

James Weinstein and the Revolt against Anti-Theory

Bulletin

OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

Vol. 2, No. 32

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10 Cents

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SSEU--AFTER THE RALLY—————

————— SUBWAY FARE RISE



Aftermath of Meredith Shooting

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EDITORIAL

CITY HALL RALLY AGAINST TRI PARTITE - A SUCCESS!!

"HEY JOHN LINDSAY GET OUT OF CITY HALL!" "MONEY! MONEY! MONEY!" yelled the teamsters. This was the mass rally at city hall called by the SSEU June 1st against Lindsay's anti-labor bomb - Tri Partite. City Hall was completely ringed around by more than 8,000 singing, chanting wrkrs from the SSEU and the Teamsters (IBT), communications workers (CWA) and some Local 371 clerks. Across the street a demolition crew was at work wrecking a building. The only wall left standing had a big sign on it, "UNION OF CITY EMPLOYEES". Once a cheer went up for the wall and everybody laughed. Meanwhile somebody started a song "John Lindsay's body lies amouldering in the grave." It was a good rally, most important it was not just made up of the SSEU but swelled by the ranks of other workers. The beginning of a united front.

Now What?

There are more workers out there! Workers threatened by anti-labor laws, taxi drivers, teachers, transit workers, nurses, just to name a few, even city librarians are overworked and understaffed. Where are they? There is a big job to be done, uniting every single last worker in a united front to fight laws against labor.

The Unemployed and Labor

The "pots and pans" brigade is growing too. Welfare clients are organizing against the encroachment of rising prices on their living standards. The unions must take a part in this struggle. Its demands must include the ranks of the unemployed and the army of welfare clients. If labor demands a sliding scale of wages, it must demand a similar sliding scale for unemployment checks and the welfare dole where people are the hardest hit by any price rise.

Closely linked with these client organizations are a whole host of others. Civil rights organizations, community and political groups, all directly concerned with the fight for better living standards. Everyone is picketing City Hall these days; we will be stronger if we picket together.

United Front with the Unemployed - Picket City Hall

Welfare clients are fed up. They can no longer live on last year's budget with this year's prices. The problem has become critical! Plans are being made now for clients to picket city hall. They are demanding higher budgets, more clothing allowances, better schools, day care centers and training centers. Every worker can fight for these demands, they are demands for higher living standards. The SSEU and all workers must help build this rally and make it even a bigger success than the June 1st rally!

THE SUBWAY FARE RISE THREATENS NYC WORKERS

Barring any unforeseen changes, as of July 1, millions of workers in New York City will be hit with an increase in subway transit fares. Added to this Mayor Lindsay has promised a city income tax. Caught between rising transportation costs, direct and indirect tax increases and a spreading inflation workers are seeing their standard of living forced down. One does not have to be an economic expert to realize what has been happening to wholesale and retail price levels, they are going in an upward direction with no end in sight. While this is going on, corporation profits hit an all time high in 1965.

A \$90 Billion Albatross

From one end of the country to the other every major city and state government is caught in this treadmill of rising costs for goods and services. They have had to float bond issues and borrow from the banks until they are saddled with a debt of over \$90 billion. In order to pay off this pile of paper, plus interest charges and keep the social services running, these local units will imitate New York City by raising the tax rate. The question is onto whose back will the tax load be shifted? To ask the question is to answer it. Those who work for a living, both in the organized and unorganized sections of the labor movement will pay the major share.

Struggle and Conflict

How will the workers react to this? Already on a small scale we have seen nurses and subway transit workers strike against the city for higher wages. As millions of unorganized in the white collar sector and in sweat shops see their living standards decline, they will be forced to organize in self defense. Whether it will take the path of linking up with other unions or forming independent unions on their own, is hard to say at this point. We can be sure of this, that as the pressures increase and Johnson continues to play the tune that people have too much money, imposing a wage freeze on the economy, there will be violent strikes and political explosions.

For a Labor Party

To many looking for a way out of this morass the idea of a party of labor will take hold. Despite the slow movement of the working class in the immediate past, the future will see this mighty sleeping giant move with seven league boots catching up to history.

AFTERMATH OF MEREDITH SHOOTING

Why SNCC Allowed King to Utilize Meredith's

Heroic Struggle for his Own Rotten Ends

James Meredith's planned walk through Mississippi was a personal mission with a specific aim. He wanted to do what he could to dispell the fear that holds down the Southern Negro and to

encourage voter registration.

