The Third Congress of the Comintern in mid-1921 took stock of this situation. Against the ultralefts of the time Lenin and Trotsky argued that the great revolutionary wave was subsiding and the communist parties had to strengthen their roots in the mass movement and strengthen their positions in relation to the reformist parties. Trotsky describes the decisions of the Third Congress in *The Third International After Lenin* in this way:

"The Third Congress of the Comintern was a milestone demarcating the first and second periods. It set down the fact that the resources of the communist parties were not sufficient for the conquest of power. It advanced the slogan: 'To the masses,' that is, the conquest of power through a *previous conquest of the masses*, achieved on the basis of the daily life and struggles. For the mass continues to lead its daily life in revolutionary epochs, even if in a somewhat different manner." (p 88)

The Fourth Congress of the Comintern at the end of 1922 filled out the line of the Third Congress. In particular it elaborated a set of theses on the tactic of the united front. These theses were drafted by Trotsky and may be found in the article On the United Front in volume two of *The First Five Years of the Communist International*. These theses remain a very succinct exposition of the united front tactic.

The very first necessity for the party to carry out any sort of manoeuvres is that it has secured its own political independence based on a clear program and internal discipline. The Comintern took up this problem at its first and second congresses which laid down the programmatic and organisational basis of the Third International and thereby firmly demarcated the genuinely communist elements from the left-reformists and centrists who wanted to hop onto the bandwagon of the Comintern for their own opportunistic reasons.

Having put its own house in order, so to speak, the problem confronting the Comintern and the communist parties was to extend their influence over the mass movement, to penetrate more deeply into the labor movement and win the ranks from the reformist parties. The united front tactic has tremendous relevance here.

Even in periods of great turmoil, such as our own, the ordinary class struggle continues. The workers still engage in clashes with the employers and the state. In this struggle the working masses feel the need for a united response to the ruling class. And this feeling corresponds to the objective needs of the situation.

The revolutionary party cannot oppose this desire of the workers for unity in action. On the contrary it must be seen as the most energetic advocate and defender of it. This means the revolutionary party has to take the initiative in approaching the reformist leaders and striving to secure agreements for joint action around various issues (in a strike, for democratic rights, etc.).

Of course, if the revolutionary party were *absolutely* preponderant in the labor movement, like the reformist Labor Party is today in Australia, then the need for the united front tactic would not arise. But when the party is a minority, even a very large one, then the united front tactic is posed very acutely.

The party has to reach out to the masses who do not follow its leadership and in the course of the struggle show them that it fights most vigorously and determinedly for the interests of the workers. The timidity and passivity of the reformist leaders will be exposed and the workers will more and more come under the influence of the party.

It is important to understand that the correct application of the united front tactic necessarily involves

negotiations and agreements with the leaderships of the reformist organisations. "Does the united front extend only to the working masses or does it also include the opportunist leaders," asks Trotsky. He replies: "The very posing of this question is the product of misunderstanding. If we could simply unite the working masses around our own banner or around our current practical slogans, and skip over reformist organisations, whether party or trade union, that would of course, be the best thing in the world. But then the very question of the united front would not exist in its present form."

Revolutionists have to force the reformist misleaders against their will to make practical agreements for common actions. This is precisely because these misleaders have a mass following which does not yet understand their treachery and who can only gain a real understanding in the course of a common struggle alongside the revolutionary party.

While the revolutionary party participates in united front actions it never gives up its independence, its freedom to ruthlessly criticise the treachery of the reformist leaders, to put forward its own program of struggle. Revolutionists function in the united front as an independent detachment, all the time clearly presenting our revolutionary face to the masses of workers.

On Single Issues Only?

While united fronts are most easily organised and maintained around single issues, under special circumstances the united front can be extended to electoral blocs or even to coalition governments of workers parties. The decisive criterion here is that the program of the coalition be unequivocally anticapitalist.

For instance, after the October Revolution the Bolsheviks briefly formed a coalition government with the left Social Revolutionaries. But a genuine united front government could only occur in a revolutionary situation, as a prelude to, or a consequence of the abolition of capitalism. Otherwise it would only be administering the capitalist state in the manner of the reformists of the Labor Party.

Popular Front

The united front is a principled alliance between the revolutionary party and other political formations. The party does not give up its independence or its program to participate. On the contrary, through the united front it gains the opportunity to lead masses of the oppressed in action around specific points of its own program.

This is not the case with the so-called "people's front" or "popular front" policy practiced by the pro-Moscow and pro-Peking Stalinist parties. The popular front is a coalition between left parties and liberal capitalist parties on a procapitalist program. Such coalitions are aimed not at advancing the mass struggle but are constructed precisely to stop it going beyond the bounds of the private property system.

This question of coalition politics, of socialist collaboration with a supposedly more "progressive" wing of the capitalist class has a long history.

Millerand

In 1889, Alexandre Millerand, a member of the Independent Socialist Party in France, on his own responsibility accepted the post of minister of industry in

the capitalist cabinet of "republican defence." Millerand's rationalisation of his action was that it was essential to save French democracy from the reactionaries who were trying to exploit the turmoil around the Dreyfus case to menace the Third Republic.

This was the first time a socialist had served in a capitalist government. Millerand set a precedent that has been followed by the opportunists in the labor movement at a whole series of historical junctures.

Millerand's action was debated throughout the European social democracy. The left wing denounced it pointing out that such collaboration between socialists and the ruling class only weakens the position of the workers and strengthens the hand of the reactionaries. Their predictions were borne out. Millerand later broke the strike of the French railroad workers.

At the Amsterdam congress of the social democracy in 1904, after a great struggle Marxist principles were upheld and Millerand was condemned. A motion was adopted which said that the party could not take any responsibility for the political and economic conditions which follow from the capitalist mode of production. The motion also stated that the social democracy could not "strive for a share of governmental power within bourgeois society."

The Amsterdam Congress was the high point of the second international. In the ensuing years the opportunist in the current grew stronger. This trend culminated in the political collapse of the social democracy in 1914 when almost everywhere its parties supported the war efforts of their respective bourgeoisies and urged the workers into the slaughter.

Left Bloc in France

In its revolutionary period under the guidance of Lenin and Trotsky the Communist International had to combat coalition politics in France. This example is very instructive in determining the Marxist attitude towards the people's front line of the Stalinists.

The Dissidents, the right-wing minority of the old Socialist Party who had split over the question of affiliation to the Communist International, were trying to promote a "Left Bloc." Trotsky defined the Left Bloc as "a bloc between the workers and a certain section of the bourgeoisie against another section of the bourgeoisie."

In his article On the United Front, Trotsky explained that: "One of the most reliable means and ideas of the Left within the working class the methods and ideas of the 'Left Bloc'... is through promoting persistently and resolutely the idea of a bloc between all the sections of the working class against the whole bourgeoisie."

Concretely, this meant adopting a united front tactic towards the Dissidents, trying on all occasions to draw them into joint action around specific problems of the masses—aid to strikers, locked out workers, the unemployed, and so on. The Communist Party would expose the reluctance of the reformists to break with the bourgeoisie and the Left Bloc project and undertake a joint defence of the immediate interests of the workers.

Trotsky puts it in this way: "If the Dissidents were capable of accepting these conditions, that is, for practical collaboration, then their worker-followers would be quickly absorbed by the Communist Party. Just because of this, the Dissidents will not agree to these conditions. In other words, to the clearly and precisely posed question whether they choose a bloc with the bourgeoisie or a bloc with the proletariat they will be compelled to conditions of mass struggle they will be compelled to reply that they prefer a bloc with the bourgeoisie. Such an

answer will not pass with impunity among the proletarian reserves on whom they are counting."

An energetic campaign against the fraud of the Left Bloc would only be successful on the condition that the Communist Party itself was ideologically clear and firm on the question. If open proponents of the Left Bloc were allowed to operate in the party then this would blunt the thrust of any such campaign. Trotsky called for "unconditional and merciless expulsion in disgrace of those who come out in favor of the idea of the 'Left Bloc.'" Such a firm policy would demonstrate to the working class the acute importance the party attached to fighting class collaborationist coalition politics.

In its later Stalinist degeneration, of course, the Comintern leadership would itself come out in favor of a "left bloc" policy under the name of the "people's front" and would reserve "unconditional and merciless expulsion" for those revolutionary socialists who championed the Marxist policy of the united front, the bloc of all workers against the entire bourgeoisie.

The Third Period

From 1929 to 1934 the Stalinised Comintern went on an ultraleft binge. The sixth congress of the Comintern in 1928 outlined a non-Marxist schema of postwar political development. Three periods were delineated: a period of sharp revolutionary crises followed by a period of capitalist stabilisation and then the "third period" which would see the final crisis of capitalism and the victory of the socialist revolution. Stalin proclaimed that the third period had begun.

The Comintern made a sharp lurch to the left. Stalin worked up a theory of "social fascism" which said that the social democrats were twins to the fascists, even that they were more dangerous than the fascists. This "theory" provided the basis for the Comintern refusing all practical collaboration with the mass reformist organisations. In the labor movement the Stalinists attempted to set up their own "red" trade unions and tried to break up the so-called "fascist" ones. This policy led to the extreme isolation of the communist forces at a time when big opportunities were developing with the onset of the world economic crisis.

Germany

The greatest and most terrible defeat that flowed from this sectarian and ultraleft line was in Germany. The Communist Party refused to press for a united front with the Social Democratic Party for self defence against the growing fascist threat.

The social democrats (the SPD) led the majority of the German working class. The CP was only a large minority. No effective counter to the fascist mobilisation was possible without involving the SPD workers. Only the united force of the whole labor movement could have crushed Hitler. But the CP called only for the "united front from below" and concentrated their fire on the "social fascists."

"United front from below" meant simply appealing to the ranks of the SPD to rally around the CP. Such a sectarian policy had nothing in common with the Leninist policy of the united front. A real united front necessarily would have entailed agreements with the leaders of the SPD.

Insistent public appeals had to be made to them to collaborate with the CP in joint defence of meetings, of strikes, etc. The SPD workers wanted to fight the fascists

but they could only be involved through a policy which recognised that, at the moment, they had illusions in the SPD misleaders. These illusions could only be dispelled in the course of fighting alongside the Communist workers. The SPD workers had to see for themselves the treacherous conduct of their own leaders who were willing to risk Hitler's victory rather than mobilise the masses in struggle. But such a common effort could only be realised by the CP doing everything in its power to put the SPD leaders on the spot and forcing them into a united front. The CP's "social fascist" line gave the SPD leaders an excuse for rejecting any joint action with the Communist Party.

The net result of the Comintern's line in Germany was the unopposed victory of Hitler who quickly silenced all opposition. The largest communist party outside the Soviet Union had been crushed without a fight.

"Collective Security"

Following the victory of fascism in Germany the Stalinist bureaucracy made a sharp turn away from the ultraleftism of the third period. Stalin looked for alliances with the bourgeois democracies to protect the Soviet Union from the threat of fascism.

A non-aggression pact was signed with France in May of 1935. Shortly afterwards the seventh Congress of the Comintern met. This congress was termed by Trotsky the Comintern's "liquidation congress." It formalised the Comintern's repudiation of the perspective of international socialist revolution.

The seventh congress put forward a line of "collective security" and the "antifascist people's front." Stalin

"As revolutionary socialists we understand that war springs, not from fascism, but from the contradictions lodged in the capitalist system of private property. The only thing that holds the bourgeoisie back from war is their fear of social revolution."

divided the imperialist powers into two categories: the "progressive," "peace-loving," "democratic" governments on the one hand, and the aggressive, fascist ones on the other. "Collective security" meant that the Soviet Union would sign nonaggression and mutual assistance pacts with the former against the latter.

This division, of course, is false through and through. The "peace-loving" allied imperialist powers (France, Britain, etc.) that Stalin first looked towards, ruled enormous colonial empires and rested heavily on their ruthless superexploitation of the colonial peoples. The so-called "Allies" were also not much of a barrier to fascism. At Munich in 1938 the British and French leaders made a deal with Germany and Italy legitimising Hitler's seizure of part of Czechoslovakia. At Munich the democracies and the fascists formed a front against the Soviet Union.

As revolutionary socialists we understand that war springs, not from fascism, but from the contradictions lodged in the whole capitalist system of private property. The only thing that holds the bourgeoisie back from war is their fear of social revolution. Imperialist wars will

disappear only when the capitalist system disappears. And fascism springs from the capitalist system. It too can only be fought by struggling against the entire capitalist system. The Stalinists systematically obscured these elementary Marxist truths.

Systematic deception of the masses

First Stalin formed an alliance with the Allies against Hitler. Then Stalin made his famous pact with Hitler against the Allies. Then during the war, Stalin formed an alliance with the Allies against Hitler.

Stalin's manoeuvres between the imperialist powers were accompanied by systematic deception and demoralisation of the masses. Each temporary ally was painted by Stalinist propaganda in phony colors. During the brief Hitler-Stalin "pact," for instance, Comintern propaganda against fascism ceased and the Allied powers were described (quite truthfully for once) as imperialist. Then during the wartime alliance, the Allies were prettied up as friends of peace and so on.

Revolutionaries do not object in principle to a workers state making alliances with this or that imperialist power. It is a tactical question. But, irrespective of these alliances, the communist parties must continue their struggle to expose the ruthless predatory nature of the entire capitalist system, in both its fascist and democratic forms, and to mobilise the masses for the socialist revolution.

However, under the Stalinised regime in the Comintern, the communist parties were expected to come in behind each deal made by the Soviet bureaucracy and subordinate their activity to the narrow needs of the bureaucracy. During Stalin's alliances with the bourgeois democracies, the CPs acted to prop up the capitalist system, blocking any revolutionary upsurge of the workers.

Along with the turn to "collective security" the Stalinists put forward their people's front strategy. This was the way the communist parties used their influence in the labor movement to give political support to Stalin's bourgeois allies. The "anti-fascist people's front" was supposed to unite all the anti-fascist forces from the proletarian to the liberal capitalists. Its program was limited to defence of bourgeois democracy, i.e. it was a capitalist program.

We can see what the popular front meant by looking briefly at the examples of France and Spain.

The popular front in France

Following Hitler's victory in Germany in 1933 France began to move into a prerevolutionary situation. In February of 1934 an armed fascist demonstration in Paris brought down the Radical Government. A tremendous groundswell of opposition in the labor movement forced the Socialist and Communist Parties to form a united front for joint activity against the fascist threat.

But the SP-CP front was converted into a popular front electoral coalition with a procapitalist program with the inclusion of the Radical Party, a liberal capitalist party with the largest parliamentary representation. The mass upsurge swept the popular front into power in 1936. SP leader Leon Blum became premier.

Thinking that they had a government of their own in office the workers responded with a massive wave of strikes and factory take-overs. Essentially over one million workers were occupying the plants.

The Stalinists, along with their popular front partners, did everything they could to derail the potentially

revolutionary mass movement. The enormous power and confidence that the proletariat manifested led even some SP leaders to raise the slogan "everything is possible!" Socialism was certainly on the agenda. The Stalinists tried to end the sit-down strikes and limit them to purely economic demands. They raised the slogan "Not everything is possible." They claimed that "rash" actions might frighten the middle classes and weaken the security of France in the face of "Hitler's menace."

"The popular front softens up the workers politically for a fascist or right-wing takeover. It politically disarms them by blurring the rigid class line which is the basis of Marxist politics."

By betraying the upsurge of the workers the SP and CP leaders demoralised them and weakened the fight against fascism. The popular front fell in 1938 and was replaced by a conservative regime. Two years later the French ruling class capitulated to Hitler and installed a pro fascist government. The popular front had paved the way.

Spain

The record of the people's front in Spain is one of even greater betrayal of the socialist revolution.

A popular front government was elected in early 1936. It aroused tremendous hopes among the masses. The bourgeoisie through the army staged a fascist revolt to repress the growing mass movement. The workers met Franco's revolt with a revolutionary uprising. The fight against the military plotters was part and parcel of a great social upheaval. The peasants rose up to seize the land, the workers created broad democratic councils and militias; they took over factories and began to produce arms.

The Stalinists had a different perspective. Stalin wanted to show the Spanish capitalists and the French and British bourgeoisie that capitalism in Spain could be saved without resorting to fascism, that Moscow was not promoting revolution, but on the contrary that the communist parties could be relied upon to defuse and demobilise the mass workers movement. Stalin thus hoped to win the support of England, France against Hitler and Mussolini.

Thus the Stalinists and the popular front government they were part of moved to crush the upsurge of the workers and peasants and prevent it going beyond the bounds of private property.

Stalin sent only minimal amounts of arms to the republic. Stalinist secret police were sent to purge and murder Trotskyist and other militant workers leaders who were putting forward socialist criticisms of the popular front.

The Stalinists proved their devotion to the capitalist system. But their policies guaranteed the victory of fascism. The popular front demoralised the masses. The only reason the ordinary people had to fight Franco was for a radical improvement in their conditions of existence. They wanted a social revolution, something which would end their misery and oppression forever. By smashing the end their misery and oppression the popular front also gave up any possibility of undoing Franco's rank-and-file support, particularly among the peasants, with powerful

social slogans (such as the agrarian revolution).

The popular front kept the masses within the bounds of the capitalist system to try and show the Spanish bourgeoisie that Franco was unnecessary, that the popular front could save capitalism. But the bourgeoisie had gone over almost entirely to Franco. As Trotsky put it, only its political "shadow" remained behind in the popular front with the Stalinist, Socialist and Anarchist misleaders. But the procapitalist perspectives of the reformist misleaders assured these bourgeois politicians a preeminent importance in the popular front.

Following the defeat of the Spanish workers and peasants in the civil war, Trotsky summed up the perspective as follows:

"The Spanish tragedy will go down in history as an episode on the path of preparation of a new world war . . .

The charlatanism of Popular Fronts serves one part of the imperialists to conceal their plans from the popular masses, as the other gang uses phrases about blood, honor, and race for the same purpose. The petty bourgeois windbags and phrasemongers only make it easier for the imperialists to prepare war, by preventing the workers from seeing the naked truth.

"Thus, from various ends and by various methods, a new carnage of the people is being prepared. Humanity can be saved from ruin and destruction only by tearing the vanguard of the proletariat away from imperialism and its lackeys, by complete independence of proletarian policy; by complete mistrust of the rituals of imperialism, fascist and democratic; by merciless struggle against the Second and Third Internationals; by stubborn, systematic, untiring preparations for the international proletarian revolution!" (*The Spanish Revolution*, p336)

Remains key Stalinist weapon

The popular front remains a key weapon in the Stalinist arsenal of class collaboration. The general policy of the Kremlin bureaucracy since the 1930s has been to reach an accommodation with world imperialism, to achieve "peaceful coexistence" with it. This means setting their face and the communist parties that serve their interests against any revolutionary struggles anywhere because any radical upsets threaten the international status quo they seek.

This reactionary Kremlin policy is often concretised in people's front electoral coalitions or governments. During the war the Stalinists cheered the Allied war effort for all they were worth. After the war, Stalinist parties participated in popular front governments of "national reconstruction" in France and Italy. The Communists played a key role in blocking the postwar revolutionary upsurges in these countries.

For instance, it used to be said in this period that a single phone call from CP chief Maurice Thorez could end capitalism in France, such was the general radicalisation. But Thorez never made that call because he would have needed a prior phone call from Moscow and that call never came because Moscow was committed to the reconstruction of French capitalism, not the socialist revolution.

In the last several years we have seen a new rise of the world revolution in a whole number of countries. And this has been accompanied by a number of popular front experiments, largely inspired by the Stalinists. We have seen popular front governments in Chile and Portugal. Popular front coalitions have emerged in Spain and France. And in Italy the Stalinists tried very hard to realise a popular front (the "historic compromise")

around the 1976 national elections.

The question of the popular front is vital for revolutionary socialists. As we have seen, it remains a burning question of our time. In the Transitional Program Trotsky says: "People's Fronts" on the one hand-fascism on the other, these are the last political resources of imperialism in the struggle against the proletarian revolution."

Last political resource

When normal parliamentary democracy begins to falter and fails to contain the rising tide of mass struggles, then there is a political basis for the setting up of a people's front regime. Advertised as a great step forward by means of the most extravagant demagoguery, in reality the popular front represents a mortal threat to the working class.

The popular front softens up the workers politically for a fascist or right-wing takeover. It politically disarms them by blurring the rigid class line which is the basis of Marxist politics. France or Spain in the 1930s or Chile in the 1970s—the political mechanism and the results are very similar.

A popular front government provides revolutionaries with certain opportunities. This is provided its true nature is understood. Popular front regimes generally come to power precisely in a period of general radicalisation. The government may have to make concessions to the masses to maintain their political allegiance. Such concessions fuel the desire of the masses for further and more fundamental reforms. Revolutionists can intervene and push the whole movement to the left, out of the control of the regime, but only if they remain completely independent of the procapitalist popular front regime and convince the masses that this regime is not socialist but the exact opposite.

In opposition to the popular front revolutionists put forward the idea of the united front of the whole working class against all bourgeois forces. We call on the bloc and struggle for a genuine workers and farmers government. In this way the masses are educated in Marxist class politics and are taught the truth about the reformist misleaders.