The shotgun blasts that felled him gave ample proof of the real basis for the fear of the Mississippi Negro. Meredith himself reached some serious conclusions as a result. He has declared that he would never again walk through Mississippi unarmed. "I'm sorry I didn't have something to take care of that man. I'll never make that mistake again." When someone suggested that this was not in keeping with a nonviolent philosophy as preached by Martin Luther King, he answered, "Who the hell ever said I was nonviolent? I spent eight years in the military and the rest of my life in Mississippi." His final conclusion: "There's something bad wrong with the society."

It is a great shame that Martin Luther King has once again been allowed to utilize other people's heroic struggles for his own rotten ends. Meredith learned never again to walk through Mississippi unarmed. King is seeking to obliterate this lesson with another of his 'nonviolent' publicity stunts. In all likelihood the march will be completed with little or no violence due to the glare of publicity. But once the marchers return home--King seems to have left already--the Mississippi Negroes will be not one whit safer. They must remain in Mississippi and live day in and day out without the television cameras focus ed upon them.

King Tugs at Coattails

King's aim is to once again push through a little federal legislation under the pressure of a publicity campaign. He tells the Negro masses that their role is only to tug at the coattails of the men in power hoping for a little morsel should they be forced to look our way. But what good are laws if they are not enforced. Can we expect the Federal Government to protect the ordinary Negro citizen in Mississippi if the FBI could not even protect a single man, Meredith, who everyone knew was marked for a killing? Is not the lesson of Meredith's shooting the need for the Negro people to stop looking to the government for handouts and to start an independent struggle aimed at removing this government from power?

The new SNCC leadership has failed this test almost as miserably as King. This is very sad for Stokely Carmichael started out so strongly when he refused to participate in Johnson's farcical civil rights parley. But now he ends up marching along side by side with that betrayer of the struggle of the Southern Negro--Martin Luther King. It is King who called the tune and it was Carmichael who went along with the dancing.

We are sure Stokely Carmichael shares our assessment of King as a betrayer of the struggles of the Southern Negro. SNCC itself has been subject to the King treatment many times: King waltzes in for the publicity and then leaves the resultant mess to SNCC after the publicity dies down. But why then does Carmichael allow King to use him as a left cover?

The problem, we feel, is the same as we discussed in the last two issues of the Bulletin ("Alabama: The Negro and Independent Politics" May 23rd issue and "Independent Political Action" June 6th

issue).

Carmichael and other SNCC militants seek a course of independent struggle. They realize that nothing basically will change unless they are able to remove from power their oppressors both in Alabama and Mississippi and in the nation as a whole. But this requires allies as the 11% of the population which is Negro could not accomplish this even if it was capable of acting as a coherent entity. It is this necessary search for allies which leads Carmichael into trouble.

The political expression of Carmichael's common march with King is his support for the "National Conference for New Politics." This formation is committed to support of the reform wing of the Democratic Party. Far from having broken from capitalist political some in this group openly look to Bobby Kennedy and Fulbright--two leading spokesmen of the American ruling class--for leadership.

Thus while Carmichael organizes an independent black party in Alabama, he finds himself not only marching down the roads of Mississippi with King but marching politically with him in national politics. The Selma March led nowhere and the Mississippi March will lead nowhere either. As long as the struggle of the Negro masses finds expression only within the camp of the ruling class parties, this struggle cannot be won.

The Futility of Supporting the Party of Your Oppressor

It is right and good that SNCC is looking for a political solution to the oppression of the Negro masses. It is right and good that many militants in the peace movement are also looking for a political solution to the war of oppression in Vietnam. It is right and good to seek to link together in a common struggle the peace movement and the civil rights movement. It is terribly wrong and bad, however, to follow up the futility of mass demonstrations and publicity stunts with the futility of political participation within the parties of your own oppressors.

The Bulletin is committed to a struggle for the creation of a serious alternative to the two parties of big business who maintain racial oppression, class oppression and imperialism abroad. We must build a mass party of American labor--of working people black and white who face the same oppressor. There is no other way out for the Negro people in particular of the masses in general. It is easier now for civil rights activists to seek alliances with the liberal capitalists and play games within the Democratic party, but it leads to worse than nothing--it contributes to the false consciousness of the Negro masses..

It may seem far more difficult to struggle today to build a new party of the American working class--to struggle for this despite the resistance and opposition of many American workers. But it is better to devote oneself now to the harder and longer battle for the only real solution to the oppression of the Negro mass than to turn one's back on this struggle and thus help to postpone this solution.

Let us march with King no more--on the roads of Mississippi or at the polls across the nation. It is better to walk alone like Meredith has done for what we feel is right than to gather numbers around a program which can only lead us to defeat.

THE BRITISH SEAMEN'S STRIKE

A New Level of Struggle Rocks Great Britain

June 7 --- The strike of British seamen is, as of this date three weeks old, with no signs of settlement yet in sight. The strike marks a real high point in the development of the class struggle in Great Britain. It is extremely significant, not just for Britain, but for the whole world and especially for the American workers.

The immediate causes of the strike lie in the current working conditions of the seamen (they receive a base wage of 14 pounds or about \$40 for a 56 hour week) and the disparity between their wages and conditions and those prevailing in the American merchant Marine. The seamen want to use their strength to achieve decent conditions. The Hull branch of the National Union of Seamen (NUS) issued a statement which explained this. It reads in part:

The Shipping Federation is issuing press statements about seamen earning 1000 pounds a year. To get this, an A.B. would have to work at least 76 hours a week for a full year! He gets 14 pounds for a 56 hour week....Nor do the shipowners tell the public that it is possible for a seaman to work for two or three days on end and get nothing at all! Seamen can be called in for 'safety of the ship'--such things as cargo adrift, fire or flooding. He can work all night or even two or three days and he may not get anything at all. We are determined to put an end to things like this and to win decent wages and conditions.

One of the major demands of the strike is the 40 hour week with no loss in pay (which would mean higher pay at overtime rates). The seamen also want to put an end to things such as being docked two days pay for being 5 minutes late, and they are also demanding the right to have a representative of theirs on ship to fight grievances for them.

All of this, as important as it is, is not the only cause or the major cause of the strike. Behind the strike lies the plans of the British capitalists and the Labour Government which has already proven its "responsibility" to these capitalists as well as to their masters in Washington. In the interests of British capitalism, which finds itself in a very unfavorable position competitively in relation to world capitalism, the Labour Government is trying to accomplish what the Tories were not able to. It is trying to ease the burdens of the capitalists by lowering the standard of living of the British workers. This means first of all a wage freeze, to be implemented by the so-called prices and incomes policy. The workingclass has resisted this policy. The trade union bureaucracy has tried to compromise the

struggle at every point, but in practice the workers have struggled and won for themselves wage increases much larger than what Wilson would like to see.

In the immediate period the strike threatens to deepen and is in fact already deepening the balance of payments crisis of British imperialism. But spokesmen for the employers have made it absolutely clear that they are prepared to accept some added strain in this department if Wilson stands firm and wins on the larger test of the incomes policy. A union victory in the fight for a shorter work week would be a sharp setback for this policy. Wilson and the employers are determined to resist this, not only for the sake of the ship-owner but for the impact it would undoubtedly have in spreading to other sectors of the economy. The battle lines are drawn and the workers must answer the determination of Wilson and those he represents with a greater determination.

These are the circumstances which have forced the NUS leadership into taking strike action and into threatening to widen the strike by blacklisting British ships in foreign ports, asking the cooperation of foreign seamen and longshoremen. The strikers are beginning to see the strike as a political strike. The NY Times of May 31 reports one of the strikers as saying: "It's a political strike and we're the scapegoats." A political struggle against the capitalist state, against the government which is serving the interests of the shipowners and all the capitalists is required. This means mobilizing the broadest united front of the workers against the continued betrayals of the Labour Government.

The Struggle for a United Front

The British Socialist Labour League and the Young Socialists are in the forefront of this struggle, engaged in fighting for just this kind of united front which is so necessary. On Wednesday, May 25, a Young Socialists sponsored march and lobby, supported by the Socialist Labour League, mobilized 2000 youth, seamen, dockers, other trade unionists, and students. This demonstration lobbied against anti-trade union legislation and in favor of the strike demands of the seamen. At the same time almost 8000 dockers brought work on the piers in Liverpool and Birkenhead to a halt with a 1 day strike in support of the lobby and the seamen's strike. The lobby and the dockers' stoppage succeeded in spite of an all-out struggle against them by the Communist Party as well as the entire trade union and Labour bureaucracy.

The SLL and Young Socialists have already clearly rejected the attempts of the Stalinists to split the workingclass movement and have pledged their support to the June 22 lobby called by the Communist Party even though the CP boycotted the May 25 lobby. The SLL sums up its program for workingclass unity and militant struggle in the June 4 issue of the Newsletter:

All out in support of the June 22 lobby
For a one-day general strike to force the government to
change its policy
For the victory of the Seamen and the dockers

One other important lesson should be clear from the seamen's strike. It points up all the insoluble contradictions of British capitalism. The internal crisis faced by the leaders of world imperialism in New York and Washington is not fundamentally different in kind from that faced by their British cousins. The objective conditions we face include a certain level of capitalist prosperity, but not therefore capitalist stability or an ebb in the class struggle. The seamen's strike shows that the contrary is the case. The absence of a recession is not simply an advantage for the capitalists. They are faced with a strong and undefeated workingclass which demands a greater share of what it produces. The problems of the capitalists are being expressed in many ways and must not be underestimated. There are those such as the Socialist Workers Party and the Spartacist group, who have shown no understanding of the nature of the capitalist crisis and its development. They are completely unprepared for developments in the class struggle such as the seamen's strike. If the seamen and other workers take advantage of the opportunities presented to them; and build a revolutionary leadership, they can win this strike and even more decisive battles to come.