Perhaps the most famous popular front in history is the one that existed in Russia in 1917. Of course, it was not known under this name then. The struggle of the Bolshevik party against this coalition remains a supreme model for revolutionary socialists. Trotsky had this to say on the question in 1935:

"... the People's Front is the main question of proletarian class strategy for this epoch. It also offers the best criterion for the difference between Bolshevism and Menshevism. For it is often forgotten that the greatest historical example of the People's Front is the February 1917 revolution. From February to October, the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionists, who represent a very good parallel to the "communists" and the social democrats, were in the closest alliance and in a permanent coalition with the bourgeois party of the Cadets, together with whom they formed a series of coalition governments. Under the sign of this People's Front stood the whole mass of the people, including the workers, peasants, and soldiers' councils. To be sure the Bolsheviks participated in the councils. But they did not make the slightest concession the People's Front. Their demand was to break this People's Front, to rend the alliance with the Cadets and to create a genuine workers and peasants

government. All the People's Fronts in Europe are only a pale copy and often a caricature of the Russian People's Front of 1917 . . ."

Maoism

At this point it is worth noting that while we 'people' with the question of the popular front in relation to the pro-Moscow Stalinist parties, the pro-Peking Stalinist parties also endorse the popular front strategy right along the line. The Maoists dress it up under the name of the "bloc of four classes." This refers to the bloc of the workers and peasants with the urban petty bourgeoisie and the so-called national bourgeoisie.

The bloc-of-four-classes line fits in with Peking's perspective of seeking an accommodation with world imperialism. The rationale is just another version of the Stalinist "stages" theory of revolution: in this schema, first the workers and poor peasants fight alongside the "progressive" section of the capitalist class against feudal

"... we are not merely supporters, but the most committed and persistent advocates of the united front. We tirelessly seek to unite the oppressed masses in defence of their class interests."

and imperialist forces for a bourgeois-democratic revolution. The struggle for socialism is put off to some later "stage."

The Maoist version of the popular front strategy was responsible for one of the bloodiest massacres of the mass movement ever seen: the 1965 generals' takeover in Indonesia in which perhaps as many as one million Communist Party members and sympathisers were killed and the CP, the largest in the capitalist world, was virtually destroyed.

The Maoists sought to maintain at all costs their bloc with Sukarno, a bourgeois leader who relied heavily on nationalist demagoguery. The CP under Peking's guidance made concession after concession to this reactionary figure. In 1969, for instance, they complied with a government request that they turn over a complete list of names and addresses of their members!

The CP endorsed Sukarno's every move. He was continually hailed as a great popular leader. The end result of this systematic misdirection of the CP's membership and supporters was that it went down to bloody extinction without being able to organise so much as even the slightest resistance.

Union of the Left: what is a popular front?

One of the class-collaborationist electoral blocs that it is particularly instructive to study is the Union of the Left in France. Its formation prior to the March, 1973 legislative elections led to an extensive debate on the left in France over the attitude that revolutionists should take toward it. A similar debate of fundamentals occurred around the later presidential elections and is occurring at the moment with the presidential elections approaching in early 1978.

This debate raises some basic questions such as what is

essential in a popular front and how do revolutionists relate to these formations. I want briefly to discuss the Union of the Left from this point of view.

The Union of the Left began as an electoral bloc between the Socialist Party and the Communist Party around the so-called "common program" which was a reformist, pro-capitalist program. Later the two reformist working class parties were joined by the Left Radicals, a small and minor bourgeois formation.

This great predominance of the SP and the CP in this bloc, and the relative insignificance of the Left Radicals led some revolutionists to maintain that the Union of the Left was not a popular front formation and that therefore it would not be unprincipled for revolutionary socialists to vote for it in elections.

This view is seriously incorrect. In our opinion the Union of the Left was and is a popular front project of the CP and SP bureaucracies, it is a popular front in the process of construction.

From the beginning the Union of the Left was organised on a class-collaborationist electoral program. It was in no sense a proletarian united front based on joint practical actions. Its whole perspective, its purpose, was to solicit the participation of bourgeois forces and make a bid for office. The entry of the Left Radicals into the bloc was only an early confirmation of this perspective. The Left Radicals, although a minor bourgeois force, are an indicator and a guarantee to the bourgeoisie of the procapitalist program and intentions of the Union of the Left.

Thus the Union of the Left had a popular frontist character from the start, even before the Left Radicals entered it. Its objective was to achieve a class-collaborationist bloc with a section of the French capitalist class.

The decisive question is not the degree of bourgeois participation, but the program and perspectives of the coalition. In France in 1936 the popular front had very substantial bourgeois representation with the Radical Party; in Spain during the civil war, only the shadow of the bourgeoisie, a few individual bourgeois politicians deserted by their class, participated; in the Union of the Left we have a different variant. But in the essence of the matter all these formations are the same. They are class-collaborationist electoral coalitions or governmental blocs, ie, popular fronts.

It is worth noting that Trotsky gave a very broad definition of the popular front in his writings on Spain where he wrote: "The modern history of bourgeois society is filled with all sorts of Popular Fronts, ie, the most diverse political combinations for the deception of the toilers." (*The Spanish Revolution* p. 309. My emphasis—DH.)

These considerations show that the Union of the Left is a popular-front bloc and therefore revolutionaries would be making a mistake in principle to call for a vote for it in elections.

What tactics are called for in the struggle against the Union of the Left? The main point is that we seek on all occasions to draw the class line, the line between the working class and all fractions of the bourgeoisie. Our main demand is for the breaking up of the Union of the Left "Break with the Left Radicals," we say to the SP and CP leaders, "and form a united front on an anticapitalist program to fight for a real workers government."

In the legislative elections we could demonstrate and combine this sort of propaganda with a call for workers to vote only for CP and SP candidates and not for any Left

Radicals. We would explain that we are only voting for these candidates as representatives of working class parties, not as candidates of the Union of the Left. And we would put forward our revolutionary transitional program in opposition to the program of the SP and CP misleaders. In this way we draw the class line.

In the presidential elections where it is ultimately only yes or no to either the Union of the Left candidate or a candidate from one of the bourgeois parties, we would have to abstain. In the last presidential elections, for instance, we could not have voted for Mitterand, the SP leader and presidential candidate of the Union of the Left. There would be no way to say that we were voting for him as the leader of the working-class party, but not as the leader of the Union of the Left. A vote for Mitterand would only have been seen as a vote for the Union of the Left. The difficult task of Trotskyists in such a situation is to stand firm against the stream and patiently explain to the masses the truth of the matter.

If the Union of the Left actually won power, our line would be the same. We would demand that the SP and CP break with the bourgeoisie—kick out the Left Radicals and form a government of workers parties only, adopt an anticapitalist program and fight to realise it. Even if the Left Radicals weren't there we would demand that the government break with capitalism and carry out a socialist program.

But in neither case would we extend even the slightest political support and confidence to such a government. We would support concrete anticapitalist measures that it was forced to take, we would defend it against attacks from the right, but we would make it clear that it was not our government, that a real workers government would carry out a socialist program which we would specify.

That was the line the Bolsheviks followed under Lenin and Trotsky in 1917. By such tactics they educated and won over the mass of supporters of Kerensky's popular front government and finally made the first socialist revolution in history.

Australia

Finally I would like to say a few words about Australia and popular front politics today. Is the question of the popular front solely an international question, one which has no relevance for the working class in this country? Obviously not.

We are educating our movement and broader layers in revolutionary class politics through articles and talks on this question. Also, the same social democratic and Stalinist forces that are the inspirers of popular front schemes abroad dominate the labor movement in this country too.

And, of course, the united front, the socialist antithesis of the popular front, is also a permanent question for Australian revolutionaries. For instance, we constantly try to draw Labor supporters and members into joint activities, however modest, around a whole range of issues. And we participate in a whole number of united-front type demonstrations, protests, etc.

The immense preponderance of the Labor Party in the workers movement might seem to make coalition politics irrelevant here. Generally the ALP would not need to nor seek to engage in such manoeuvres to carry out its betrayals. But there are historical precedents. For instance, in Britain during the last war the Labor Party participated in a Tory cabinet in a "National Union"

government.

Around the first anniversary of the November 11, 1975 overturn of the Labor Government we saw the emergence in New South Wales of a formation calling itself "Citizens for Democracy." This group represents a joint effort of some Labor Party figures and the Communist Party of Australia. It is most definitely a class-collaborationist coalition, although so far it is not an electoral combination. Undoubtedly the Stalinists would like to see it develop into a full-blown Australian popular front.

Citizens for Democracy seeks to block the struggle against the Fraser Government by diverting it into a blind alley, away from a fight around jobs and wages, and so on. Not that the struggle for the preservation and extension of democratic liberties is unimportant, but this fraudulent project is not concerned with a serious fight on this front. Its only good proposal is for the inclusion of a bill of rights in the constitution. But we can rest assured that the Jim McClellands and Donald Hornes won't be organising the unrelenting campaign that will be necessary to win such an important concession from the ruling class of this country. For example, these charlatans don't even raise the demand, which is in the ALP platform, to abolish the Senate, the undemocratic upper house which was used to set up the ouster of the Labor Government. Too many cosy jobs are at risk here and then again, things might get out of hand.

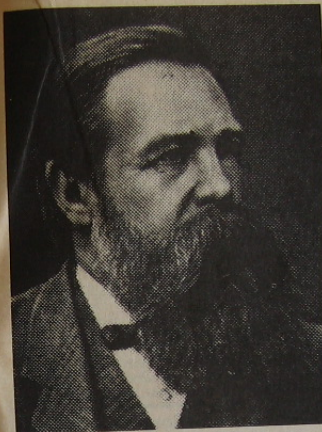
Just as the pro-Moscow Stalinists are engaged in this class-collaborationist manoeuvre, the pro-Peking Stalinists are trying to organise a bloc with the supposedly "national" section of the Australian capitalist class. While the reactionary ideology of Australian nationalism is fairly widespread in some form or other in the labor movement, the organised "Australian Independence" movement is still tiny and has not yet attracted any significant bourgeois support.

Also to date, it has not been extended to the electoral arena. But this movement is a class-collaborationist one making no bones about its desire to cement together a bloc of the working class with some "progressive" wing of the capitalist class.

That concludes this brief examination of the question of the united front and the popular front. Let's summarise the lessons of these historical and theoretical considerations.

The revolutionary party is the decisive strategic instrument of the socialist transformation of society. On the road to gaining majority support in the working class, the party necessarily has to make all manner of agreements and compromises with other political formations. But only those which do not compromise its political independence, only those which do not mis-educate the oppressed and teach them to place their trust in a section of the class enemy rather than in their own activity. For this reason we are vehement opponents of the so-called "people's front." Trotsky's view was that "There can be no greater crime than coalition with the bourgeoisie in a period of socialist revolution."

At the same time, and for the same reason we are, not merely supporters, but the most committed and persistent adversaries of the united front. We tirelessly seek to unite the oppressed masses in defence of their class interests. This approach corresponds to the real needs of the proletariat. At the same time, it is the principal tactic by which the mass revolutionary party will be constructed and the oppressed masses assembled under its banner for the final assault on the strongholds of this outmoded social system.



In Defence of Engels by George Novack

[The following was originally presented as a talk given as part of an educational program following the twenty-sixth national convention of the Socialist Workers Party, held in Ohio August 17-21, 1975.]

Our discussions this week have revolved around the new turn in the world situation brought on by the end of the postwar boom and what this portends for the prospects of the class struggle and our work in the United States. The dialectics of capitalist development, arising from its incurable contradictions, is becoming asserted with ever greater force. After thirty years of prosperity come stagnation and large-scale unemployment. After the explosive and unchecked expansion of Washington's military might on the world arena comes the defeat in Southeast Asia.

Our movement is now looking ahead and tooling up for corresponding shifts in the attitudes of the American workers. They can be expected to pass from raw material for capitalist exploitation into a more self-conscious and independently acting force for political and social change.

These reversals at hand and in the making present a philosophical as well as a political challenge to us. The revolutionary vanguard requires a world outlook and a logical method capable of analysing these unfolding processes and foreseeing their underlying trends. Fortunately, we have at our disposal the ideas of Marxism, the theoretical foundation of scientific socialism.

However, Marxism itself is in a state of crisis nowadays in the international socialist movement. Several generations have been miseducated by the Stalinist degradation and distortion of Marxist theory that has been coupled with the political degeneration of the Soviet Union. The thoughts on philosophy of Mao Tse-tung have further addled the minds of many militants.

Finally, just as the long detour in the course of the world revolution through the colonial countries has induced rebels in the advanced countries to embrace and extend its peculiar pattern and adapt to Castroism or Maoism, so in the field of philosophy many left intellectuals have been beguiled by the ideas held by the young Lukacs, Karl Korsch, the Frankfurt school, including Marcuse, Horkheimer, and Adorno, Erich Fromm, Sartre, and similar nonmaterialist interpreters of Marxism.

Some of their misconceptions have seeped into the ranks of world Trotskyism. This was indicated in the exchange of views on Lukacs between Comrade Abrahamovici of the French section of the Fourth International and myself in the July-August 1972 *International Socialist Review*. Aituen's considerations make it advisable to assure that the philosophy of our cadres is clear and correct and to contemplate the advent of more favorable conditions for anticapitalist action on a mass scale in this country.

This talk will focus upon Frederick Engels and his contributions to the elaboration of dialectical materialism. For the following reason. The cocreator of scientific socialism has come under heavy fire in recent years on the ground that he switched Marx's thought onto the wrong track and distorted his teachings on philosophy. Just as Trotsky is portrayed by the Stalinists as the antagonist of Lenin after 1917, so Engels is separated by his detractors from Marx and depreciated in a like manner on the philosophy front. He is accused of deforming Marx's method of dialectical materialism, thereby being the progenitor of Social Democratic deviations and Stalinist dogmatism. This fabrication has been broadly accepted and embowered by New Left ideologists in both East and West because it undermines those elements of dialectical materialism the critics want to discredit and

discard.

This variegated grouping applies "salami tactics" to the body of Marxist thought, although they do not all slice it up the same way. The most unrestrained slicers cut Marx himself in half by discovering a contradiction between the young Marx and the mature Marx. He is supposed to have shifted his views in the wrong direction from his early humanistic writings to the publication of *Capital*. They unjustifiably introduce a sharp break in the normal process of growth through which Marx deepened his understanding of many things from one decade to the next.

However, most of the revisionists find Marx blameless for misinterpreting himself or let him off lightly as ambiguous. The other half of the team is singled out as the main culprit and bears the brunt of the attack as the prime falsifier of Marx's real beliefs. The core of the indictment against Engels is that his version of dialectical materialism is essentially different from Marx's historical materialism.

The true, innovative, humanistic Marx is to be found in such writings of the 1840s as *The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* and the *Theses on Feuerbach* (which, incidentally, Engels recovered and published after Marx's death). This humanity-centred philosophy of praxis was disfigured and displaced by the deterministic, mechanistic, positivistic, and scientific rendering of dialectical materialism Engels presented in his writings. (Praxis is a Greek word for human activity popularised by contemporary philosophers.)

The false antithesis between Marx and Engels contradicts the basic facts about their relationship. It is, bluntly speaking, a hoax, and serious socialists should beware of being taken in by it. When Engels first visited Marx in Paris in the summer of 1844, he later wrote, "we found that we were in complete accord in all theoretical domains; this was when our joint work began." It continued without letup until Marx died in 1883.

History has rarely witnessed so close, harmonious, and unambitious intellectual and political partnership. Their correspondence testifies to the communion of thought and lively interchange of ideas on a multitude of subjects that found expression in their writings. Although Engels modestly assigned himself the role of "second fiddle" to Marx, the development of the dialectical method and historical materialism was a collective creation. Engels and Plekhanov later named the synthesis dialectical materialism. Marx and Engels elaborated its fundamental principles together in the 1840s. Most of what they wrote thereafter, whether in the form of newspaper articles, manifestos, pamphlets and books, was either discussed beforehand or submitted to each other's searching critical scrutiny.

Whatever differences of opinion they had on this or that minor matter, there is no record of disagreement on any important theoretical or political question during their forty-year collaboration. Engels was so familiar with Marx's criticism of political economy that he alone could be entrusted with piecing together and putting into publishable shape the second and third volumes of *Capital*.

Anti-Dühring by Engels was the fullest exposition of Marxist philosophy issued while Marx was alive. It was a preliminary sketch for the *Dialectics of Nature* and shares the same theoretical viewpoint. *Anti-Dühring* was undertaken on Marx's insistence. He endorsed every word in the book, which Engels read to him before sending it to the printers. Chapter 10 of part II was written by Marx. Therefore any dissent from the ideas presented in its pages is *ipso facto* a disagreement with Marx as much as Engels. The latter made this clear when

he wrote in the preface to its second edition: "I must note in passing that inasmuch as the mode of outlook expounded in this book was founded and developed in far greater measure by Marx, and only in an insignificant degree by myself, it was self-understood between us that this exposition of mine should not be issued without his knowledge." Engels likewise noted in the preface to the first edition of *The Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State* that he drew extensively upon Marx's prolific observations and conclusions.

Long after the observations and conclusions, the mythmakers are attempting to do what was impossible during their lifetimes—pit the one revolutionist against the other. This gambit is not new. In a letter to Bernstein, written April 23, 1883, shortly after Marx's death, Engels said: "The fable about the nasty Engels who had led the benign Marx astray has been repeated many times since 1844."

Indeed, it has been considerably magnified from that time to this. Plekhanov and Kautsky are said to have extended the derelictions of Engels in the next generation. To spice the dish, it is implied, if not always stated, that Plekhanov's bad conduct in 1905, 1914, and 1917, and Kautsky's betrayals from 1914 on are traceable, at least in part, to the philosophic deviations derived from their mentor. To top off this indictment, just as Hegel has been

"Marxism redefined and revitalised philosophy by linking it with the class struggle and political activity, by converting it into an instrument to be added to the arsenal of the revolutionary proletariat in its struggle to change the world . . ."

held responsible to some extent for the Kaiser's Prussianism and Hitler's totalitarianism, so Engels is alleged to have fed the version of "dialectical materialism" disseminated by the Stalinist school because his dialectical materialism subordinated the human individual to the laws of nature and history.

To round out the rogue's gallery, Lenin is charged with carrying forward their vulgar materialistic mode of thought in *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, although he began coming to his senses in his unpublished *Philosophical Notebooks*.

If we are to credit this caricature of the development of Marxist philosophy, all the leading exponents of European socialist thought from Engels to Lenin, Luxemburg, and Trotsky misunderstood Marx's ideas and went astray until the purveyors of the fable arrived to set matters straight.

This melange of misrepresentations has been taken up by academic Marxologists who willingly retail such misinformation to untutored pupils and unwary readers. Here is how the British philosopher Anthony Quinton formulates the tale in a review of recent books on Hegel in the May 29, 1975, *New York Review of Books*: "The official Marx of the interwar years, discredited by the theological ornamentation of Stalin's slave state, was the late, scientific Marx of *Das Kapital*, as interpreted by the naively positivists Engels, whose task it was to generalise Marx's theory of history and society into the comprehensive philosophy of dialectical materialism."

Quinton naturally prefers the libertarian image of Marx dreamed up by the petty-bourgeois humanists who, he says, emphasise "man as the creator of himself and the

world." Unlike this newfangled Marx, the original Marx knew that, while humanity did create itself, it did not have the godlike capacity of creating the world but only of changing it. The power of humanity is limited to adapting the materials of nature to serve its needs and purposes.

This Oxford scholar is forthright enough to place the mature Marx alongside Engels as the fountainhead of the original sin of scientism, which is a highfalutin euphemism for materialism. Many of the semi-Marxists are not so candid or consistent. These timid iconoclasts hesitate to wield the hammer against the granite figure of Marx himself. They fear to question his authority and exempt him from the transgressions of his partner.

A comical specimen of their tortured reasoning is offered by George Lichtheim in his last book, entitled *From Marx to Hegel*. He opposes what he calls "the peculiar ontological system of metaphysical materialism invented by Engels and termed 'dialectical materialism' by Plekhanov and Lenin." (p.4) Lichtheim writes, "The 'dialectical' materialism, or monism, put forward in the *Anti-Dühring*, and published in 1925 under the title *Dialectics of Nature*, has only the remotest connection with Marx's own viewpoint, though it is a biographical fact of some importance that Marx raised no objection to Engels' exposition of the theme in the *Anti-Dühring*." (p.67)

This offhand remark not only blatantly sweeps aside the nature of the working relations between the pair but disregards Marx's whole character. That militant materialist would not have remained indifferent to misrepresentations of his philosophical method by so close a colleague, any more than Plekhanov, Lenin, or Trotsky would have. He would not have allowed such an offense to pass without making his own countervailing known to the socialist public.

After settling their basic philosophical principles in their own minds, Marx and Engels divided the tasks at hand in the exposition of their common ideas. While Marx immersed himself in the prodigious labors involved in investigating the problems of political economy, Engels undertook to popularise their philosophic positions. The most important of these works were *Anti-Dühring*, from which *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* was extracted, and later *Ludwig Feuerbach and the Outcome of Classical German Philosophy*. These were to be crowned by the *Dialectics of Nature*, which remained unfinished at his death. In addition to *Capital*, which stands as the supreme example of the application of their method, these classical writings are the prime sources for our knowledge about Marxist philosophy.