JAMES WEINSTEIN AND THE REVOLT AGAINST ANTI-THEORY

The Meaning of the History of the American Socialist Movement

Studies on the Left has played a very special role in relation to what is known as the "New Left" in the United States. It has been the theoretical organ of a deeply anti-theory tendency.

It is not an easy task to publish a theoretical organ of, by, and for people hostile to theory. But somehow or other the publication has managed to come out year after year with little or no theoretical content of any kind--good, bad, or indifferent.

In its first period of existence it accomplished this by adapting itself to the academic community. It became the "legal Marxist" publication for young radical graduate students, particularly those who once had some connection with the Communist Party. Academic jargon ran supreme and the mention of Marxism and Marxist theories was either forbidden or handled in the most Aesopian way conceivable. Whether or not the publication made contributions of importance to various academic endeavors we do not know, but it certainly made no contributions to the development of Marxist theory, to the theoretical arming of American socialists.

In its more recent period, without totally breaking from its academic origins, Studies has sought to become some kind of organ of the New Left student radical activists in SDS, SNCC, and more recently in peace demonstrations. It began with lengthy descriptive commentary of these "movements", still avoiding any open discussion of theory in general and Marxist theory in particular.

Today at least a section of those associated with Studies have begun to revolt against the anti-theory of which Studies has been such a proponent for so many years. Most prominent in this revolt have been James Weinstein and Stanley Aronowitz. In the past we have commented on Aronowitz's role in the Anti-Vietnam movement(see Bulletin

Vol.2, No. 19,20,21). In this article we will discuss Weinstein's approach to Marxist theory. This we feel, may provide some insight into the role this tendency plays within the "movements".

In a communication to Studies (Vol. 6, No.2, 1966) entitled "Socialism and the New Left", written together with Martin Sklar, Weinstein states his basic outlook. "The initial usefulness and success of their anti-ideological stances have worn thin," he states referring to the "movements", "and the need now is to search for theoretical clarity about revolutionary politics in the United States. There is among new radicals," he further notes, "a growing awareness that activity, although essential within a worked-out political perspective, leads nowhere by itself. This is a result of the increasing frustrations experienced by organizers in the South, in ghetto projects and in the peace movement."

Referring, we feel, essentially to themselves, Weinstein and Sklar state: "In recognition of this and in the hope of moving towards a new socialist politics, some groups are beginning to search for new theory and are beginning to study the American past."

This is not at all a bad way to start developing the theoretical understanding of the socialist movement. Theory is not something that can be sucked out of a thumb; Marxist theory in particular is more than simply generalizing on current empirical data. Marxist theory is above all a historical theory. The only way it can be developed is historically--that is by beginning with the theory as it has evolved since Marx's time and develop it further on the basis of the experiences of the working class in the interim period.

Weinstein's Historical Outlook

James Weinstein's basic assessment of the history of the American Socialist movement can be found in an omnibus book review "Socialism's Hidden Heritage: Scholarship Reinforces Political Mythology" which appeared in Vol. 3, Number 4, Studies in 1963. Weinstein takes up some eight books written on the early history of the Socialist and Communist Parties primarily for the purpose of developing his own analysis of these parties. In the course of developing this analysis he works out in embryo an approach towards the construction of a socialist movement today.

Essentially Weinstein conducts a polemic against what he feels is the falsification of the early history of these two parties carried on in order to justify the split in 1919 and the post-1919 history of the two parties. He sees no continuity between the old left wing of the Socialist Party and the Communist Party. Even the divisions between right and left within the Socialist Party he sees as artificial and confusing. He sees the right wing more proletarian than the left, more anti-war than the left, as pro-Soviet as the left, etc.

His conclusion from all this seems to be that the split in 1919 that created the CP was a mistake. It was this split which led to the decline of the once vital and healthy Socialist Party. Furthermore since the split took place on the basis of affiliation with the

Third International, the new Communist Party emerged as a creature of a foreign movement and as such it was destined to decay.

The meaning of this for Weinstein is that the attempt to build a Leninist type party in the United States was and is a mistake. "Not one of the Leninist parties on the scene was capable of building a conscious movement for socialist even remotely comparable to that stirred up by the party of Debs, Berger and Hillquit." His aim then is to re-create in some form not made clear in his writings a multi-tendency party like that of "Debs, Berger and Hillquit."