From the inventory of previous philosophising, Marx and Engels retained the materialist conception of the world and dialectical logic, making these acquisitions the cornerstones of their systematic thought. The distinctive character of the revolution they effected in philosophy was to fuse these two disconnected elements into a synthetic world outlook that posed the necessity for the working class to transform society and that offered a theoretical guide in the struggle for emancipation. Materialism was extended from natural to social phenomena and to the development of the thought process; the idealistic dialectics of Hegel was turned upside down and given a solid scientific basis in the realities of the universal evolution of matter in motion.

Marxism redefined and revitalised philosophy by linking it with the class struggle and political activity, by converting it into an instrument to be added to the arsenal of the revolutionary proletariat in its struggle to change the world through class action, and by absorbing the results of the growing scientific knowledge about nature.

history, and the mind into its principles.

The unfounded allegation that Marx and Engels held divergent philosophical views sets up Engels as a whipping boy for Marx himself. The objections raised against his positions are actually aimed against the tenets of the dialectical materialism they held in common. The detractors ought to come out from ambush and challenge Marx fairly and squarely instead of resorting to the subtlety of assailing his ideas indirectly through Engels. If all the criticisms they make of Engels were accepted as valid, few parts of Marxist theory would be left intact. They begin with nothing less than an abandonment of its materialist foundation.

From its origins in antiquity, the materialist philosophy has been based on a specific interpretation of the nature of reality; its highest expression in dialectical materialism is no exception. Materialism maintains that nature alone, based on matter in motion, has a self-sufficient existence and everything in human life is derived from and dependent upon the objective world. Idealism, to the contrary, denies that nature is primary and makes it subordinate to mind or spirit. In Hegel's system, for example, nature is the alienated reflection of the logical process, or as Marx said, the son begets the mother.

These are the two fundamental opposing camps in the history of philosophy. However, their contraposed positions do not exhaust the possibilities in this field. A heterogeneous array of thinkers and tendencies have, on one ground or another, refused to align themselves in a clear-cut manner with one side or the other. They try to combine elements from both the materialist and idealist viewpoints and oscillate unsteadily between these two poles.

These eclectics commonly skate around the crucial question of whether nature or social and intellectual phenomena come first. The humanist exponents of praxis stand on the left flank of this category. They affirm that neither nature nor thinking but human activity is the essence of reality and therefore praxis is the fulcrum of Marxist theory.

They consider this intermediate variant superior to what they term vulgar materialism or out-and-out idealism. Yet their standpoint fails to face up to the need to define the fundamental relation of practice to the external world. When hard pressed, most of the praxologists dispose of the problem by arguing that this question really has no meaning and needs no definite answer because nature and thought are inseparably united in and through practice. While this happens to be true as far as it goes, it leaves undecided whether matter or mind, the objective or the subjective, takes priority in existence. Their ambiguity and evasiveness on this issue is actually a half-concession to idealism, which holds that there is no object without a subject and the object is solely a shadow or "reflective moment" cast by the subject, variously called in the history of philosophy, God, spirit, mind, nous, the Word, etc.

The "critical theories" of the Frankfurt school, as they are known, believe that the objective world cannot be severed from the subject because it is itself a product of human activity. In viewing the subject and rejecting determinism as a metaphysical aberration, they revert to the standpoint of the Left Hegelians, which Marx and Engels, using Feuerbach's materialism as a bridge, threw off early in their intellectual evolution.

Materialism teaches that nature has objective reality before and apart from the human subject. This paramount premise of its outlook has been confirmed by the discoveries of the natural sciences from astrophysics

to biochemistry, showing the evolution of the cosmos over billions of years. The earth itself and its organisms had a prolonged history before humanity came on the scene with its distinctive productive activities.

Practice, to be sure, thereupon became the motive force in social history. But it is not and cannot be considered the basis of material being. The praxis school tends to make social life eclipse the natural matrix of which it is an outgrowth. The value we rightly attach to the activities, achievements, and further progress of our species, which is the focus of our attention, should not contract our vision of reality as a whole. Anthropocentrism is as outdated as the view that the earth is the centre of the universe. It is extremely parochial at a time when astronauts and rockets are invading outer space, scientists are looking for signs of life on remote planets and exploring ever deeper into the atom.

Thus the reformist socialist George Lichtheim whom Quinton describes as "one of the most active and enthusiastic exponents of this current of thought," writes in *From Marx to Hegel*: "The external world, as it exists in and for itself, is irrelevant to a materialism which approaches history with a view to establishing what men have made of themselves." (pp. 69-70.) This is in the same vein as the statements by Lukacs in *History and Class Consciousness* that "existence is the product of human activity" and "nature is a social category." The discovery of nature is a social enterprise and the concept of nature is a social-historical category, but not nature itself. Kolakowski, too, tells us in *Marxism and Beyond*: "The world is a human product." (p. 78.)

Finally, Alfred Schmidt, a younger member of the Frankfurt school, who has devoted an entire book to *The Concept of Nature in Marx*, says: "Nature exists for man only as it is mediated by history." He contrasts the "naturalised Hegelianism" of Engels to Marx, who subordinated nature to its "appropriation through social labor." "Nature," he writes, "only appears on the horizon of history, for history can emphatically only refer to men. History is first, and immediately, practice." (p. 193.)

This is a half-truth: It applies to human but not to natural history. As Marx and Engels stated in *The German Ideology*: "We know only a single science, the science of history. History can be contemplated from two sides, it can be divided into the history of nature and the history of mankind. However, the two sides are not to be divided off; as long as men exist the history of nature and the history of men are mutually conditioned." (This text is cited from Schmidt, p. 49.) Schmidt disregards the decisive qualifications in the quotation: "as long as men exist." Several million years ago humanity did not yet exist, although nature did. That fact is what the philosophic materialism of Marx and Engels is predicated on. It embraces but goes beyond the horizon of human history as such.

We can agree with other socialist humanists that the problems of human life and the revolutionary theory and practice of coping with them are central to the teachings of Marxism. But the point at issue is not the centre but the circumference of materialist philosophy that identifies the total field of its concerns. Does dialectical materialism deal only with what is specifically human or with all of reality? Most critics of Engels contend that the broader concern with ontology, the theory of being, is an outworn metaphysical relic of Hegelianism; Marxism limits itself to social experience.

Their narrow conception that restricts the content of Marxism to historical materialism alone is an unwarranted abridgment of the dialectical materialism Marx and Engels developed. This issue has far-reaching

implications. The world outlook and procedure of science itself was made possible only when its first practitioners cast aside animism, religion, teleology, and other anthropocentric notions. They learned to separate themselves in thought from nature, and nature from themselves, and approach the world objectively, as it really was in its own right, having an independent existence and operating in accord with its own laws.

According to Karl Klare, editor of a collection of articles on the leading figures of so-called "Western Marxism" from Lukacs to Marcuse, their signal achievement has been "to restore to Marxism, its original western subjectivity to the heart of human consciousness, human does not need any injection of objectivity. But these critical theorists, who find the determinism and lawfulness upheld by dialectical materialism to be the source of Social Democratic fatalism and passivity and Stalinist totalitarianism, felt that the socialist movement could not be reoriented without it. The trouble is that they gave Marxism such an overdose of subjectivity as to throw it off balance in theory and practice.

Marxism was the first system of thought to give a correctly balanced account of the objective and subjective aspects of human activity. It views the object-subject relation as a unity of opposites in which one can be transformed under certain conditions into the other. In the same process whereby the flint was chipped into a subjective factor of labor, the concept of the tool and its purposes in the mind of the maker was objectivised. The idea became materialised as the natural thing was humanised.

The primary basis of the object-subject relation is to be found in the interaction between humankind and nature incorporated in productive activity. Here nature is objective to the human subject. To the extent that the forces of nature are converted by social labor into human forces, the object-subject relationship is instituted and developed. The essence of history consists in the progressive modification of nature thanks to the productive activity of humankind and in the correlative transformation of humankind itself as the powers of production grow.

The early Lukacs and the Frankfurt school term the artificial environment in which we live, work, and think "a second nature." They focus exclusively upon the phenomena in this domain and try to shove the original and underlying nature into the shade. In doing so they give greater weight to the subjective factors in human history and social life than to the objective conditions of development.

Historical materialism teaches that what is subjective is governed by objective realities, laws, and necessities. This is summarised in the statement that social being determines social consciousness. This does not mean, as some critics contend, that the subjective element is negligible or powerless. Quite the contrary, it is omnipresent in human affairs and can play a more or less influential part depending upon the more or less circumstances of the case. At climactic junctures in the case can even be decisive, as has been reiterated in my article "The Role of the Individual in History Making." Recognition of this fact necessitates the building of the revolutionary party, a conclusion that most New Left apostles of praxis refuse to draw. Their subjectivity shrinks from accepting this objective necessity.

The Marxist conception of the reciprocal interplay of the two factors affords adequate and ample room for effective action by the subject. The subjective, like the

objective, is a relative category that shifts its field of reference. It can refer to the human collective in respect to the natural environment, or to a class within the given social formation, a party of the class, an ideological grouping, or a single person and his or her consciousness. As a physical organism, the individual is an object to himself and others, while as a social being he or she is a subject with a spiritual, that is, a private psychological and intellectual, inner life.

As a doctrine of class struggle and a guide to revolutionary action, Marxism least of all downplays the part that can be exercised by the will and initiative of human beings in all departments of endeavor, from altering their habitat, forming and transforming social relationships, and redirecting the course of events through their deliberate intervention. But we humans have been able to do all this only under the historically created conditions of life that have lawfully determined the nature, direction, and scope of our transformative powers, which have not yet come under our collective control to be under socialism.

The crux of the argument with the praxis theorists, its practical political point, is that they tend to exaggerate the subjective element and underestimate the predominance of the real objective conditions. This one-sidedness is conducive to voluntarism, ultraleftism, and adventurism in politics. Lukacs's essays collected in *History and Class Consciousness*, for instance, reflected the ultraleft course against which Lenin, Trotsky, and other leaders of the Third International fought in 1921. This did not prevent Lukacs from swinging around, withdrawing from political activism in the Hungarian Communist Party, and accommodating himself albeit with teeth clenched, to the Stalinist regime for two decades.

Extreme subjectivism in theory and politics can readily turn into its opposite and often end up in capitulation to the existing alignment of forces, as so many of the ultraleft stars of the 1960s in this country, Black and white, from Rennie Davis and Tom Hayden to Bobby Seale and Eldridge Cleaver, have freshly demonstrated.

The philosophical problem of the object-subject relation goes back to the Greeks. The first materialists from Thales to the Atomists concentrated their attention upon the nature of physical being. The Sophists and the Socrates turned aside from social, moral, and logical considerations to focus upon social, moral, and logical himself.

However one-sided this shift was, it was then a necessary step in the development of philosophical thought. This alternation of attention between the objective and subjective sides of reality has recurred on higher levels at subsequent stages of philosophy's progress. In the concrete course of its elaboration, Marxism itself first examined the most urgent economic, Marxist itself first examined the most urgent economic, social and political questions and only later, as we shall see, took up the theoretical problems posed by the development of natural science.

However much this overemphasis was justified and inescapable in preceding phases of philosophising, such one-sidedness becomes retrogressive when it is reproduced by the praxiologists at this late date. The Polish Communist thinker Adam Schaff rightly distinguishes between the Milesian and Socratic lines in philosophical tradition and then wrongly urges Marxists to abandon the Milesian for the humanistic starting point and outlook of Socrates. But Socrates was the inspirer of idealism and Schaff diverted Greek thought from materialism. Schaff's injunction to follow his lead would impel socialists in the same direction. It examples from antiquity are in order,

we, like Lenin, recommend the path of the pioneer materialists, Democritus and Lucretius, instead.

To go from the history of philosophy to contemporary politics, the opposing consequences of adhering to the objective method of Marxism or slipping into some subjective approach are exemplified in the debate over one of the most crucial issues of world politics: What is the nature of the Soviet Union? According to historical materialism, the fundamental character of a social system is determined by the prevailing relations of production expressed in the form of property relations. In light of these objective criteria, the Soviet Union, the product of the October revolution, must be defined as a workers state, a progressive formation qualitatively different from and superior to a capitalist economy. This sociological characterisation is made more precise by the political qualification that the Soviet Union today is not a healthy but a diseased workers state because of the absence of proletarian democracy.

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Many of the praxis-oriented thinkers reject both this method and its conclusion and resort to more superficial criteria in assessing the nature of the USSR. Some, noting the persistence of commodity relations, classify it as state capitalist. Others designate it as a totalitarian or bureaucratic-collectivist state, a completely new kind of society. Still others throw up their hands and confess their incapacity to fit this historical anomaly into any sociological categories. All of them hold that unless the workers have democratic control over the economy and state, it cannot have any progressive social substance. They give political relations precedence over socioeconomic realities.

Their failures to understand what the Soviet Union really is can lead to incorrect and even reactionary positions. This kind of subjective sociology is carried to an extreme by the Maoists, followed in their manner by the left economists Bettelheim, Sweezy, and Nicolaus. Because of the sharp differences between Moscow and Peking on the state level, the Maoists call the Soviet Union a capitalist, imperialist, fascist power, just as Moscow plastered similar labels on Yugoslavia after Tito rejected Stalin. Such lines of thought, which originated in Stalin's misbegotten theory of social fascism, are a travesty of Marxism.

The independent existence of material reality, the primacy of objective conditions, and the objectivity of knowledge all fit together in the structure of Marxist philosophy. The Marxist theory of knowledge is predicated on the capacity of the human mind to reflect the surrounding world more or less correctly and is inseparable from its conception of material being. The properties and relations of things that we sense, perceive, and handle are conceptualised through the abstractive and generalising powers of logical thought. The content of our true ideas corresponds with that, is more and more approximate, what objectively exists.

The praxologists undercut the premises of this materialist conception of knowledge by severing the intrinsic connection between the ontology, the theory of existence, and epistemology, the theory of knowledge, of dialectical materialism. Lichtheim argues that Marx's historical materialism, which he distinguishes from the philosophic materialism of Engels and Plekhanov, had "no connection whatever" with their "indefensible theory of cognitive perception." (pp. 70-71.)

A major stumbling block in the way of this attempt to demonstrate a divergence between Marx and Engels and stealthily dispose of their materialist theory of knowledge is Marx's clear and categorical statement in the afterword to the second edition of *Capital* in 1873: "With me, the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought". Schmidt characterises this assertion as "unfortunate"—as indeed it is for the thesis that Marx did not hold the same reflective theory of knowledge as Engels.

To make refutation easier, the Marxist view is often mixed up with the position that people passively receive sensations and perceptions that are reproduced in the mind as direct replicas or mirror images of objects. Such a simplified and mechanical explanation of knowledge was held by empiricists, sensationalists, and pre-Marxian materialists. The eighteenth century materialist Diderot likened the brain to wax on which things left their imprint.

Dialectical and historical materialism went far beyond this crude conception. It views human beings, not as mere spectators of their environment or reactors to its stimuli, but as doers, inquirers, and strugglers who engage in labor and other practical activities directed by their ideas and who have developed their conceptual equipment in accord with changing historical circumstances and social relations. In the process of knowledge the active, productive subject works out generalisations, ideal models, and categories in the mind, which when tested in social practice disclose their correspondence with or variance from the essential feature of things. The whole development of knowledge from primitive ignorance to present-day science bears witness to the creative capacities and social character of the human reason.

As a faculty and product of developing human beings, knowledge has its subjective sides. But unless our sensations, perceptions, and ideas truly reflected events occurring outside us and gave reliable information about the phenomena, conditions, and laws of reality, the process of cognition would be worse than useless and could not serve the vital requirements of human beings. Theory would have no practical value in orienting us to what is happening or in dealing with difficult situations and changing them.

Atomic physics is in the forefront of scientific research and applications today. It has taken science and society twenty-five hundred years to work out the theory of the atomic constitution of matter, and an immense amount is still to be learned about this aspect of the universe. But we undeniably know that atoms actually exist. We know many of their properties through the verification of hypotheses concerning their content.

A favorite charge is that Engels was a "one-sided economic determinist" who slighted the relative autonomy of political and other forces. This is particularly untenable in light of the series of letters he wrote to Konrad Schmidt, Franz Mehring, and other correspondents in the early 1890s in which he derided the narrow-minded individuals who attributed all social phenomena to economic causes alone and disregarded the many-sided interaction of all factors from the material

substructure to the intellectual heights in the process of social determination.

However, Engels never forgot to add, what the praxologists usually overlook, that economic conditions are ultimately decisive in historical developments. As he wrote to J. Bloch, "There is an interaction of all these elements [political, legal, philosophical, religious, and so on] in which, amid all the endlessness of accidents... the economic movement finally asserts itself as necessary." (*Selected Correspondence*, p. 498. Emphasis added.) His observation that "what these gentlemen lack in dialectics" applies not only to those mechanical minds who see nothing but economic causes and ignore the influence of superstructural factors but also to those fugitives from materialism who refuse to acknowledge the determinative role of economics in the formation of social-cultural features.

Engels can easily be absolved of having a mechanical approach to social causation because he did not even have a mechanistic conception of natural processes. He adopted a consistently dialectical method in respect to both sectors of reality. The objections of the critics are directed not to his alleged mechanical-mindedness, but to his insistence that human affairs as well as physical phenomena are governed by lawfulness, a conception that is fundamental to scientific method but anathema to nonmaterialist humanists.

Marx and Engels contended that through dialectical and historical materialism socialism had matured from its infantile utopianism into a thoroughly scientific approach to the world. This claim is discounted or disqualified by the adversaries of Engels. They deny that Marxism is a scientific theory based upon a correct knowledge of objective reality in the same sense as the natural sciences.

The more sweeping critics say that scientific socialism is a gross misnomer. In their opinion, as an ideology designed to further the aims and interests of a particular class, it possesses no objectively demonstrable validity. This line of thought is shared by Kolakowski, Ernst Fischer, and members of the Frankfurt school, who regard Marxism not as a fully scientific mode of thought but as a system of values and norms along humanistic lines that Engels, followed by Plekhanov, Kautsky, and Lenin, converted into a misleading positivist and scientific ideology later exploited by Stalinism.

"Marxism was the first system of thought to give a correctly balanced account of the objective and subjective aspects of human activity. It views the object-subject relation as a unity of opposites in which one can be transformed under certain conditions into the other."

In his book *Art and Coexistence*, published in 1966, the Austrian Ernst Fischer holds that Marxism is not a pure ideology, that is, a mystified consciousness of the world, but a mixture of science and utopianism. Ernst Bloch's philosophy of hope makes utopian idealism the pivot of Marxism.

Decades ago Sydney Hook argued that Marxism could not be an objective science because, unlike the socially neutral natural sciences, it incorporates the narrow and

subjective class interests of the proletariat. He regarded Marxism as a pragmatically useful set of directives to assist the activity of the working class in its struggles.

Marxism admits no opposition between the objective truths of science and the interests of the working class; the two are inseparable. Marxism is both the outlook of its revolutionary-socialist contingent and a scientific mode of thought that gives the most correct and correctible interpretation of reality. This invests it with the exceptional quality of being revolutionary. The credentials for its scientific character come not only from theoretical considerations but from practical proofs provided by actual developments of world society such as the current economic crisis.

In contrast to guesswork and intuition, scientific forecasting is founded on the study of law-governed causal connections as they really exist and operate. Marxism passes this practical test. Its value as a reliable and effective guide to proletarian activity and its usefulness in predicting the main trends of social and political development have been confirmed by both the positive and negative experiences of the class struggle.

Such currents of thought as positivism, pragmatism, and existentialism deny that philosophy must have a foundation in science. They restrict that characteristic to the natural sciences or at most to some branches of social science. Unlike the physical sciences, they say, philosophy is not concerned with the nature and laws of the world at large but only with human activities, aspirations, and values. If philosophy as such has no dialectical relation with the whole of reality, then dialectical materialism stands in the same boat and is bereft of scientific validity.

Praxis-oriented thinkers agree that Marxist philosophy does not have the same status as the special branches of science. That is the meaning of the contrast they draw between the "scientific" Engels and the humanistic early Marx. Figures such as Adorno want to keep philosophy apart from science in order to safeguard subjectivity.

To support this contention they sometimes point to the fact that whereas philosophy originally contained within itself many of the branches of science from astronomy to psychology, these have since hived off and set up in business for themselves. This process of divestiture has left philosophy with no content of its own save the realm of human values. Philosophy is in the miserable condition of King Lear, who handed over all his possessions to his daughters and was left destitute and helpless with no domain of his own.

This picture of the interrelations between philosophy and the sciences presents only one side of their progress. While one science after another has split off from philosophy and developed on its own account, along with this continuing diversification the sciences as a whole have come closer together and tightened their respective ties, as biophysics and biochemistry testify. These growing interconnections and their results have provided a more comprehensive and solid basis for the categories of a more comprehensive and philosophic thought. The laws scientifically guided specific fields of operation have yielded the general laws of motion in the universe.

The most general laws to the most controversial issue in the anti-Engels campaign. Its main target is the *Dialectics of Nature*, which is held up as the prize exhibit of the unsentimental character of dialectical materialism and dismissed as a fantastic metaphysical hangover from the Hegelian heritage of Marxism.

All the more reason why it is essential to explain what Engels was aiming to accomplish in this fragmentary and

unfinished work. The *Dialectics of Nature* is not a marginal addition nor an excrescence in Marxist literature, as the anti-Engels forces contend. It is an integral part of the whole world outlook of modern materialism.

Let us see what place this undertaking occupies in the development of the thought of its creators. In common with the titans of philosophy from Democritus and Aristotle through Aquinas to Descartes and Hegel, Marx and Engels responded to the necessity of elaborating a unitary and systematic interpretation of reality encompassing the physical world, society, and the cognition of both of them.

Unlike the metaphysicians, they did not propose to present a closed, fixed, final structure of philosophic generalisations. What they did aspire to work out was as coherent and consistent an understanding of matter in motion as the available scientific knowledge and theoretical insight of their time allowed. This synthesis could then serve as a powerful instrument of further analysis.

In *Capital* Marx formulated the laws governing the development of capitalism; and in other writings on historical materialism, notably in the introduction to *The Critique of Political Economy*, he indicated the general laws that determined the nature and regulated the march of humanity in precapitalist times as well. Starting, as they had to do under the spur of the most pressing requirements of the working-class movement, with their analysis of the driving forces of social activity, Marx and Engels went on, as soon as they could, to examine the vast realm of nature and the findings of the natural sciences as a further test of their outlook. This next step was a logical extension of their theorising.

This gigantic task involved assessing the results of the advances in the natural sciences from the standpoint of the materialist dialectic just as they were doing in the social sciences, beginning with political economy. By mutual agreement, as their correspondence amply shows, Engels set about to study the conclusions of the natural sciences to inquire whether and in what ways they demonstrated the presence of the dialectical laws and categories in the world. He did not seek to impose these logical laws upon the phenomena of nature but rather to find out what laws of motion were actually exhibited within the facts that scientific research had extracted in one field after another but insufficiently generalised. He first explored the inorganic and after that the organic sciences.

The notations assembled in the *Dialectics of Nature* were organised around the following key concept. The physical world harbors a hierarchy of diverse forms of motion, each of which has a distinctive and irreducible quality of its own. These modes of motion are not uniformly and exclusively mechanical as the Newtonian determinists believed, although the laws of mechanics are widely operative in the macrocosmos. There are many other different types of motion, chemical, electronic, physiological, and so on, determined by the structure and properties of the field under observation. All these forms of motion are materially interconnected, and under the appropriate conditions are convertible one into the other. In the process of transformation, the energy is conserved although the form of transformation is changed.

The individual sciences deal with the laws specific to their domains. But running through these particular kinds of movement are more general laws that constitute the content of the dialectics of nature. One such law, for example, is the transformation of quantity into quality. Another is the conversion of possibility through

assiduous propagandist for the Hegelianising of Marxism in the United States.

While the views they have espoused may come as a fresh revelation to these radicals, they are a warmed-over dish to revolutionists of my vintage. This train of ideas was inaugurated as long ago as 1933 by Sidney Hook with his book *Towards the Understanding of Karl Marx*.

In the preface he gives credit to Luksa's *History and Class Consciousness* and Korsch's *Marxism and Philosophy* for confirming his "own hypothesis of the practical-historical axis of Marx's thought." Hook reproduced many of the major Luksaean theses. Marxism is not based on a scientific explanation of objective reality, he held. The materialist dialectic does not apply to natural phenomena but solely to human history; it is a dialectic of social change. Marxism is not a body of doctrines derived from a scientific analysis of nature, society, and human thought; it is simply a method without any essential determinate content and would be valid without its specific conclusions. Like the early Luksa and Horkheimer, Hook contested the inevitability of socialism as the progressive outcome of the class struggle under imperialism; it would come about from a voluntary embracing among options by a conscious proletariat.

Hook denied that there had been a complete identity in the doctrines and standpoint of Marx and Engels from the beginning of their friendship. To the contrary, he said Engels gave a wrong twist to his partner's positions in both economics and philosophy, transforming Marx's economic propositions into a closed deductive system and shifting his naturalistic activism to a simplified materialism that he called dialectical but was really mechanical. Engels also misconstrued Marx's theory of knowledge by insufficiently stressing the importance of the active practical element and retaining a crude theory of ideas as passive reflections of the material world. These innovations became hardened into dogma by the Social Democratic theoreticians before the First World War, he said.

During the 1930s Hook paraded as a free-thinking philosopher of the extreme left intent on combating the twin evils of the reformist Social Democratic and bureaucratic Stalinist perversions of Marxism. Despite his pretensions, he was actually engaged in trimming dialectical materialism to a pragmatic pattern that fitted his political opportunism in the socialist movement as he drifted away from the revolutionary struggle.

At the time of their appearance, Hook's deviations were severely criticised by Trotsky. Hook had sketched them in an article in the *Nation* entitled, "Marxism: Dogma or Method?" In his comments Trotsky pointed out that the very posing of the question in that way was wrong. The materialist dialectic is not only a method but one whose applications to capitalist economy and the historical process have produced positive results contained in the Marxist doctrines of political economy and historical materialism.

To Hook's contention that Marxism is not a science but merely a realistic method of class action, Trotsky rejoined that it could not be realistic unless it was based upon true knowledge of objective reality. To Hook's argument that the motivations of practical needs and class aims invalidated the scientific objectivity of Marxism, Trotsky answered that the usefulness of a doctor's prescriptions in curing a patient depends upon accurate knowledge of anatomy, physiology, pathology, and other sciences. The same held true for revolutionists confronted with a sick society. (The full text of Trotsky's letter can be read in *Writings, 1932-33*, pp.200-1.)

It was around this time that newly hatched Trotskyist intellectuals like myself became inoculated against the views of Luksa, Korsch, and their American followers. Unfortunately, other leading comrades such as Felix Morrow, Albert Goldman, and James Burnham were not.

The continuity in the assimilation of Marxist philosophy was so sharply broken between the 1930s and 1970s that this earlier dispute between the pro-Luksaean and their opponents is virtually unknown even to our own ranks. The New Left intellectuals who are refurbishing the ideas of the early Luksa may be disconcerted to learn that Hook was their precursor in pitting Engels against Marx, tossing out the dialectics of nature and interpreting Marxism as a sociology of revolutionary praxis. This theoretical weakness had its effect upon their regressive course from 1940 on.

Marxism is, to be sure, the theory of revolutionary action par excellence. But it could not serve this purpose unless it was a scientific doctrine based upon true knowledge of the material conditions of development that determine the nature, scope, and effectiveness of social change and political activity. By cutting away or sliding over the totality of objective factors, the revisionists invite the intrusion of pragmatism, voluntarism, and subjectivism in place of an authentic materialist method.

What relevance do these apparently abstruse theoretical disputes, past and present, have to our current party work and historical tasks? The members of our movement were first impressed with the practical importance and political relevance of a correct philosophical method in the 1939-40 struggle and split in the Socialist Workers Party recorded in Trotsky's *In Defence of Marxism* and Cannon's *Struggle for a Proletarian Party*. The polemics of that time over the relation between dialectical materialism and revolutionary politics were connected with the task of clarifying the most fundamental issues of proletarian policy and program revolving around the nature and defence of the Soviet Union as a degenerated workers state.

At present there are no such tense differences over philosophy or politics in our party. However, a variance of views on some questions of method does exist within the world Trotskyist movement. These can be calmly and objectively discussed. Unlike the Healyite sectarians, we do not believe that philosophic ideas are the most important and determining element at all times in class politics. The notion that philosophy takes command is not a materialist and dialectical but a mechanistic and idealist approach to the place philosophy occupies in the total activity and development of the revolutionary movement of the working class.

Nonetheless, experience has demonstrated that a light-minded attitude toward a correct and consistent theoretical outlook, and even more a stubborn defence of nonmaterialist premises, can have serious consequences for practical activity. Underlying philosophical differences can come to the surface in the form of opposing political conclusions. What these might be can be ascertained only by analysis of the concrete circumstances of the case.

Individuals can stray from the right road in various directions. Despite their affinities in misinterpreting certain principles of Marxist thought, Luksa, Korsch, and Hook, for example, subsequently traveled along divergent paths and ended up at different destinations determined by their personal situations and the enervating pressures directly exerted upon them. Luksa

was trapped in the Stalinist apparatus; Korsch quit politics and even repudiated Marxism in the 1950s; Hook became an apologist for the US State Department and voted for Nixon in 1972. The unstable eclecticism of their positions can hold out equally divergent futures for present adherents of the praxis school.

The doctrines upon which our movement is based are not named scientific socialism without good and sufficient reason. Our party endeavors to educate its members in all aspects of Marxism from the most general problems of theory to everyday tactics. We want to create well-equipped cadres of revolutionists who know enough not to be captivated by passing fads and are on guard against being tripped up by their errors. We have to check and polish the tools of thought given by Marxism and keep them bright and sharp by continuous application.

"Marxism is both the outlook of its revolutionary-socialist contingent and a scientific mode of thought that gives the most correct and correctible interpretation of reality."

The philosophical situation within the international socialist movement nowadays is very complex. Three main tendencies are contending with one another. There are the propagators of the deformations of Marxist thought emanating from Moscow or Peking. In opposition to them are genuine exponents of the dialectical materialist method derived from the unalloyed teachings of its creators. In between is a variety of tendencies in flux that overlap materialism at one end and border on subjectivism at the other.

The wide differences of opinion among the dissidents in the Soviet bloc require us to distinguish between them. We support the democratic rights of all of them without qualification, we do not support those theoretical positions and political perspectives that deviate from revolutionary Marxism. On the philosophical level many of them are resisting the stultifying effects of Stalinism and questing for the truth along previously forbidden lines. Here too we solidarise with their fight against thought control and official dogmas without sharing their errors.

The Stalinist debasement of Marxist teachings constitutes an ideology in the worst sense; it is a rationale for the special interests of a privileged caste. Moscow's "red professors" blunted the critical edge of the dialectical method and turned its laws and categories into a set of rigid formulas applied in a stereotyped manner dictated by state prescription. The logic of Marxism was not only schematised but eviscerated.

In his obligatory catechism of *Dialectical and Historical Materialism*, Stalin, for instance, omitted mention of the law of the negation of the negation, which sets forth the pattern of progressive development in which the new replaces the old on a higher level as the outcome of the conflict of opposing forces. Supposedly this shielded the bureaucracy from liquidation. Instead of Marxism being a school of unfettered thought, it became a school of scholastic mumbo jumbo.

In the course of challenging this ideology, numerous oppositionists have questioned some of the postulates of Marxist philosophy. Since the Stalinists, in the name of dialectical materialism, so grossly falsify the real state of affairs, many no longer consider dialectical materialism

to be a scientific doctrine. They have likewise turned against historical determinism in indignation against the inquisitors who justify their abuses on the pretext that as executors of the laws of history, they are entitled to pursue the class struggle more harshly after the conquest of power than before. Some counterpose to it the fervent moral idealism of the individual defying arbitrary rule. They seek an ethical instead of a class basis for their shaken faith in the prospects of socialism.

Those humanist dissidents who disavow the governance of lawfulness and necessity in social life and stress the autonomous freedom of the nonconformist personality are themselves driven by the imperious necessity of throwing off bureaucratic oppression and unmanaging their own minds. Their assertion of the unhampered exercise of critical thought and the right to uncensored expression is a powerful progressive ferment at work within the Soviet bloc.

However, too many of them still accept the say-so of the Stalinists that they are faithful disciples of Engels and Lenin and that to break away from them is equivalent to repudiating scientific socialism. In unthinking reflex they place a minus sign wherever Stalinism has affixed a plus. Such critics make the same methodological mistake in philosophy as in party organisation where they lump together the autocratic centralisation of the monolithic Communist parties with the Leninist conception of democratic centralism and reject both one and the other.

The ideological havoc wrought by Stalinism is evidenced in the paradoxical fact that many of the most courageous champions of democratisation have been caught up in the anti-Engels current. Some among them, such as certain members of the *Praxis* group in



The Frankfurt school
Max Horkheimer standing
behind Herbert Marcuse,
Theodor Adorno and
Jurgen Habermas

Yugoslavia, Kolakowski in Poland, and Karel Kosik in Czechoslovakia, have been penalised for their justified criticisms of the regime. In response to the indiscriminate accusations flung at them by the watchdogs of the status quo, they have clung all the more firmly to their heretical views.

So the worth of Engels and the tradition stemming from his work has become an unmerited casualty of the conflict between the repressive rulers and dissident thinkers in Eastern Europe who have permitted the falsifications of Stalinism to blur some of the truths of Marxism.

It should be recognised that these heterodox theorists are grappling as best they can with the novel issues and unprecedented problems posed by the unexpected and anomalous path taken by the development of the postcapitalist regimes in their countries. They have to undertake their inquiries in ceaseless conflict with the authorities bearing down upon them.

To explain the reasons for the direction their thought has taken is not to justify any of their incorrect views. In philosophy as in politics those who disengage from Stalinism can move along opposite lines. They can either find their way to the viable traditions of dialectical materialism that Stalinism smothers and obscures or else adapt to or adopt nonmaterialist, nonproletarian positions.

Up to now only a few have managed to embark on the first course in their search for a new orientation. Instead of going forward to resuscitate and extend the method of dialectical materialism, many of the iconoclasts have jettisoned some of its fundamental tenets and veered away from its standpoint. They adulterate Marxist thought with ideas that are incompatible with its teachings. Just as certain Social Democrats before the First World War attempted to amalgamate Marxism with borrowings from Kant, the empiriocrats, and others, so New Left thinkers East and West are prone to cook up a stew that mixes Marxist conceptions with ingredients from nonmaterialist sources, ranging from existentialism, structuralism, and pragmatism to neo-Hegelianism, phenomenology, and linguistic analysis. It is the season for raising hybrids rather than developing purebred Marxism.

The evolution of the two most prominent Polish Communist philosophers, Leszek Kolakowski and Adam Schaff, typifies this swing away from classical Marxism toward eclecticism. From their common starting points in Stalinist orthodoxy before 1956, both master and pupil have at different paces and in differing degrees discarded key elements of dialectical materialism en route to their present beliefs. Schaff spurns the dialectics of nature and doubts the possibility of eradicating alienation in the future socialist society, as though it were a built-in human trait, not a historically conditioned phenomenon. Kolakowski has almost entirely lost his Marxist bearings. The root of their trouble is their failure to overcome the insidious effects of Stalinist mindsets and miseducation, even in reading them, and their failure to use their newfound freedom of thought to advance to consistent Marxist positions.

Where, amidst this swirling confusion, do we as Trotskyists stand? We adhere to the principles originating with Marx and Engels and the course marked out by their ablest followers in philosophy (Pickhaver), Lenin, Luxemburg and Trotsky are our teachers, and we regard the heritage received from them as among our most precious possessions. We are resolved to carry forward and develop their ideas as the only scientific basis for revolutionary working-class politics.

Review

Rape, one of the most brutal expressions of male dominance in our society, has been a subject of discussion in the feminist movement for a number of years.

Before the rise of the recent women's liberation struggles, rape was considered a taboo subject. Female rape victims often refrained from even reporting the crime out of fear that they themselves would be blamed for "encouraging" the assault. Those who did seek justice faced harassment and humiliation, if not worse, from the police and the courts. Many rape laws are rigged against women, allowing less credence to the testimony of the victim than in other assault cases.

In 1973, FBI figures showed 51,000 reported cases of rape. Estimating that only one in five rapes is ever reported, the actual number would be 255,000.

Rape, like all other crimes of violence, is on the increase in the country, a product of the way this society portrays women as sex objects and distorts the sexuality of all human beings.

For Blacks and other oppressed nationalities, rape has also had another meaning. Rape charges have been used to frame up or lynch thousands of Blacks as a means of terrorizing and intimidating those fighting for freedom.

While exposing rape as a reflection of the degradation of women, the feminist movement has explored ways of combating sexual assaults. Questions have arisen, such as: Why do men rape? Can we end rape short of ending all forms of women's oppression? Does the solution lie in stricter rape laws, or more women police officers? In *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape*, Susan Brownmiller has attempted to analyze the roots of rape and give answers to the problem. Brownmiller is a prominent feminist writer, nominated as one of *Time* magazine's "women of the year" in 1975. Her book has been widely circulated and discussed in the women's movement.

Unfortunately, *Against Our Will* is being treated as the authoritative position of feminists on rape. But Brownmiller's analysis and solutions have nothing to do with the interests of women. In the contrary, they lead in the direction of proposing that women should line up with some of the most reactionary institutions and prejudices in this society. To see how she falls into this trap, we must begin with her theory of the origins and role of rape in our society.

Brownmiller on Rape: a Betrayal of Feminism

by Cindy Jaquith



Role of the rapist

warriors for Achilles.

"Police-blistered rapists in a very real sense perform a myrmidon function for all men in our society. Myrmidons in the cause of male dominance, police-blistered rapists have performed their duty well, so well in fact that the true meaning of their act has largely gone unnoticed."

"Rather than society's aberrants or 'spoilers of purity,' men who commit rape have served in effect as the front-line masculine shock troops, terrorist guerrillas in the longest sustained battle the world has ever known."

Brownmiller's "myrmidon" theory of rape is based on what could be boiled down to these premises: 1) that rape is the central means by which women are kept oppressed,

"From pre-historic times to the present, I believe, rape has played a critical function," writes Brownmiller in her introduction. "It is nothing more or less than a conscious process of intimidation by which all men keep all women in a state of fear."

Elaborating on her theory, Brownmiller explains that rapists are not exceptionally perverted or disturbed individuals but are basically representatives of the male sex. She describes these men as "myrmidons," the name of a tribe in Greek mythology who were a "swarm of steel descended from ants." The myrmidons served as

"Raped"
Kathie
Kollwax

2) that rape and the oppression of women are in the interests of all men, whether or not they themselves are rapists; and 3) that the basic conflict in society is the sexual conflict between all males and all females.

On the basis of these premises, she tries to reconstruct history, reinterpreting it as simply a history of rape against women.

Origins of rape

When did men begin to rape—and why? Brownmiller concludes that it began in prehistoric times with man's "discovery" that he can rape.

"Man's structural capacity to rape and women's corresponding structural vulnerability" are the reasons for rape, she asserts. "When men discovered they could rape, they proceeded to do it."

The question is reduced to a simple biological phenomenon, stripped of social or psychological motivation. Rape is not a simple sex act, however, but a violent sexual attack. If the only reason men rape is that they can get erections, why don't all men rape all the time? Why is there no rape in the animal world, a fact Brownmiller notes but fails to explain.

Brownmiller does not offer a shred of documentation to back up her theory that rape has always existed among humans. Yet she gets so carried away with this theory that she says man's "discovery" of rape "must rank as one of the most important discoveries of prehistoric times, along with the use of fire and the first crude stone axe."

The logic of this biological view of rape is obvious. Men, having the ability to rape, will always rape. Women, being "structurally vulnerable" will always be so. The conclusion: biology determines our destiny as women, and nothing we do can change it.

Actually, Brownmiller's simplistic theory is merely a variation of the theory that women's oppression stems from the presumed fact that men have always been stronger than women and thus able to physically keep them subjugated. After all, women are only "structurally vulnerable" to rape if you assume they are physically weaker.

This old theory at least has the merit of recognising that women are subjected to many forms of violence in this society, not only or even primarily rape. But it has the same problem as Brownmiller's special variation of it: there is no explanation of why men wanted to use their presumed strength to put down women.

Brownmiller not only believes men are rapists by nature, but that all other forms of women's oppression, and exploitation in general, flow from the act of rape. Again without offering any scientific evidence, she writes, "Female fear of an open season of rape, and not a natural inclination toward monogamy, motherhood or love, was probably the single causative factor in the original subjugation of women by man; the most important key to her historic dependence, her domestication by protective mating..."

"Concepts of hierarchy, slavery and private property flowed from, and could only be predicated upon the initial subjugation of woman," she concludes.

Real roots of women's oppression

Through study of the works of Frederick Engels, Robert Briffault, and Lewis Morgan, and today through the contributions of Marxist anthropologist Evelyn Reed,



"Susan Brownmiller: *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape*... a conscious process of intimidation by which all men keep all women in a state of fear."

women are learning the true history of our oppression, and, most importantly, discovering that we have not always been the second sex.

Brownmiller makes only fleeting reference to the existence of a matriarchy in preclass, primitive society, in which women were the respected equals of men. They were also leaders, directing the gathering of food, domesticating animals, and discovering agriculture.

What led to the downfall of women? Evelyn Reed, in *Problems of Women's Liberation*, explains how the oppression of women arose with class society:

"The downfall of women coincided with the breakup of the matriarchal clan commune and its replacement by class-divided society with its institutions of the patriarchal family, private property and state power."