The organizational efforts of Aronowitz and Weinstein, expressed most recently in the formation of Committees for Independent Political Action (CIPA) on the Upper West Side and Lower East Side in New York City, must thus be seen as aimed at creating this alternative of the Leninist party, this return to the party of "Debs, Berger and Hillquit."

This approach of Weinstein is, of course, nothing new. He has simply come over to the basic historical outlook held traditionally by the left social democracy in the United States. It was this theory that led Max Schactman and his followers like Hal Draper and Mike Harrington, to join the Socialist Party in 1957 in the hopes of re-creating the "Debsian" party. The result, interestingly enough, was the further disintegration of the remnants of the SP and the further political degeneration of Schactman and his political followers.

"Every generation of historians," Weinstein correctly notes, "rewrites its history to fit its needs and the books under review here demonstrate that their authors are no exceptions." We are afraid that Weinstein himself is also not an exception. While he notes the extremely confused character of the pre-World War I Socialist Party, he fails to understand the causes for this confusion. He is right in attacking those who seek to paint the left wing as consistent, proletarian, etc., and the rightwing as petty bourgeois reformists in the style of the divisions in the European parties of the time. What he does not seem to understand is that the Socialist Party was a temporary alliance of a number of disparate forces--an alliance which could not last any serious length of time. The Socialist Party was the product of an early stage in the development of the American working class and middle classes, a stage which we can no more return to than we can to the log cabin and the wild west.

The Real Nature of the SP

The essential ingredients of the SP were the imported radicalism of the foreign born worker (both reformist and revolutionary varieties), the syndicalist revolutionary consciousness of the American worker under semi-frontier conditions (the miners, lumberjacks, hobos who made up the IWW), and the middle class radicalism of the farmers and "small man" which had previously swelled the ranks of the populist movement.

The great vote of the SP in 1912 was primarily a reflection of populism and not working class socialism. It was part of that great

historic rebellion of the petty bourgeoisie against--not the system of capitalism itself--but the fact that it was losing out within that system to big business. As big business was the inevitable outgrowth of the system itself those who accepted the system but fought its logical development could not help but be defeated. Populism has largely died out in the United States along with the small capitalist upon which it rested. It will not be resurrected by Weinstein's wishful thinking.

Much the same can be said about that embryonic class consciousness which extended way beyond IWW ranks. The IWW never developed a permanent following in the large basic industries and in the urban centers. The IWW was to disappear like the frontier itself. The foreign born workers, primarily employed in basic industry, were another part of the early SP, the bulk of its membership after the populist current drifted away in search of other utopias. As part of his acculturation into American life the foreign born workers tended to reject in time what radicalism he brought with him (most immigrants brought none as they came from peasant stock). It will be the son or grandson of the foreign born workers who will come to class consciousness on the basis of struggle in this country.

If we remove the populist current, the IWW types, the foreign born workers--what do we have left of the old SP? Not even enough people to make one block committee for CIPA!

Now let us look at James Weinstein's assessment of the early CP. He develops his thesis primarily in a polemic with Theodore Draper: "Draper's treatment of the pre-Communist movement within the old Socialist party leads him to consider the new party as 'a new expression of American radicalism' which by later seeking Russian help in the solution of American problems was perverted into an 'American appendage of Russian revolutionary power.' (p.395) But if these parties were in fact an appendage of the Russian revolution they were that from the beginning."

Even more than Draper, he fails to understand the nature of the early CP and the significance of its relationship with the Third International and the Russian leadership. Of course the Communist Party was "a new expression of American radicalism." Not only did the bulk of its membership emerge from the SP, but it contained similar elements and similar problems. To be sure its foreign language base was far greater than that of the old SP but that was a quantitative not a qualitative difference. In addition to foreign born workers--and Weinstein must realize that the overwhelming bulk of the industrial working class in that period were foreign born --there were those like Cannon and Foster who represented this Wobbly, non-theoretical class consciousness. The party was not even totally immune from populism.

The Meaning of the 1919 Split

It is also Weinstein's position that the split in the SP which created the CP took place over the wrong issue--an issue on which those who formed the CP were wrong and the right wing was right. He holds that the leading spokesmen for the right wing were as pro-Soviet as the left wing. The issue, as he saw it, was that the Comintern was demanding acceptance of a position of immediate insurrectional struggle for power in the United States while the right wing rejected this as adventurist at that time.

Weinstein misses the whole point of the 1919 split--the entire point. The central issue--and this is how all understood it at the time--was whether or not American revolutionaries were to be part of the international movement created with the impetus of the Russian Revolution. Certainly Debs, as well as men far to the right of him, "supported" in general the Russian Revolution. But these people were not ready to throw their lot into the creation of a new international movement basing itself on the lessons of the October Revolution.