"The key factors which brought about this reversal of woman's social status came out of the transition from a hunting and food-gathering economy to a far higher mode of production based upon agriculture, stock raising and urban crafts. The primitive division of labor between the sexes was replaced by a more complex social division of labor. The greater efficiency of labor gave rise to a sizeable surplus product, which led first to differentiations and then to separating divisions among the various segments of society."

"By virtue of the directing roles played by men in large-scale agriculture, irrigation and construction projects as well as stock raising, this surplus wealth was gradually appropriated by a hierarchy of men as their private property. This in turn, required the institution of marriage and the family to fix the legal ownership and inheritance of a man's property. Through monogamous marriage the wife was brought under the complete control of her husband who was thereby assured of legitimate sons to inherit his wealth."

Thus the subjugation of women is rooted in the change-over to a social organisation based on inequality in property. The family, and women's role in it, plays a major role in preserving an economic system based on private ownership of society's productive resources.

One of the functions of the family system is to enforce general sexual repression against males as well as females.

To justify the subjugation of the female sex, women are portrayed as sex objects, the natural inferiors of men. This distorted, reactionary view of women and sexuality is fostered and reinforced through the economic compulsion that the family system is based on, through the church, state, schools, and other institutions, warping all human beings in our society.

The defence and transmission of private property explains not only the oppression of women, but the development of the state, prisons, and armies, which are forms of institutionalised violence against all challengers of the status quo and privileges of the rich-male or female.

In rejecting this materialist view, Brownmiller attempts to ignore history and the existence of social classes, the family, and the state. Rather than seeing rape as a social phenomenon generated by the inequality and inherent violence of class society, she tries to stand reality on its head, and insists that all of human history evolved from the erect penis.

She gets into trouble when she tries to apply her theory to the real world.

Brownmiller's 'history' of rape

One large section of *Against Our Will* deals with rape in wartime: during the Middle Ages, American Revolution, World War I, World War II, the Congolese revolution, Vietnam, and Bangladesh. She recounts each war in terms of the numbers of women raped on all sides. While the descriptions paint a shocking picture of the abuse of women, they are rendered meaningless by her method of dissolving history into the single event of rape.

The driving forces of war—battles over trade markets and control of natural resources, class struggles between working people and employers, struggles between oppressed and oppressor nations—are absent and seemingly irrelevant in her history. The driving motive behind the aggressors (always male) is uniformly the same: rape. To conform to her assumption that women are the only real victims in war, Brownmiller dismisses other aspects of wartime violence—concentration camps, torture, mass murders, atom bombs.

A case in point is her history of the revolution in the Congo in the 1960s. We now know, as a result of CIA revelations, that the US Government, in collaboration with the Belgian regime of King Baudouin, was ready to use any means necessary to crush the Congolese liberation forces led by Patrice Lumumba because they feared that the struggle he led would succeed in ripping the Congo out of the grasp of Western imperialism.

Brownmiller says she sympathises with Lumumba's side. But her reactionary analysis of the war in the Congo is more accurately revealed in the title of this section: "Mob Violence Against Whites: The Congo." The main point of this section is to revive the slander used by the US and Belgian rulers to justify the war at a time of growing sympathy for the colonial revolution. That slander was the charge that Lumumba's forces were raping white nuns. Without batting an eye, Brownmiller cites as the main "source" for this information a "white paper" on African raping commissioned by King Baudouin himself!

Outside of the Belgian royalty, however, there has never been any other evidence for the tale of mass rape by Lumumba's supporters. Afro-American reporters covering the war at the time wrote back from the Congo that there was no truth to the charge. The "rape" story was devised to whip up a racist hysteria against the national liberation fighters in the Congo, so as to facilitate the deeper involvement of US forces.

But by leaping on this rape myth as fact, Brownmiller places herself on the side of Belgian and American imperialism in this war, against the struggle of the men and women who were fighting to throw off centuries of exploitation, pillage, and rape by the white colonialists.

The war in Vietnam

In contrast to other sections of her book, Brownmiller's chapter on the war in Vietnam is a well-documented and convincing description of how rape was intertwined with racism, imperialism, and sexism during US intervention there.

In the beginning of the chapter, she points out that the National Liberation Front and North Vietnamese forces committed little rape during the war. She then rips into the role of the US Government in not just permitting but institutionalising prostitution and rape as "standard operating procedure."

"By 1966," she writes, "the 1st Cavalry Division at An Khe, in the Central Highlands, the 1st Infantry Division at Lai Khe, twenty-five miles north of Saigon, and the 4th Infantry Division at Pleiku had established official military brothels within the perimeter of their base camps."

"The Lai Khe 'recreation area' belonging to the base camp of the 3rd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division was a one-acre compound surrounded by barbed wire with American MPs standing guard at the gate. It was opened only during daylight hours for security reasons."

"Inside the compound there were shops that sold hot dogs, hamburgers and souvenirs, but the main attraction was two concrete barracks, each about one hundred feet long—the military warehouses that serviced the four-thousand-man brigade. Each building was outfitted with two bars, a bandstand, and sixty curtained cubicles in which the Vietnamese women lived and worked."

"These 'recreation areas' became known among GIs as 'Disneylands,' 'boom-boom parlors,' and 'sin cities.'"

In this atmosphere of violence, racism, and abuse of women, rape on a mass scale naturally followed as one of the conquests of battle. Brownmiller includes several horrifying accounts that show not only the brutality toward Vietnamese women, but the dehumanisation of American GIs through the war.

One US deserter told this incident:

"We balled these chicks. They were forcibly willing. They'd rather do that than get shot. Then one of the girls yelled some derogatory thing at the guy who'd balled her..."

... He just reached down for his weapon and blew her away. Well, right away the other three guys, including myself, picked up our weapons and blew away the other three chicks. Just like that..."

Brownmiller also quotes Scott Camil, who later became a leader of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War, explaining how the day-in, day-out anti-communist, anti-Vietnamese propaganda created a climate where all kinds of violence against women were justified: "It wasn't like they were humans... They were a gook or a Commie and it was okay."

By the end of the chapter, ironically, Brownmiller has

wonder that this book has been hailed in the big-business media at this time of mass layoffs of Blacks and women and of official encouragement to racist anti-busing mob violence.

Even while offering her "solutions," Brownmiller is forced to concede that "the most perfect rape laws in the land, strictly enforced by the best concerned citizens, will not be enough to stop rape."

Censorship laws do nothing to attack the roots of violence and degradation of women and of human beings that is reflected in pornography. Rather, such laws have traditionally been turned against working people—including against feminists—to abridge the right of free speech and suppress dissenting views.

The road to stopping violence against women is not through strengthening the repressive apparatus of the very system that oppresses women, but through challenging that system of inequality at every level and upgrading it.

What should women do now to fight sexual abuse? Our job is to build a mass, independent feminist movement that can channel the outrage of women in a political direction, fighting against all the forms of institutionalized sexism that stunt the lives of masses of women. Such a movement must seek allies not among those responsible for maintaining women's oppression but among those who, like us, are fighting oppression and exploitation in all its forms.

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Editors: As a feminist and a revolutionary socialist, I was upset to read such an unfair description of Brownmiller's *Against Our Will* in the April/International Socialist Review. It would take an equal amount of space to properly refute the statements made against the book so I can only say this:

The book does not say that biology is destiny. It is not racist. It is not anti-working-class.

As a socialist I was disappointed in Brownmiller's solution to halting rape, that is, more police and stricter laws, etc. But that is just the last chapter and can be ignored.

Against Our Will remains for me the definitive statement of the destruction machinism can cause. Its main premises are well proved: Rape is a crime of violence (not a sexual act as was previously thought) and it is against our will—we haven't been "asking for it."

Perhaps, instead of setting up a straw man and throwing the baby out with the bath, socialist sisters will read the book for themselves and write their own last chapter: the end of capitalism (and the patriarchy.)

Editors: Cindy Jaquith's review of Susan Brownmiller's book on rape was right on, and a real contribution to a continuing discussion about the origin and nature of women's oppression.

I think that a recent event in Houston supports Jaquith's point that the police force doesn't change its

nature by increasing the number of women who are in it. Recently a Vietnam War veteran, Milton Glover, was blown away by Doreen Miller and Richard Watson of the Houston Police Department. It turns out that Mr Glover was walking in the street ahead of these cops, who were taking a prisoner from a disturbance at a bar. Glover was reportedly stopped by the cops as he was in the middle of the street, and one cop got out of the car to ask what was going on. In reply, Glover, who was psychologically disabled after his service in Vietnam, reached into his hip pocket and said, "This is what I've got for you." Before he could pull out the Bible that he carried with him, he was wasted by Officers Miller and Watson—he with his .44 revolver and she with her .357 magnum. I wonder if Susan Brownmiller prefers being shot with a magnum?

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1) I do not understand the tone of the article. Why is the book called "a betrayal of feminism"? To me, the review should have been written with a sister-to-sister tone, as a discussion with another feminist who is not a socialist. There are many feminists like that. They are not staunch supporters of capitalism, though some may be, but they have not been convinced that socialism can be any different than what exists in the USSR or China, and are dismayed by the position of women there.

2) I think Jaquith made an error in not pointing out the many sections of the book where Brownmiller did an excellent job of documenting and drawing the right conclusions about rape. Why doesn't she give credit where it is due?

3) I think the review was correct in pointing out many things, such as Brownmiller's treatment of racism, Vietnam and the Congo. But you can't ignore the direction that I think Brownmiller was coming from. In regard to racism, for example, I completely agree with what Jaquith wrote, but I think that Brownmiller was objecting to the overwhelming trend in the 1960s and today of white males to condone rape by Black males.

The reasoning is something like this: Black males are oppressed and the laws are used to discriminate against them, therefore we must unconditionally support their right to rape, and assume they are innocent, even when admittedly guilty (like Eldridge Cleaver). For one do not support any man's right to rape, Black or white, regardless of the situation.

4) Another confusing thing to me is Jaquith's conclusion. Brownmiller's conclusions are wrong, but what is the answer to rape? Is the only answer socialism? To me, that is so pie-in-the-sky that if that's the only answer you might as well forget mentioning it. Are there no demands that can be raised short of a socialist society to help alleviate or control rape? What about encouraging women to be physically stronger, and to learn to defend ourselves? Obviously this is not a total solution, but isn't it a small step that should be supported?

5) Finally, my most confused question is about the police. For Boston, the *Militant* has called on the Federal troops and the police to use all force necessary to guarantee the right of Black children to go to the schools they want to attend without harassment. The *Militant* has said that the law should be enforced. Shouldn't laws against rape also be supported? If so, then why shouldn't we call for the police to enforce the rape laws? Don't women have just as much right to walk down the streets without fear of harassment as the Black schoolchildren have to go to the school of their choice?

Women are an oppressed grouping in this society just as Blacks are. If we call for protection against racist attacks,

why not for sexist attacks? Is it perhaps because rape is generally done in isolated situations, whereas the racist attacks are done in group situations? But although women are raped in isolated situations, it is a mass phenomenon. Should we refuse to call for protection against racist mobs who lynch individual Blacks in isolated situations?

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Briefly, let's review the main points in Brownmiller's theory of rape: 1) rape is the central problem women face; 2) most rapists are Blacks, members of other minorities, or less-privileged workers; 3) rape is in the interests of, and tolerated by, all males; 4) in order to halt this crime, women must demand more cops and stiffer rape laws. The book contains a mass of descriptive material and testimony about all kinds of rape, but the above points comprise the conclusions and the political statement of Brownmiller's book.

The mass of data indeed presents a horrifying panorama of centuries of crimes against women—for anyone who simply wants to be horrified. But for those of us interested in fighting back against the oppression and degradation of women, the criterion for evaluating this book must be its political conclusions.

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Consider Brownmiller's position on the anti-Vietnam War movement to take just one example. She explains in her book that she refused to support this movement because its central demand was "bring the troops home soon" rather than opposition to the rape of Vietnamese

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Consider Brownmiller's position on the anti-Vietnam War movement, to take just one example. She explains in her book that she refused to support this movement because its central demand was "bring the troops home now" rather than opposition to the rape of Vietnamese women.

What would a Vietnamese woman think of Brownmiller's stand against the anti-war movement? What would an American woman who had lost a son in Vietnam think of Brownmiller's stand? They would think, "If this is feminism, I want nothing to do with it." And they would be right.

In fact, it was the anti-war movement that helped force the rapists—the CIA assassins, the William Calley and their superiors, and the Saigon torturers—out of Vietnam, while Brownmiller's stance had the effect of sabotaging this effort.

One reader tries to explain Brownmiller's views by arguing that "Brownmiller was objecting to the overwhelming trend in the 1960s and today of white males to condone rape by Black males."

"The reasoning is something like this," the reader continues. "Black males are oppressed and the laws are used to discriminate against them, therefore we must unconditionally support their right to rape."

What is the real "overwhelming trend" in capitalist America with regard to rape, not just in the 1960s or

today, but going back for centuries? The "overwhelming trend" is the lynching of thousands of Black men on trumped-up false charges. The "overwhelming trend" is rape by men with social, economic, and military power (who are white) against the most oppressed women—the slave masters against Black women; by rich men against their maids; by employers against women workers, especially Black, Chicana, and Puerto Rican; by cops against their victims.

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Earlier, she states more openly her contempt for the civil rights movement and the framed-up Blacks it defended, calling these men "a handful of pathetic, semiliterate fellows... who only wanted to beat the rap."

Brownmiller leaves little doubt in her book that she sides fundamentally with the lynch mobs out to protect "white womanhood," even if they might have gone a little too far in mutilating and murdering their victims.

In an interview in the October 18, 1975, *New York Post*, Brownmiller states outright that she opposes the civil rights struggle. She turned against it, she says, "when the civil rights movement started getting very anti-white and anti-woman."

What can we do now?

But what should socialists and feminists do about rape? Are there no demands we can raise short of socialism to solve this problem?



Picket for Joanne Little

Let's begin by looking at what rape is—a crime of violence whose roots lie in sexual repression, the economic compulsion of the family system, and the general violence and alienation spawned by class society. As such it is similar to other crimes related to the family, such as wife beating and child abuse. These crimes are, in fact, more widespread than rape.

In 1973, for example, FBI statistics showed 14,000 cases of wife beating in New York State and 4764 cases of rape. Both figures are probably much lower than the actual number, since many women never report either crime.

The number of battered children every year is estimated at between 500,000 and 2.5 million, compared with Brownmiller's estimated 255,000 rapes. Six thousand children are beaten to death every year by their mothers or fathers.

These are all tragic examples of how capitalist society perverts and warps human relations to the point of utter destruction. Socialists support laws against these crimes. We support the right to human life—that is in the US Constitution, as well as the right of people to defend themselves.

But while we support the right of a woman to defend herself, and the right to call the police against a rapist, the question of how to eliminate rape is another matter.

The idea that we can control or reduce rape through more cops and prisons makes no more sense than hoping to "control" child abuse, robberies, or murder. No matter how many rapists, child abusers, and wife beaters are jailed, the economic and social conditions of this society of class oppression are producing more each minute. Calling for more police does nothing to challenge the causes of rape or of the oppression of women.

It is otherwise with the call for police and troops to be used against the racist mobs in Boston.

The drive to stop desegregation in Boston is one of the most important issues facing Black people nationally at this time. It is an *organised* campaign of violence, with

direct or backhanded support from city hall, the Federal Government, and the Boston police force. In building a counter-mobilisation of Blacks and their allies to isolate the racists politically, to expose government support to the racists, and to physically protect Black people, *we* are striking blows against the causes of Black oppression. We are building a movement against the capitalist government, the true sponsors of racism and sexism.

If the government could be forced by such a mass pro-desegregation movement to send troops against the racists, as it was forced to do in the South, it would have a real effect in intimidating the racist mobs and strengthening the confidence and organisation of the struggles for Black equality.

Rape, on the other hand, is in no way a central issue for the women's movement. Contrary to Brownmiller's thesis, rape is not the main problem women face. It is one facet of our oppression. It is a particularly compelling symbol of our social degradation and the institutionalised violence of men toward women in class society. But when Brownmiller takes this aspect of women's oppression and turns it into the axis around which all social relations turn, she completely disorients women (and men) who are appalled by sexist violence and want to do something about it.

The only way that rape as a social phenomenon will be eliminated is by eliminating the repressive and violent class society that spawns it. To do that we must build a political movement that mobilises the forces of all the oppressed and exploited. This can only be done by taking up the major social problems women face—the organised, systematic government-backed forms of discrimination and our rights. The issues most women correctly see as key today are the challenges to our right to abortion, and the fight for child-care, jobs, and ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment.

The logic of trying to build a movement against rape—just as against "crime" in general—leads invariably into the trap of right-wing, pro-cop, racist politics. It is no accident that one of the favorite ploys of all Democratic and Republican politicians is to play up the issues of rape and crime, so as to deflect attention from issues such as unemployment, inflation, racism, and sexism that affect working people.

A good example of the logic of trying to build a movement against rape is what happened at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia in 1973. After several on-campus rapes, some white feminists decided something must be done to halt rape. They demanded that the university provide "more security." The Philadelphia cops immediately obliged by invading the dorms and arresting 100 Black male students on suspicion of rape.

On the other hand, building an independent women's movement around the key issues facing women can have an impact in deterring rape. Today, that impact can already be seen in the changed view of women and of this crime. It is no longer generally assumed that raped women "asked for it," as a result of the role of the feminist movement in combating the stereotype of women as sex objects.

This factor made a difference in the trial of Joanne Little. Ten years ago no jury would have upheld the right of a Black woman to defend herself from rape by any means necessary.

The women's movement can only be built, however, in alliance with the other oppressed groups in this society—Blacks, Puerto Ricans, Chicanos, working people. *Arguing Our Way* points in the opposite direction, driving a wedge between feminists and our allies in the fight for a just society.

News of the Fourth International

Speeches to the London Meeting in Solidarity with Hansen and Novack Against Healy's Frame-up Campaign

On January 14 one of the most significant meetings in the history of the Trotskyist movement was held in London. Well over one thousand socialists attended a meeting to condemn the slander campaign waged by the British Workers Revolutionary Party, a crisis ridden sect led by Gerry Healy, against two leaders of the United States Socialist Workers Party, Joseph Hansen and George Novack.

This meeting was a striking repudiation of the methods of the WRP and their followers in Australia the Socialist Labour League. For two years the Healyites have carried on and orchestrated their slander campaign accusing the SWP leaders of "criminal negligence" in Trotsky's assassination and of being accomplices of the GPU, the Soviet secret police.

The purpose of the campaign waged by the Healyite sect is to direct their members attention away from their own crisis which has resulted in significant splits in Britain and Greece and the loss of key leaders in the United States and Australia.

However, the January 14 meeting has shown the shortsightedness of this campaign which has deepened the crisis and isolation of the Healyite current. We have the example here in Australia of the increasing use of physical violence by the Healyites against their opponents on the left as a reflection of their inability to politically defend their program and their slanders of longtime

collaborators of Trotsky and builders of the revolutionary movement.

The London meeting was a triumph for the Trotskyist movement. It brought together a whole series of Trotskyist leaders who had taken a principled stand on the slanders—slanders which were not simply a vile attack on the SWP leaders, but also an attack on the whole Trotskyist movement and the Fourth International. It showed that Trotskyists are not just "splitters and wreckers" as the Stalinists would try to make us believe. It showed that despite differences the bulk of Trotskyists could get together and defend in the most vigorous way the principle of workers democracy.

The meeting was chaired by Tariq Ali, who had just managed to escape from the clutches of the Pakistani state. Behind the stage was draped a huge banner which made the call "For workers democracy. Against frame-ups and slanders" and reflected the purpose and impact of the meeting.

On the stage were George Novack, Ernest Mandel, Pierre Lambert and Tim Wohlforth whose speeches we publish here. Also on the stage were a number of Trotskyist veterans including Betty Hamilton, a founding member of the Socialist Labor League, the WRP's predecessor and who has been active in the revolutionary Marxist movement for more than fifty years, Harry Wicks, a founder of the British Trotskyist movement and

Meeting Podium—Wohlforth Speaking



Tamara Deutscher, companion of Isaac Deutscher, biographer of Trotsky, Michel Pablo, a former leader of the Fourth International was unable to attend the meeting but sent a message which we also publish below.

The Healyites response to this meeting has been to intensify their slander campaign in continued defiance of the principles of workers democracy. Their whole course daily takes them further from the ranks of the revolutionary movement. For the Fourth International the meeting was a big achievement. It showed the possibilities for building a united Trotskyist movement and it showed that when under attack the Fourth International will fight back and defend itself against all forms of slander and violence.

Tariq Ali . . .

On the extreme left it is someone many of you—persons active in the Trotskyist movement in this country—will know, a veteran activist of the Trotskyist movement in Britain, Comrade Harry Wicks, one of the first Trotskyists [applause].

On Harry's right is someone who needs no introduction, as a writer and a militant in her own right, Comrade Tamara Deutscher [applause].

On her right is Comrade Betty Hamilton, who was a founding member of the International Committee in 1953 [applause].

On her right is Pierre Lambert from the OCI in France [applause]. The comrade next to him is his translator, who wishes to remain anonymous for the purpose of this meeting.

My name is Tariq Ali. I'm a member of the Political Committee of the IMG . . . a plot, hatched in Moscow by the KGB, put pressure on the Pakistani state to allow me to be present at this meeting [laughter].

On my right is Comrade George Novack from the American Socialist Workers Party [prolonged applause].

On his right is Comrade Tim Wohlforth from the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party [applause].

And on his right is Comrade Ernest Mandel from the United Secretariat of the Fourth International [applause].

There is a comrade who is absent, which is, of course, a great regret for us—Comrade Michel Pablo, whom I'm sure many of you were looking forward to seeing. Many of you have heard of him, though few of you have seen him—leave alone understood him. He could not be with us tonight because his wife, who had an operation recently has still not recovered. He is still in Greece with her. He has sent a message to this meeting which we shall read out at the appropriate moment.

It falls on me as the chairperson of this meeting to welcome you all, and I must say, very, very honestly, comrades, that personally, I'm not happy to be at this meeting. It's not the sort of meeting that we want to see repeated in this country or in any country. Because in fact, it is a meeting which shows and expresses the fact that degeneration, factionalism, is something which is still rife in the broad Trotskyist movement, which reduces the credibility of this movement in the eyes of the broad masses—and the working class in particular—and amongst our factional opponents in the workers movement, namely members of the Communist Party, and Social Democrats. It provides an excuse for saying that "these people are mad, we have always told you so, and this is a

confirmation."

So I make no apologies for saying this. It should not be necessary for our movement to organise and to have meetings like this. The fact that we have to do so is just a reflection of certain aspects and certain characteristics of those who continue to call themselves Trotskyists. And I hope that meetings such as this will in the future not be necessary.

What is the character of this meeting? It is, in essence, not a debate, it is not an inquisition, it is not an apology. It is a meeting of solidarity—a meeting of solidarity with those who have been made the victims of the most horrendous slanders we have seen in the Trotskyist movement for a long, long time. That is the sole job and the sole function of this meeting.

That is why there are many, many people here who do not agree with each other on strategy, on tactics, on interpretations of various Marxist-Leninist-Trotskyist texts, but who are nonetheless gathered on this platform to stress their solidarity with comrades Joseph Hansen and George Novack, who have been made the victims of a vile, slanderous campaign of abuse and innuendo, which does a disservice to the Trotskyist movement globally. That and that alone is the sole function of this meeting.

It is not the task of this meeting to decide or to proclaim upon whether or not a parity commission is necessary, as the News Line and the organisation it represents are now demanding. Incidentally, a parity commission should have been requested, if the comrades were serious, long before this—before they began this vile campaign—if they were serious they should have written to the organisations and said, "We want to have talks with you."

After you have waged a campaign up and down the world, made it the central focus of your political activity, pronounced comrades Novack and Hansen guilty as charged, you then say, "Isn't it right to have a commission?"

We say, "What for?" And the organisations to which you have made these approaches will reply to this request for a commission after it has been discussed by the central committees and leading bodies of these organisations.

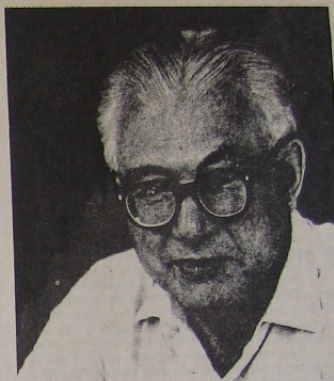
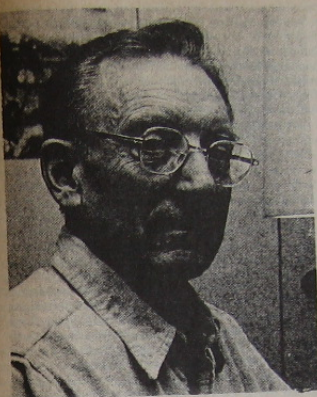
The first speaker we have here with us this evening is Tim Wohlforth of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party . . .

Tim Wohlforth . . .

In my opinion, the only kind of inquiry that we need, really need, is an inquiry into how it can be that an organisation which began and started out in the struggle against Stalinism, in the struggle for Trotskyism, has ended up going over to the methods of Stalinism. Healy, like Stalin, has now started on a path of slander and fabrication for which there is no end.

It began with Hansen, and then Novack. Now, in one of the latest issues of the *News Line*, Cannon is brought in. In connection with Sylvia Caldwell, it is stated: "It only means that Cannon knew of the cover-up and that he was in on it for reasons which have still to be discovered."

And this James P. Cannon has come, in the eyes of the Workers Revolutionary Party and Healy, to be one of the "accomplices." But it won't even stop there. There even is a suggestion that perhaps Trotsky should be added to this list. After all, it was Trotsky who came to the defense of Sheldon Harte, who was murdered by the Stalinists after their first raid on Trotsky. It was Trotsky's judgment on Sheldon Harte.



Joseph Hansen
George Novack

Now Healy's organisation says that Sheldon Harte was a Stalinist agent. Obviously, therefore, it was Trotsky who was covering up for the GPU!

The only conclusion that we can come to is that the eyes of the Workers Revolutionary Party and its followers are directed against, and its blows are directed against, not this or that individual, but against Trotskyism. And what we do ain't Stalinism [applause].

Now, I'm going to try to make a contribution to the question of an inquiry into why this madness—and it is madness—has taken place. And I'm going to do it by speaking about what I know most about, and hoping to add that contribution. There are other comrades here who know Comrade Novack and know Comrade Hansen for more years than I have.

So what I will speak on is something I do know about, and I certainly do know Comrade Healy. And I've had some experiences with him. And in fact those experiences were the beginnings, in many ways, of the slander campaign.

It began back in the summer of 1974. We were having some difficulties in the Workers League—losing some members, having some problems. And Healy decided to take this up. Now, it wasn't unusual that we had these difficulties. Because after all we were trying to do in America what he wanted us to do. And for that very reason we had problems. But that could not be objectively looked at. It could not be objectively stated that perhaps we made mistakes, and so did he. And perhaps we were doing things and so was he doing things that were wrong and should be corrected. Instead, a campaign had to be launched, specifically against myself as national secretary.

But it was not enough to launch a campaign against me to criticise my policies; something new had to be added. One of our leading comrades in that period was Comrade Nancy Fields. As Healy knew, and others know, Nancy Fields was personally associated with me. What better way to get at me than to attack her, because that's the way he functions and thinks. Lo and behold, it was discovered—the startling fact, known by many in the party—that Nancy Fields' uncle had worked for the CIA.

had retired from that position in 1969; that when Nancy was young, her uncle had helped her through school for a certain period. It was also known that she broke with her uncle; that she had to work her way through college, taking full-time courses at Columbia University and holding down a full-time job. And as many of you here who have done that know, barely having money and time to eat, walking to college in New York City, two miles because she didn't have the subway fare; in order to work her own way because she was going to stand on her own feet, and she wasn't going to take money from anyone who was going to dictate to her. As many of you probably have done in your lives.

So this fact was brought up. But it wasn't simply brought up; it was spread around—the eve of our summer camp it was privately spread around. Comrade Slaughter was sent over to check the security of the camp. You see, since Nancy Fields was already in Healy's mind a CIA agent, there was a grave danger that Comrade Healy might not survive the trip. James Bond. He might be shot when he arrived. So Comrade Slaughter had to call up London every day to inform Healy that security was OK, and that he could perhaps come across the ocean and risk it.

But of course Comrade Slaughter could not use the phone at the camp, because that would be tapped. So he had to use a phone of his own. So Comrade Slaughter asked a comrade to drive him to and from the phone so he could assure Comrade Healy that everything was alright with the CIA. So Comrade Slaughter asked Comrade Nancy Fields to do the driving! The supposed CIA agent [laughter].

And that's the truth. That's the farce of these methods. Because this had nothing to do with it—there was a political motivation all along.

Then one night, midnight, because when else should one call Central Committee meetings, comrades? Especially if you're in a camp in the woods, in a camp in the Laurentian Mountains of Canada, always hold your Central Committee meetings no earlier than 12.30 a.m. It creates the proper atmosphere for the inquiry.

And the slanders were launched against Fields that had

already been spread around the camp, so forty or fifty people were told that she was CIA. And of course, later we will investigate. What is that? Have we ever had that in our movement? You slander first, you have your Control Commission later. Where? When? Because it's the same methods that he uses now in his public slanders against comrades Hansen and Novack.

I got up in the middle of the meeting and said I disagreed with the proceedings. Which was the hardest thing that I have ever said in my life because of the atmosphere. And yet, and any of you here who have ever been in the Socialist Labour League could understand this, and yet I ended up, as those who have been in the Socialist Labour League have done and still do, I ended up voting against my convictions!

I voted for my own removal; Nancy Fields voted for her own suspension. And then, two minutes out of that meeting, we went back to our cabin with Comrade Slaughter and we told him we disagreed with the way we voted. We just could not say it in front of such a meeting in such an atmosphere. And we spent the whole night talking.

Now, we thought about it afterwards. I did not immediately leave the organisation. I went to work every day. Nancy couldn't because she was suspended. So she spent her time reading James P. Cannon. She read *Speeches to the Party*; she read *The Struggle for a Proletarian Party*; she read *In Defense of Marxism*. She read Cannon. And then I come walking home, through the door, and she starts bombarding me with Cannon; she says this is the way Cannon says a party is supposed to be. This is what they did; it's not right.

And she was right. And I came to agree with her. And we resigned. After we resigned, after we had been slandered, after we had been removed from these positions, then an inquiry commission was held, which then said that it wasn't true! That Nancy Fields wasn't a CIA agent after the damage had been done and the leadership of the section removed.

Now, then we spent a month or two isolated, because we had no other friends but those in the movement. We knew no one, no one knocked on the door, no phone calls, complete isolation. And we thought and we thought, and then we wrote what we thought. And we sent what we wrote to all the papers on the left. And one of them, *Intercontinental Press*, printed it. And Comrade Joe Hansen wrote that he thought what we said sounded like the truth. And Comrade Healy then began his slander campaign against Hansen.

Comrade Novack then wrote that what Healy said about Hansen was slander. And then Comrade Novack became an accomplice of the GPU in the eyes of Healy.

And then we learned that in England, unknown to us, actually learned a month or two after it happened, that 200 members of the Workers Revolutionary Party had been expelled—the Thornett group, what is now the Workers Socialist League. And we thought this was significant—it was not just us, it was throughout the world. And it was not just anyone in the Workers Revolutionary Party that was expelled, it was the working-class comrades in that party who were expelled. Because they just couldn't carry the absurdities of the line of the WRP into the living struggles of the workers in the factories.

And they suggested that they discuss it; that they discuss the Transitional Program. And they perhaps got further than anyone else who has suggested a discussion in Healy's movement—they got a bulletin out that got to some Central Committee members, and then they got out, checked out before a conference.

And we said this meant something; it's political. He's

using these slanders for political purposes. He is seeking to develop a theory that anyone outside of his organisation who criticises him must be a cop. And anyone inside his organisation who raises a doubt or question must be a cop. He did not originate that theory. Stalin thought the same; or whether he thought the same, he said the same. Opposition to his policies meant that you were police. And he applied it to Trotsky. This was his theory.

And it appeared to us that what was really happening was that, confronted with a new situation which required, which opened up new possibilities for Trotskyism all over the world, Healy had collapsed. He had no policy. He didn't know what to do. He couldn't do anything. And in that collapse was seeking to guard himself off, was seeking to defend his little organisation, to protect it from criticism internally and externally, through the spreading of slanders, through frame-ups, through fabrications, and putting every resource he could get to that purpose. This was to us the meaning of what was happening.

So whatever is because at times the question is raised in people's minds—whatever is the personal mental condition of the comrade involved in this, and those of us who have known him realise that that condition has never been overly stable—we are really dealing with a political madness, and that's what we must confront.

And like in any madness, including political madness, madness comes from the inability to confront reality. And thus the necessity to create a different reality in one's head. And the reality which he could not confront is the growth and the vitality of the Fourth International, the turn all over the world of people toward Trotskyism in this new period of upsurge of the working class. We do not and we cannot accept the point that Healy in any fashion is seriously seeking to grapple with the problem, the real problem, of the role of the cops and the police in our movement. Because his blows are against the movement, not against the police. And we contrast his method to the method of the Socialist Workers Party, which has done more than any other organisation on earth to expose the FBI [applause], to expose the CIA [applause].

This struck me so much just this Wednesday when Comrade George Novack and I held a press conference to release CIA documents that we have been able to get through our lawsuit, which showed the role of the CIA and all that it tried to do to the Fourth International, to all its sections.

The daily *News Line* sent Alex Mitchell to the press conference. He did not raise one issue in relation to the CIA—he was not interested in it. All he did at the press conference was to press his factional attack on Novack and Hansen. Can you tell me honestly those people are concerned with security? They are concerned with the security of their clique, not with the security of the working class against the capitalists [applause]!

Just want to end on one point. Being on this platform, taking this stand with these comrades, yes, these comrades, is the proudest moment in my life. Thank you [applause].

Pierre Lambert . . .

If the accusations lodged by Gerry Healy against comrades Hansen and Novack, and beyond them, against the Socialist Workers Party of the United States and the Fourth International, could be explained only in terms of insanity, it would be useless to answer them. There would be no point in having this meeting or in denouncing

Healy's methods, which are contrary to all the practices of the workers movement, so as to root them out from that movement.

The accusations lodged by Healy are indeed insane. And in a statement I wrote jointly with Comrade Betty Hamilton, which has been published in *Informations Ouvrières* and in the publications of the Comité d'Organisation pour la Reconstruction de la Quatrième Internationale [OCRFI—Organisation Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International], we have demonstrated their absurd character.

But these insane accusations by Gerry Healy are not simply insane. The repetition of those charges, the fact that they have been made by a man like Mitchell, who has very tenuous links, if any, with Trotskyism and the workers movement, and the fact that they have already been used against the Fourth International, compel us to probe for the causes and the roots of these disloyal attacks directed against the honor of two veteran revolutionists, as well as against the activity, struggle, and memory of Leon Trotsky himself.

Mike Banda, at present the general secretary of the WRP, sent to me in Paris, from London, a letter dated the fourth of January, 1977. I read that letter carefully, and I can show, as I am going to do, that it is a prime example of the political methods of Gerry Healy. Banda launches, and I quote from the letter, "an open challenge to all revisionist groups who are joining hands in London on January 14, 1977, to whitewash the GPU crimes against the Trotskyist movement." The Comité d'Organisation pour la Reconstruction de la Quatrième Internationale and the OCI [Organisation Communiste Internationaliste], which I represent here, are consequently characterised as revisionist.

Although I do not regard either the OCI or the Comité d'Organisation as revisionist, and although I could easily prove that Gerry Healy and Marxism have very little in common today, that is not the purpose of this meeting. To characterise the policies of an organisation, rightly or wrongly, as revisionist is a matter for political discussion. But to deduce from that characterisation that "all those organisations—and I quote Banda—that 'all those revisionist groups', that is, in particular the organisations that I represent here, the Comité d'Organisation pour la Reconstruction de la Quatrième Internationale and the OCI, falsely labeled as revisionist, are in London 'to whitewash the GPU crimes against the Trotskyist movement,' is to resort to the Stalinist method of amalgam. Stalin deduced from the political differences he had with Trotsky that Trotsky was a Gestapo agent. Healy deduces from differences he has with a political organisation, or at least accomplices of the GPU. All working-class militants, whatever the tendency they belong to, can only reject with contempt the methods of Gerry Healy.

Healy slanders comrades Hansen, Novack, and in fact, Cannon. He slanders them—I quote again from Banda's letter—in the following terms: "They have covered up for other agents like Mark Zborowski who masterminded the murder of Trotsky's son, Leon Sedov, before being brought to the United States in 1941 with the help of Novack." Thus, he accuses those taking part in this meeting of being accomplices of the GPU.

It is indeed difficult for a Trotskyist militant, for a working-class militant, to have to wade through Healy's muck. But it is necessary to do so, because what is involved are the principles of proletarian revolution, of proletarian morality.

Mike Banda, in one paragraph of his letter, is rather ironic. He states that we will be meeting here under the

"bogus slogan" of workers democracy. What a thing to say!

Gerry Healy, who claims he is a Trotskyist—has forgotten that the Trotskyists, as early as the first Left Opposition in 1923, joined together precisely to defend workers democracy against the emerging bureaucracy?

Has he forgotten that it was because Stalin started by trampling upon the principles of workers democracy that he was able to establish the bureaucracy as a parasitic caste? Workers democracy is not merely a question of behaviour, it has social and political roots.

Has Gerry Healy forgotten the teachings of Leon Trotsky, who taught us to seek the political and social roots of attacks against the principles of workers democracy?

Has he forgotten in addition that Trotsky also taught us to seek the social and political roots of the rejection of free discussion in the framework of democratic centralism, and of the substitution instead of slander and lies?

Has he forgotten that the Stalinist bureaucracy, to become a privileged counterrevolutionary caste, had to begin by attacking the principles of workers democracy, and of free discussion within the ranks of the workers movement?

Mike Banda believes he is ironical. He does not seem to comprehend that he is offering us the key to understanding the social and political roots of Gerry Healy's slanders against Hansen, Novack, and the Fourth International.

To illustrate this point, I would like to recall two instances drawn from the joint experience of the Socialist Labour League and the OCI that I think will help us to understand many things.

In 1953 the SWP, the British section that was to become the SLL, the majority of the PCI [Parti Communiste Internationaliste] of which the OCI is the continuation, the Chinese section, and other forces formed the International Committee of the Fourth International. It is not the purpose of this meeting to discuss if that decision was correct. It is not, I repeat, the purpose of this meeting.

In 1963, political differences opposed the SWP to the OCI and the SLL within the International Committee. There was a split in the International Committee, and as follows: that the SLL and the OCI maintained the International Committee. And after that split, there was a call for a second conference of the International Committee, which took place in London. Gerry Healy in the discussion, attempted to have that conference characterise the SWP as follows: "The SWP must now be regarded as a centrist organisation."

It is of secondary importance here to note that the OCI disagreed with that characterisation, and was of the opinion that in spite of the differences with the SWP, the SWP had to be regarded as a Trotskyist organisation. And it is secondary, in the framework of this meeting to note that Gerry Healy was persuaded to officially withdraw that characterisation. I say it is of secondary importance in relation to this meeting because once again this was a political characterisation, part of a political discussion.

At the meeting of the International Committee that followed the conference Healy suggested for the first time that Comrade Hansen—at the time there was no mention of Comrade Novack—could have, I repeat, could have participated in the death of Leon Trotsky, playing, in Healy's words, an "obscure" role. The OCI protested and stated that it would not accept insinuations of this sort. Healy then retreated, and it was only in 1975 that he resumed and amplified his monstrous accusations against comrades Hansen and Novack.

What had happened in the intervening period? What happened between 1963 and 1975? Simply that during those years Healy attempted, and partially succeeded in, stifling political discussion within the International Committee. Healy, like his successor as general secretary of the WRP, regarded workers democracy as a "bogus" slogan. He refused discussion. And that is why he broke up the International Committee in 1972.

In violating the principles of workers democracy, which Healy and Banda joke about today, they have both been led to use the methods of Stalinism, the methods of lies, slanders, and provocations.

I am not saying that Healy is a Stalinist. But I say that today—when Brezhnev in Moscow is resorting to provocations against an opposition which is seeking a road forward—by his slanders, his lies, his amalgams, Healy gives support to the Stalinist bureaucracy, that bureaucracy which in alliance with imperialism and through the policy of peaceful coexistence, stands as the main obstacle on the road to the international proletarian revolution.

I will add, looking at it from abroad of course—that the Socialist Labour League, in 1960 and the years that followed, bore all the hopes of Trotskyism in this country. It was an organisation of thousands of members. What is left of it today? The methods of Gerry Healy have destroyed the Socialist Labour League.

And now comrades, in spite of the political differences that separate the Comité d'Organisation pour la Reconstruction de la Quatrième Internationale and the OCI from those who have sponsored this meetings—the representative of those organisations I want to state here my full solidarity with comrades Hansen and Novack, victims of Healy's slanders [applause].

George Novack . . .

Forty years ago last month, Leon Trotsky was under internment by the Norwegian Labor government, gagged and unable to answer the infamous accusations Stalin's benchmen were hurling at him. On the other side of the ocean, his American cothinkers had formed the American Committee for the Defence of Leon Trotsky, of which I was national secretary. We sought to secure asylum for the Soviet exile, and constitute a commission of inquiry to give Trotsky his day in court to refute the charges in the Moscow frame-up trials.

Both aims were realised. Trotsky and Natalia were sprung from house arrest and shuffled aboard a Norwegian tanker headed for Mexico. By chance, a while ago, I came across a letter I had written to the novelist James T. Farrell on December 4, 1936, recounting our efforts. Here are several passages from it: "As to Trotsky's condition, we get cables from Europe of the most alarming character to the effect that almost anything might happen to him after December 18, and that a visa for some other country is our only hope. . . . I told about failures of our attempts to get visas for the United States or Cuba, and the hurdles encountered in Mexico where President Cardenas was agreeable to his entry. Diego Rivera had telegraphed us: 'Foreign Affairs Minister is making all kind of difficulties. Stalinist agents and counterrevolutionaries helping him.'"