This was a fundamental step for American socialists to take. The relationship of the SP to the Second International had not been a particularly serious one. It was more an expression of a vague international solidarity than a political relationship which had any deep impact on either the International or the SP. American socialism particularly because of its undeveloped, infant character, its lack of and general hostility towards theory, its isolation and parochialism, desperately needed to be part of a serious world Marxist movement. It needed to learn from the more developed mature working class parties in other countries in order to strengthen its working class outlook which was constantly under bombardment from American liberal and middle class elements.

The problem was, as we have discussed elsewhere (see: "The Struggle for Marxism in the United States" by Tim Wohlforth, Fourth International, Vol. 1, No. 3) that the American socialists never had been Marxists to the extent that they played any role as Americans rather than as exiles from another country.

This relationship of the early American Communist Party to the Comintern was necessarily a stormy one. But any serious study of the period reveals that it was an extremely fruitful one. The Comintern, precisely because of its theoretical development, showed itself to have a far better understanding of the American scene than did the early American Communists. The Comintern struggled to break up the old foreign language federations inherited from the SP, to bring the party out of its underground existence, to turn the party toward the American working class, to break it from sectarian conceptions of trade union work, to point out the importance of the Negro in an American revolutionary movement, to end the sterile factionalism that plagued the early party. Thus the 1919 split played a great role in the process of transforming the early American socialists into serious Marxists. This was and remains an essential pre-condition for the development of a serious revolutionary movement. A non-theoretical class "instinct" of the Wobbly variety, a middle class populist opposition to the logic of the market, a radicalism of the foreign emigre--or as the old SP represented--some confused mixture of all this, is not enough. We cannot overthrow the most powerful ruling class in the history of mankind with the childish thinking of the infancy of the working class movement.

Of course this early healthy relationship between the American CP and the Comintern turned into its opposite with the degeneration of the USSR and the impact of this upon the Comintern. That the Americans did not resist this degeneration better than they did is easily understood considering the development of the American socialists as Marxists was just beginning at this time.

We reject as puerile poppycock this counterposition of "old left" and "new left". As communists we are very happy to acknowledge that our basic program goes back almost 120 years. The so-called "new left" is still a good deal farther behind in its development than that. These people have yet to reach the level of the Communist Manifesto of 1848. Their minds are filled with liberal, democratic, utopian notions of the late 18th and early 19th century.

There can be no meaningful theoretical development on the part of the new generation of militants as long as they continue to divorce themselves from history. This ahistoricism is a reflection of their anti-theory outlook and it cannot be separated from it. The mistakes of the old socialist and communist movement must be rejected consciously through a process of historical evaluation. Weinstein has begun this necessary task but he has only begun it. He now has a responsibility to complete it at least to the point where he makes clearer than he has so far the nature of the socialist movement he is seeking to build in the United States.

No one can seriously accept what appears to be his rejection of the struggle to build a communist movement in the United States-- yes, a Leninist party--on the basis of what he has so far produced.

STATEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL
RELEASE POLISH AND HUNGARIAN MILITANTS

** Declaration of the International Committee of the Fourth International on the imprisonment of Polish Trotskyists and other members of the Polish Communist Party, and of Hungarian militants who participated in the revolution of 1956. **

The class struggle is international. The working class in struggle against the imperialists is joined by the workers of Russia, Eastern Europe and China, who must fight the counter-revolutionary bureaucracy inside their own countries in order to defend the gains of their past revolutionary struggles, and to play their part in the building of a new international working-class leadership.

The recent repressions in Eastern Europe and the USSR are part of the response of the Stalinist bureaucracy to strike terror into the proletariat of these countries, and, above all, to prevent the formation of a revolutionary leadership.

Of great significance are the recent imprisonments of Polish communists, and of workers and militants in Hungary who had participated in the Revolution of 1956.

A number of those arrested in Poland had worked as communists in the Trotskyist movement both in Western Europe and in Poland itself. Their political work in fighting for the defense of the nationalized property foundations of the Polish state, but at the same time criticizing and opposing the Stalinist bureaucracy, expresses the highest aims and interests of the Polish working class, and demonstrates the internationalist character of the programme and leadership which is required for the fulfilment of those interests.

The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 is equally an inevitable target for the bureaucracy, for it symbolised and inaugurated the political revolution of the working class against the Stalinist regime for the whole of Eastern Europe, the USSR and China. Through their workers' councils, the proletarian fighters of Budapest and the whole of Hungary initiated the struggle for the overthrow of the Stalinist police dictatorship, for the building of a socialist economy under the political rule of the working class itself.