These obstacles were overcome, and I vividly remember how excitedly Max Shachtman and I telephoned Oslo and informed the ill-fated Walter Held, whose life I later

tried vainly to save, that the Mexican invitation had come through. We met the Trotskys when they landed in Tampico early in January, and, on the presidential train the day after, discussed plans for launching the commission of inquiry. In April, under John Dewey's chairmanship, the commission went to Coyoacan and in September delivered its verdict that branded the trials as frame-ups and completely exonerated Trotsky and his son Sedov of the charges against them. Trotsky hailed this as a "magnificent achievement." Our concern for his security was unremitting from then on.

Comrades, that was forty years ago—and much water—not all of it clean, has flowed under Westminster Bridge since that time. The speakers tonight have come together to protest and expose another frame-up, in which Joe Hansen and I are cast, not as defenders of the accused, but as the accused themselves. Though it is on a smaller scale, this case belongs to the same category of political slander, and must be repelled as vigorously because of the issues of principle at stake.

The allegations against us by Healy's poison-pennmen are so outrageous that their effrontery verges on the absurd. In this instance, as has already been commented, Healy has borrowed from the arsenals of Stalin and the Maoists, who crudely set about to discredit and destroy factional opponents who only yesterday were their closest associates. You let loose a lie, inflate it to monstrous proportions, reiterate it incessantly in all keys, and hope that gullible and ignorant people with no access to the facts in the case will swallow it whole. On January 4, Healy spokesman M. Banda brazenly declared to us, "None of you have been able to refute a single fact brought to light by the International Committee's investigation." Actually, the allegations in Healy's Big Lie, that Hansen and Novack are accomplices of the GPU and guilty of "criminal negligence" in Trotsky's assassination, have been refuted point by point in articles appearing in *Intercontinental Press* and publications in other countries. These have just been collected in a single brochure, entitled *Healy's Big Lie*, which can be consulted for the relevant information. I shall not go over the same ground, but intend to speak for and about myself tonight.

During my last extended stay in England, from late 1951 to early 1953, I was as intimate a collaborator with Healy as I have been with Joe Hansen since 1941. We met for political discussions three or four times a week, and articles I wrote occasionally appeared under his name [laughter]. That's a time-honored custom for foreigners residing in England. Engels, you will recall, submitted a review of Marx's *Capital* in the liberal *Forthrightly Review* under the signature of his friend Samuel Moore.

I got to know Healy's strengths and weaknesses quite well. Though he has a suspicious disposition [laughter], it would never then have occurred to him that I had anything whatsoever to do with Stalinism or its works—and he would have indignantly rebutted any such calumny.

His attitude changed from comradeship to rabid hostility after sharp differences developed between the Socialist Workers Party and the unified Fourth International and his own organisation. In the ensuing polemics he singled out three adversaries for especially venomous attack: Ernst Mandel in economics; Joseph Hansen in the sphere of politics and organisation; and myself in philosophy.

He is rather inept and uncomfortable in discussions of Marxist theory with qualified critics. So he was eventually driven to employ the most unworthy means of coping with his political opponents. He descended into the sewer of slander, where he could throw the most noxious muck

at us.

That is the background of his Stalinist-type campaign. Slander has played a considerable role in political life, as a weapon wielded by reactionary forces of many kinds against their adversaries. Many a union militant can testify to that. In the Russian revolution, Kerensky's regime accused Lenin, Trotsky, and the Bolsheviks of being German agents.

In the chapter of his *History of the Russian Revolution* captioned "The Month of the Great Slander," Trotsky pointed out how poor and monotonous a character political slander has, because of the conservative mentality of its authors. So it was with Healy's unoriginal and repetitive lies. They do not only imitate the more notorious frame-up artists before him, but they do not vary from month to month as his press keeps harping on the same set of falsifications.

I was pulled into the scenario only after coming to the defence of the first target, Joe Hansen, as I was duty bound to do out of concern for the truth and for the sake of solidarity with my colleague. I detest frame-ups, not only because they are unjust, although that's an adequate reason, but as the worst sort of moral abomination. I have fought against scores of frame-ups for almost half a century, beginning with the cases in the United States of Tom Mooney and the Scottsboro Nine in the early thirties and coming up to the present moment, when the Socialist Workers Party is so effectively uncovering the machinations of the FBI and CIA.

However, I never expected that a former associate would defame me in connection with the defence of Trotsky, which constitutes one of the proudest acts of a long political career devoted to the advocacy of his ideas in defiance of the Stalinist slander machine. The first article I wrote for the *Militant*, early in 1934, was a satirical criticism of the zigzags in Stalinist policy, and there are volumes on record since then.

What a contrast there is, comrades and friends, between Healy's obsessive charges, and the attitude of the grief-stricken Natalia Trotsky at the time of Trotsky's assassination! She never afterwards uttered a word of reproach about the case. More than that, listen to this: Natalia even gave a deposition to the Mexican police absolving the unfortunate woman comrade who had unwittingly been the tool of the assassin from any complicity in the crime. That's Trotskyism.

Let me cite a sample of Healy's technique. Stalin extorted false confessions from the Moscow Trial defendants in his dungeons by means of terrible threats and tortments. Though the wizard of Clapham High Street, that has no such means at his command (so far as I know), that does not deter him. He has contrived to twist our answers to his accusations into admissions of guilt.

Thus, in my statement of condemnation I mentioned that I had helped rescue prospective victims of the Nazis after the fall of France, by enabling them to get to the United States as I had earlier brought the Trotskys to Mexico. I worked with a group of people of diversified political opinions, including Menshevik emigres, and they, among numerous other refugees, found asylum for Marc Zborowski, Leon Sedov's secretary and collaborator on the *Bulletin of the Russian Opposition*. He was later exposed as a GPU agent, a fact unknown to us at that time. Healy pounced upon this information as proof that I, too, had engaged in conscious complicity with Stalin's secret police and afterwards kept silent about it. And that is the sole item of "evidence" he brings forth against me.

What are the facts in the matter? It happens that I never met Zborowski, and had nothing directly to do with his

transit to the United States, although under the prevailing circumstances, that would have been commendable. These arrangements were handled through Lola Dallin, a Russian friend of Zborowski and the Trotskys.

This has not kept Healy's faceless International Committee from repeating—I quote from the *Bulletin* October 15—"Zborowski had been brought into the United States by Novack."

That same article features a photo of Ignace Reiss, the ex-Soviet intelligence agent who, after denouncing the purges and coming over to the Fourth International, was murdered by Stalin's gunmen in Switzerland. What Healy fails to say—and probably doesn't know—is that in 1940-41 I was busy saving the lives of other targets of the GPU. Among them were the widow and son of Ignace Reiss, whom I met at the pier and escorted to safe lodging in Manhattan. Wasn't it an anomalous occupation for an alleged accomplice of the GPU to spend months and years shielding and saving intended victims from their deadly clutches?

The November 27 *News Line* carries a four-page piece under the heading: "George Novack: A case of falsifying history" which accuses me-for sinister reasons-of suppressing what it calls "the most interesting information of all" in an obituary I wrote of Sara (Weber) Jacobs, "namely that she was the sister of Lola Estrine (Mrs. David Dallin) who had brought Zborowski to the United States. One simple fact shatters this concoction. Sara Weber was not the sister of Lola Estrine [laughter], she was a friend of hers, as both were of the Trotsky family.

Joe Hansen and others have which Healy has fabricated his Big Lie crumble to pieces when confronted with the simplest authentic facts. The slanders first directed against us must be firmly resisted because they have since spread like an evil stain. They have broadened to embrace anyone who has raised a voice against the frame-up, whatever their views and affiliations.

For instance, the September 17, 1976, *Bulletin*, the organ of Healy's American echos, reports a speech given by Jean Brust in Minneapolis five days earlier that refers to what she calls "the support of renegades from the revolutionary movement around the world." There she says: "Hansen rallies the very same forces around him today who defended the Moscow Trials and Stalin yesterday."

All the signatories of the statement in our defence, including Trotsky's grandson, five former secretaries and guards, the executor of Natalia Trotsky's estate, and the

Lambert
Hamilton
Deutscher
Wicks



people represented on this platform, are well known for their stances against the crimes of Stalin. Now they are identified as defenders of Stalin! And ourselves as accomplices. They have been condemned as tools of Hansen and Novack because they refuse to be the dupes of Healy. This expanded defamation demonstrates how one lie leads to others, still more reckless of facts and logic alike. No honest person is exempt from the mudslinging, as the two ex-leaders of his American group, Tim Wohlforth and Nancy Fields, who were falsely accused of hiding ties with the CIA, can testify. And Tim has done so this evening.

While Healy has been transforming us into imaginary accomplices of the Stalinists, the SWP has undertaken a sustained offensive against real agents of the FBI, CIA, and other government departments that have long been harassing our movement. The exposures arising from our \$40 million suit have reverberated throughout the country and have had unprecedented results. The FBI has been ordered to end its surveillance of our activities, and its informers have been instructed to quit the party forthwith. Our attorneys are now in court demanding their names and unexpurgated files.

Washington officials have been greatly disconcerted by these embarrassing exposures of the illegalities of their political police as a continuation of Watergate. And they are not the only ones. The Communist party leader, Gus Hall, has stated that "the SWP is the main stagnation area of the FBI in the left movement" simply because we've forced the FBI to divulge the presence of sixty-six informers in our ranks. And Healy points to the informers planted by the FBI to smear our party just as Gus Hall does. That is a real alignment with the Stalinists!

There may be some friends of the Workers Revolutionary Party here who either credit what Healy says, or are reluctant to believe that he would level such unscrupulous accusations against his opponents. Have you not sometimes wondered how credulous followers of Moscow and Peking can blindly accept everything they are told by their leaderships? Haven't you asked: How could a person of ordinary intelligence be taken in by such manifest slanders against the Trotskyists?

Shouldn't you apply the same criteria of critical intelligence to Healy's factually motivated campaign that you recommend to them? Ask yourself this question: Why should the SWP leaders have placed themselves at the service of the Stalinist scoundrels and betrayers of the Russian and world revolutions whom they had fought untriggingly and publicly since 1928, when they had nothing to gain and everything to lose by leading two contradictory lives and violating their whole past? The wildest political accusations should at least contain a grain of sense. Healy's trumped-up charges lack even the semblance of plausibility.

On the other hand, Healy and his entourage have compelling reasons for proceeding against us, as you previously heard. In addition to personal spitefulness and vindictiveness, which are anathema to Marxist politics, coupled with an ultrafractional attitude toward his erstwhile cothinkers, and everyone else, the panic provoked by the defections and attrition in their own forces, and the growth of the Fourth International in Britain, impels them to try to close the minds of their own members to any ideas and arguments coming from working-class critics of their own policies and methods. The very existence of the Socialist Workers Party, which Healy used to hold up as an example of what a democratic and principled Trotskyist organisation can be before the American angel turned into a spawn of the devil—stands as a constant reproach to his conduct.

The issues posed by this case transcend the reputations of the SWP leaders who are involved, and even the honor of Trotsky and Leon Sedov. The traditions and integrity of the Fourth International, as the banner-bearer of revolutionary Marxism in our time, and, beyond that, the fundamental interests of the entire working-class movement for liberation, are threatened and damaged by frame-up practices of this kind. The struggle for workers democracy and socialism to which we have dedicated our lives, requires a clean atmosphere, purified of all falsifications from any quarter, so that the masses can arrive at the truth and shape their destiny through an open and honest confrontation of views on all questions.

That is the common premise on which all of us stand in opposition to the Healyite peddlers of the lie [applause].

Michel Pablo . . .

[Michel Pablo was one of the scheduled speakers at the rally; however, he was unable to attend.]

[He sent the following message, which was read to the audience by Tariq Ali.]

I believe that it is irresponsible, to say the least, for Gerry Healy and his organisation to deal with the question of who was responsible for the assassination of Leon Trotsky in such a manner. I, myself, and anyone who remembers the situation that reigned at that time in Europe amongst the organisations claiming to be part of the movement for the Fourth International, and eventually of the International itself, would not be surprised at the many gaps which existed then in the protection of the movement and of Leon Trotsky, particularly against the criminal activity of Stalin's agents.

But to make this a basis for concluding that men such as Joe Hansen and George Novack were in complicity with these agents or with others seems to me to be both irresponsible and absurd. These men have devoted their intellectual and practical lives to defending the conception which they hold of Trotskyism. This is not the behaviour of men associated in any way whatsoever with our class enemy.

The whole of this nasty quarrel is symptomatic of a certain ideological decomposition in the movement of epigones who have not succeeded in linking themselves up seriously with the natural movement of the class. It manifestly serves only the declared enemy of the great name of Leon Trotsky and his real inheritance.

It is high time that this campaign was brought to a halt by at some point submitting the whole dossier on this affair to the irrevocable judgment of an international commission composed of people who are acceptable to either side.

The task of the real revolutionary Marxists is to turn resolutely towards the future, and to find a way of consolidating the alliance among themselves on the basis of common programs which correspond to the current necessities. To remain confined within the exacerbated sectarianism of the sects would be the worst possible offence against the name of Leon Trotsky and his ideas. Our common task is to defend the European and the world socialist revolutions, and to create in time the real independent revolutionary Marxist force capable of

bringing about this objective at both the national and international levels. It is therefore necessary that we search with the utmost determination, and not divide ourselves on questions which, when posed in a certain way, give the impression that we are sects who have been irremediably overtaken by the development of reality, of ideas, of the real and essential tasks.

Michel Pablo [applause].

Ernest Mandel . . .

Comrades, why are we here tonight? We are not here tonight to defend Comrade George Novack and Comrade Joseph Hansen because friends and comrades like these two who have been active in the revolutionary movement and devoted to Trotskyism for forty years do not need to be defended against vile slander.

The *News Line* of January 1, 1977, tells us why we are here—why all of you are here. We are here "with the express intention of protecting the GPU." Not even with the objective intention, with the *express* intention. All the people sitting here. Here are 1500 defenders of the GPU—that's why we are here.

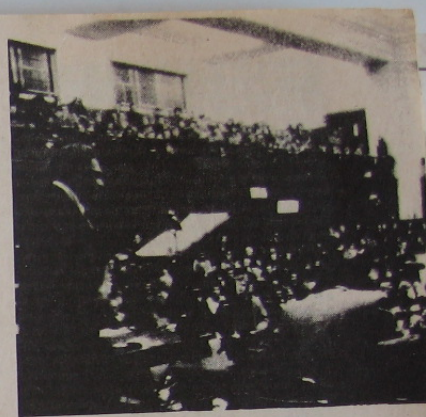
If he wasn't such a little rascal, one could feel sorry for Comrade Gerry Healy for saying such stupid things that immediately boomerang against himself. One could be sorry for him, to see how he has been caught in the objective dialectics of a little sectarian bureaucrat who absolutely subordinates the interests of the working class, the interests of the world revolution, the interests of socialism [applause], to the interests of an inefficient, inaccurate, and meaningless little sect which has taken itself out of the class struggle in Britain and internationally. I say one could feel sorry for him, because he has, after all, devoted his life to building that revolutionary movement, and when he has to cover up his failures with lies and slanders, one could feel sorry for him, I repeat, if he wasn't such a little rascal.

One must see the logic of this business which has set in motion: first calling one person an agent of the Soviet police, then calling 1000 persons agents of the police, then reducing the class struggle to police infiltration and the operations of agents. Because in the very same article, you find unbelievable things. You find that we are all here together, not in order to participate in the class struggle... the class struggle of whom? The class struggle of the workers of Europe and Latin America against the infiltration of the CIA! The class struggle is not any more infiltration of the capitalist class; the class struggle is conducted against between social forces—No! the not any more conducted between social forces!

Class struggle is now all against agents and infiltrators! Class struggle is anybody who would have told Comrade Healy ten years ago that he would fall to that Stalinist depth of reducing the class struggle to a struggle against spies and agents, anybody who would have told that Healy ten years ago would have received the answer which he would have merited.

I tell you, anybody who would have said that Stalinist Healy ten years ago that he would fall to that Stalinist depth of reducing the class struggle to a struggle against spies and agents, anybody who would have told that Healy ten years ago would have received the answer which he would have merited.

And you can only feel sorry for people who have so little control over their own development, who know so little about what is happening to themselves that by the accumulation of the logic of sectarian mistakes they can degenerate and fall so deeply as to deform and desecrate Marxism in the way in which Healy is doing today. So I say we are here tonight to defend Comrades Hansen and Novack, not to defend the GPU, it's too stupid to discuss that.



Mandel Speaking

No. We are here to defend the Fourth International. To show solidarity with Comrade Hansen and Comrade Novack. We are here to defend the Fourth International. And it needs to be defended, against the slanders of Healy, because we have to understand what this fool has done. Again I say "this fool," because this boomerang against himself and his own organisation as long as he continues for reasons which are unclear—to call himself a Trotskyist.

What have been the allegations of our main enemies for years and decades against the Fourth International, against the world Trotskyist movement? It has been that ours is a movement infiltrated and manipulated by agents and by spies. That was the main thesis of the Soviet bureaucracy—that the Trotskyist movement is not a genuine part of the international working class, is not a genuine part of the international labor movement, but a movement manipulated by spies and infiltrators. And what has been the main thesis of international imperialism, what has been the main thesis of the bourgeoisie? Look at the *Congressional Record* in the United States, look at the Fourth press campaigns of the bourgeoisie against the Fourth International. They say that it is a movement manipulated by terrorist agents, infiltrators, and spies. And for years, and for decades, as long as our movement was weak, as and for decades, as long as our enemies spoke with long as very powerful material force, in a united voice, many people believed these slanders. Many people believed them, including many people inside the working class.

Today, things have changed. Today, we are much stronger, and our enemies are much weaker and much more divided than before. And especially, today, we are deeply rooted in the working class, we are deeply rooted in the toiling and fighting masses in so many countries that nobody can believe this type of business any more.

And it is at such a moment, it is at the moment of this big historical turn, when we have become recognised and accepted as a genuine part of the working class in the international working-class movement, that such a fool comes around and says, "No! Start to look for agents under your bed." And he says this to a fool who is full of agents and can read in his newspaper—agents of the GPU and agents of the CIA are sitting here and rubbing shoulders with each other, and that it is here like that, and it is in every

cell meeting like that, and it's in every national meeting like that. That's what this fool is saying-giving aid and comfort to all the slanders and all the attacks which for such a long period have been conducted against our movement.

I say, what Hitler and Stalin couldn't get away with-when these mass murderers couldn't destroy our movement, a tin-pot tyrant like Gerry Healy is not going to destroy us or stop us in the building of the Fourth International [applause].

Why is it not possible to have any serious group of workers in the world today accept that we are a movement full of agents, full of spies, full of infiltrators, manipulated by outside forces? Because people, as I said before, thanks to our principled activity, thanks to our activities in the service of the working class and in the service of the revolution, know us now, and they know us by the thousands, and they know what we are, and nobody is going to tell them anything else than what they themselves know in the living class struggle of the different countries.

I'll just take a few examples from the last weeks to show what the Fourth International is today, and to show how the international working class, and how the international labor movement looks upon the Fourth International.

A young comrade of ours, hardly twenty years old, was arrested in Peru, brutally tortured, and murdered by the police. Fifteen trade unions-fifteen trade unions-spoke out within twenty-four hours in his defence. Do you think you will convince the Peruvian workers that the Trotskyist movement is a movement infiltrated and manipulated by agents of the GPU, and of the CIA, when they see and do such things?

In Pakistan, Comrade Tariq Ali, who is sitting here, was prevented from leaving the country. Immediately there was a telegram sent, of MPs of the British labor movement, there was a movement started in France by leaders of the labor movement to force President Bhutto to get Comrade Tariq out of that prison in Pakistan, and he got out.

We have had in France-I must give the due to whom we have to give the due to-a powerful mobilisation of left working-class forces in which the comrades of the OCI have played an excellent, exemplary, role: to get one of the representatives of the left-wing opposition in the Soviet Union-not Solzhenitsyn, not the reactionaries, not the semifascists, but a representative of the left-wing opposition in the Soviet Union, Comrade Plyusheh, out of the grasp of the Soviet bureaucracy. And we got him out! [Applause.]

And the most important, and most inspiring example of all, four weeks ago 154 comrades of the Basque conference of our Spanish organisation were arrested at the end of their meeting. Within twenty-four hours, five factories went on strike to get these comrades out. In this united action about every single one of the working-class organisations of the Basque country was represented, and we got every single one of the 154 comrades out before the week was over! That's the Fourth International today! [Applause.]

Do you think that slandering our movement, slandering the leaders of our movement, slandering the public representatives of our movement, is going to stop this business which is the business of the rise of a new revolutionary vanguard, which is the business of building a revolutionary party, which expresses objectively the rise of world revolution today? You think you're going to stop us by slandering? You are just a fool when you think so. Look at this meeting, and look at the reality of the Fourth International today, and you will see what results you will get: zero point zero!

And why couldn't you stop us, and why can't you stop us, and why can nobody stop us, on that road? Because we have followed a very simple, a very consistent, and a very, very, very difficult way, in which we have had to build our movement against terrible odds. But that's the only road which will repay in the long run. We have followed the road of just sticking to confidence in the working class; confidence in the class struggle; participating in the class struggle, participating in mass action, educating our members and educating the working class in relentless and irreconcilable struggle against every form of exploitation and oppression in the world. That's what the program of socialism is all about, that's what the program of Marxism is all about, and that's what is indestructible.

When you have a correct program, when you follow the line of that program, when you tell the truth to the workers, when you don't hide anything from them, when you don't use slanders, when you don't use false accusations, when you don't see spies where there are social forces in operation, then in the long run you must win, inasmuch as you have confidence that the working class will continue to fight, that world revolution will continue to rise, that capitalism is unavoidably crisis-ridden and will be overthrown, that the Soviet bureaucracy and all other conservative forces inside the labor movement cannot stop this movement of history in the long run. By striking out along this line, we could resist, successfully, I repeat, terrible odds-because the slanders of Stalin, and the murders committed by Stalin and Hitler, were far graver than the slanders of Thomas Gerald Healy. We could resist them, and we could transmit the heritage to a new generation-a new generation that is today ten times stronger in numbers than the older ones, in which Healy, myself, and all the people who are sitting on this platform participated. That was a united Trotskyist movement. But a united Trotskyist movement which was, I repeat, ten times weaker in number, and immeasurably weaker in influence and in activity than the Fourth International is today.

By sticking to this principled line, by sticking to this simple line, by not looking for some miracle solution, by not looking for some shortcuts, by not trying to do more than you can do with the forces which you have, but by doing whatever you can with these forces on the basis of your program, and on the basis of the unfolding class struggle, we have come out of that tunnel, and today we have a movement much stronger, much more influential, in a better position and much more capable of gaining results through our intervention in the class struggle than we ever had before. And we will continue to build the Fourth International, and we will continue to build revolutionary parties by that method because that's the only method which gives results in the long run. And we are dedicated- we dedicate our members and we dedicate the vanguard of the working class to that method. That means a method which fights with politics, which fights with the weapons of the class struggle, and not of science fiction or of the spy scare, which fights not with witch-hunts but by means of the working-class struggle, mass struggle-that's the weapon with which to build the revolutionary party; and that's also our weapon against imperialism and against the Soviet bureaucracy.

And I would add we should keep our sense of proportion as Comrade Tariq said when he opened this meeting. We should use that method towards the Workers Revolutionary Party, too. We should not be sectarian against the sectarians. It's meaningless and it would be worthless to our own cause. We should understand that whatever be the madness that inspires their present slanderous course, at the slightest sign they would show,

at the slightest sign we could force them to show, to return to reason, we would treat them like we have to treat every other tendency of the revolutionary left, every other tendency of the revolutionary wing of the international labor movement, as potential allies, and potential members today in big mass revolutionary parties which we want to build, and for which many, many participants will have to come from many, many different political tendency and factional origins. [applause.]

And when I say we have to keep our sense of proportion, and we have to apply the same classical methods of working-class policy, of working-class tactics and of working-class strategy, to all the problems that concern us this evening, we have to understand that in the fight against Stalinism at this stage, at this peculiar, particular stage, which is an extremely important stage, especially in Western Europe, we have today exceptional-ly powerful weapons to conduct a political campaign, to which I invite all comrades present here, of all different tendencies, factions, and organisations, to participate and come together to conduct this fight.

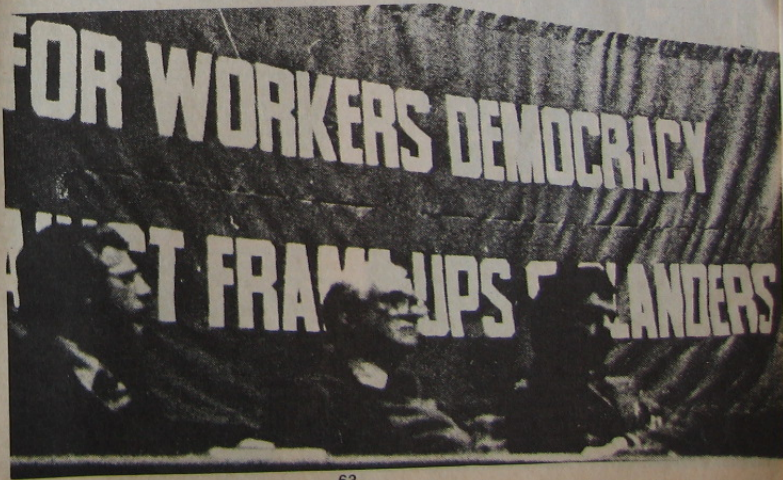
Whatever one may think about all the intricacies of so-called Euro-Communism, of which we are of course no friends whatsoever, no apologists-which we don't cover up-it is a new stage in the reformist degeneration of these parties, preparation for the deeply counterrevolutionary role of these parties in the coming revolutionary struggles in southern Europe. We have to understand one thing, in addition to all these aspects-that they have introduced new and tremendously vulnerable elements of division inside the world Stalinist movement, which can today have very big effects in favor of Trotskyism.

And I would therefore propose to the tendencies, factions, and organisations which are present. Let us conduct a common political campaign, to ask from the Italian Communist Party, from the French Communist

Party, from the Spanish Communist Party, from the Belgian Communist Party, from the British Communist Party, that they immediately, openly and publicly, rehabilitate all the victims of Stalin, all the victims of the Moscow Trials and that the Spanish Communist Party in particular draw the logical conclusion from this rehabilitation and immediately expel the vile murderer of Leon Trotsky from its ranks [applause]. Such a propaganda campaign today will perhaps not uncover some secret spy device which caused the assassination of 1940, but is instead a political campaign which will hit the Soviet bureaucracy, which will hit international Stalinism ten thousand times more deeply, more profoundly than any of these spy inquiries. And it is especially a political campaign which will have an effect in the working class of France, in the working class of Italy, in the working class of Spain, in the working class of Portugal, which will make it easier to fight class collaboration and betrayal of the revolutions which are mounting there; which will widen the scope of workers democracy in the unions and the factories of these countries, which will make it easier for the revolutionaries in these countries-and there are already thousands of them-to fight against what remains of the poison of Stalinism today in the working-class movement, in the Communist parties, and in the trade-union organisations of these countries.

That is a fight worthy of Trotskyism, that is a fight worthy of the Fourth International, that is a fight which is in the great tradition of revolutionary Marxism, for which we stand in the great tradition of defence of workers democracy, which we must defend relentlessly, unconditionally, and without reservation if we are to be principled in every country, in every case, and against everybody who questions them [prolonged applause, foot stamping, etc.]

Wohlforth
Novack
Ali



After Burglary of SWP offices

FBI Orders Removal of Informers: A Victory for American Trotskyists

481-S is in prison. On January 5, he was sentenced to a maximum of ten years after pleading guilty to a burglary charge.

The burglar's real name is Timothy Redfeam. 481-S was the code number used to identify him by his employer, the FBI. The burglary for which he was sentenced occurred last July 7, when Redfeam broke into the Denver offices of the Socialist Workers Party and carried off four boxes of files.

Redfeam is the first FBI employee ever to have been jailed for a political burglary. But numerous reports in US newspapers indicate that nervous agents fear he won't be the last.

Why did 481-S, unlike the numerous FBI criminals before him, end up in jail? Something, obviously, has changed, as Redfeam himself explained after his arrest to the chief of the Denver police: "I said there was a time when you could do things like with the FBI, and you could—you know, a few years ago you could infiltrate radical groups and actually burglarize or take or steal, however you want to put it. You could do that and get away with it, but you can't any more. And I mentioned that to him on the phone."

In a general sense, 481-S's problems were a product of

Watergate, and of the radicalisation of the 1960s and 1970s. As a result of these experiences, most people in the US no longer consider that the government has some inalienable "right" to violate its own laws and to spy on and disrupt political groups with which it disagrees.

But there is also a more specific factor that is making it difficult for the government's political police to "get away with it any more." That is a \$40 million lawsuit filed against the FBI, CIA, and various other government agencies by the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance, demanding an end to government spying and harassment.

The US Trotskyists never conceived of the suit as a means of putting FBI burglars in jail—that was an unforeseen byproduct. Rather, the aim was to take advantage of the Watergate crisis to expose the anti-democratic nature of the capitalist government and to expand the democratic rights available to working-class organisations and the various movements for progressive social change.

Syd Stapleton, national secretary of the Political Rights Defense Fund (an organisation established to raise money and support for the suit) explains the SWP's approach like this:

"The big difference in what we did as opposed to virtually every other tendency on the left is that we did not focus on Nixon. What the SWP and YSA did, was to focus on the broader questions of democratic rights."

"Democratic rights had been violated by the Nixon administration, but we knew and we said that they had also been violated by Democratic and Republican administrations going right back through the Second World War. And sure enough, as the facts began to come out, our political approach was confirmed. We were able to see far enough ahead of the evolution of the career of Nixon as an individual to focus on what were really the important questions—that is, the overall growth of the government's attack on democratic rights."

The suit has resulted in literally mountains of evidence about the US government's assault on democratic freedoms. Among the activities so far exposed and given national prominence in the media are the following:

- The government admits conducting electronic surveillance of the SWP from 1945 to 1963.
- It admits that the FBI ran an "SWP disruption program" from 1961 to 1969. The evidence indicates that the program wasn't ended in 1969, it merely had its name changed.
- The FBI attempted to get SWP members fired from their jobs.
- The FBI created forgeries designed to cause conflicts within the SWP and YSA and between the Trotskyists and other left groups.
- The FBI tried to disrupt the movement against the Vietnam war by red-baiting, encouraging right-wing attacks, and planting accusations that antiwar activists were police agents. The FBI also forged evidence that

SWP members were police agents in an unsuccessful effort to start a witch-hunt within the party.

The CIA conducted a program called "Operation Chaos" to spy on and disrupt the antiwar movement. According to US law, the CIA is supposed to conduct its activities only outside the United States.

- The FBI maintains an "Administrative Index" of 1,250 persons—110 of them members of the SWP—who are considered "dangerous to the internal security and who would be afforded priority investigative coverage read, arrested immediately in the event of a national emergency."
- The FBI burglarised the national office of the SWP 92 times between 1960 and 1966. FBI director Clarence Kelley claimed that such burglaries ended in the 1960s—a statement which he steadfastly defended until the arrest of 481-S.

Because of a division of labor—the FBI is primarily responsible for political spying and disruption within the United States, the CIA for the same activities abroad—the SWP has not yet uncovered as much information about the CIA as it has about the FBI. Nevertheless, the evidence against the CIA is still quite extensive. For example:

- The CIA conducted break-ins against SWP and YSA members travelling abroad.
- Electronic surveillance was used against SWP and the YSA members traveling abroad.
- The CIA opened and copied letters, in violation of US laws, of US Trotskyists.
- Information on the SWP and YSA was obtained through the use of informers.
- The CIA both gave to and received from foreign governments information on the SWP and YSA.
- It admitted that it "has engaged in the collection of information concerning the Fourth International."

The documents which the SWP and YSA have so far obtained from the CIA were heavily censored and represent only a small proportion of the material being sought. But this small amount of documentation has already been sufficient to expose the two official "investigations" of the CIA (conducted by the Rockefeller Commission and the US Senate committee headed by Frank Church) for the cover-ups that they were.

The government committees, for example, say that CIA spying in the US began in 1967, while the CIA files on the SWP go back to 1949. The Rockefeller Commission claimed that the CIA stopped keeping files on legal activities of US citizens in March 1974, files turned over as a result of the suit contain entries from May and November of that year. Moreover, neither official investigation mentioned that the CIA systematically spies on US citizens traveling abroad—a fact uncovered by the SWP and YSA suit.

Following the reunification of the Fourth International in 1963, the CIA decided to step up its activities directed against the FI. One memorandum obtained states: "We are presently endeavoring to increase our coverage of FI activities throughout the world." Documents turned over to the SWP and YSA on Latin America alone contain material on at least 11 countries.

"One thing that comes through clearly in the CIA documents," David Frankel reported in the January 17, 1977, *Intercontinental Press*, "is the complicity of other governments in CIA activities. The CIA demands its actions be kept secret from the masses of working people both inside and outside the United States. But its burglaries, wiretaps, and agents are well known to the governments allied with American imperialism around

the world—including, of course, the imperialist democracies in Europe." Thus, for example, much of the material concerning the French Trotskyists is censored because it is "information provided by a foreign government."

The SWP and YSA are also pressing for an injunction barring spying and harassment by all government agencies, not just the FBI. "The government," Stapleton explains, "will simply have its informers reporting to other agencies instead of the FBI if they can get away with it."

The US Trotskyists expect the suit—and the accompanying disclosures—to continue for years more. The trial itself is still months, if not years, away. And already the suit has had an impact on the consciousness of millions of Americans.

"There have been literally thousands of articles in hundreds of newspapers concerning the suit," says Stapleton. "And the impact that type of information has, both from the point of view of making people aware of the criminal activities the government has been involved in, and from the point of view of making people aware of the Socialist Workers Party, is very great."

"It has had an even bigger impact in preventing this whole process of disclosure from being brought to a close. They would finish one investigation—as in the case of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence—and within a month we would have information that they hadn't dreamed of, or looked for, or asked for."

In the face of the disclosures generated by the suit and the resulting unfavorable publicity, Washington's political police have made several tactical retreats. In September, a little more than a month after the arrest of 481-S, the attorney general of the US announced that the government was ending its forty-year-long "investigation" of the SWP. Then on November 1, just two days before he was scheduled to testify under oath in connection with the suit, FBI director Kelley made public an order urging FBI informers to leave the SWP and YSA. The agency's field officers were instructed to read the following message to informers:

"The FBI has terminated its investigation of the SWP, the YSA, their chapters and members, and any individuals or groups being investigated because of his (her) or its affiliation with the SWP or YSA. Thus, we suggest that you remove yourself from the SWP and YSA. You must no longer act in behalf of the FBI in regard to your membership in the SWP or YSA, related activities, or contacts with SWP or YSA members."

"You are not to report to the FBI information concerning the SWP, YSA, their chapters, leaders or members, nor are you to obtain any documents, copies of documents, any things, or other materials from the SWP, YSA, their leaders or members and furnish these to the FBI . . ."

Of course, what the government gives with one hand, it tries to take away with the other. While it pretends to have ceased "investigating" the SWP as an organisation, the FBI's instructions permit it to continue snooping on individual members.

Nevertheless, Kelley's order regarding informers was a significant victory for the SWP and YSA in that it is an admission that there were no legal grounds for the government's spying in the first place. The socialists are now pressing their advantage, demanding that the now pressing their advantage, demanding that the FBI identities of the 66 informers the number which the FBI says were involved be disclosed and that FBI turn over the eight million pages of files it has on the two organisations.

Redfeam

'INFORMER NO. 481-S'



SWP 5th National Conference

"For a class struggle Left Wing in the Labor Movement, Socialist Worker: For Marxism and Internationalism, Build the United Revolutionary Party" read the banner hanging behind the platform at the rally at the Fifth National Conference of the Socialist Workers Party, held near Sydney from January 27-31. And this summed up the three central themes of what was the biggest and most successful conference in the SWP's five-year history. Some 170 people came together to hear and discuss resolutions and reports on some of the central political questions facing the working class today and to map out a strategy for Australian revolutionaries in the coming year. The main political resolution entitled *The Fraser Offensive: How the Labor Movement Can Fight Back* was reported on by Jim Mellroy who summarised the main points of the document.

The other resolutions under discussion were *The Socialist Revolution and the Struggle for Women's Liberation* (printed in this issue) which was summarised in a report by Helen Jarvis who also assessed the current state of the women's liberation movement in Australia; *The Socialist Revolution in the Arab East* presented by Sol Saby, a well-known leader of the movement in defence of the Palestinians in this country; and *The Organisational Principles of the Socialist Workers Party*, outlined by Allen Myers.

In addition to these there were reports on the tasks and perspectives of the party, a report on the work of the Socialist Youth Alliance, the youth organisation in sympathy with the program of the SWP, by SYA national secretary Dave Deutschmann, and two reports on issues before the world Trotskyist movement, one on behalf of the majority of the Political Committee of the SWP presented by Nita Keig and the other representing the Political Committee minority presented by John McCarthy. The differences on these issues reflected differences that have existed in the world Trotskyist movement for the past few years and which contributed to a split away from the SWP (then SWL) in 1972 by a group who formed the Communist League.

The conference was enthusiastic about being able to register the success of a fusion between the SWP and a sizable section of the Communist League in the months immediately preceding the conference. While differences remain, particularly on the level of international questions, these were not seen as an obstacle to a fusion between these groups when substantial agreement existed on all questions currently facing the Trotskyist movement in Australia.

At the time of the conference ex-members of the Communist League were already playing central roles in many areas of the party's work and contributing to the

leadership of the party. The fusion was a great inspiration to everyone at the conference drawing out the theme of the united revolutionary party.

There were also two educational talks scheduled during the conference, one on the question of Alliances and the Revolutionary Party presented by Dave Holmes and a talk on *The Struggle for Workers Democracy in Eastern Europe* by John McCarthy. A range of workshops around different political campaigns and internal tasks filled out most of the remaining schedule of the five day conference. A great many messages of greetings, mostly from Trotskyist parties overseas, were also read to the conference.

Perhaps the two aspects of the conference that were most exciting were the *Tasks and Perspectives Report* and the conference rally. Both dealt with the party's projections. The *Tasks and Perspectives Report* presented by SWP national secretary Jim Percy noted the achievements of the SWP in the previous year, including involvement in a great many areas of political work, successful election campaigns in a number of states and achievement of a \$25,000 fund drive and other internal goals. But perhaps more exciting were the various projections the party was going to work to achieve in 1977.

A central projection, that was also a focus of the rally held on Sunday night, was the establishment of a new theoretical journal for the party. The SWP has long felt the need for such a publication but now sees the way clear of the physical and financial problems associated with such a project. The journal *Socialist Worker* was seen as an important addition to the range of Trotskyist publications our movement is already distributing.

In addition other publishing tasks were projected as well as the increase of *Direct Action*, the SWP's newspaper, to a regular 16 pages. The acquisition of new phototypesetting equipment was also regarded as essential. All these and other targets were conditional on achieving a \$25,000 party expansion fund drive as well as a fund drive to support *Direct Action* of \$15,000. At the conference rally, addressed by John Tully, Marcia Langton, Alan Pinjen, Lou-Anne Barker, John McCarthy and Jim Percy and chaired by Peta Stewart, an extremely successful expansion drive appeal was orchestrated by Allen Myers. Pledges and cash to the value of over \$30,750 was raised, going over the party-building target by some \$5,750. The response to this appeal was a very concrete expression of the confidence and enthusiasm generated by the whole conference, and the belief expressed by all the members and supporters of the party present that the Socialist Workers Party is a party with a big future.

End the rule of the moneybags

Join the fight for socialism at the Socialist Youth Alliance 7th National Conference

May 21-23
Queens College Melb. Uni.



The SYA Seventh National Conference is for young people who are prepared to stand up against the power and privileges of the money bags—the capitalist class. It's a conference for young people ready to fight back against unemployment and the cutbacks in education. The conference will be attended by members and supporters of the SYA from right around the country who are actively involved in all of these struggles.

'The crisis confronting youth—a socialist strategy to fight back' will be the main topic of discussion. This is the draft political resolution of the SYA which will be presented to the conference.

Other sessions of the SYA conference will discuss the world revolution today—Palestine and South Africa, the tasks of the student movement, and

building the socialist movement. As well, there is a panel of speakers on the Malaysian student movement and workshops for high school students, young workers and women. Feature talks will be presented on Feminism and Revolution and the 60th Anniversary of the Russian Revolution.

The live-in conference will be held at Queens College, Melbourne University-accommodation will cost \$8 per night (\$16 for the conference weekend) and some private billeting will be available. For details on accommodation, travel and the conference schedule contact the SYA national office, PO Box 160, Glebe 2037 (phone (02) 6602251) or SYA in Melbourne at 361 Lt Bourke St (phone 671225).

Come along to the SYA Seventh National Conference and join the fight for socialism.

Get in touch

To contact socialists in your area...

If you would like more information about the Socialist Workers Party or the Socialist Youth Alliance, radical and socialist literature—get in touch with the addresses below:

National Office:	SWP, SYA, Pathfinder Press—PO Box 151, Glebe 2037. Phone 6602251	Hobart:	14 Mary St, N.Hobart 7000. Ph 345453
Adelaide:	287 Rundle St, Adelaide 5000. Ph 2234539	Melbourne:	361 Lt Bourke St, Melbourne 3000. Ph 671225
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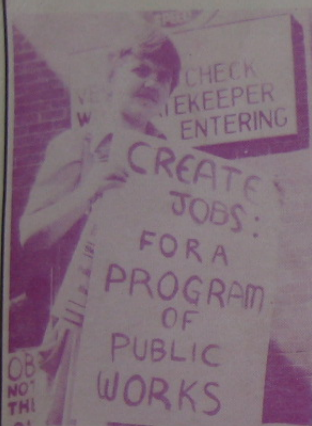
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