Inside the USSR, the sentences on Daniel and Sinyavsky, like all the manifestations of opposition and criticism among the intelligentsia and students, reflect and at the same time impel forward the struggle of the workers themselves. When the Stalinist bureaucracy unleashes the new wave of repression against all opposition inside the countries under its control, it carries out functions complementary to its service to the imperialists on an international scale, wherever the struggle of the proletariat and the peasantry threatens the stability of imperialist rule.

In Vietnam, and in consequence throughout Asia, imperialism is able to stem the tide of revolutionary war only through the collaboration of the Kremlin bureaucracy, which is willing to threaten the foundations of the Chinese workers' state, and which gives its services to strengthen the ruling classes of India and Pakistan against the mounting social and political unrest.

Inside the advanced capitalist countries, the Stalinist parties are to the fore in breaking the resistance of the proletariat to the integration of their trade unions into the bourgeois state; there is no road to the defeat of this integration except by the defeat of the Stalinists.

In all these cases, and in the USSR and Eastern Europe too, it is the very existence of the proletariat as a class which is at stake. The bureaucracy, basing itself on the experience of the Moscow Trials and of the suppression of the uprisings in Eastern Europe in 1953-56, strives above all in the very first place to politically behead the working class, to deprive it of independent and conscious existence.

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In the present stage of the class struggle, the international nature of this struggle is ever more clearly marked.

When the Stalinist bureaucracy attempts today to prevent the formation of a working-class leadership, it does so, and must do so, at an international level. The bureaucrats themselves understand that they would never have been able to suppress the movement of 1953-56 as they did if there had existed an effective international proletarian leadership, able to mobilise solidarity actions in the capitalist world and in the USSR, and able to provide the Hungarian and Polish revolutionaries with a Marxist, internationalist programme.

Knowing that critical struggles are on the way, the Stalinists strive to protect themselves through their repressions against every possibility of the growth of a revolutionary leadership.

In these future struggles, whose magnitude will far outweigh those of 1956, the existence of a Marxist leadership, part of the Fourth International, showing the workers the programme of the united revolutionary interests of the workers of Western Europe and America against imperialism, and those of Eastern Europe and the USSR against the bureaucracy, would make impossible the suppressions of 1956, achieved only on the basis of those Stalinist betrayals which had divided the workers of Eastern and Western Europe.

The Stalinist bureaucracy was able through the 1935-38 repressions to exterminate physically almost all the vital forces of the proletarian vanguard. In contrast with that period of international working class defeats, the present situation produces a constant striving by a militant working class for a new, revolutionary leadership, despite the betrayals of the Stalinists and social-democrats. At every turn the militant workers are thrown into conflict with the bureaucrats as well as with the capitalists.

In the past it was possible for the bureaucracy, usurping the revolutionary prestige of October, to successfully hold back the revolutionary movement with a wall of lies, slanders and eventually assassinations. It is part of the severe crisis of Stalinism today, however, that the bureaucracy can no longer carry out such acts with the same 'justification'. Their right to do so is no longer acknowledged by the advanced workers, including many inside the Communist Parties themselves. Some other way must be found to initiate a campaign of slanders to once again prepare the way for political assassinations.

Fidel Castro has taken on the mantle of Stalin for this purpose, being uniquely qualified for such a role. Castro, the 'respected and great revolutionary', replaces Stalin the 'old Bolshevik'. To Castro falls the task of repeating the lying phrases of Stalin about 'Trotskyite agents of imperialism'--all with the purpose of justifying imprisonment and liquidation of proletarian revolutionaries.

'Castro-ism' has reached a dead end. It was never any more than the extreme left of petty-bourgeois 'socialism'. Finding itself bankrupt, like all petty-bourgeois formations in the imperialist world, it capitulates for the time being to the Kremlin bureaucracy, serving its urgent need to attack the Fourth International.

On every front--against China, and above all against all those elements in Latin America who are rejecting the Stalinists' line of collaboration and subordination to the bourgeoisie and seeking the path of proletarian revolution--Castro serves his Kremlin paymasters.

When Castro attacks the Fourth International in the same terms used by Stalin, he takes his place in a single campaign of calumnies and repressions by the bureaucrats and petty bourgeois everywhere, whether it be in Latin America or Eastern Europe.

The contradiction between the interests of the class in struggle and the bureaucrats and petty-bourgeois who dominate the mass movement is an international phenomenon. The different forms taken in different countries by this contradiction must be understood as parts of a single process, forcing the bureaucracy and the petty-bourgeois leaderships to fight to prevent at all costs the crystallisation in these struggles of the advanced forces of the proletariat around the programme and organisation of the Fourth International.

* * *

The struggle waged by Leon Trotsky against the Moscow Trials, against the exterminations and slanders carried out by Stalin and the

bureaucracy, was an indispensable contribution to the whole life and development of the workers' movement. Without this fight, not only the political and theoretical continuity of the movement but even the human resources of the vanguard stood in danger of liquidation.

Only because this fight was waged as a necessary part of the building of the foundations of the Fourth International could the programme of Bolshevism and the banner of proletarian revolution be carried forward for future generations of working-class fighters. There is no continuity of the movement purely in the abstract. This continuity is carried through by real, living men and their experience in fighting for the programme and for their own existence against every attack of the class enemy and its agents.

In the last two decades, there developed within the Fourth International itself revisionist tendencies which attempted to destroy this essential continuity in struggle. In the years 1953-56 these Pabloite revisionists betrayed the struggles of the revolutionary workers of Eastern Europe. They abandoned the revolutionary programme of building Trotskyist parties in every country, instead trying to liquidate the organisation of Trotskyists on the grounds that social democrats, Stalinists and petty-bourgeois nationalist leaders would, under present conditions, carry out the historic tasks of the proletariat. Today they are found utterly incapable of anything but sorrowful dirges and pleas to the bureaucratic and petty-bourgeois enemies of the working class, having for years hailed these enemies--Castro, the 'liberal' Stalinist bureaucrats--as 'progressive'.

Unable to analyse in their class meaning the new wave of repressions and slanders, the revisionists are reduced to weeping and moaning, having in effect helped prepare the way for the repressions themselves.

Only the Trotskyists of the International Committee can carry out the necessary task of political and physical defence of the vanguard forces of the proletariat in the countries ruled by the Stalinist bureaucracy and in the capitalist countries.

In taking upon its shoulders the task of fighting for the continuity of the programme and organisation of the Fourth International, the International and its sections have the inescapable duty of combatting every manifestation of the new wave of repressions and slanders perpetrated by the Stalinists against the most advanced elements of the working class.

This is an international duty in every respect, a task which can be carried out only on the basis of the record and traditions of the Fourth International. In this period our main task of rebuilding the Fourth International will be successfully carried out only in and through the acceptance of responsibility for the defence of all those who fall victim of the Stalinist repressions.

When we fight on the programme of the Fourth International this means nothing more nor less than an unceasing campaign against the bureaucracy, to resist and turn back every attempt made by them to break the revolutionary vanguard; In this way, by taking up all our responsibilities of struggle on every front against the class enemy and its bureaucratic agents, we carry out in practice the fight for the programme and reconstruction of the Fourth International.

The International Committee fights always for its independent political line: when it takes up the defence of the victims of Stalinist repression it does so without making it a condition that these victims fight on the same programme as the International Comm-

ittee, nor does it take responsibility for every political stand taken on every question by these victims.

Our programme, to organise the revolutionary vanguard for the Stalinist bureaucracy as an indispensable part of this international struggle, is clear. To this end we defend all those whom the bureaucracy persecute as part of their campaign to politically behead the proletariat.

In the same way the International Committee accepts enthusiastically its responsibility to defend the conquests and organisations of the working class against every attack of the imperialists and consequently defends every member of the working-class movement who falls victim to the imperialist attack on these conquests and organisations.

However, the best defence, and in our epoch the only effective, defence of these conquests and of the workers and militants who come under attack, is the rebuilding of the Fourth International as the leadership of the international struggle of the working class. The duty of revolutionaries, of communists, is always to represent the long-term, revolutionary interests of the proletariat as a whole in every partial and immediate struggle.

It is in the conduct of every phase of the international class struggle within the strategy of the struggle for power that the fight against the Stalinists' repressions and slanders achieves its full force.

The sections of the International Committee will fight to demand the immediate release of Modzelewski, Smiech, Badowski, Haas, Kuron and others imprisoned in Poland, and of the revolutionaries of 1956 arrested in Hungary, as part of their fight to win the leadership of the working class in each country and defeat the opportunists and Stalinists.

They will mobilise on the broadest possible front a campaign to publicise the arbitrary and repressive character of the arrests, carried out with no other justification than that the accused published their criticisms of the regime, which is the elementary duty of any Communist.

A determined and militant struggle can secure the release of those imprisoned and a defeat for their persecutors. The International Committee will work together with all those who will genuinely fight for the defence of these political prisoners in Hungary and Poland against the Stalinists. We are convinced that every blow struck in this campaign will be an indispensable contribution to the strengthening of the revolutionary vanguard in the USSR and Eastern Europe as in every country in the world.

May 28, 1966, International Committee

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